



Australian  
Human Rights  
Commission

Corporate  
Plan  
2016–2017



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**Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs**

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*President  
Australian Human Rights Commission*



# Foreword

This Corporate Plan sets out the strategic goals and priorities of the Australian Human Rights Commission (the Commission). It creates an explicit connection between our purpose, corporate goals, operational environment, key activities and annual performance reporting.

As a Commission, we seek to be innovative and agile. We seek to ensure maximum benefit for the Australian community from the actions that we take.

Respect for human rights and freedoms is the cornerstone of a cohesive and peaceful society in which everyone can make a contribution and feel safe and included.

Ultimately, the purpose of this Corporate Plan is to articulate how we promote an Australian society where human rights are enjoyed by everyone, everywhere, everyday.

This plan comes at a time of change at the Commission with four new commissioners commencing in 2016. This will mean we now have seven Commissioners responsible for discrimination on the grounds of sex, age, disability and race, along with human rights, children's rights and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In 2016 we also celebrate 30 years of the Commission – which came into existence on Human Rights Day, 10 December 1986.

As the accountable authority of the Australian Human Rights Commission, I present the 2016–17 Australian Human Rights Commission corporate plan which covers the periods 2016–17 to 2019–20 as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (PGPA Act) and s 46AA of the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*. It covers the specific activities in the 2016–17 financial year and our strategic outlook through to 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gillian Triggs". The signature is stylized and cursive.

**Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs**  
President  
Australian Human Rights Commission  
July 2016

Part 1:

# Our purpose

The Australian Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is the nations' legislatively mandated national human rights institution.

**Our purpose is to provide independent and impartial services to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and address discrimination.**

We have obligations under the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth) as well as the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth), *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth), *Race Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) and *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth). The Commission also has specific responsibilities under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth).

We operate as a Corporate Commonwealth Entity under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth). Our operations are determined independently of the government through our President and Commissioners.

We work by finding practical solutions to issues of concern, advocating for systemic change and raising awareness across the community. We provide direct services to the Australian community, in particular by assisting people to resolve disputes about discrimination and breaches of human rights.

We also work at the policy level – encouraging government, industry and community groups alike to see fundamental rights and freedoms realised. It involves building the case for change on issues ranging from age discrimination in employment to constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It involves providing a human rights analysis to the courts and parliamentary inquiries, conducting research and fostering collaboration and partnerships.

We develop education resources, focused on early education, primary and secondary schools and the vocational training sector, as well as undertaking training on human rights with governments, business and through international technical cooperation programs.

Our work also involves exchanging ideas with equivalent bodies around the world, while closer to home, we monitor and report on the experiences of those particularly vulnerable to disadvantage.

From addressing complaints of discrimination, to engaging with government on policy issues, the Commission's task is both to apply those rights that are currently recognised in our laws and to aspire for greater recognition and protection of those that are not.



This year is the 30th anniversary of the Australian Human Rights Commission, which was established in 1986

## Nature and scope of the Commission's functions

The Commission has the following functions, as set out in federal laws\*:

1. To inquire into, and attempt to conciliate, complaints of unlawful discrimination.
2. To inquire into, attempt to conciliate and report on complaints of breaches of human rights.
3. To examine laws and proposed laws to determine whether they are consistent with human rights.
4. To promote an understanding and acceptance, and the public discussion, of human rights in Australia.
5. To undertake research and educational programs and other for the purpose of promoting human rights.
6. To report on laws that should be made by the Parliament, or actions that should be taken by the government, on matters relating to human rights.
7. To report to the Attorney-General on actions that should be taken by Australia in order to comply with international human right obligations.
8. To prepare guidelines on avoiding human rights breaches and to promote compliance with federal discrimination laws.
9. To intervene in court matters that involve human rights issues, with the leave of the court.
10. To conduct national inquiries into issues of human rights.
11. To prepare reports annually to the federal Parliament on the status of enjoyment of human rights by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the impact of native title laws on the enjoyment of rights by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
12. To prepare a report annually to the federal Parliament on the status of enjoyment of human rights by children.
13. To promote understanding and acceptance of, and compliance with, the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*, *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)* and *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*.
14. To develop and monitor disability standards under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.
15. To consider applications for exemptions under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*, *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)* and *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*.

\* This is a general overview. See the specific legislation for exact wording, in particular section 11 of the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*. Some functions are set out in other legislation

## Vision, mission and principles

In performing our functions we are guided by the common purpose and values held within our vision, mission and principles statement.

### Vision

- Human rights: everyone, everywhere, everyday.

### Mission

To lead the promotion and protection of human rights and freedoms in Australia by:

- Making human rights part of everyday life and language.
- Empowering all people to understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities.
- Providing an efficient and effective national investigation and dispute resolution service.
- Holding government accountable to international human rights obligations and domestic legal standards.
- Fostering collaborations that inspire action on human rights.

### Principles

The Commission seeks to apply a human rights based approach to its own work. This involves respect for five principles:

- **Participation** – everyone has the right to participate in decisions which affect them.
- **Accountability** – effective monitoring of compliance with human rights standards, as well as effective remedies for human rights breaches.
- **Non-discrimination and equality** – people are treated without discrimination and in pursuit of equality before the law.
- **Empowerment** – all members of the community understand their rights and responsibilities, and this contributes to their ability to make choices about how they participate in the community.
- **Legality** – the law recognises, and is consistent with, rights and freedoms.



## Our leadership team

The work of the Commission is led by a President and Commissioners.

Centre, **President** Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs. Left to right: **Race Discrimination Commissioner** Dr Tim Soutphommasane, **Disability Discrimination Commissioner** Alastair McEwin (commences 1 August), **National Children's Commissioner** Megan Mitchell, **Human Rights Commissioner** Edward Santow (commences 1 August), **Sex Discrimination Commissioner** Kate Jenkins, **Age Discrimination Commissioner** Dr Kay Patterson (commences 1 August). **Executive Director** Padma Raman (not pictured).

*The Hon Susan Ryan AO, Age and Disability Discrimination Commissioner concluded her term on 29 July 2016.*

*Mick Gooda, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner resigned from his term on 1 August 2016.*

## Operating environment

The Commission operates in a challenging social and political environment with multiple factors that can impact on how we achieve our purpose.

