

Let's talk about Diversity and Inclusion at VicRoads



VicRoads Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018–2022





Introduction

I am proud of the people at VicRoads; I am proud of what we do, and I am particularly proud of who we are.

We are an extraordinarily rich and diverse group, reflective of the broader Victorian community with all its strengths and challenges. I am convinced that using and supporting every bit of this diversity will be the basis of even better service and delivery to our community in the coming years. To do this, every one of us must feel acknowledged, respected and supported for who we are. Then, and only then, can we all really test and explore our skills and our judgement to be our very best.

This Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is, if you like, a road map for the organisation to help us create that organisation – one that values everyone’s contribution and talents. It’s informed by what you told us in this year’s Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) diversity survey, and also takes into account the results of our recent People Matter surveys. It also builds on the work already done by our vibrant diversity employee networks: Pride Network, WomenNetworking@VicRoads, Indigenous and our CaLD network.

I am so very pleased that as one of my final official duties at VicRoads I can introduce the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.



John Merritt
Chief Executive
VicRoads
December 2017

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion

Our people are the key to our organisation's success through our strategic commitment of Care, Share, Dare.



- We Care about and treat each other respectfully.
- We Share what we know with each other and our Transport for Victoria partners.
- We Dare to work innovatively to deliver the best transport solutions for our users.

VicRoads is committed to creating a more diverse and inclusive workforce where all our people are valued, feel safe and empowered to think freely, express themselves, innovate and are able to fully contribute regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or whether they identify as indigenous, or whether they have a disability.

VicRoads will be an inclusive workplace free of bullying, harassment and discrimination, where diversity is actively encouraged, positive workplace behaviours are promoted and where employees participate in employment opportunities that are fair and free from bias. Through embracing all aspects of diversity and building an inclusive workplace, we will be a more effective organisation, making better decisions, representing broader perspectives, and better reflecting and meeting the needs of the community we serve.

This VicRoads *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018–2022* outlines how we will fulfil this commitment. It describes how this will be implemented and how we will measure our outcomes.



What do we mean by diversity and inclusion?



Diversity means the ways we differ, such as how people identify in relation to their age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability, gender, indigenous background, sexual orientation, socio-economic background their profession, education and work experiences.

Inclusion is about creating an environment of involvement, respect and connection, where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed to create business value. This is achieved when everyone feels valued and respected, has access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve the organisation.

In 2017, the DCA-Suncorp *Inclusion@Work Index* surveyed 3,000 working Australians, and revealed that inclusion matters to the majority of Australian workers, as it fuels team performance and employee satisfaction, success and security, while also minimising the risk of harassment and discrimination. It benefits everyone.

Diversity is the mix; inclusion is getting the mix working well together. Or in the words of Verna Myers, "Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance."

Why do we need diversity and inclusion?

There are strong commercial, cultural and social benefits in developing a workplace that values diversity and inclusion. There is considerable research that shows that diverse workforces make better decisions and deliver better outcomes for the community, as well as leading to greater employee satisfaction and engagement. Diverse teams are more innovative and organisations that have strong reputations in workforce diversity and inclusion attract and retain top talent which leads to them being more effective and successful (Deloitte, 2012; VPSC, 2015).

Kristen Hilton, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner, said:

