

# Women on Boards Strategy 2015-2020

Annual Report  
October 2018

## INTRODUCTION

The Tasmanian Government is committed to addressing gender inequality and improving the status of women and girls in all aspects of life, including leadership and participation. *The Women on Boards Strategy 2015-2020* (the Strategy) is one of a number of initiatives that the Tasmanian Government is undertaking to increase the number of women in leadership and decision-making roles.

Released in July 2015, the Strategy committed the Tasmanian Government to a target of 50 per cent representation of women across Tasmanian Government boards and committees by July 2020.

There has been a significant increase in the percentage of board positions held by women since 2015. At 31 August 2018, women held 42.9 per cent of positions on all Government boards and committees. This is an increase of 9.1 percentage points since the launch of the Strategy, when 33.8 per cent of all board positions were held by women, and nearly a 27 per cent increase on the ratio of women holding board positions.

Under the Strategy, in 2015 the Government partnered with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) to deliver scholarships for women with fifty-eight scholarships awarded in the three years to 2018.

The \$50,000 Board Diversity Governance Scholarships Program is continuing in 2018-19, to support and mentor Tasmanian women who are emerging leaders to develop their governance skills and become board-ready.

Seventeen scholarships will be offered to Tasmanian women to undertake the Foundations of Directorship (FOD) course along with a six month tailored program of events and activities provided by the AICD.

Supporting the *Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2018-2021*, this year's Program is designed to include women who face the most barriers to professional development opportunities and leadership roles, including board and committee appointments.

The Tasmanian Government boards and committees data in this report is drawn from the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) Government Boards Database as at 31 August 2018. All Tasmanian Government agencies participated in the recent audit of the database, which included the addition of new information on remuneration, regionality and Chair and Deputy Chair positions. The assistance of agencies in this process is acknowledged in ensuring the ongoing accuracy, currency and effectiveness of the Government Boards Database.



## BACKGROUND

Women continue to be under-represented in positions of leadership and decision-making across government, community and business.

The Women on Boards Boardroom Diversity Index measures the participation of women on the boards of Australian organisations. While there has been an increase in the percentage of women on governing boards since 2010, the Index shows that female representation continues to be consistently lower than their male counterparts. The most significant increase in boardroom participation has occurred in the ASX200 listed companies where the representation of women increased from 8.7 per cent in 2010 to 26.7 per cent in 2018.<sup>1</sup> Of all new appointments to ASX200 boards to 31 August 2018, 49.6 per cent are women.<sup>2</sup>

There has been an increase in women's representation on government boards and committees across all Australian jurisdictions since 2017, with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory where the number has remained stable on 48 per cent. South Australia reports the highest percentage of women in positions on all government boards and committees at 51 per cent and the Northern Territory has the lowest percentage with 40.6 per cent.<sup>3</sup> Pleasingly, since 2015 Tasmania has had the highest growth of women's representation on government boards across all states and territories of 9.1 percentage points.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIONS UNDER THE STRATEGY

The *Women on Boards Strategy 2015-2020* contains five priority action areas:

1. Gender equity targets;
2. Identifying women for board appointments;
3. Contemporary communication tools are used to promote board vacancies and maintain information about women seeking board membership;
4. Relationships with representatives, sector bodies and key stakeholders are developed;
5. Mentoring, training and networking for women is supported.

Communities, Sport and Recreation in the Department of Communities Tasmania is responsible for implementing the Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Women On Boards, Boardroom Diversity Index, 2018 <https://www.womenonboards.net/en-au/resources/boardroom-diversity-index>

<sup>2</sup> Australian Institute of Company Directors, 2018 Board Diversity Statistics <https://aicd.companydirectors.com.au/advocacy/board-diversity/statistics>

<sup>3</sup> This is based on the most recent available data in all jurisdictions. There are differences in the time point of data collections and some definitional differences of government boards and committees. The data from South Australia was provided by the Office for Women and is unpublished. The data for the Northern Territory was provided by the Department of the Chief Minister and is unpublished.

## I. GENDER EQUITY TARGETS

The Strategy includes a target of 50 per cent representation of women on Tasmanian Government boards and committees by July 2020.