Some of the factors affecting the Commission in 2016–17 and in the next four years include:

- Meeting our mandated obligations under tightening fiscal conditions.
- Growing and managing our relationships with key government stakeholders, while also operating in the independent manner that our legislation requires.
- Developing new relationships, internally and externally, as four new commissioners commence their terms.
- Ensuring an appropriate balance between work on discrimination related matters and broader human rights and freedoms.

Key opportunities and challenges over this period include:

- Making a distinct contribution to key government initiatives, including the proposed plebiscite on marriage equality, constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and contributing our independent expertise to Australia's technical cooperation and aid program.
- Promoting social cohesion and community harmony at a time of global upheaval and unprecedented movement of asylum seekers and refugees.
- Achieving full implementation of human rights commitments made by the Government in the Universal Periodic Review process at the United Nations, including by addressing key priorities on business and human rights to keep up with global developments and implementing a national preventive mechanism for places of detention under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.
- Delivering on key strategic partnerships, such as with Universities Australia to undertake prevalence research on the incidence of sexual harassment and abuse in universities and with the Australian Defence Force to promote cultural reform.

## Risk oversight and management

The effective assessment and management of risk is central to the Commission's governance processes and strategic decision making.

Our risk management process complies with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 requirements for commonwealth entities. Each year a process to review and oversee these risks is led by our internal auditors and integrated into our planning processes. Our risk management framework covers three areas:

- *Strategic risks*: including reputation and public image, managing external relationships.
- *Core business risks*: including complaints management, community engagement, media and public awareness, organisational alignment.
- *Administration and corporate service risk assessment*: including financial management, asset management, fraud and corruption prevention, business continuity, regulatory compliance, procurement and contract management, human resources, information and communications technology (ICT), ICT management, WHS management, project management and records management.

The following strategic risk areas were identified through our risk assessment processes:

- Adequacy of funding to enable the Commission to maintain current operating requirements and meet legislative requirements.
- Impact of high levels of media focus on the Commission (both positive and negative) on relationships and reputation.
- Challenges of a large executive team in ensuring effective governance, having adequate resourcing to perform functions and promoting collegiate decision making by the President and Commissioners
- Potential loss of key staff and organisational knowledge in an uncertain funding environment.

The strategic management of our capability in the areas of workforce and information and communications technology in this challenging environment is a key factor in the year ahead.

## Workforce capability

The Commission has an agency wide human resources capability plan which is updated annually. This ensures that, among other things:

- The Commission's staffing policies are designed to support effective decision-making, and are consistent with our strategic priorities and legal obligations.
- We continuously improve our human resources practices to support the whole of employment experience of an employee.
- We manage change effectively.
- We encourage innovation, including through targeted learning and development programs that meet the identified needs of staff and the ongoing needs of the Commission.

In the coming year we anticipate continuing impact from public sector spending cuts and the need to ensure optimal management structures consistent with Australian Public Service Commission guidance. This is likely to impact on our staffing profile and recruitment processes.

To address this our human resources team will continue to monitor the external and internal landscape affecting personnel and workplace change. A key focus will be to manage the impact of staff reductions through a skills building strategy to ensure our workforce remains both capable and engaged.

## Information and Communications technology capability

Being able to communicate and share information externally and internally is essential to our stakeholder and relationship management. Information and communications technology plays an important part in facilitating this. The Commission's ICT capability plan, updated annually, ensures that the Commission maintains its systems and service standards, encourages innovation and efficient ICT, and identifies opportunities for collaboration with other agencies. In 2016–17, the major focus of our ICT development will relate to the continued transition of our records management to electronic platforms and improving our audio-visual communication.

This includes implementing cost effective options for online communication (in lieu of travel) through video conferencing technology, as well as to upgrade our internal systems for document management, and building servers that meet our business needs.

The Commission will enter a new phase of technical capability as a participant in a pilot led by the Department of Finance to transition and evaluate entities to working in a cloud based business environment.

## Strategic goals, objectives and priorities

There is no simple way to solve complex human rights issues. From the challenges that face a person with a disability seeking to live independently, to ensuring that Australia's immigration detention policies meet our human rights obligations and treat people with dignity, the promotion of human rights must address issues for individuals as well as the need for broader, systemic change.

The Commission plans to fulfil our mandate and carry out our purpose by working towards the four strategic goals and objectives set out in this plan.

This Corporate Plan is the road map that guides the Commission's work for the 2016–17 period within the four-year horizon of 2016–20. The dashboard over the next few pages outlines our goals, objectives and priorities.

The **goals** reflect our aspirations as an organisation. They are ambitious and require sustained action over time. They are set for the next four-year period.

The **objectives** provide a framework that enables us to plan our work and to monitor progress in our mandate to achieve improved respect and protection of human rights in Australia.

The three **priorities** provide a thematic focus that cuts across all areas of our work – from the advocacy of our commissioners, to our policy and research program, to the work of our Investigation and Conciliation Service.



Vision  
Human rights: everyone, everywhere, everyday

Mission

Purpose

As Australia's national human rights institution, our purpose is to provide independent and impartial services to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and address discrimination.

Principles

Goal 1:

**Leadership**

We are respected for our independent and influential promotion of the full implementation of human rights and freedoms in Australia and internationally.

Goal 2:

**Rights and freedoms are protected**

Human rights and freedoms are respected in Australian law, policy and practice, and are understood by the Australian community.

Goal 3:

**Access to effective information and dispute resolution services**

We provide efficient and effective services to address questions and disputes about human rights and discrimination.

Goal 4:

**Organisational excellence**

We are a collaborative, innovative and flexible workplace that fosters excellence and expertise in our staff and in our work.

Priorities

Human rights education and promotion • Engaging with business on human rights • Freedom from violence, harassment and bullying

Objectives

Annual work plan

## Strategic Goals 2016–2020

### Goal 1: Leadership

**We are respected for our independent and influential promotion of the full implementation of human rights and freedoms in Australia and internationally.**

Human rights issues are on the national agenda and are part of public debate, resulting in:

- the exchange of ideas about ways to better protect rights and freedoms, informed by timely and accessible information through our digital presence and Commissioners
- systemic responses being adopted to prevent future rights violations
- collaboration between organisations and across sectors to advance the enjoyment of rights and freedoms
- our expertise being sought to contribute to technical cooperation and capacity building regionally and internationally.

As Australia's national human rights institution, we are known for undertaking our role impartially and for our expertise and evidence-based research.