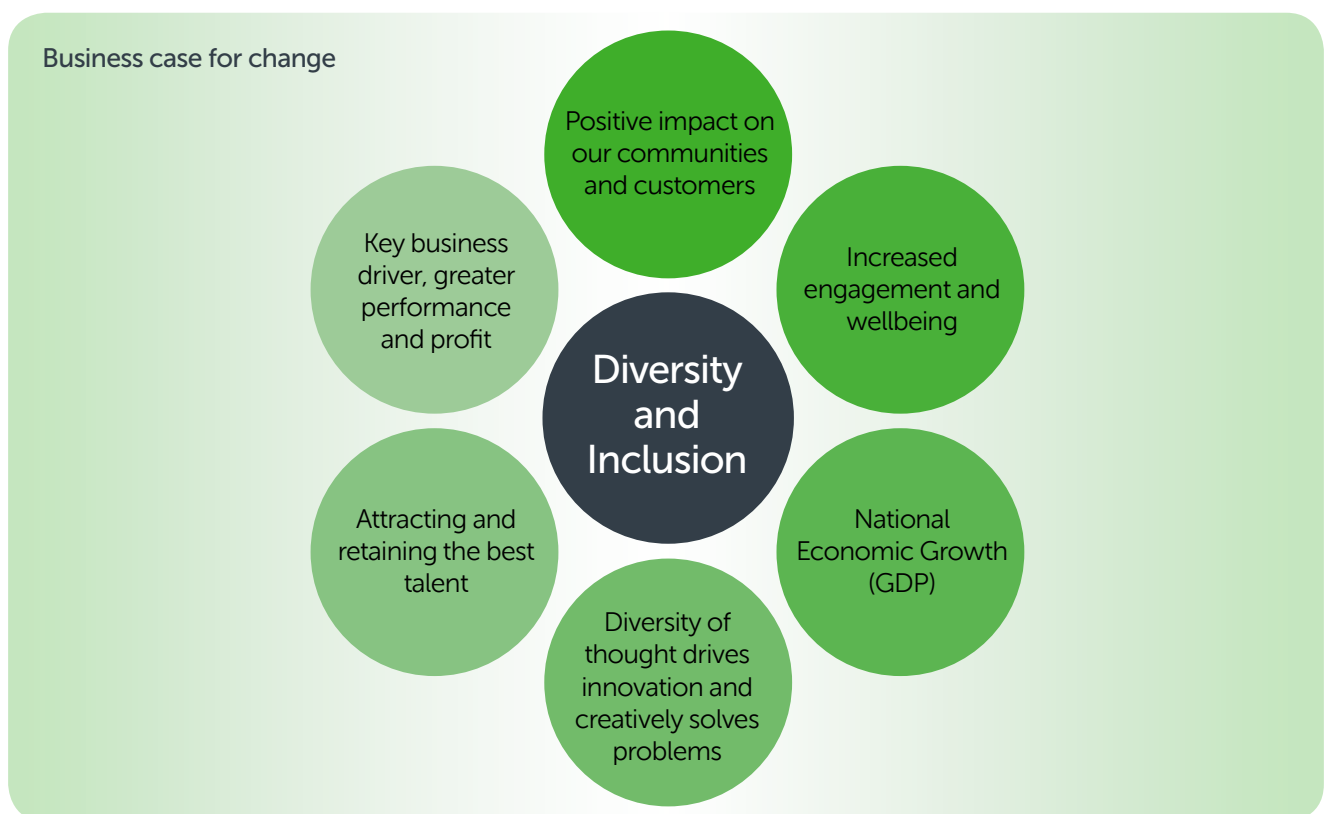
“We know that organisations benefit from a diverse workforce due to a wider pool of employee talent, a better understanding of the community they serve, and through leaders making better decisions due to a more diverse thinking. A key part of that change is understanding that diversity brings different perspectives and when you include people from different backgrounds who have different stories, we all benefit.”

Former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick wrote of the lost participation of women in male dominated sectors in *A strategy for inclusiveness, well-being and diversity in engineering workplaces*:

“These losses come at a significant cost to Australia and its economy. Some of the most pressing problems facing us today – such as energy, water, and climate change have science and engineering at the heart of the solution. We need the best talent, male and female, to bring diverse perspectives to address these challenges. Diverse teams are also more innovative, which will drive Australia’s future economy and wealth.” (November 2014)

In addition, the Victorian Government states, “A more diverse public sector will be better able to reflect the views of the people it serves. A diverse range of voices will deliver public policy informed by a variety of perspectives.”

In summary, a diverse workforce operating within an inclusive culture makes business, cultural, and social sense.



What have we done so far?

Indigenous Engagement

VicRoads was a pioneer in Indigenous engagement and workforce participation, with an Indigenous Employment Program commencing in 2006. A broader Indigenous Action Plan 2011–2015 set a standard across the Victorian Public Sector. This plan included 1% employment target, as well as initiatives covering road safety, registration and licensing, heritage and Native Title, and engagement and reconciliation.

