Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

1 July 2018

Safety and wellbeing   Customer focussed   Innovation   Accountability   Collaboration   Integrity and respect

Introduction

As an organisation, we aim to create a high performing inclusive learning and working environment that values diversity and promotes equality and inclusion. We will do all we can to support Gippsland Water employees to achieve their full potential, free from prejudice, bias and discrimination.

Managing workplace diversity involves recognising the value of individual differences in the workplace to realise the full potential of all employees and assists Gippsland Water to achieve its mission to "manage the resources in our care in a manner that secures social, environmental, and economic benefits to our customers, stakeholders, and the Gippsland region".

Our focus will be on creating an inclusive culture where our efforts are dedicated to raising awareness, removing barriers, and enabling change by implementing initiatives and actions that enable this achievement.

The realisation of this strategy also contributes towards the achievement of Gippsland Water's strategic drivers: Safety, Health and Environment; Customer; People; Financial Sustainability; External Relations; and Optimal Asset Management.

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Benefits of valuing diversity and inclusion

Workforce diversity and inclusiveness builds organisational capability.

A diverse and inclusive workforce is critical to high performance, innovation, adaptation, connecting with our customers and employee engagement. This places us in good stead for attaining our 'People' strategic driver, ensuring the 'right people, right jobs and right enabling culture'.

Implementation of this Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will benefit and assist Gippsland Water to:

- Better identify and harness talent within Gippsland Water and attract the best available talent in the market place.

- Inspire innovation. Diverse teams have a wider set of experiences, approaches and resources to draw on which leads to the development of innovative solutions enabling process improvements.

- Improve performance. Valuing and including all employees irrespective of their individual differences enables a more motivated, engaged and productive culture. In turn, supportive and respectful colleagues will enable greater collaboration and less conflict.

- Reflect the diversity of the community. If Gippsland Water represents and connects to the local community, we will be better positioned to meet their expectations and provide a positive impact.

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Forces driving our diversity and inclusion strategy

To enable achievement of Gippsland Water's overall diversity and inclusion strategy, an Action Plan has been established around three key forces. These outline Gippsland Water's priorities in responding to diversity and inclusion and are:

1. Active leadership which supports and champions diversity in the workplace with a particular focus on inclusivity.

2. Raise awareness and understanding of workplace diversity and inclusion.

3. Improve our ability to attract, recruit and retain people of diverse backgrounds.

Within each area deliverables have been aligned to key focus areas. The Action Plan is tailored to Gippsland Water and developed in consideration of the wider external factors – water industry, government and community.

The plan will guide our efforts, initially over a two year period, and then be reviewed and a further action plan developed. Our progress in implementing the plan will be reported on via bi-annual Executive Team and Board reporting.

Overall, we need to challenge long held mindsets and work differently.

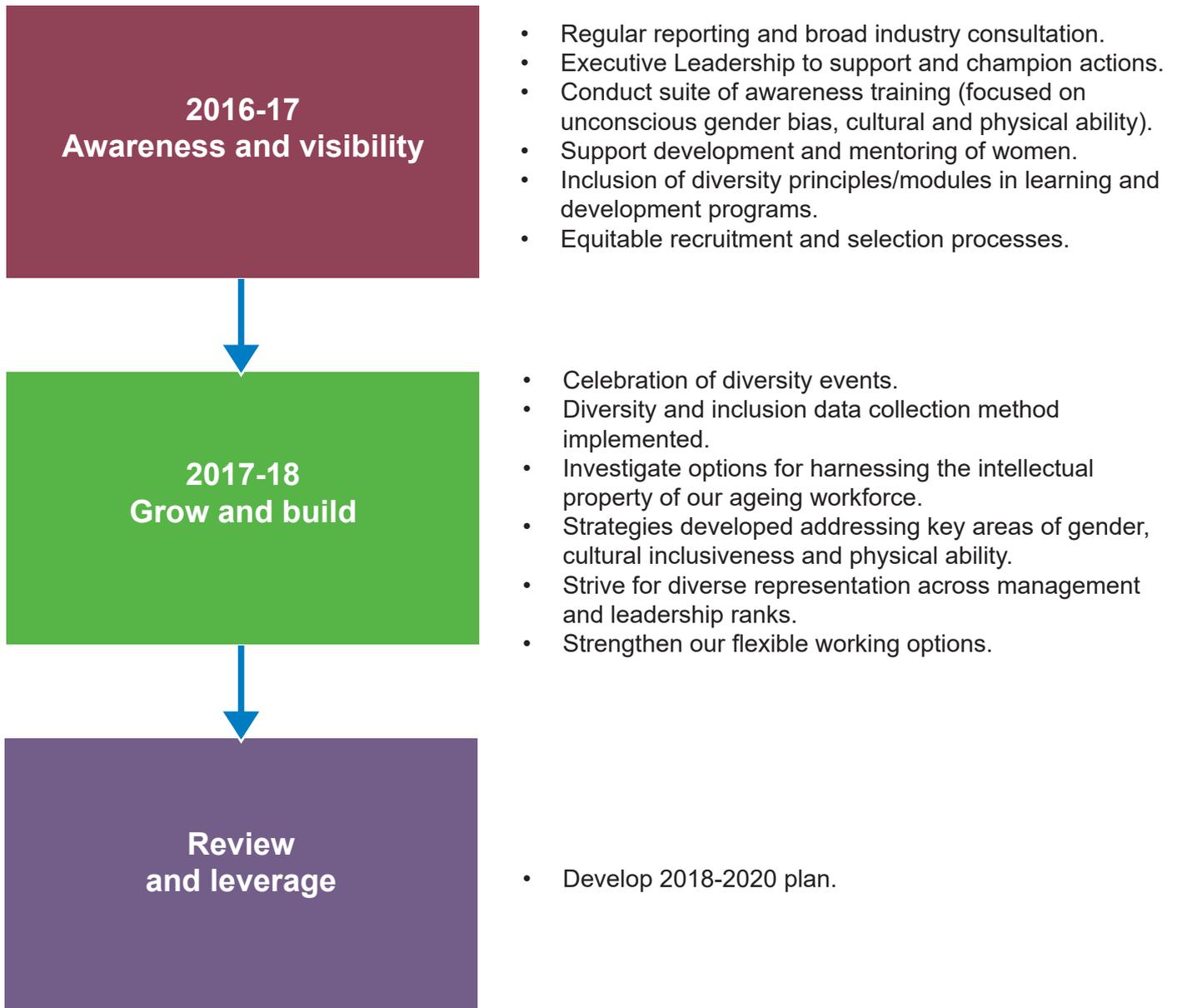Safety and wellbeing   Customer focussed   Innovation   Accountability   Collaboration   Integrity and respect

Two year approach – key initiatives

2016-17 Awareness and visibility	• Regular reporting and broad industry consultation. • Executive Leadership to support and champion actions. • Conduct suite of awareness training (focused on unconscious gender bias, cultural and physical ability). • Support development and mentoring of women. • Inclusion of diversity principles/modules in learning and development programs. • Equitable recruitment and selection processes.
2017-18 Grow and build	• Celebration of diversity events. • Diversity and inclusion data collection method implemented. • Investigate options for harnessing the intellectual property of our ageing workforce. • Strategies developed addressing key areas of gender, cultural inclusiveness and physical ability. • Strive for diverse representation across management and leadership ranks. • Strengthen our flexible working options.
Review and leverage	• Develop 2018-2020 plan.

These steps aim to result in a positive transformation within the workplace and helps achievement of broader industry and government requirements and strategies.

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