We emphasise how human rights apply to everyday life, with a particular emphasis on those who are marginalised in our society.

### Goal 2: Rights and freedoms are protected

**Human rights and freedoms are respected in Australian law, policy and practice, and are understood by the Australian community.**

Government is held to account for its performance on human rights, and all sectors of society take action to promote and protect rights and freedoms. This is achieved through:

- timely analysis of how law, policy and practice can better respect and protect rights and freedoms, and positive action being taken as a result
- applying our expertise in legal proceedings, and through the investigation and reporting of breaches of human rights to Parliament
- education and awareness raising activities that build understanding and respect for rights and freedoms in our community
- increased awareness of everyone's responsibility to respect the rights of others.

## Objectives

- 1.1 Effective reach in the general community and among identified target audiences with relevant and useful information about human rights, including discrimination.
- 1.2 Public awareness and debate about human rights issues increases through our communications and public presence.
- 1.3 Constructive relationships are developed and maintained with parliament, government, community, business and other stakeholders.
- 1.4 Increased capacity to apply human rights through our education and technical cooperation activities.
- 1.5 Impact through our contributions to United Nations processes in our capacity as a national human rights institution.

- 2.1 Our research, advocacy and recommendations are cited or acted upon by parliament, governments, the courts, businesses and in the community.
- 2.2 Effective education, training and information resources increase human rights knowledge and skills and contribute to changes in attitudes and behaviours.
- 2.3 The human rights impact of violence, harassment and bullying is increasingly understood and contributes to preventive measures being taken that improve safety.
- 2.4 Effective support for business contributes to more inclusive and productive workplaces, and provides redress for workplace discrimination.
- 2.5 Increased capacity to take action by those vulnerable to, experiencing or witnessing human rights breaches and other discrimination.

## Priorities

### Human rights education and promotion

We build awareness of rights and freedoms across the community and encourage a culture of respect and responsibility that values dignity.

### Goal 3: Access to effective information and dispute resolution services

We provide efficient and effective services to address questions and disputes about human rights and discrimination.

We assist individuals, businesses, organisations and governments to understand rights and responsibilities and take action to prevent and resolve disputes about human rights and discrimination.

This is achieved through:

- provision of an accessible National Information Service
- provision of a best practice Investigation and Conciliation Service that enables disputes to be resolved without recourse to litigation, increases understanding of rights and responsibilities, and enables systemic outcomes.

### Goal 4: Organisational excellence

We are a collaborative, innovative and flexible workplace that fosters excellence and expertise in our staff and in our work.

We lead by example, and are transparent and accountable in how we operate, including by:

- operating in accordance with the human rights standards that we expect of others and the APS values and Code of Conduct
- having a diverse and respectful workplace that reflects the diversity of the Australian community
- focusing on continuous improvement through rigorous evaluation that demonstrates the impact of our work
- delivering an efficient corporate services area that is competitive in a shared service provision environment and which manages safety, risk and supports staff.

Our Commissioners work in a collegiate manner that reflects the universality and indivisibility of human rights.

3.1 Our National Information Service is recognised as a leading source of information about federal human rights and discrimination law and the associated complaint process.

3.2 Disputes relating to breaches of human rights and discrimination are effectively and efficiently resolved.

3.3 Participation in the investigation and conciliation process results in increased understanding of rights and responsibilities in the law.

3.4 The terms on which disputes are resolved include systemic outcomes that accord with the objectives of the law.

4.1 Effective governance is maintained by our Executive and provides strategic leadership for the organisation.

4.2 Corporate services are provided to internal and external clients efficiently and flexibly, while meeting professional standards and legislative requirements and providing effective controls.

4.3 Staff feel engaged and valued with a work life balance, professional development and job satisfaction.

4.4 A diverse and safe workplace is maintained with high performing staff.

4.5 Effective systems to monitor and evaluate our work are implemented and are used to improve the quality and impact of our work.

4.6 Internal processes effectively promote communication and coordination and enhance the quality of our work.

### Engaging with business on human rights

We encourage innovation in how business respects, protects and promotes human rights, and provide comprehensive and effective support to prevent workplace discrimination and assist in the resolution of disputes.

### Freedom from violence, harassment and bullying

We promote safety by ensuring that human rights protections are in place, by encouraging bystander action and by resolving related disputes.

Part 2:

# Our performance

## Operationalising our purpose and goals

Our work requires sustained and collaborative efforts as our goals are long term and our activities to deliver them are complex, with outcomes delivered through partnerships, advocacy and capacity building.

Each year we develop an operational work plan based on an assessment of our environment and capabilities. During the year we monitor our progress and measure our performance in meeting our objectives.

This section provides a summary of our key initiatives for 2016–17 and the contribution they will make to our organisational objectives.



*RightsTalk* at Sydney Town Hall with David Morrison, 2016 Australian of the Year; Elizabeth Broderick, NSW Australian of the Year; Julian McMahon, Victorian Australian of the Year; and Nic Marchesi, Young Australian of the Year

## Goal 1: Leadership

As Australia's national human rights institution, we are respected for our independent and influential promotion of the full implementation of human rights and freedoms in Australia and internationally.

### Objectives

We use our profile and public presence to reach communities and increase public awareness and debate about human rights issues. Our President and Commissioners play a key leadership role in promoting debate about human rights, facilitating cooperation and partnerships to implement human rights and in leading our research to provide an evidence base for our advocacy.

We encourage the exchange of ideas about ways to better protect rights and freedoms. We partner with governments, service providers and others, collaborating across sectors to advance the enjoyment of human rights.

We build constructive relationships with a broad range of stakeholders and have an impact through our contributions to United Nations processes in our capacity as a national human rights institution.

We use our expertise to increase the capacity of stakeholders to apply human rights through our education and technical cooperation activities.

### To progress these objectives in 2016–17, we will:

- Facilitate and support the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in national discussions about constitutional recognition as well as for Indigenous health equality by running the Secretariat for the Close the Gap campaign and National Health Leadership Forum.
- Facilitate and support a national dialogue on Indigenous Property Rights with Indigenous land holders, claimants and Traditional Owners, the business sector and government to identify options for reform to enable economic development and build sector capacity.
- Work collaboratively with the business sector and employer groups to promote the further realisation of human rights in Australia. This includes partnering with Government and civil society in the development of a National Action Plan on Business and Human rights, and with business organisations including the Australian Global Compact Network to identify best practice in supply chain management and procurement.