We will continue to pursue this work and leverage the momentum and gains made.

We now have a target of 2% Indigenous workforce participation by 2022, and have developed a series of initiatives to support the achievement of this target.

In addition, we have continued to build engagement with Indigenous communities through our schools' scholarship program that supports twelve Indigenous students each year to complete their senior school years. VicRoads has provided financial support to over 100 students over the last 10 years, helping to build an 85% year 12 completion rate for these students.

VicRoads also runs regular Indigenous Cultural Awareness training days to accommodate its commitment that 70% of new employees undertake the training each year.

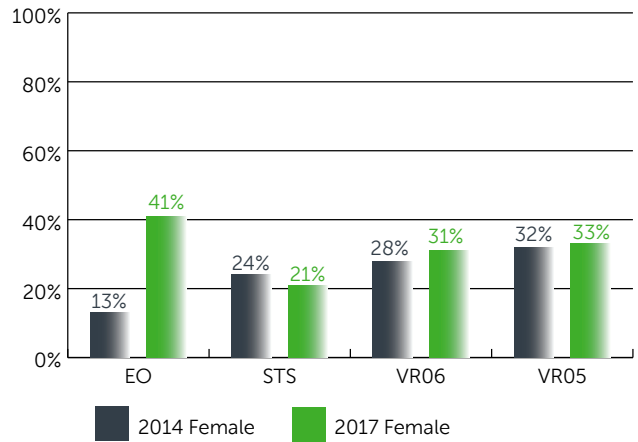


Women in Senior Leadership

In 2014 VicRoads set its sights on achieving a greater gender balance in its leadership teams. The organisation committed to greater representation of women in leadership positions in the organisation, and specific gender targets were set to increase the number of women in senior management roles by up to 37% of the workforce by end of 2017.



Table 1: VicRoads Diverse Leadership
% of Women in Leadership Roles



To support women in their career aspirations, a mentoring program was implemented called My Mentor. This program partners the approximately 25 participants with a senior leader as a mentor. VicRoads has run a My Mentor program annually since 2014. At the end of the 2017 program, a total of 115 women had participated. Our data shows that many participants of the program have had success in being promoted.

VicRoads has contributed to Transport for Victoria's Women in Transport program by sharing our gender based initiatives, as well as participating in the Women in Transport Mentoring program with both mentors and mentees. VicRoads has also provided financial support of \$30,000 for a Mary Jane Lewis Transport Sector Scholarship to support a woman to complete an undergraduate engineering degree.

In addition, VicRoads has

- Empowered a number of employee diversity networks to become established and flourish within the organisation
- Introduced an "all roles flex" policy whereby positions can be worked in a flexible way, and managers and staff have access to toolkits to facilitate discussions
- Worked to better understand our diversity through the engagement with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission designed to help us get deeper insights into people's views and experience of diversity and inclusion at VicRoads
- Better utilised recruitment and promotion through our graduate program and talent management
- Participated as a foundation partner in 2017 in the Victorian Government's Recruit Smarter program to determine the impact of bias in recruitment.

Our diversity networks

The diversity networks were established as a result of passionate people in the business taking the lead to bring network communities to life to support women, culturally and linguistically diverse staff, and those who identify as LGBTI. All have thrived on the sponsorship, empowerment and encouragement they receive from senior executives. In addition, the organisation plans to support an employee network for people with, and carers of people with a disability. Also, as part of our program of work, our Indigenous staff come together as a community on a regular basis.

Women Networking at VicRoads (WN@V)

Women Networking at VicRoads (WN@V), provides a forum to empower and connect women, foster acceptance of women in leadership roles, and open up opportunities for women to advance their careers. This peer networking group supports the aim of building a strong community of talented women across the organisation to take on leadership positions and support each other.



Regular networking events and workshops support WN@V. The group invites leaders from across government and private enterprise to attend scheduled events to further strengthen our stakeholder relations, networking across government and build our reputation as a progressive, diverse and inclusive organisation.

