



Australian
Human Rights
Commission

Corporate Plan 2015–2016



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Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs

*President
Australian Human Rights Commission*



Foreword

This Corporate Plan sets out the strategic direction and priorities of the Australian Human Rights Commission. It creates an explicit connection between the public reporting of our corporate goals, our 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.

To achieve this, we will focus our work over the coming years on the following priority areas:

- *Human rights education and promotion* – to build awareness of rights and freedoms in the community
- *Engaging with business on human rights* – to encourage innovation in promoting human rights, to provide support to prevent workplace discrimination and to assist in resolving disputes
- *Ensuring freedom from violence, harassment and bullying* – by promoting human rights safeguards.

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

I present this plan for the period 2015–2019 as the accountable authority of the Australian Human Rights Commission, as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (PGPA Act).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gillian Triggs". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs
President
Australian Human Rights Commission
July 2015

Part 1:

Strategic direction

Our purpose

The Australian Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is Australia's national human rights institution.

We operate under the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth) as well as federal laws that seek to ensure freedom from discrimination on the basis of age, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, intersex status and gender identity. 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.

Our job is to work towards an Australia in which human rights are respected, protected and promoted, 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. Much of our work is also 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 contributing to partnerships.

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.

Our vision is for an Australia where human rights are enjoyed by **everyone, everywhere, everyday.**

Our vision, mission and principles

In delivering our work 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.

Left to right: **Tim Wilson** Human Rights Commissioner, **Padma Raman** Executive Director, **Mick Gooda** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, **The Hon Susan Ryan AO** Age and Disability Discrimination Commissioner, **Emeritus Professor Gillian Triggs** President, **Elizabeth Broderick** Sex Discrimination Commissioner, **Megan Mitchell** National Children's Commissioner, **Dr Tim Soutphommasane** Race Discrimination Commissioner



RightsTalk, 2015 Australians of the Year: Inspiring change in human rights. MC Annabel Crabb (centre) in conversation with Drisana Levitzke-Gray, Jackie French, Juliette Wright and Rosie Batty

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.

This Corporate Plan is the road map that guides the Commission’s work for the 2015–19 period. 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

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 2015–2019

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 financial 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.

Environmental statement

There are multiple internal and external factors that impact on the environment in which we operate.

Key operational factors over the next four years include:

- Meeting our legislative obligations under increasingly tight fiscal conditions
- Growing and managing our relationships with key government stakeholders, while also operating in the independent manner that our legislation mandates
- Adapting our work to support new Commissioners (as the terms of existing Commissioners expire) as well as new functions (in relation to the proposed integration of the privacy commissioner)
- Ensuring an appropriate balance between work on discrimination related matters and broader human rights and freedoms
- Adapting our internal operations to meet new PGPA Act requirements as a corporate entity.

Key opportunities and challenges over this period include:

- Increasing our external funding and partnerships
- Making a distinct contribution to key government initiatives, such as constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultural reform within the Australian Defence Force
- Leveraging our research base and expertise to increase our educational resources and capacity.

The effective assessment and management of risk is central to the Commission's governance processes and strategic decision making and is set out later in this document. The following key strategic risk areas were identified through our risk management processes for 2015–16:

- 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 (externally set by legislation) both in terms of effective governance, resourcing and collegiate decision making by President and Commissioners on policies and strategy
- Potential loss of key staff and organisational knowledge in an uncertain funding environment.

The Commission seeks to proactively manage our workforce planning to ensure we have the capability and skills to implement our mandate.



Close the Gap: Andrew Illin-Lovett and Willun Thorpe, both seven years, at Thornbury Primary School. Photo courtesy of Bonnie Savage/OxfamAUS

Part 2:

Our performance

Operationalising our strategic directions

The Commission has core statutory responsibilities that it will undertake over the next four years – including the investigation and conciliation of complaints, preparation of Social Justice, Native Title and National Children’s reports, and functions relating to promoting awareness of human rights.

The Commission’s work to implement these and other statutory responsibilities, is guided by the goals and priorities presented in this plan and determined on an annual basis through our regular planning processes.

We develop an annual work plan based on an assessment of our operating environment. During the year we monitor our progress and measure our performance in meeting our objectives. For 2015–16, our work plan aims to deliver the following key initiatives and outcomes.