President Gillian Triggs

- Work collaboratively with the Australian Defence Force in its goal to embed cultural reform around diversity within the forces. This includes research with the Royal Australian Navy to explore the cultural and/or systemic barriers that impede women and members from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds from becoming Marine Technicians – their largest employment category.
- Conduct technical cooperation activities on human rights in China and Laos in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and partner agencies in those countries.
- Engage with the Government on implementation of recommendations and commitments emanating from the United Nations Universal Periodic Review process, including by participating in newly established coordination and monitoring mechanisms.
- Collaborate with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) stakeholders to build on the findings of the Resilient Individuals report (2015) including promoting LGBTI inclusion in sport and working with media and community stakeholders to develop a web-based resource and guidelines about how to respectfully report about LGBTI people and issues.
- Convene the annual Human Rights Awards which, for 28 years, has celebrated the extraordinary achievements of individuals, organisations and businesses in contributing to human rights in Australia.

## Actions under this goal to promote our thematic priorities



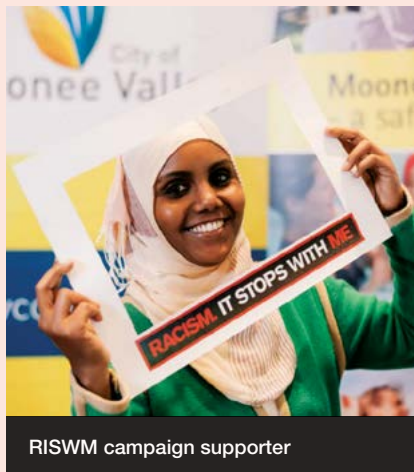
Pilot testing interactive school resources

### Human rights education and promotion

This year we will create a series of new education resources based on the theme of *The Story of our Rights and Freedoms*. This follows an in depth evaluation of our education resources in 2015–16. Resources for students and teachers will be interactive, engaging and linked to teaching requirements. Our objective is to build respect for human rights within the school community.

*‘An essential area of education dedicated to developing student’s understanding of their rights and responsibilities as global citizens...I hope that it empowers my students to be independent thinkers who are the designers of their own future and creators of positive social change’.*

Q. What is human rights education?  
2016 teacher survey (n=1,005)



RISWM campaign supporter

### Freedom from violence, harassment and bullying

We will continue to lead the work of the *National Anti-Racism Strategy* which promotes an understanding of racism and how it can be prevented. This year the focus will be on teacher education, the media and sport.

We will also continue to build the *Racism. It Stops with Me* (RISW) campaign membership and support organisations to take action against racism. Evaluation to date shows that the strategy and campaign continue to make a difference – raising awareness, empowering action, starting conversations and sending a positive message.

*‘The outward, public stance displayed to our communities is very powerful...we have engaged thousands of local people in conversations about the campaign through participative activities – we think every conversation helps’.*

2015 RISWM supporter survey



Keynote speaker John Morrison, 2015 Australian Dialogue on Business and Human Rights

### Engaging with business on human rights

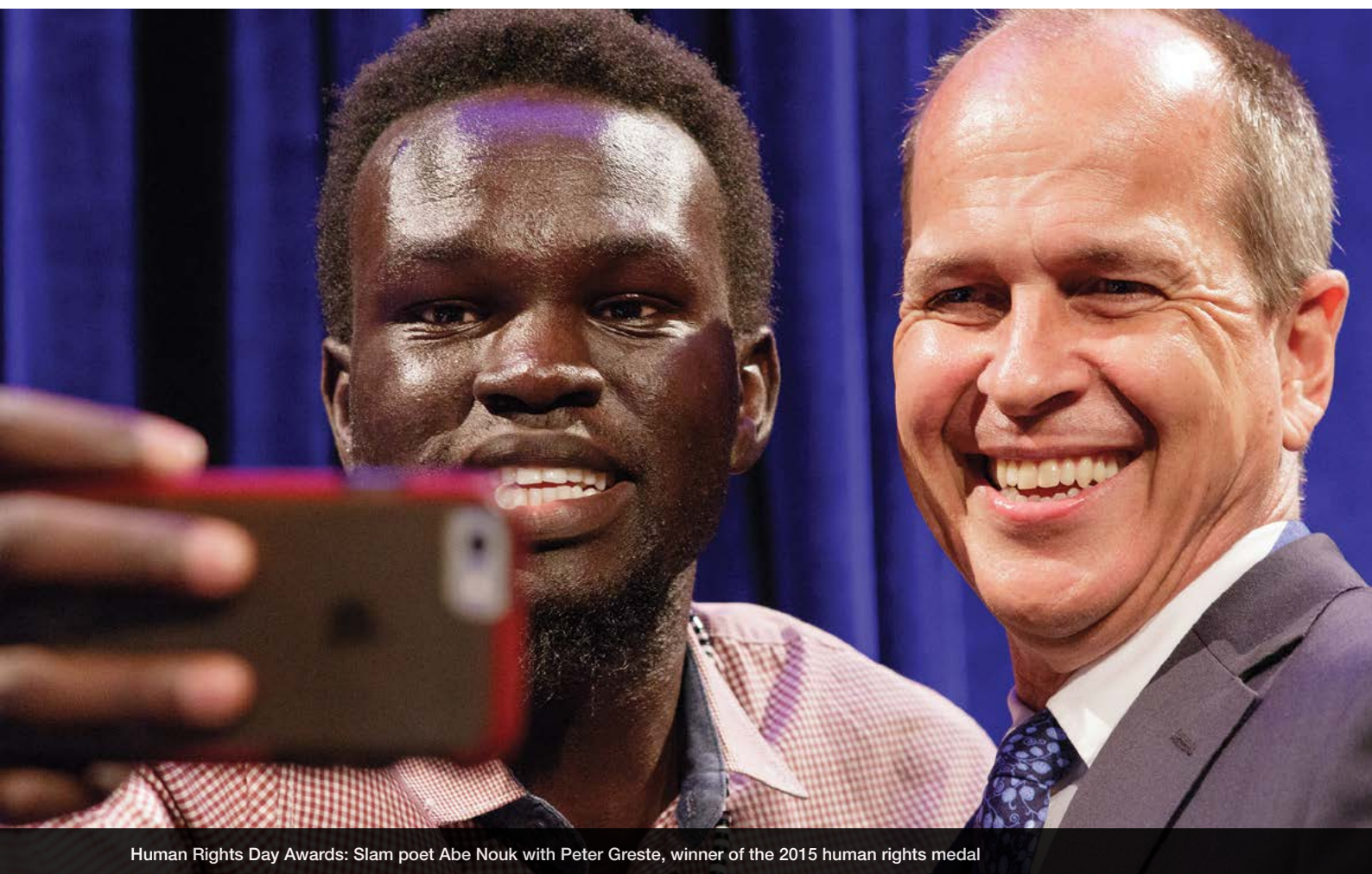
This year we will hold the third Business Dialogue initiative in partnership with the Global Compact Network Australia. The dialogue contributes to increased capacity among businesses stakeholders by exploring current practices, challenges and opportunities based on UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Last year 100% of respondents to our participant survey said they would recommend colleagues or organisations in their business networks to attend the Dialogue in 2016.