Successful events and initiatives organised by WN@V include International Women's Day, White Ribbon Day, the publication of a book of stories of women across VicRoads called *Unfinished Business*, and a series of wellness seminars.

WN@V also supported the secondment of female project managers to support Victoria Police to help map out a plan to implement the findings from the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

WN@V also supported Fitted for Work, a not-for-profit agency committed to getting women back into the workforce, by providing mentors for their mentor program and organising a pilot program to provide a safe environment for women to gain work experience.

Vic Roads Pride Network

VicRoads Pride Network comprises a passionate group of LGBTI individuals and allies from around VicRoads with the aims to promote a diverse and inclusive workplace that supports LGBTI employees through internal and external events, raise awareness of the issues faced by LGBTI people, and connects LGBTI employees with their peers and facilitate networking opportunities.



The network launched in August 2016 with successful "Wear it Purple Day" events across VicRoads businesses throughout the state, and won the Victorian Public Sector inaugural Pride award for best event.

CALD Network

The CALD Network was established to be a voice for all those who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, and to generate awareness of challenges of CALD workforce with senior leaders. It advocates for awareness across the organisation, training for leaders, and tailored development programs for CALD. In addition, the network has held a number of very successful internal events such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, Eid, and several external events, including a stand at Federation Square during Victoria's Cultural Diversity Week in March 2017.



In a coordinated program in 2017, the diversity networks joined forces to run a series of roadshows across the state, hosted by the Regional Director of the relevant office and supported by a member of the Executive Leadership Team. These roadshows provided an opportunity for the networks to raise awareness and engage with regional staff.

Diversity and inclusion vision

VicRoads wants to be a leader in valuing and optimising the contribution and talents of its diverse workforce, and creating a fully inclusive culture to support the communities and customers it serves.

This strategy supports the achievement of *VicRoads Corporate Plan 2017–2021*. It is also aligned with the *VicRoads People and Culture Strategy 2017–2020*, which articulates clear outcomes for an inclusive culture that values diversity.

Our approach has also been informed by the findings from the diversity diagnostic analysis that we engaged the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission to undertake for VicRoads. This was to help us understand the experience of staff in terms of diversity and inclusion, and seek input from staff on how to ensure the organisation achieves meaningful diversity and inclusion outcomes.

In addition, understanding the current diversity of our workforce is important for this strategy, so that clear targets and aspirations can be established for the future.

Current Workforce Demographics (as at November 2017)

Nov 2017	Number	Male No.	Male %	Female No.	Female %
ELT	10	7	70%	3	30%
EO	51	29	57%	22	43%
STS	14	11	79%	3	21%
VRO6	169	117	69%	52	31%
VRO5	428	288	67%	140	33%
VRO4	807	536	66%	271	34%
VRO3	674	420	62%	254	38%
VRO2	624	275	44%	349	56%
VRO1	11	4	36%	7	64%
Total employees	2788	1687	63%	1101	37%

People Matter Survey Results 2016 (2293 respondents representing 70% participation rate)

	No.	%
Indigenous	15	1
People with a Disability	77	3
CALD (people born outside of Australia)	647	28
LGBTI	63	3

What we want to focus on

Close the gap on Indigenous Workforce Participation

This strategy includes developing a revised VicRoads' Indigenous Action Plan that covers our commitment to Indigenous inclusion by promoting a workplace that respects Indigenous culture, values and practices.

It also intends to focus on leveraging embedding Indigenous employment into contractual agreements with construction partners.

Let's continue our journey on increasing women in leadership

The aim of gender equality in the workplace is to achieve broadly equal outcomes for women and men, not necessarily outcomes that are exactly the same for all (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2017).

This requires:

- Workplaces to provide equal pay for work of equal or comparable value
- Removal of barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce
- Access to all occupations and industries, including leadership roles, regardless of gender
- Elimination of discrimination on the basis of gender, particularly in relation to family and caring responsibilities.

Whilst VicRoads has made significant inroads in achieving a greater gender balance in more senior positions, it needs to ensure it has a female talent pipeline, particularly in technical roles, and it needs to continue to focus on opportunities for women to move into middle management levels.

Let's celebrate and leverage our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) workforce

VicRoads is in a distinctive position of having a very culturally diverse workforce. In the 2016 People Matter survey, we learnt that 28% of our staff was born overseas and that 32% speak a language other than English at home. The organisation wants to leverage this great diversity. The organisation realises that it needs to develop and support key initiatives to enable our leaders to fully leverage the opportunities a workforce with this degree of diversity presents, as well as provide our CALD staff with future development opportunities.

This fits in well with the external environment where it is recognised that more needs to be done to fully support CALD people. Within the Victorian context there is a strong agenda to support cultural diversity through *Victorian, and proud of it*, a state government initiative launched in February 2017.

However, Diversity Council of Australia (DCA) produced a seminal report in 2014 called *Cracking the Cultural Ceiling* which showed that while Asian talent is well represented at entry level and gain entry into mid-level jobs, it is significantly under-represented in top leadership positions. Asian talent is ambitious and very capable, but is under-valued. As such it's critical to develop this talent to successfully retain it.

The Australian Human Rights Commission's report *Leading for Change*, builds the case for, and recommendations of how to, increase cultural diversity within Australian leadership.

Whilst VicRoads has a very culturally diverse workforce, there is little representation in leadership positions. There are a number of planned initiatives to address this, including setting a target for leaders from CALD background, cultural awareness training for leaders, and coaching for identified CALD talent.

Let's provide a workplace that is fully inclusive for our LGBTI workforce

The Victorian Government has affirmed the right to equality, fairness and decency for LGBTI Victorians and is committed to removing discrimination from Victorian laws, services and society.

Over 10% of the population are of a diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity. However, 50% of LGBTI Australians hide their sexual or gender identity in the workplace for fear this could impact their careers (*Pride in Diversity, 2017*). VicRoads is committed to raise awareness of the specific challenges LGBTI staff have in the work, so support of those who identify as LGBTI is an important part of VicRoads' commitment to embrace diversity and be an inclusive place to work.

VicRoads has set a target for the number of people who identify as LGBTI as this will reflect having an inclusive culture where people feel safe to identify.

Let's provide a workplace that welcomes and enables people with a disability

More than four million Australians, that's one in five people, experience disability.

The Victorian Government's *State Disability Plan 2016–2020* demonstrates the government's commitment to supporting the one million Victorian with a disability.

Discrimination in the workplace is the number one barrier for people with a disability (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016). Many people with a disability wish to work, are capable and have the skills, but face individual and structural barriers to employment.

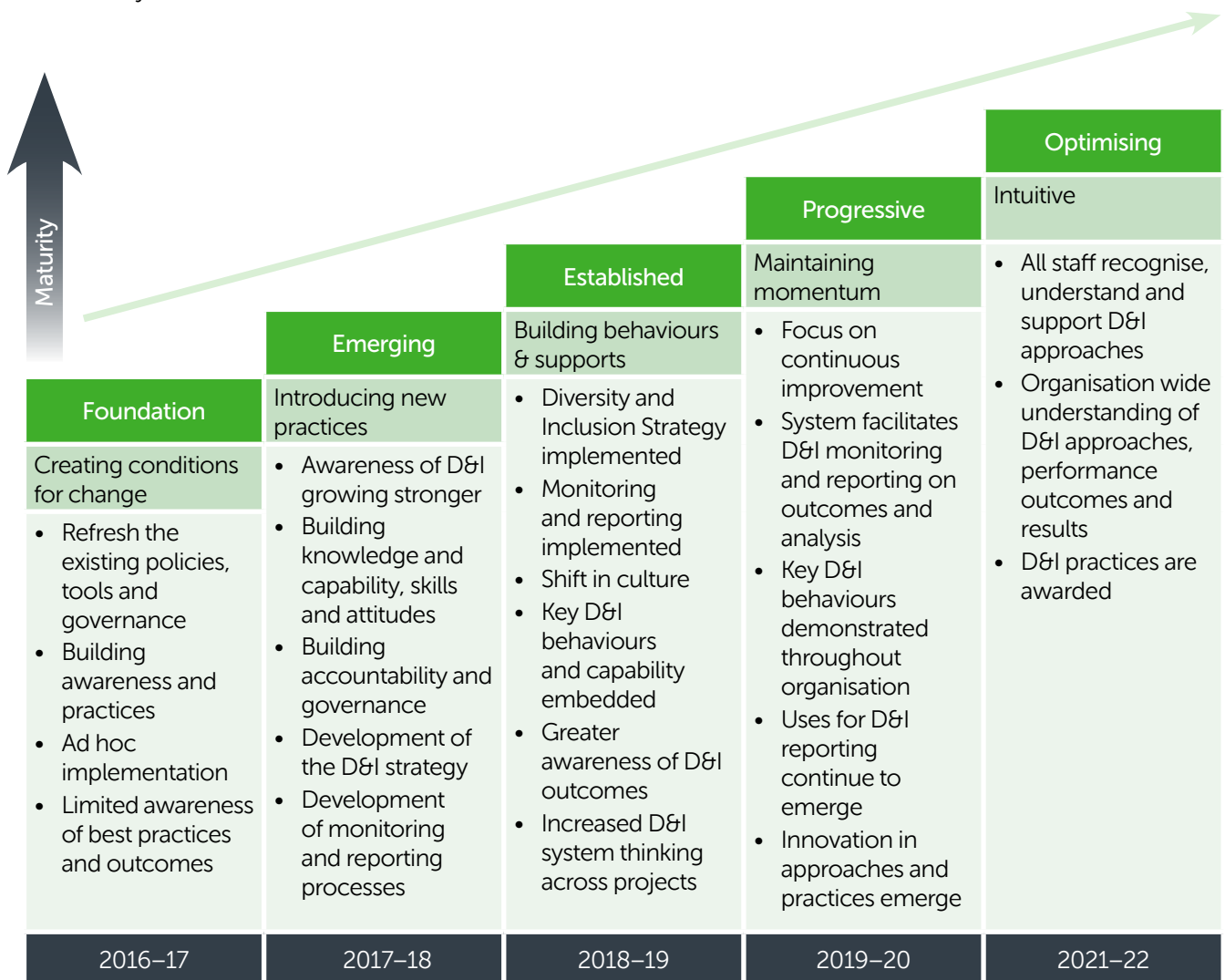
A disability-confident organisation is one that understands the relevance of disability and identifies and removes barriers. This includes plans to prioritise disability employment issues, provision of flexible work arrangements and workplace adjustments, as well as training and support for managers and staff to have a better understanding of disability.

VicRoads wants to ensure our organisation can welcome people with disability in an accessible and inclusive way, and will focus on reinvigorating our *Disability Action Plan 2016–20*. VicRoads will leverage its membership of Australian Network on Disability to identify priorities and key areas of focus to build a disability-confident organisation.



Timeframe

This five-year *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* acknowledges that fundamental organisational change takes time, and as such programs need to be built on year on year. Diversity and Inclusion is a cultural journey for VicRoads and every year we are looking for a shift in our maturity.



Our Diversity and Inclusion Targets

VicRoads has experienced the benefits of setting targets for women in leadership roles. We will now focus more broadly.

	Our target for 2022	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Gender balanced leadership	50% of VicRoads leaders will be female (VRO5 and above)	37%	40%	45%	50%
Indigenous workforce	2% of our employees will identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples	1.5%	1.5%	1.8%	2.0%
Indigenous Leaders	3 Indigenous employees will be VRO4 and above	1	1	2	3
CALD Leaders	30% of VicRoads leaders will be of CALD background (VR0 5 and above)	25%	30%	30%	30%
Accessibility	10% of our employees will identify as having a disability	4% (People Matter Survey 2018)	5%	8%	10%
LGBTI	10% of our workforce will identify as belonging to the LGBTI community	5% Data from People Matter survey 2018	7%	8%	10%

