



Diversity, culture and engagement

The sector employs people of different abilities, cultural backgrounds, experiences and expertise. It is committed to building a diverse workforce that more accurately reflects the diversity of the Queensland population.

The sector is actively working towards increasing its diversity and realising the many true benefits of difference, including:

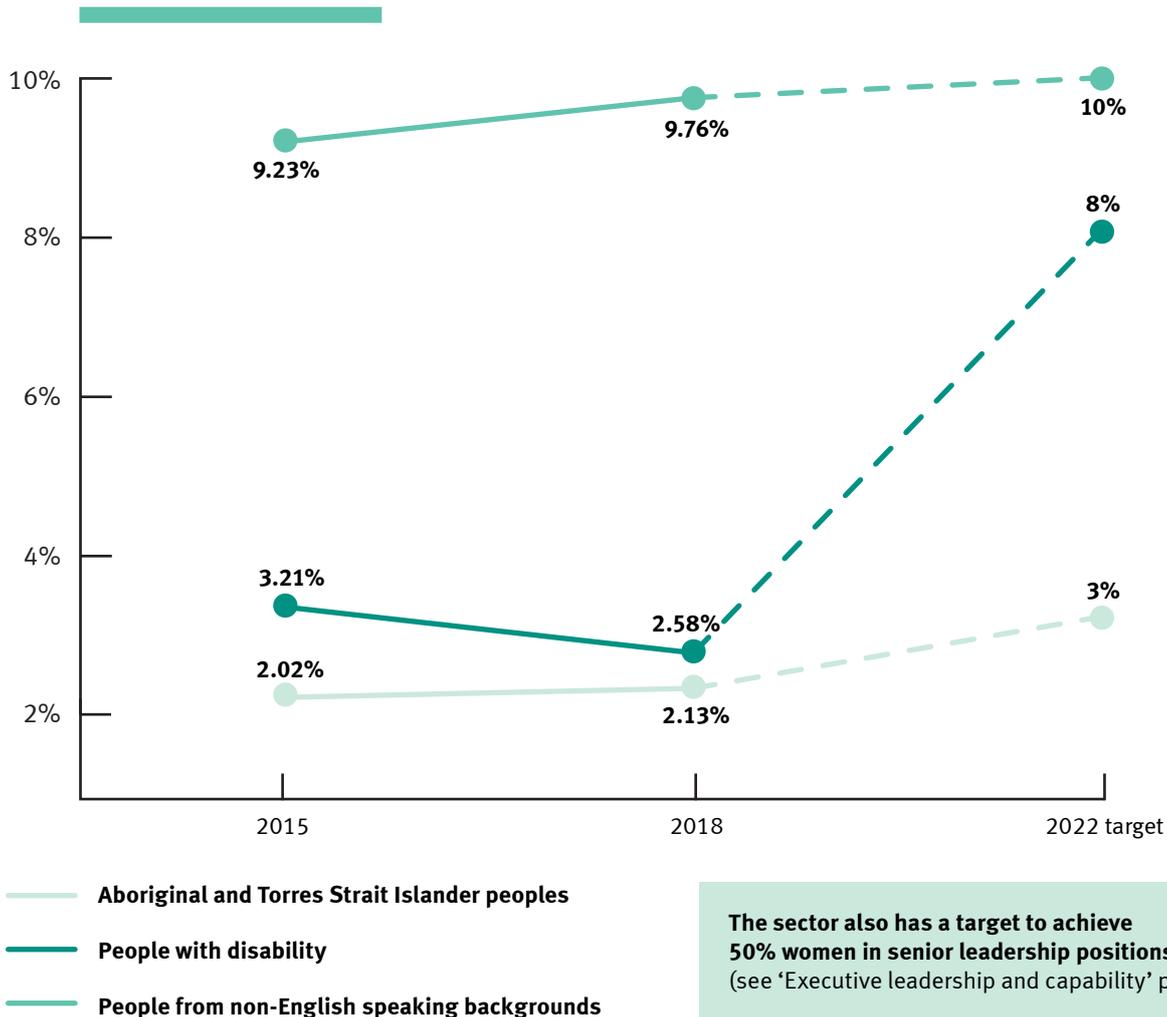
- the importance of diversity of thought and experience in solving complex contemporary challenges
- the role of representation and visibility of difference in changing established norms.

Recognising the capacity of the public sector to lead and drive community change, the sector has committed to diversity targets to drive improvement by 2022.

Good progress is being made in three of the four focus areas, and targets have almost been achieved in people from non-English speaking backgrounds and women in senior leadership positions (see 'Executive leadership and capability' p. 15).

Significant focus will be required to increase the representation of people who identify as having a disability in the sector. An ongoing focus to attract, retain and support the career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is also essential.

Progress against diversity targets



Our employees' perceptions:



72%
say their workplace has an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and respected **(72% in 2015)**



69%
say cultural background is not a barrier to success **(72% in 2015)**



56%
believe disability is not a barrier to success **(62% in 2015)**



65%
have a positive perception of anti-discrimination in the workplace **(70% in 2015)**



68%
say gender is not a barrier to success **(73% in 2015)**

The public sector is committed to a more diverse workforce, and also ensuring workplaces are inclusive and supportive of diversity.