*‘I was impressed by the trust in the room. I felt like business felt it was a safe space to talk relatively freely about issues they face and to be open about challenges’.*

2015 Business Dialogue survey respondent



Commissioner Tim Soutphommasane; Blueprint for cultural diversity and inclusive leadership; Commissioner Megan Mitchell; Commissioner Mitchell with young *Crinkling News* journalist



Human Rights Day Awards: Slam poet Abe Nouk with Peter Greste, winner of the 2015 human rights medal



Marine Technician Submariner. Photo copyright Royal Australian Navy; Commissioner Kate Jenkins



Commission photo competition entry. Photo copyright Sean Spencer



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## Goal 2: Rights and freedoms are protected

Our activities encourage all sectors of society to take action to promote and protect rights and freedoms. To do this we:

- Undertake timely research and analysis of how law, policy and practice can better respect and protect rights and freedoms and use this evidence to increase understanding of the issues and encourage positive action to be taken as a result.
- Apply our expertise in legal proceedings, and through the investigation and reporting of breaches of human rights to Parliament.
- Develop and deliver education and awareness raising activities that build understanding and respect for rights and freedoms in our community.

### Objectives

We build awareness and understanding of rights and freedoms among decision makers and stakeholders.

We improve the protection of human rights through the uptake and use of our research, advocacy positions and recommendations by parliament, governments, the courts, business and the community.

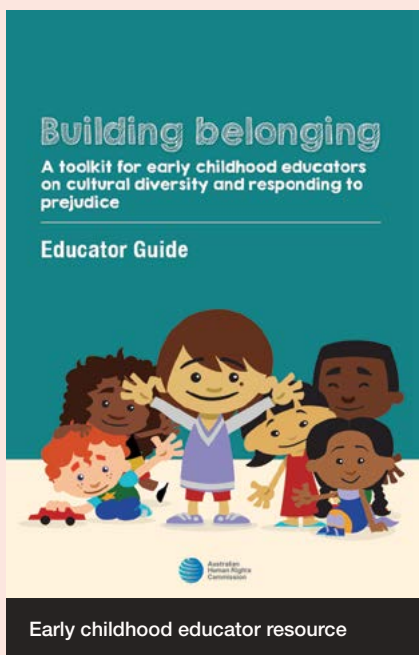
Our human rights education objectives include increasing the understanding and skills of our target audiences and laying the foundations for positive attitude and behaviour change among users of our resources and participants in our training.

### To progress these objectives in 2016–17, we will:

- Report on the status of the enjoyment of rights of Indigenous peoples (the annual *Social Justice and Native Title Report*) and children (the annual *Children's Rights Report*).
- Work with the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights and government departments to analyse new legislation and identify potential breaches of human rights.
- Promote the rights and freedoms of asylum seekers and refugees through our monitoring and advocacy on immigration issues.
- Assist the courts in discrimination and human rights cases through our intervention and amicus curiae ('friend of the court') roles.
- Release research on alternatives to third country processing and undertake monitoring visits to immigration detention facilities.
- Develop and launch a blueprint for cultural diversity and inclusive leadership in partnership with the University of Sydney Business School, Westpac, PwC Australia and Telstra.
- Build on the 2015 *Resilient Individuals* report on sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex issues to promote the rights of intersex people with a project to increase understanding of the human rights issues around medical interventions on intersex people and to drive policy and practice change in this area.



## Actions under this goal to promote our thematic priorities



### Human rights education and training

This year we will launch our resource: *Building belonging: A toolkit for early childhood educators on cultural diversity and responding to prejudice* and continue and expand our public service training program targeting federal, state and local government to increase the understanding and application of human rights in the public sector.

*'The course really made me think about how I could apply the training to my work and the tools were very helpful in this regard'.*

2015 Survey respondent,  
NSW Government Disability Rights  
Training Program

### Freedom from violence, harassment and bullying

We will contribute to an increased understanding of the prevalence and impacts of sexual harassment and abuse and in turn encourage systemic change with two groundbreaking national surveys:

- Working with Universities  
Australia and 39 universities we will conduct the first *National survey on sexual assault and harassment in university settings*. The survey will help determine the prevalence of harassment and assault, students' knowledge of existing services to support them on campus as well as identify how universities' responses and systems may be improved.
- Our fourth national prevalence survey on sexual harassment in the workplace.



Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool: Online 'how to' guide to workplace cultural diversity

### Engaging with business on human rights

We will continue to expand our business relationships and resources on our information hub for employers. This platform provides a targeted hub for employers seeking resources to help prevent discrimination, respect human rights and promote diversity in their workplace.



Commissioner Kate Jenkins, in conversation with University Women's Officers and Eva Cox



## Actions under this goal to promote our thematic priorities

### Human rights education and promotion

Through our National Information and Investigation and Conciliation Services, we will continue to build awareness of rights and responsibilities under federal human rights and anti-discrimination law and encourage action that accords with the objectives of the law.

In 2015–16 we provided assistance to over 16,000 people and organisations who contacted our National Information Service. In 2015–16 we also conducted some 1308 conciliations and successfully resolved 76% of these complaints. In relation to these conciliated complaints, 72% of those who completed our feedback survey indicated that involvement in the complaint process has assisted them to better understand rights and responsibilities in the law.