Governance

The governance framework for this strategy and associated implementation plan will be:

ELT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of Diversity and Inclusion Strategy • Review and note annual diversity report and progress to targets • Act as Diversity and Inclusion Champions • Review regular diversity and inclusion reporting and actions
People and Culture Governance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of Diversity and Inclusion Strategy • Review quarterly diversity reporting • Act as Diversity and Inclusion Champions • Review regular diversity and inclusion reporting and actions
Diversity and Inclusion Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELT member as the sponsor for a network, together with Diversity Network leads and nominated others • Diversity and Inclusion champions • Contribute to and drive diversity and inclusion strategy and plan • Drive progress on the diversity and inclusion plan • Review regular diversity and inclusion reporting
Diversity Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement action plans specific to each area of focus which contribute to achievement of overall implementation plan • Report on progress of action plans • Act as diversity and inclusion champions

Reporting and Review

Progress against the VicRoads *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* will be reported through

- Quarterly dashboard reporting to the Executive Leadership Team, People and Culture Governance Committee, and Diversity and Inclusion Council.
- The final quarterly report of the year will be an annual report describing our progress against our targets and achievements.

This *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* will be reviewed for its ongoing relevance and for its alignment to the broader organisational and industry requirements on an annual basis. Each year a revised workplan will be developed with clear objectives and outcomes.



Legislation

Unlawful discrimination in employment

Discrimination means treating a person unfavourably because of a protected attribute, such as the person's age, disability, race, gender, gender identity or sexuality. Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs if a person treats a person with a protected attribute unfavourably because of that attribute. Indirect discrimination occurs if a person imposes a requirement or condition on everyone but it has the effect of disadvantaging persons with an attribute and is not reasonable.

State and federal anti-discrimination laws make it unlawful for employers or prospective employers to discriminate against a person in the area of employment on the basis of a protected attribute (including age, disability, race, gender, gender identity and sexuality).

It is unlawful for an employer or prospective employer to discriminate in offering employment, determining the terms of employment or limiting access to opportunities.

Positive duty to eliminate discrimination

In addition to making discriminatory conduct unlawful, state and federal anti-discrimination laws also create a positive duty for employers to take reasonable measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination from the workplace.

VicRoads aims to ensure a workplace free from discrimination and to set out positive actions to achieve a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Relevant legislation

- *The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- *The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*

Whole of Victorian government initiatives

VicRoads is part of the public sector, and as such works within and is responsive to the broader context and policies of social change.

Victorian Gender Equality Strategy (2016) contribute to the prevention of family violence and work towards gender equality.

Multicultural Policy Statement: Victorian. And proud of it (2017). The key purpose is to safeguard our social cohesion and ensure that every Victorian is able to contribute and belong. It contains a Victorian Values Statement, which sets out the shared values upon which our success as a multicultural state has been built: equality, freedom and shared responsibility. It also details the policies, programs and services that will extend this work, and sets out clear outcomes to measure progress.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Inclusion Plan 2016–2017: A commitment to the right to equality and removing discrimination. Attitudes and ideas that might be averse to LGBTI inclusion can be the result of conscious and unconscious behaviours. It is our responsibility to challenge these ideas and work towards promoting inclusion for all employees.

Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework: The Framework, released in November 2011, outlines the main barriers Aboriginal Victorians face in accessing services and resources, following consultations in 2009 and 2010. The Framework includes as a key action the development of departmental action plans to demonstrate how access to and inclusion in mainstream services will be improved. Progress against inclusion plans is reported in the annual Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Report.

Aboriginal Employment Strategy: The Victorian Public Sector Commission is developing a strategy for implementation in 2017. The Strategy will encompass 2016 initiatives such as the Aboriginal Undergraduate Cadetship Program, the Aboriginal Career Development Program, and Aboriginal Pathway to GRADS and develop a coordinated approach to Aboriginal employment across the Victorian Public Sector.

State Disability Plan 2017–2020: Greater inclusion to tackle the negative attitudes and barriers that many Victorians with a disability face and to focus on changing attitudes and reduce discrimination.