Magna Carta: The Story of Our Freedom online interactive school resource

Priority: Human rights education and promotion

We work to build awareness of rights and freedoms across the community, encouraging a culture of respect and responsibility that values dignity.

To make this a reality, the Commission creates a range of community engagement and human rights education resources to engage with a broad cross-section of the community. We use tools such as social media to build awareness of rights and freedoms in the community.

Objectives and performance

Our strategic objective under this priority is to increase human rights knowledge and skills among our stakeholders and education and training audiences.

Over 2015–2016, we will:

- Develop and launch an early childhood resource addressing prejudice and racism
- Develop and deliver training to state and federal public servants, teachers and trainee teachers
- Build on our work with the vocational education and training sector by developing and launching new resources on human rights
- Conduct a schools based evaluation to measure the impact of the *RightsEd* program on human rights knowledge, awareness and understanding among our school stakeholders
- Commemorate 40 years of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth), including by publishing educational resources and information about preventing race discrimination.

RightsEd school resources

Following on from the success of *The Story of Our Freedom* school resources we will develop further resources for teachers that focus on our fundamental rights and freedoms and are linked to the Australian curriculum.



Consultations with children conducted by National Children's Commissioner Megan Mitchell at Marrickville West Primary School, as part of her examination of the impact of business on children's rights

Priority: Engaging with business on human rights

The Commission prioritises collaboration with the business sector to foster more inclusive and productive workplaces. We encourage innovation in how business respects, protects and promotes rights and freedoms.

We will continue to provide comprehensive and effective support to prevent workplace discrimination and assist in the resolution of disputes. We will continue to support the capacity of small to medium sized enterprises to prevent discrimination with targeted resources available through our Good Business Good Practice business portal.

Objectives and performance

Our strategic objectives are to increase understanding and awareness of human rights among business and to strengthen their capacity to respond to human rights issues.



Good practice, good business
humanrights.gov.au/employers

Over 2015–2016, we will:

- Finalise guidance materials under the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) on the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Foster human rights champions in business through our Business and Human Rights Network and partnership with the Australian Global Compact Network
- Engage with our colleagues from national human rights institutions within the Asia-Pacific region and globally to share best practice on business and human rights
- Release research findings in the *Children's Rights Report 2015* on the impact of business on children's rights and co-host a major conference on related issues in late 2015
- Work with male CEOs and Chairpersons to elevate the issue of women's representation in leadership
- Conduct an evaluation to examine how our business engagement program has strengthened the capacity of stakeholders to understand and respond to human rights issues.

Priority: Freedom from violence, harassment and bullying

Violence, harassment and bullying has a profound effect on many Australians, whose health, confidence and capacity to participate in community life can be shattered by these acts. The Commission prioritises work that promotes safety from violence, harassment and bullying by ensuring that human rights protections are in place, by encouraging bystander action against damaging behaviours and by resolving disputes. A priority since 2010, this remains a focus for the coming year.

Objectives and performance

Our strategic objectives are to increase understanding of the human rights impact of violence, harassment and bullying and to contribute to preventive measures being taken that improve safety. In the coming year we will improve understanding of how domestic violence impacts on the lives of children and families, and improve the capacity of individuals to take action to prevent and reduce violence, harassment and bullying and to seek redress when it occurs.

Supporting Working Parents

In 2015–16 the Commission will complete and launch resources to support parents in the workplace. The resources build on our 2014 report on discrimination in relation to pregnancy at work and return to work after parental leave.



Over 2015–2016, we will:

- Release research findings in the *Children's Rights Report 2015* on the distinct human rights issues for children affected by family violence and conduct an evaluation to examine our impact in this area
- Identify options for improving coronial systems in responding to domestic violence deaths
- Launch and promote our online resource for local government to prevent and respond to racism and build social cohesion in diverse communities
- Continue our focus on combating racism and supporting diversity and inclusion through the 2015–2018 National Anti-Racism Strategy and the *Racism. It Stops with Me* campaign
- Promote awareness of domestic violence as a workplace issue.



