

Nicholas Hunt  
Head of Organisation  
William Angliss Institute of TAFE

Cc: John Pandazopoulos, Board chair

30 September 2024

Dear Nicholas

**RE: OUTCOME OF YOUR PROGRESS REPORT COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT**

Gender equality will be achieved when women, men and gender diverse people can access and enjoy equal resources and opportunities regardless of gender. As a duty holder under the Equal Opportunity Act 2020 (the Act), you play a key role in progressing gender equality in Victoria.

Your organisation must publicly report on your progress towards gender equality in your workplace and in your public policies, programs and services every two years. Reporting on progress ensures that organisations covered by the Act are meeting their obligations.

In February 2024, you were required to:

- complete a **progress audit** to collect, compare, and submit information about workplace gender equality in your organisation
- submit a **progress report**, drawing on your audit data and other information, to demonstrate whether your actions are achieving positive change towards workplace gender equality, and in your public programs, policies and services.

I have now assessed your organisation's progress report and progress audit. I am pleased to confirm that your progress audit and progress report have been assessed as compliant under the Act.

<b>Obligation</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Progress audit	Compliant
Progress report	Compliant

You can find detailed feedback and guidance in the attached compliance feedback reports. Your organisation can use this feedback to make sure you meet your future obligations under the Act and drive gender equality in your workplace and community.

## **Themes and observations**

The Commission has undertaken a rigorous, multistage review of nearly 300 progress reports and audit submissions. I acknowledge the significant amount of work and resources that duty holders have dedicated to the development and submission of their progress reports and audit data. I also appreciate your patience as we conducted these reviews.

As we close off the first progress reporting period under the Act, we take away many observations and reflections. The learnings from 2023 progress reporting will provide opportunities to improve processes for 2025 progress reporting, and beyond.

Many duty holders showed thoughtful and reflective approaches to gender equality in their organisations, identifying where and how to make improvements. We were pleased to see that reporting on the strategies and measures in Gender Equality Action Plans was consistently completed well. Many organisations completed the optional recommended items, and effectively applied an intersectional lens to their report. We also saw many entities show meaningful engagement with their audit data when assessing their progress against the workplace gender equality indicators. Many organisations told us they are working on new or upgraded human resource management systems to better capture and report on required data that will facilitate more nuanced intersectional gender analyses in future. And for many organisations, assessing their progress highlighted their own need for greater attention and resourcing.

However, many organisations were not yet able to demonstrate quantitative progress against the workplace gender equality indicators. Gender impact assessments (GIAs) were not consistently reported. Progress reports demonstrated a great deal of variation in levels of compliance - not only between different organisations, but also within different sections of the same progress report. We will look to address these areas through enhanced guidance and templates to better support defined entities to meet their compliance requirements in future reporting periods.

As this is the first progress report public sector organisations have submitted to us, we have taken these challenges into consideration when assessing progress. We expect to see greater quantitative progress reported in the next 2-year period, when organisations have had more time to embed their practices and refine their strategies.

We have engaged Right Lane Consulting to conduct an independent review to identify how we can improve future reporting. The review will look at our processes, duty holders' experiences, and barriers and enablers to making progress. The review will provide a final report to the Commission including practical recommendations. We will share key findings and next steps with duty holders in November 2024.

### Compliance under the Act

As the Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner, the Act gives me compliance and enforcement powers. I acknowledge that in the first years of the Act's operation there will be a transition period for duty holders to fully understand and adequately meet their obligations under the Act. That is why, for this first progress reporting period, I am focusing on education and support to achieve informal resolution when duty holders have not demonstrated compliance.

For future obligations, including the next progress report and Gender Equality Action Plan, I expect that duty holders (with the exception of new defined entities) will have had sufficient time to understand their obligations under the Act and make progress. This means that a firmer approach will be taken to compliance assessment in the future. The Commission will provide further information and guidance on this in the lead up to the next set of obligations.

As part of good governance, compliance with obligations under the Act should form part of your organisation's risk register and risk management plan. It is important that actions relating to these obligations are regularly reported to your board of directors (if you have one). This is why I am also sending these compliance feedback reports to the chairs of governing bodies where appropriate, and will do so from now on. I ask that compliance feedback reports are also passed on to your organisation's risk committee chair (or equivalent).

### Next steps

Please carefully review your attached feedback reports, which provide useful information to help you understand any compliance issues and improve your future progress reporting.

Your **progress report** is now marked with a status of 'final' on the reporting platform. You must publish your progress report on your organisation's website as required under the Act. The compliance status of your progress report will not be made public on our Insights Portal.

If we have identified any non-critical issues with your **progress audit data**, you can choose to make changes to, and resubmit your data by 25 October. You will find further guidance in the attached Progress audit feedback report.

We will publish all progress reports and summary data on our public Insights Portal in November. We will not publish the compliance status of your progress report on the Insights Portal.

We ask that you to share your feedback reports with the Chair of your Audit and Risk Committee. This will help your organisation effectively manage your obligations and any associated risks.

Yours sincerely



**Dr. Niki Vincent**

Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner