

Chapter 2

Review of annual reports

2.1 This chapter examines one report in greater detail, and provides the Senate with information that may be of particular interest.

2.2 The following report under the Employment portfolio¹ is discussed in this chapter:

- Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

2.3 No reports from bodies under the Education and Training portfolio were received during this reporting period.

Workplace Gender Equality Agency

2.4 The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) is a statutory agency established under the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (the Act).²

2.5 The WGEA is charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces, including through the provision of advice and assistance to employers and the assessment and measurement of workplace data.³

2.6 During 2016-17, the agency continued to expand its national audience. The number of speaking engagements increased by 44 per cent to 89.⁴ The WGEA also conducted 15 webinars and live demonstrations which reached 1578 participants.⁵

2.7 As of 11 September 2017, over 4600 reporting organisations had been assessed as compliant with the Act.⁶ These employers represented over 4 million employees, accounting for approximately 40 per cent of Australian employees.⁷ This represents a slight decrease on the 2015-16 reporting data.

2.8 All of the WGEA's performance criteria were exceeded. These were:

- Increasing the number of speaking engagements and event participation from 62 in 2015-16 [the WGEA undertook 89 speaking engagements in 2016-17];

1 As noted in Chapter 1, the Employment Portfolio was renamed the Jobs and Innovation Portfolio (Jobs and Small Business) following the Australian Government Cabinet reshuffle on 18 December 2017. As the WGEA report was tabled prior to this date, the Employment portfolio terminology is still used in this report.

2 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 12.

3 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 12.

4 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 8.

5 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 20.

6 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 10.

7 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 10.

- improving the ease of reporting through the simplification of the secure logon procedure and the wording and layout of the reporting criteria and increasing the means by which data is communicated;
- increasing the number of media mentions of the Agency from 516 in 2015-16 [the WGEA received 679 media mentions in 2016-17];
- increasing the number of industry roundtables from 6 in 2015-16 [there were 11 in 2016-17];
- increasing the number of holders of the WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation from 91 in 2015-16 [the number of citations increased to 106 in 2016-17]; and
- increasing the number of enlisted Pay Equity Ambassadors from 103 in 2015-16 [there were 113 in 2016-17].⁸

2.9 The WGEA continued to expand its education outreach program during the reporting period. Unique web visits increased by approximately 60 000 on 2015-16 levels to over 339 000.⁹ The agency also reported a 72 per cent increase in Facebook 'likes' and a 32 per cent increase in Twitter followers.¹⁰

2.10 The WGEA recorded a deficit of \$939 009 during the reporting period.¹¹

2.11 The committee notes that following changes to Administrative Arrangements Order signed on 19 April 2018, the WGEA no longer falls under the jurisdiction of the Education and Employment Legislation Committee. The Agency instead now falls within the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio and will present future annual reports to the Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee.

2.12 The committee commends the WGEA for its continued work in enhancing awareness and promoting gender equality in Australia.

Senator Slade Brockman Chair

8 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, pp. 16-17.

9 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 21.

10 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 21.

11 Workplace Gender Equality Agency, *Annual Report 2016-17*, p. 35.