As at 31 August 2018, the Government Boards Database held information for 118 active boards and committees. The total number of filled board positions was 934, of which 401 (42.9 per cent) were held by women.

To reach the gender equity target by 2020, women will have to be appointed to 66 board positions, in addition to maintaining the 401 positions currently held by women as at 31 August 2018.

### Board appointments and reappointments | September 2017 to 31 August 2018

In the 12 months to 31 August 2018, there were 202 board appointments. This included board reappointments. Of these, 90 (or 44.5 per cent) were filled by women. Table I shows the number of new board appointments in the previous year by board or committee type.

Table I Number of new board appointments and reappointments by gender, | September 2017 to 31 August 2018

	New appointments Female	New appointments Male
Government Agencies	83 (44.6%)	103
Independent Statutory Boards	1 (33.3%)	3
Government Business Enterprises	2 (50%)	2
State Owned Companies	4 (50%)	4
TOTAL	90 (44.5%)	112

### Women in Chair and Deputy Chair positions

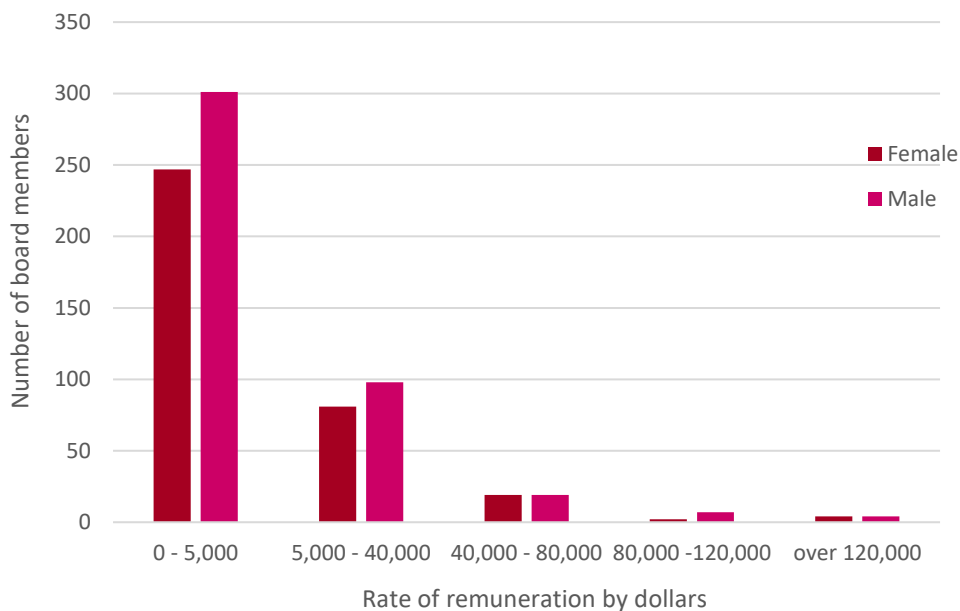
New data collected in August 2018 shows that women were under-represented as Chairs and Deputy Chairs on Government boards and committees. Of the current 117 Chair positions, 36 (31 per cent) were filled by women. Of Deputy Chair positions, 8 of 21 (or 38 per cent) were filled by women.

## Board remuneration by gender

There were 782 remunerated board and committee positions as at 31 August 2018. Women filled 353 (45 per cent) of these positions. As Figure 1 illustrates, the majority of all board members (548 or 58.8 per cent) were paid less than \$5,000 per annum. Of this group, women made up 45.1 per cent.

Women were similarly represented in the group of board members paid between \$5,000 - \$40,000 per annum (45.3 per cent of 179). Gender parity was more likely in the higher paying board positions which are much fewer in number. For example, there was an equal number of women and men in board positions paid an annual fee over \$120,000 but this is one per cent (8 positions) of the total remunerated positions. There was also gender parity in positions paid between \$40,000 and \$80,000, which is 4.6 per cent of the total.

Figure 1 Board member remuneration by gender, 31 August 2018



## Multiple board membership

As at 31 August 2018, the 934 board positions were held by 767 individuals. Of the 102 board members holding more than one board appointment, women held 44 (43.1 per cent) and men held 58 (56.9 per cent). As Figure 2 shows, the majority of individuals with multiple board appointments sat on two boards, with a smaller number holding positions on up to five boards. While women are less likely than men to hold multiple board positions, it is notable that one woman sat on a total of seven boards or committees, the highest number for both genders.