Race Discrimination Commissioner Tim Soutphommasane launching the second phase of the National Anti-Racism Strategy 2015–18

National Anti-Racism Strategy 2015–18

From 2015–18 the Commission will work to promote an understanding of racism and how it can be prevented through the second phase of the National Anti-Racism Strategy. The Commission will continue to lead the *Racism. It Stops with Me* campaign and conduct a range of further activities guided by the themes of 'supporting diversity and inclusion' and 'combating prejudice and discrimination'. We will focus on the priority areas of employment, education, media, government service provision, sport, the online environment, communities and public places.



City West Water, a supporter of the *Racism. It Stops with Me* campaign

Strategic Goal 1: Leadership

As Australian'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 and performance

Our strategic objectives include using our expertise to increase the capacity of stakeholders to apply human rights through our education and technical cooperation activities and to place rights and freedoms on the national agenda, ensuring they are part of public debate.

As part of this 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.

Through our reach we increase public awareness and debate about human rights issues. We build constructive relationships with a broad range of stakeholders and impact through our contributions to United Nations processes in our capacity as a national human rights institution.

Cultural Reform in the Australian Defence Force

The Commission is working with the Australian Defence Force to embed cultural reform in Australia's armed forces.

As part of their commitment to diversity and inclusion the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) has identified a lack of women fast jet pilots as an issue for reform.

A collaborative research project with the Commission will investigate and report on what if any are the cultural and/or systemic barriers that impede women from becoming fast Jet pilots in the RAAF.

Over 2015–2016, we will:

- Support engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in national discussions about constitutional recognition
- Lead an initiative for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other stakeholders to identify options for leveraging property rights for economic development purposes
- Bring together representatives of religious communities to generate positive and constructive discussions about religious freedom in Australia
- Support the Australian Defence Force in its aim to embed cultural reform around diversity through a series of collaborative projects with the Army, Air Force and Navy
- Work with China and Vietnam under the China-Australia Human Rights Technical Cooperation Program and the Vietnam-Australia Human Rights Technical Cooperation Program, providing support for programs in these countries and conducting monitoring visits
- Under the United Nations Universal Periodic Review process, provide an independent assessment of Australia's human rights record which will be the subject of a global dialogue between governments at the United Nations Human Rights Council in late 2015
- Celebrate the work of the community in promoting human rights through our annual Human Rights Awards.



Australian Defence Force personnel. Photograph provided by Defence



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda and Human Rights Commissioner Tim Wilson at a meeting of Indigenous leaders in Broome to explore the challenges and opportunities of property rights after native title

Strategic Goal 2: Rights and freedoms are protected

We play an important role in ensuring that human rights and freedoms are respected in Australian law, policy and practice as well as understood by the Australian community.

To do this, we analyse how law, policy and practice can better protect human rights. We work with the Joint Committee on Human Rights in the Australian Parliament to consider whether proposed new legislation raises concerns about human rights.

Objectives and performance

Our strategic objective is to build awareness and understanding of rights and freedoms among decision makers and stakeholders and improve the protection of human rights through the uptake and use of our research, advocacy and recommendations by parliament, governments, the courts, business and the community.



The Commission has been tasked by the Attorney General to undertake a National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination against older Australians and Australians with disability.

The *Willing to Work* inquiry examines practices, attitudes and Commonwealth laws that deny or diminish equal participation in employment of older Australians and Australians with disability; and makes recommendations as to Commonwealth laws that should be amended, or action that should be taken to address employment discrimination against older Australians and Australians with disability.

The Inquiry will examine existing research, commission new data and consult nationally through a series of face to face consultations, roundtables and a submissions process.

Over 2015–2016, we will:

- Conduct an inquiry into the experiences and obstacles faced by older persons and persons with disabilities in actively participating in the workforce
- 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, government departments and the legislative process to analyse new legislation and identify potential breaches of human rights
- Promote the rights and freedoms of asylum seekers and refugees through our advocacy on immigration issues
- Assist the courts in discrimination and human rights cases through our intervention and amicus curiae, or 'friend of the court', roles
- Build on the 2015 *Resilient Individuals* report on sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex issues to increase the capacity of Australian sports codes to champion best practice diversity
- Lead advocacy for Indigenous health equality through the Close the Gap campaign.



