



Administrative
Appeals Tribunal

Workplace Diversity Plan

2020 - 2025

Purpose

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) is committed to creating a workplace that values diversity. At the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) we understand and actively support our lawful responsibilities under equal opportunity legislation. Beyond these lawful responsibilities, the AAT recognises that effective management of diversity in the workplace is sound business and people management practice. We are committed to fostering an inclusive workplace and a diverse workforce that more broadly reflects the Australian community and the clients and stakeholders we serve.

The AAT's Workplace Diversity Plan (WDP) sets the foundation for building an organisation reflective of the diversity in the Australian community. This Plan is intended to assist the AAT in promoting and maximising the opportunities and knowledge that can be gained from an inclusive and diverse workforce.

Workplace diversity is guided, in part, by the *Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987* which promotes equal opportunity in employment for women and persons in designated groups. Furthermore, section 18 of the *Public Service Act 1999* requires an Agency head to establish a workplace diversity program to assist in giving effect to the Australian Public Service (APS) employment principles.

What is an inclusive and diverse workplace?

Our approach to diversity at work means:

- effectively accommodating and optimising the benefits of individual differences and similarities;
- treating everybody we come across during our time working with or for the AAT reasonably, fairly and with respect;
- creating and sustaining a work environment where every member, employee and non-APS employee can contribute to their full potential in meeting our business objectives and outcomes;
- exploring the unique contributions that individual people have to offer;
- drawing on the possible opportunities that those differences and similarities present.

Diversity in the workplace is an expansion of equal opportunity principles and refers to both methods of working and intangibles, such as ideas, attitudes and perceptions, in relation to the many ways that people are different (and similar), including:

cultural/religious background	educational level/qualifications	age
family/carer responsibilities	geographic location	ethnicity
mental or physical impairment	work background or experience	gender
socio economic background	religious or spiritual belief	marital status
learning styles	communication styles	sexual orientation
physical attributes	personal characteristics	neurodiversity
job function/skill level	language/literacy	life experience

As of 30 June 2020, the APS employees at the AAT identify as being:

66.5% female (59.7%)	30.9% of employees were aged 50 years or older (33.1%)
1% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (3.5%)	15.3% part time service (14.6%)
2% with a disability (4.0%)	7.2 years averaged length of service at the AAT (12 years)

NB: (in brackets is the equivalent statistic across the APS at 31 December 2019. The APS statistics will be updated to 30 June 2020 when available):

What are the benefits of a diverse workplace?

An inclusive and diverse workplace can lead to various benefits which can include:

- Improved employee engagement;
- Improved retention;
- Increased creativity and innovation;
- Diversity amongst decision makers.

What does the AAT aim to do for 2020-2025?

For 2020-2025, the AAT has set the following objectives:

1. Promote and uphold the APS Values and Code of Conduct embedding the principles of diversity

- ✓ Provide Code of Conduct and APS values training to new starters and refresher training to all staff every two years.
- ✓ Host an online suite of diversity related training courses on the AAT's Learning Management System which will include awareness of culture, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and disability.
- ✓ Recognise, promote and celebrate significant diversity days to acknowledge the diverse workforce of the AAT.

2. Attract, retain and support staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD)

- ✓ Ensure recruitment policy and practices provide members of the public with a reasonable opportunity to apply for positions, including through reasonable adjustment.
- ✓ Promote diversity and inclusion through the AAT's mentoring program, including opening the program to staff at the APS3 and APS4 classifications.

- ✓ Provide and support opportunities for career progression including training on resume writing and interview skills to help develop and retain staff.
- ✓ Provide training in unconscious bias for supervisors and managers and those involved in recruitment and selection.

3. Increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees

As at 30 June 2020, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in the AAT was just under 1 per cent. The AAT's minimum target for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders employment is 2.5 per cent. As per the [Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-24](#), each portfolio should aim to achieve a stretch target of 3 per cent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation at each classification level in their workforce by 2024.

With this objective in mind, the AAT will:

- ✓ Continue to participate in the APSC Pathways Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate program, increasing the number of places offered in the 2020 to 2023 intakes. This includes expanding the program to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates with a non-legal background.
- ✓ Implement mentoring and training initiatives to continue to engage and retain existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and enhance career pathways.
- ✓ Work with the APSC and other APS entities to implement strategies aimed at increasing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in our workforce including actively participating in APSC events and programs.
- ✓ Support the Jawun six-week secondment program and seek executive level participation.
- ✓ Explore opportunities and other strategies to promote opportunities to work at the AAT including the Indigenous Employment Portal.
- ✓ Increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and improve cultural competence across the AAT with a focus on accessibility.
- ✓ Review our attraction and recruitment practices to ensure they are inclusive and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people to apply for our roles.
- ✓ Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) with Indigenous staff being part of the committee and by engaging with AGD and other portfolio agencies to share ideas and initiatives.
- ✓ Either establish an Indigenous Employee Network (IEN) or look to partner with AGD to have AAT Indigenous staff able to join their IEN.

- ✓ Implement and support core strategies as outlined in the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-24.

4. Support gender equality and the advancement of women

- ✓ Implement the strategies as detailed in the NSW Law Society's Charter for the Advancement of Women in the Legal Profession, to which the AAT is a signatory.
- ✓ Provide access to 'keep in touch' workdays for employees on maternity leave for staff to remain engaged.
- ✓ Provide mentoring and training opportunities for parents returning to the workforce to support career progression.
- ✓ Support return to work and flexible working arrangements for parents with the assumption that roles can be performed part time unless proven otherwise.

5. Provide an inclusive and flexible work environment for all staff

- ✓ Actively work to meet the guidelines contained in the APS Disability Employment Strategy.
- ✓ Ensure employees and managers are aware of, consider and support flexible leave and work arrangements, where operational requirements can still be met with reasonable adjustment.
- ✓ Promote the benefits of an intergenerational workforce, and a diverse workforce more broadly.
- ✓ Continue to monitor diversity representation at the AAT and implement strategies to ensure that our workforce more closely reflects the diversity of the Australian community.
- ✓ Participate in a range of diversity and inclusion forums to leverage, share and learn from APS Agencies and external organisations.
- ✓ Obtain corporate membership of the Diversity Council of Australia.

6. Explore options for increasing the diversity of our supplier base

- ✓ Raise awareness across the AAT regarding the Indigenous Procurement Policy.
- ✓ Investigate subscribing to [Supply Nation](#) (the largest database of verified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses)
- ✓ Consult with the AAT's Procurement team regarding what measures can be implemented to increase the diversity of our supplier base.