### Freedom from violence, harassment and bullying

We will continue to provide an effective Investigation and Conciliation Service in relation to complaints about harassment and bullying, as covered under federal human rights and anti-discrimination law. Feedback from those involved in the Commission's complaint process continues to be very positive. For example, in 2015–16, 94% of those who completed our feedback survey reported they were satisfied with the service provided and 73% rated the service as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

### Engaging with business on human rights

We will continue to assist businesses, both large and small, understand the law and resolve complaints about discrimination and breaches of human rights. The Commission continues to receive positive feedback about its service from respondents to complaints, including business. For example:

*'I found the officers approach to the complaint and process extremely fair and reasonable without bias. She took the time to understand the challenges we face within the business and how they related to this specific complaint. She also proactively made suggestions on how we could work towards a resolution. Overall, I found the officer's approach definitely took a potentially stressful and onerous process and made it an approach that was timely and concise'.*

Respondent feedback, 2015–16 Service Satisfaction Survey

Auslan: Information about making a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission



## Goal 4: Organisational excellence

To achieve our goals and purpose, we work collaboratively, with innovation, and to the highest standard of excellence. This Corporate Plan provides a basis for us to measure our impact over time and to assess whether we are achieving our goals.

As a micro-agency, the strategic management of our capability in the areas of financial services, workforce and information and communications technology is different from that of larger government agencies and departments. With diminishing resources and no economy of scale factor, our agility and innovation in these areas relies on skilled personnel, cross-agency information sharing and streamlined or shared services.

### Objectives

Our objectives are to lead by example and to practice and inspire sound corporate social responsibility, operate in accordance with the human rights standards that we expect of others and to be transparent and accountable.

### To progress these objectives in 2016–17, we will:

- Work in a collaborative way, that recognises the universal and indivisible nature of human rights.
- Focus our work so that it directly implements the goals, objectives and priorities of this Corporate Plan.
- Evaluate our performance to ensure transparent and auditable accountability of our financial reporting and administrative conduct.
- Offer a broad range of flexible working options to our staff and develop staff skills for professional growth within the Commission and beyond.
- Maintain a workplace that is safe, respectful and reflects the diversity of the Australian community.
- Use our information and communications technology to enhance our stakeholder and relationship management and to more effectively and efficiently communicate and share information externally and internally.
- Monitor and evaluate our work to ensure that this makes a positive and tangible difference, and meets our obligations under the Enhanced Commonwealth Performance Framework and PGPA Act.



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## A workplace that is safe, respectful and reflects the diversity of the Australian community.

Our diverse work force currently exceeds the APS targets for the employment of people from a non-English speaking background, people with a disability and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We actively promote staff wellbeing, health and safety, for example, each year we deliver a health and well-being program based on staff identified interest areas such as dementia awareness, fitness and nutrition and resilience.

In the 2016 Australian Public Service survey, Commission staff feedback\* included:

*100% felt that the people in their work group behave in an accepting manner towards people from diverse backgrounds,*

*99% felt the Commission actively encourages ethical behaviour by employees,*

*91% felt that the Commission genuinely cares about employees being healthy and safe at work,*

*88% are satisfied with their access and use of flexible working arrangements, and*

*93% felt a strong personal attachment to the Commission.*

\*Commission response rate 72%



International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia staff event



Mick Gooda, former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner & Co-Chair of Close the Gap Campaign. At the NCTGD event at Redfern Community Centre. Photo copyright Jon Love/Oxfam

## Evaluating our performance

We conduct our activities within a learning and improvement framework, so we can understand what and how we are contributing towards our purpose. We implement a monitoring and evaluation framework that is aligned with our Corporate Plan. It helps us to answer the questions:

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- What difference did we make?
- Who benefits and why?

Our evaluation framework also assists us to:

- Assess implementation methods and process.
- Guide program development.
- Assist decision making.
- Add to existing knowledge and promote best practice.
- Identify gaps in knowledge and research.
- Meet our annual reporting obligations to government under the PGPA Act.

Assessing the impact of our work is a complex task, as our efforts are often linked to longer term goals, multiple activities, collaborative approaches and result in incremental change. This means it is not always possible to directly attribute outcomes solely or predominately to our efforts.

### 2016–17 principal evaluations

We have intentionally built the evaluation capacity of our staff and developed systems to improve the monitoring and evaluation of our programs. We prioritise externally led evaluations and collaboration with external evaluation experts for key projects. With internally led evaluations, we use designs that increase the validity and independence of our findings. Within this approach the evaluations we undertake are proportional to our resources and capability.

The following provides a snapshot of key evaluations for the coming year and over the four-year outlook of this plan.

Goal 1		Goal 2	
Activity	Evaluation snapshot	Activity	Evaluation snapshot
<b>Close the Gap Campaign</b>	<p>Every 5 years to 2030 (2006–2011 completed).</p> <p>Comprehensive, external evaluation to gather quantitative/qualitative data and assess the outcomes, influence, engagement and improvements at this stage of the 25-year campaign.</p>	<b>School education resources program</b>	<p>2015–16 – comprehensive, external developmental evaluation captured quantitative/qualitative data to inform resource improvement.</p> <p>2016–17 – resources developed using evaluation findings.</p> <p>2017–18 – moderate, internally led impact evaluation (with teachers).</p>
<b>China-Australia Human Rights Technical Cooperation Program</b>	<p>Annual plus 4-yearly review using a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework.</p> <p>Annual collaboration with external evaluators and overseas partners gathers quantitative/qualitative data using targeted interviews, cases studies, impact tracking studies, and significant change stories to assesses the relevance, effectiveness, program outcomes and improvements.</p>	<b>Public Sector Training</b>	Ongoing, internally led pre-post participant surveys assess change in participants: knowledge, skills, ability to apply human rights in their work.
<b>National Anti-Racism Strategy</b>	<p>Every 3 years to 2018 (2012–2015 completed)</p> <p>Collaboration with external evaluator to review the strategy with a focus on key component evaluations including the RISWM campaign.</p>	<b>Statutory reports</b>	<p>For the <i>2016 Children’s Rights Report</i>, and <i>2016 Social Justice and Native Title Report</i>.</p> <p>Annual accountability review of the actions taken and progress against report recommendations, with media and web analytics to assess recognition and public engagement with the report.</p>
<b>RISWM Campaign</b>	Annual, internally led, online supporter survey and analysis of web analytics assesses supporter organisation satisfaction, improvements, impact of the Campaign on supporter capacity, reach and influence on broader audiences.	<b>Immigration and Detention and Asylum Seeker Policy Program</b>	Internally-led design using stakeholder surveys and key informant interviews to assess whether reports have increased understanding of the issues among target audiences and strengthened capacity of stakeholders to advocate with decision-makers.
<b>Other activities</b>	We also conduct internally-led post event participant surveys for major events to assess satisfaction levels and identify future improvements. For example: annual Australian Business Dialogue; Human Rights Awards.		