Figure 2 Multiple board positions by gender, 31 August 2018



### Board and committee composition by region

A regional analysis shows that women make up 41.4 per cent of board positions located in the South of the State; 45.5 per cent of positions in the North; and 44.6 per cent of positions located in the North West region. The regional location of 18 positions (9 females and 9 males) is not specified.

### BOARD MEMBERSHIP ACROSS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The percentage of board positions held by women across all Tasmanian Government boards has increased significantly since the release of the Strategy. In April 2015, women held 33.8 per cent of all positions on government boards and committees. This has increased to 42.9 per cent (401 out of a total of 934 positions). This is a 9.1 percentage point increase in female representation since the Strategy was launched, and nearly a 27 per cent increase on the ratio of women holding board positions.

There has been an overall increase in the percentage of positions held by women across State Government agencies. Table 2 shows the percentage of board positions held by women across State Government agencies since the introduction of the Strategy. The Department of State Growth had the largest percentage increase (13.2 per cent) since 2015, followed by the Department of Education with an increase of 11.8 per cent.

On 20 March 2018, the Government announced the establishment of a new Department of Communities Tasmania (Communities Tasmania) encompassing Human Services, Disability, Housing and Communities, Sport and Recreation. This has resulted in boards and committees moving into Communities Tasmania, reducing the number of boards and committees administered by the Department of Health and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. As a result, it is not possible to compare the 2018 data on boards and committees with previous years across these departments.

The number of boards that an agency administers affects the percentage changes in female board representation. For example, the impact of a change in one or two board appointments has a greater impact on the percentage of female held positions for agencies that administer fewer boards.

Table 2 Percentage of board positions held by women across Tasmanian Government agencies between April 2015 and 31 August 2018<sup>1</sup>

Department	No. of boards August 2018	% positions held by women April 2015	% positions held by women August 2017	% positions held by women August 2018	% change since April 2015
Communities Tasmania	5	-	-	67.7	-
Education	6	55.6	63.8	67.4	+11.8
Health	10	38.5	37.8	39.7	-
Justice	31	40.6	45.1	49.5	+8.9
Police, Fire and Emergency Management	4	19.1	21.9	26.8	+7.7
Premier and Cabinet	2	56.7	57.1	46.7	-
Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment	29	21.2	27.5	31.2	+10
State Growth	20	28.3	42.9	41.5	+13.2
Treasury and Finance	5	32.4	27.8	41.2	+8.8

<sup>1</sup> Includes membership of Government Business Enterprises and State Owned Companies

NOTE: On 1 July 2018, the Department of Communities Tasmania was formed following a restructure of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Communities, Sport and Recreation Division in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. As a result, boards and committees in the Communities, Sport and Recreation Division and in Human Services are now administered in the Department of Communities Tasmania.

### Female representation on the independent Statutory Boards of state-owned agencies

As Table 3 shows, Tourism Tasmania has the most significant increase (14.3 per cent) in the percentage of board positions held by women since 2015 in the comparison of state-owned agencies with independent Statutory Boards.

Table 3: Percentage of board positions held by women across independent Statutory Boards between April 2015 and 31 August 2018

Board	No. of members	% positions held by women April 2015	% positions held by women August 2017	% positions held by women August 2018	% change since April 2015
TAFE Tasmania	7	33.3	44.4	42.9	+9.6
Macquarie Point Development Company	6	50.0	42.9	50	No change
Tourism Tasmania	7	42.8	57.1	57.1	+14.3
Tasmanian Audit Office	3	-	33.4	33.3	-0.1 <sup>#</sup>
Tasmanian Health Service Governing Council	9	-	55.6	55.6	No change <sup>#</sup>
Office of the Ombudsman	3	-	33.4	33.3	-0.1 <sup>#</sup>

<sup>#</sup> Compared with 2017 data

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

Board membership of Government Business Enterprises (GBEs) is provided under Part 3 of the *Government Business Enterprises Act 1995* (GBE Act). Under the GBE Act, a GBE board must have no less than three and no more than eight Directors. The Governor appoints the Directors on the recommendation of the Treasurer and the relevant portfolio Minister.