Age and Disability Discrimination Commissioner the Hon Susan Ryan AO with Attorney-General Senator the Hon George Brandis QC launching the *Willing to Work* Inquiry



Leaders of Australia's professional sports supporting the Bingham Cup and LGB inclusion in sport

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

The Commission plays a crucial role in helping people resolve complaints about discrimination and other breaches of human rights.

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

Our national Information Service receives over 19,000 enquiries each year and our national Investigation and Conciliation Service receives over 2,200 complaints each year.

Objectives and performance

Our strategic objectives are to be a leading source of information about federal human rights and discrimination law and to deliver an efficient and effective Information Service and Investigation and Conciliation Service.

Over 2015–2016, we will:

- Deliver an efficient and effective National Information Service to respond to enquiries from individuals, business and government
- Deliver an efficient and effective Investigation and Conciliation Service to help resolve disputes affecting a range of people across Australia
- Provide information about rights and responsibilities under federal law to various audiences around Australia including potential complainant groups, business and government
- Evaluate these services against our Charter of Service and associated key performance standards.

National Information Service and Investigation and Conciliation Service

Last year we conducted approximately 1,531 conciliations and were able to successfully resolve 72% of these complaints. This represents successful dispute resolution for more than 3,062 people and organisations. Approximately 30% of conciliated discrimination complaints included terms of resolution which will have benefits for people beyond the individual complainant. For example, agreements to introduce anti-discrimination policies and training or modify buildings and services to address potential discriminatory factors.

The conciliation process also helps people learn about the law. For example where the complaint was conciliated, 74% of surveyed participants said that involvement in the process had assisted them to better understand rights and responsibilities in the law.

In 2014–2015, 92% of parties who participated in our Service Satisfaction Survey reported that they were satisfied with the service they received and 73% rated the service as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. Where complaints were conciliated, 94% of parties reported they were satisfied with the service and 82% rated the service as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’.

Some feedback from users of the service include:

“Timely and balanced approach to the complaint. Very well handled.”

– A respondent

“I found the conciliator very knowledgeable and fair during the conciliation conference, which rendered the process easy to follow and resulted in a mutually satisfactory resolution.”

– A respondent

“The conciliator was terrific. They showed excellent judgment ... and were a great support to the parties. ... Nothing but praise at this end.”

– A respondent advocate

“The investigator and mediator, was totally professional, thorough, compassionate, understanding and fair throughout.”

– A complainant

“Excellent service. Extremely professional staff dealing in a highly emotionally charged area.”

– A complainant advocate



Commission staff with President Gillian Triggs and Sex Discrimination Commissioner Liz Broderick

Strategic Goal 4: Organisational excellence

Our Corporate Plan commits us to working collaboratively, with innovation, and to the highest standard of excellence. This Plan provides a framework that allows us to take stock of progress in our mandate, 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 and performance

Our strategic 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.

Over 2015–2016, we will:

- 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
- Deliver work guided by the goals, objectives and priorities identified in our Corporate Plan 2015–2019
- Work in a collaborative way, that recognises the universal and indivisible nature of human rights
- 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 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 communicate and share information externally and internally
- Evaluate our performance under our APS legislative obligations to ensure transparent and auditable accountability of our financial reporting and administrative conduct.