Goal 3	
Activity	Evaluation snapshot
<b>National Information Service</b>	Statistics regarding contacts with the National Information Service and web analytics in relation to use of online information are collected and monitored.
<b>Investigation and Conciliation Service</b>	<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the service have been developed with reference to best practice standards for complaint processes and a 'Charter of Service'.</p> <p>Statistical data is used to measure performance against KPI targets relating to timeliness of process and complaint outcomes.</p> <p>A Service Satisfaction Survey is used to assess performance in relation to qualitative data such as user perceptions of accessibility, fairness and overall service satisfaction and to obtain data on perceived increased understanding of rights and responsibilities in the law.</p> <p>Statistical data on conciliation agreements is used to assess the level of systemic outcomes from the complaint process.</p>

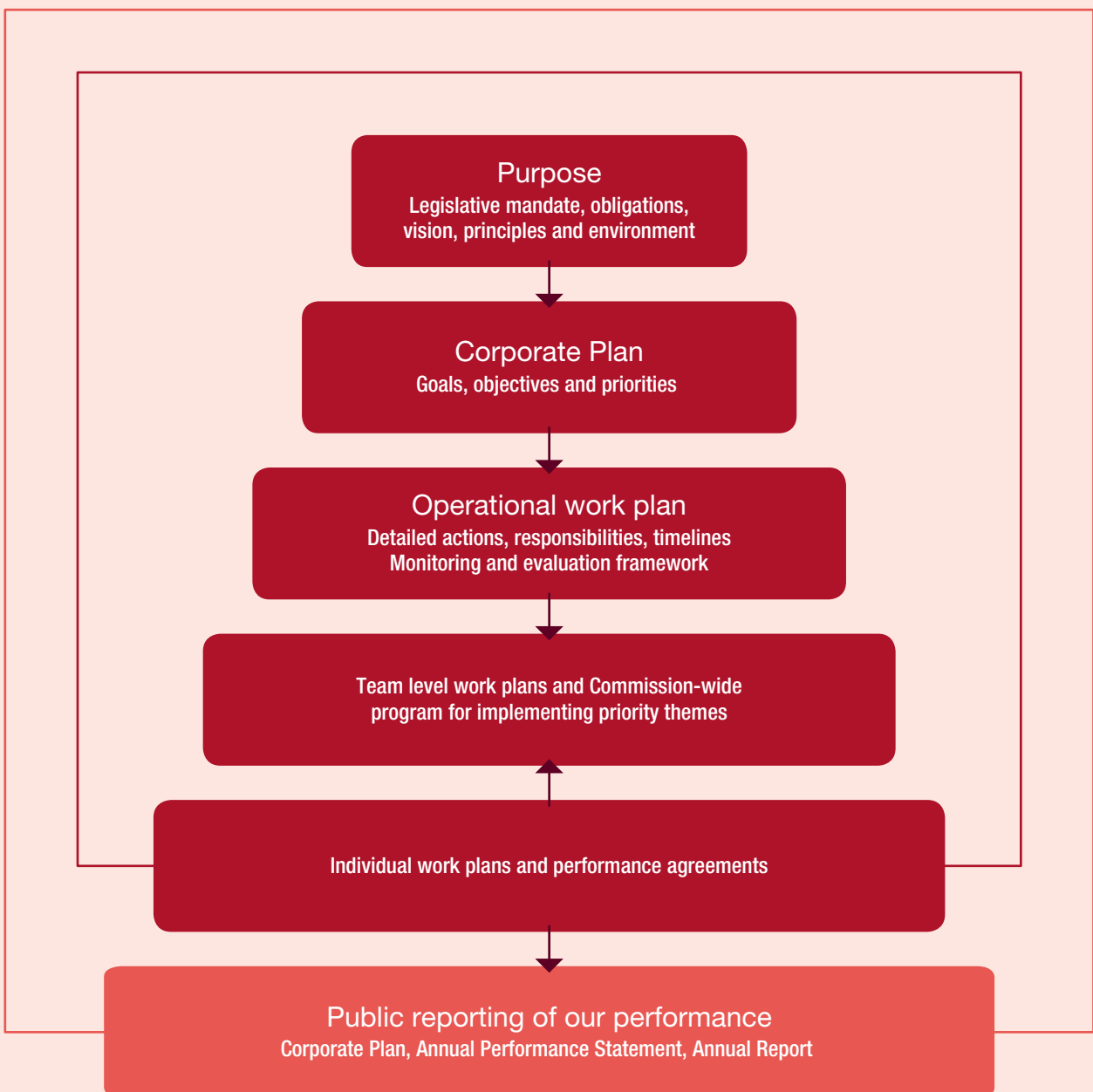
Goal 4	
Activity	Evaluation snapshot
<b>Corporate services (Financial, Human resources, Information and Communications Technology)</b>	External evaluation of our activities under goal 4 are an ongoing part of APS financial, human resources and ICT reporting systems. They ensure that our internal processes and systems meet best practice Commonwealth guidelines and requirements.
<b>Organisational excellence, culture and internal working</b>	<p>Other external evaluations that contribute to our learning and development in this area include the state of the Australian Public Service annual staff survey and agency report and annual Digital Continuity 2020 Policy agency survey and report.</p> <p>Other evaluations include surveys to monitor workplace diversity, workplace health and safety knowledge and awareness, training needs and evaluation capability and culture.</p>

Part 3:

# Integrating our purpose and goals into our day to day work

The diagram opposite illustrates how our operational planning, as well as our monitoring and evaluation activities are aligned to deliver our purpose. Our annual workplan enables us to review and report each year on our progress in meeting our organisational objectives and over time, to assess what impact we are making through these, in achieving our mandate and goals.