In relation to the skills and experience required for appointment to GBE boards, the provisions of the GBE Act only specify that the Treasurer and Portfolio Minister must not make a recommendation for appointment unless “they are satisfied that the person recommended has the experience and skills necessary to enable the Government Business Enterprise to achieve its objectives.” All GBE Boards also operate under a Governance Framework Guide. The Guide highlights key governance requirements for Government businesses including the role of the Board and its responsibilities in relation to the conduct of the GBE and its achievement of objectives under the GBE Act. This includes the Government’s commitment to female representation on Government boards and committees.

Table 4 shows a comparison of the gender composition of GBE boards over time from 2015 and 2018. The percentage of female directors has increased by 7.5 per cent since 2015. At 31 August 2018, the number of female and male directors of GBE boards each increased by one since the previous year.



Women currently represent 52.9 per cent of Directors across all GBEs. Every GBE board has at least two female Directors.

Table 4: Number of directors of Government Business Enterprises by gender 2015-2018

	Female directors 2015	Male directors 2015	Female directors 2016	Male directors 2016	Female directors 2017	Male directors 2017	Female directors August 2018	Male directors August 2018
Sustainable Timber Tasmania	2	4	3	3	3	2	4	2
Hydro-Electric Corporation Board	2	3	2	4	2	4	2	5
Motor Accidents Insurance Board	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2
Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
Public Trustee Board	3	2	3	1	3	2	3	2
Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total	15	18	16	16	17	15	18	16
Percentage of female directors	45.4		50.0		53.1		52.9	

## STATE OWNED COMPANIES

Board membership of State Owned Companies (SOCs) is provided under legislation specific to each SOC. TasPorts, for example, is established under the *Tasmanian Ports Corporations Act 2005*. Each piece of legislation has specific provisions for the establishment of the relevant company and appointment of Directors. SOC's are subject to the provisions of the Commonwealth's *Corporations Act 2001*. Like GBEs, SOC's operate under the provisions of the Governance Framework Guide.

Table 5 provides a comparison of the gender composition of SOC boards between April 2015 and August 2018. The percentage of female directors at 31 August 2018 was 44.1 per cent, an increase of 13.2 per cent since 2015. The slight decrease of 0.3 per cent from 2017 is due to the reduction in the number of directors on SOC boards overall, down from 45 in 2017 to 43 in 2018, a decrease in one female and one male director.

Table 5 Directors of State Owned Companies by gender, 2015-2018

	Female directors 2015	Male directors 2015	Female directors 2016	Male directors 2016	Female directors 2017	Male directors 2017	Female directors August 2018	Male directors August 2018
Aurora Energy Pty Ltd	3	1	3	1	3	2	4	1
Tasmanian Ports Corporation Pty Ltd	1	4	3	2	3	2	2	2
Tasmanian Networks Pty Ltd	2	4	2	4	2	3	2	3
TT-Line Company Pty Ltd	2	5	2	5	3	4	3	4
Metro Tasmania Pty Ltd	1	4	0	4	2	3	2	3
Tasmanian Railways Pty Ltd	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	3
Tasracing Pty Ltd	1	4	1	5	3	4	3	4
Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4
Total	13	29	14	28	20	25	19	24
Percentage of female directors	<b>30.9</b>		<b>33.3</b>		<b>44.4</b>		<b>44.1</b>	

## BOARD MEMBERSHIP ACROSS JURISDICTIONS

Each government jurisdiction, including the Australian Government, reports performance in relation to the percentage of government board positions held by women. Table 6 shows the data from all jurisdictions over time. The 2018 data is the most recent provided by each jurisdiction. It should be noted that the collection date for the data sets varies across jurisdictions. There has been an increase in female representation across all jurisdictions, with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory which has remained stable at 48 per cent. South Australia reports the highest percentage of board positions held by women at 51 per cent. This information was provided by the Office of Women in that State from unpublished data. The data for the Northern Territory was provided by the Department of the Chief Minister and is unpublished. Pleasingly, since 2015 Tasmania has had the highest growth of women's representation on government boards across all states and territories of 9.1 per cent.