Employees indicate that their workplaces value and respect diversity. However, many acknowledge that belonging to a diversity group may also be a barrier to success.

Initial analysis suggests that focusing a greater spotlight on the challenges faced by employees and members of the community who ascribe to diversity groups has led to shifts in community expectations of workplace inclusion.

There remains an ongoing need to continually strive for greater equity and equality for all employees in the workplace.

Data also indicates a reluctance for public sector employees to identify themselves as members of priority diversity groups.

Educating employees on the benefits of identifying their diversity, and at the same time creating environments where employees feel confident to identify their diversity, will therefore continue.

Benefits of identification include access to available support, adjustment and targeted programs. Accurate data also enables the organisation to track progress and ensure ongoing focus on improvement.

In recent years a number of landmark programs to support diverse members of the public sector workforce have been created. These include *Working differently: Empowering disability confidence*, the first sector-wide *LGBTIQ+ inclusion strategy 2017–2022* and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander career pathways service.

While many of these programs are in still in their infancy, they are designed to lead to tangible benefits for employees, workplaces and organisations as they mature.

Our employees' perceptions:



61%
would recommend their organisation as a great place to work (**58% in 2015**)



59%
are positively engaged with their organisation (**57% in 2015**)



58%
feel a strong personal attachment to their organisation (**58% in 2015**)



80%
are aware of workplace policies to support employees affected by domestic violence (**75% in 2015**)



67%
are proud to tell others they work for their organisation (**65% in 2015**)

Public sector employees express a growing sense of engagement with their agencies and the work they perform.

This may reflect a purposeful sector-wide focus on:

- building workplaces that employees thrive in, so that the community receives the best possible public services
- tailoring the employee experience to meet the varied needs and expectations of a diverse and multi-generational workforce
- championing the value and importance of those involved in public purpose work, and a strong, professional public service in a Westminster system of government.

Employees appear to respond well to strong leadership on social issues that affect the workforce and the community at large, such as domestic and family violence (DFV).

There has been a significant focus by individual agencies on taking a stand on domestic and family violence by becoming White Ribbon Australia Accredited workplaces. All departments have now achieved accreditation, in line with stated commitments.

While maintaining this effort, similar commitment and leadership will now focus on increasing and promoting diversity and inclusion.





Empowering disability confidence

The sector is committed to increasing the representation of employees with disability in the workforce.

To better understand the current state of disability across the sector and the lived experience of employees who identify as a 'person with disability', the [Working differently: empowering disability confidence project](#) was instigated in 2017–18.

The project aims to shift existing workplace norms and identify workplace principles to ensure inclusion for people who see, hear, move, process information and perform differently.

Disabling disability is critical to driving enhanced employment and workforce participation outcomes for this representative group.

Supporting LGBTIQ+ employees

The sector strives to create workplaces that are actively and genuinely inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities and intersex variations.

To support this goal, the sector developed its first [LGBTIQ+ inclusion strategy 2017–22](#), in consultation with LGBTIQ+ employees, agencies and LGBTIQ+ organisations.

It aims to build workplaces where LGBTIQ+ employees feel safe, valued and supported to bring their whole selves to work.

Implementation of the strategy is supported by the establishment of an LGBTIQ+ employee network, and the Rainbow Liaison Officer program providing employees with a contact point to discuss LGBTIQ+ issues and concerns.

Building career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees

An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander career pathways service has been developed to address the under-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in leadership and decision-making position in the public sector.

The service is focused at the individual and system level, supporting the learning and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and creating working environments that are empowering, enabling and culturally safe.

It was designed in partnership with employees from a number of agencies, and informed by insights from past and present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.



Workplace responses to domestic and family violence

DFV can impact a person's safety, wellbeing, attendance and performance at work.

As Queensland's largest employer, the public sector can make a significant difference to how domestic and family violence is addressed within the workplace, and in turn influence social change within the broader community.

The sector is delivering a comprehensive workplace response to prevent [domestic and family violence](#), support affected employees, and promote a safe, respectful workplace culture.

Our response includes:

- a directive that provides for paid DFV leave for affected employees
- ensuring all agencies have a workforce support policy in place
- providing access to e-learning programs through Australia's CEO Challenge to increase employee understanding of DFV and enable them to support affected employees
- developing a range of supporting tools
- templates and resources for agencies to use when developing their own programs and strategies.

Reinvigorating public purpose work through IPAA Queensland

In 2017, the sector partnered with the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) National to re-establish [IPAA Queensland](#).

As the professional association for public servants and others engaged in public purpose work across all levels of government and sectors, IPAA Queensland provides thought leadership and activities to promote and enhance the professionalism, capability and integrity of public administration.

The re-establishment of IPAA Queensland will provide the opportunity for public service employees to take charge of their own professional development and interact with a growing community of professionals interested in developing and delivering better public services for the community.