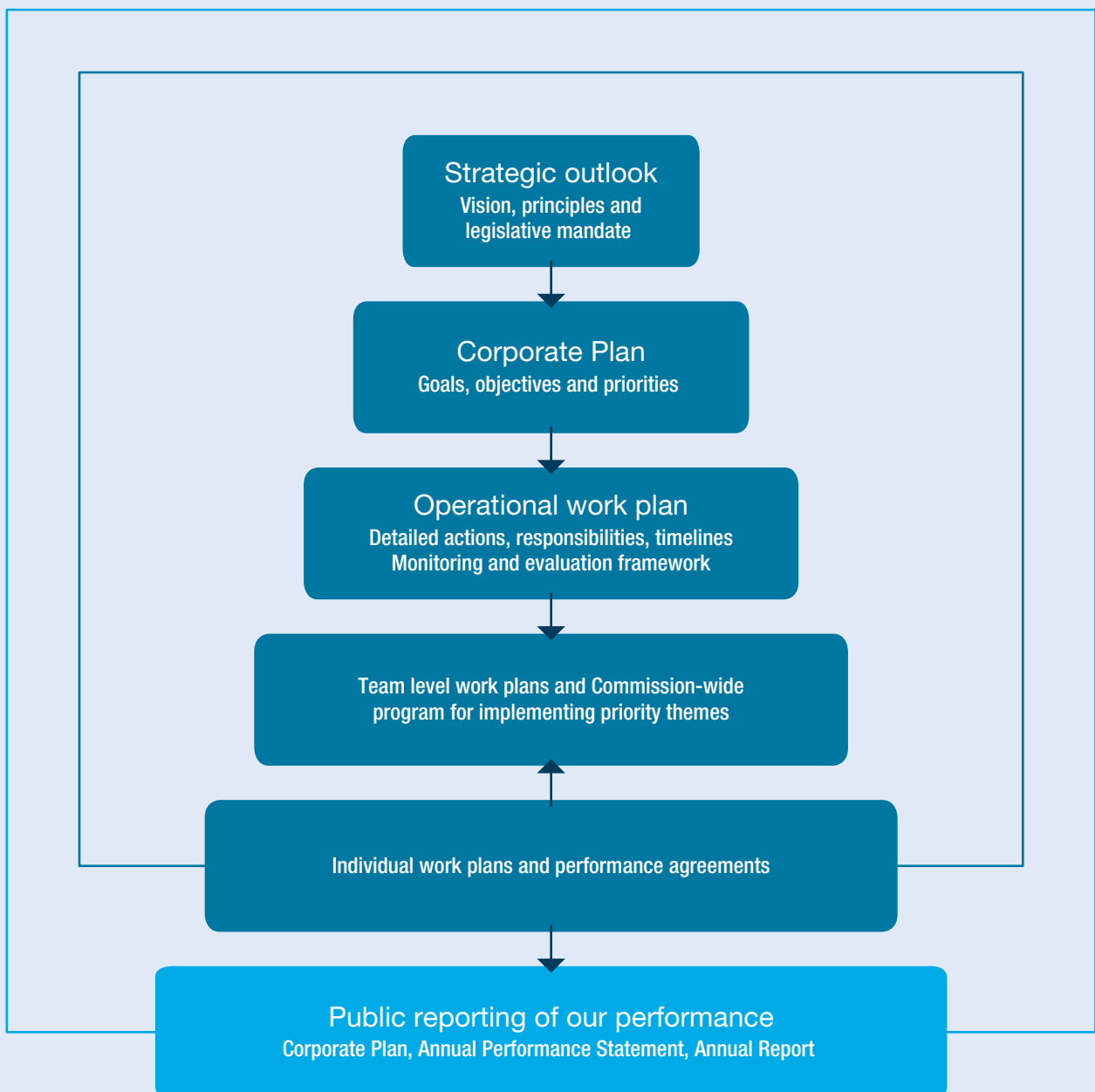
Part 3:

Integrating the Corporate Plan and strategic goals into our day to day work

The PGPA Act requires the Commission to meet a series of new performance requirements for Commonwealth agencies through the preparation of an Annual Performance Statement in our Annual Report and publicly reported monitoring and evaluation initiatives.

The diagram opposite illustrates how our annual planning processes, as well as our monitoring and evaluation activities, are aligned with this Corporate Plan. This 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 the strategic goals into our activities



Evaluating our impact

We conduct our activities within a learning and improvement framework, so we can know what we are contributing towards improved protection of human rights in Australia. 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 not only provides this accountability but it 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.

We acknowledge that 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.

The Commission aims to achieve a 'line of sight' between individual staff work plans and the distinct activities conducted by their work areas up to the goals and objectives contained in this Corporate Plan.

The Corporate Plan is intended to be a dynamic, living document that changes to reflect what we learn and achieve over time and to adapt to our changing internal and external environment.

Risk management and capability

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, ICT management, WHS management, project management and records management.

The Commission has an agency wide human resources strategy, which is updated annually and seeks to maximise our workforce capability. This ensures that, among other things:

- The Commission's staffing policies are designed to appropriately 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, and
- We encourage innovation, including through targeted learning and development programs that meet the identified needs of staff and the ongoing needs of the Commission.