## Integrating our purpose and goals with our activities



## Integration matrix

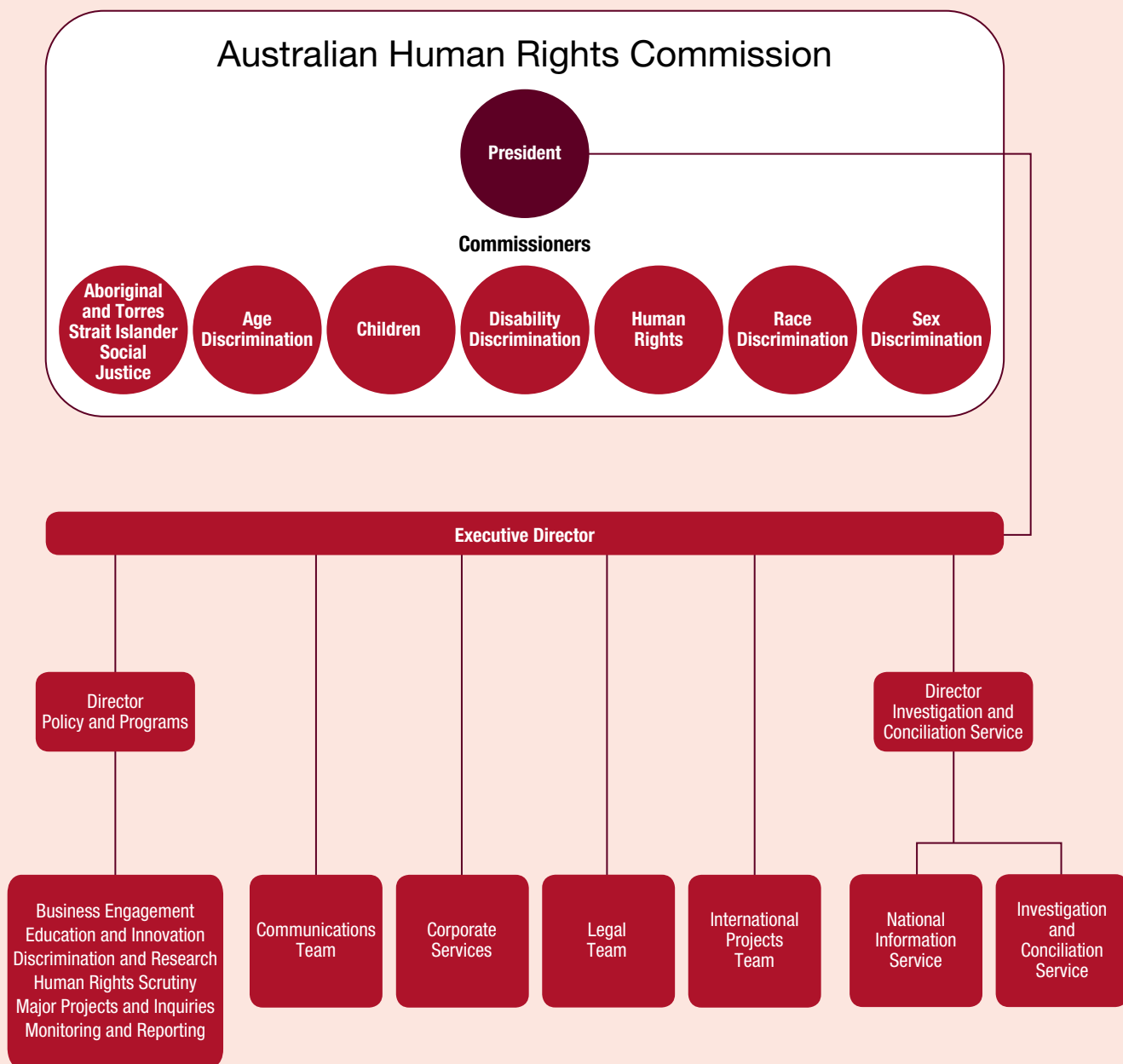
The integration matrix below identifies the main systems that we have put in to place to track how we achieve our strategic goals over the next four years.

Action	Outcome	Responsibility
A Commission-wide work plan is developed annually to guide our work activities.	<p>A work plan for the entire Commission is approved by the Commission Executive at the beginning of each financial year.</p> <p>It identifies key priorities, milestones and peak workload periods across the Commission for the year.</p> <p>All projects and activities are linked to the goals, priorities and objectives in this Corporate Plan.</p>	All staff, led by team managers and coordinated by the Director – Policy and Programs.
Team work plans are designed to advance our strategic goals, priorities and objectives.	<p>Team activities are agreed by the Commission on an annual basis following a planning and peer review process that identifies the best projects to advance the key objectives of our Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Each team draws on their evaluation and evidence to identify how the activities for the coming year can deliver the main outcomes identified in the Corporate Plan.</p>	All staff, led by team managers.
Performance management scheme integrates the Corporate Plan.	<p>All staff have a performance agreement that indicates their role in conducting activities and projects.</p> <p>These projects and activities have a 'line of sight' to the strategic goals, priorities and objectives.</p>	<p>Commission managers.</p> <p>All staff are responsible for meeting performance measures.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation framework ensures project evaluations are congruent with the Corporate Plan and meet our reporting requirements under the PGPA Act.	<p>All projects and activities incorporate a monitoring and evaluation component designed to assess impact against our strategic objectives, priorities and goals.</p> <p>We document our progress towards achieving our strategic objectives and goals.</p>	<p>Executive Director; Director – Policy and Programs; Director – Investigation and Conciliation Service; and team Managers.</p> <p>All staff are responsible for conducting relevant monitoring and evaluation activities.</p>
Annual report and web-based tools report on progress in achieving strategic goals and outcomes of evaluations.	<p>Our Annual Report includes an Annual Performance Statement on progress in achieving our strategic goals, as well as an Evaluation Outcomes Report. We publish our annual workplan online, as well as other materials required to meet our performance and reporting obligations under the PGPA Act.</p>	<p>Executive Director; Director – Policy and Programs; and Director – Investigation and Conciliation Service to coordinate with team managers.</p>
Learning and development framework supports capacity of staff to implement the Corporate Plan.	<p>Learning and development framework identifies staff capacity needed to achieve strategic goals.</p> <p>Framework includes opportunities to learn from internal and external expertise.</p> <p>Staff participate in training and feedback reflects strong professional and personal value.</p>	<p>Human Resources coordinate in consultation with Director – Policy and Programs; Director – Investigation and Conciliation Service; and team managers.</p> <p>All staff to participate in delivery of and attendance in learning opportunities.</p>



Our staff

## Our organisational structure



## Further Information

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