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 2015–16, the major focus of our ICT development will relate to audio-visual communication needs.

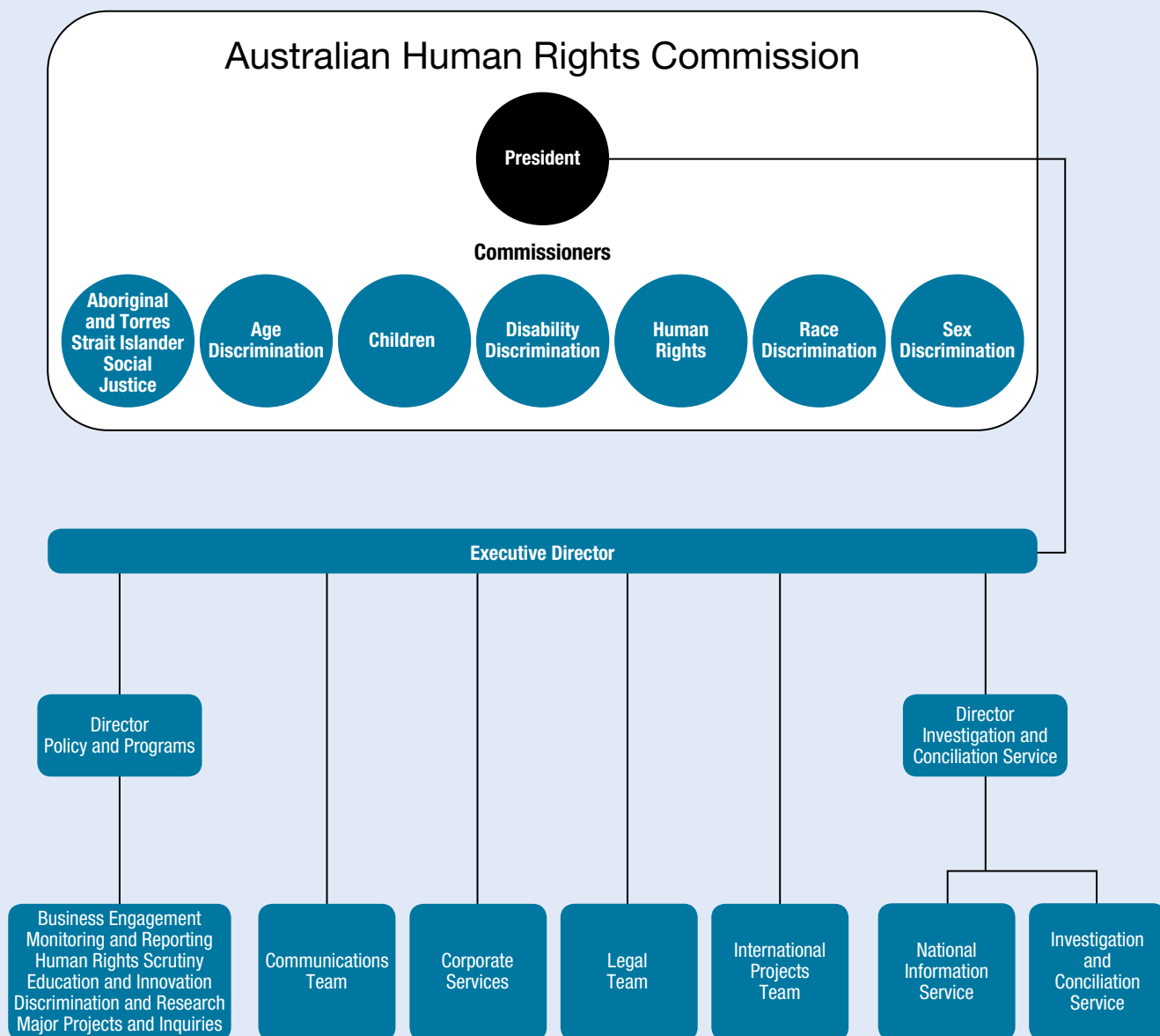
As a micro-agency, the Commission does not receive significant ongoing capital funding and so capital investment is addressed on a needs basis.

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 organisational structure



Further Information

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