Table 6 Comparison of percentage of board positions held by women across Australian government jurisdictions between 2015 and 2018<sup>^</sup>

Jurisdiction	% of board positions held by women September 2015	% of board positions held by women September 2017	% of board positions held by women August 2018*	% change since 2015*
Victoria	-	41	45	-
ACT	47	48	48	+1
South Australia	47	47.6	51	+4
Western Australia	42	43	46	+4
Queensland	37	43	46	+9
New South Wales	39	41.2	41.8	+2.8
Northern Territory	34	37	40.6	+6.6
Tasmania	33.8	40.1	42.9	+9.1
Australian Government	40	42.7	45.8	+5.8

\* Based on the most recent available data.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>^</sup> There are differences in the time point of data collections and some definitional differences of government boards and committees. The data from South Australia was provided by the Office for Women and is unpublished.

## 2. IDENTIFYING WOMEN FOR BOARD APPOINTMENT

### GENDER EQUITY GUIDELINES FOR GOVERNMENT BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Under the Strategy, the Tasmanian Government introduced the Cabinet Gender Equity Guidelines (the Guidelines). The Guidelines outline a process for agencies to ensure that women are considered in the appointment of members to Government boards and committees, and that Cabinet is kept informed of efforts to identify suitably qualified and experienced women for appointment.

The Guidelines apply to appointment and reappointment processes for all Government boards and committees. This includes GBEs and SOCs, governing boards, tribunals, panels, foundations and similar bodies administered by Government agencies, the members of which are appointed by Ministers and/or the Governor.

It is current convention that most appointments to Tasmanian Government boards and committees are ratified by Cabinet. The process for Cabinet endorsement of Government board appointments is outlined

<sup>4</sup> State of the Public Sector in Victoria 2016-2017 <https://vpssc.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/State-of-the-Public-Sector-In-Victoria-2016-2017-Final-Web-version-ISSN-2204-9096.pdf>; OnBoardsWA, <https://onboardwa.jobs.wa.gov.au/onboardwa.php/encouraging-diversity>; Queensland Gender Targets for Government Bodies, Gender Diversity Progress Report Q4 2017-18; Office for Women, South Australia, unpublished data; NT Department of the Chief Minister, unpublished data; ACT Community Services, Annual Report Card 2017 <http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/women/2017-annual-report-card>; NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet (2018), NSW Government Boards and Committee Members, December 2017, unpublished data.

in the Cabinet Handbook. The documentation prepared by the appointing agency must include a Certification Form that informs Cabinet about the measures taken to identify women for appointment. Communities Tasmania reviews the Certification Form, and comments on the appointment process may be provided as required.

As noted previously, the Government Business guidelines, produced by the Department of Treasury and Finance, require that Government businesses comply with the Government's *Women on Boards Strategy 2015-20* and the gender equity target, including a requirement for a Tasmanian Women's Register Certification Form, where a proposed appointment creates or continues a significant gender imbalance.

Appointing agencies are required to advise the Tasmanian Women's Register of board vacancies. The Women's Register is managed by Communities Tasmania. Women seeking appointment to Government boards and committees indicate their interest on the Women's Register, and receive notification of all board and committee vacancies as these arise. Interested candidates then forward their applications directly to the advertising agency. This process must be followed for all appointments and re-appointments to increase gender diversity of board membership. As at 31 August 2018, there were 576 women on the Register mailing list.

## **EXECUTIVE SEARCH FOR APPOINTMENT TO GOVERNMENT BUSINESS BOARDS**

Appointments to GBEs and SOCs are managed through the Shareholder Policy and Markets Branch in the Department of Treasury and Finance. The recruitment process requires the use of one of three executive search organisations to identify nominations for appointment to vacancies. The executive search organisations are aware of the Strategy and all contact the Tasmanian Women's Register to ensure suitably qualified and experienced women are notified of board vacancies. Promotion of vacancies also refers to the Government's commitment to increasing representation by women on its boards and committees.

## **3. CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION TOOLS ARE USED TO PROMOTE BOARD VACANCIES AND MAINTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT WOMEN SEEKING BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

The Women Tasmania website and Facebook page were launched in 2017. The website at [www.women.tas.gov.au](http://www.women.tas.gov.au) and the Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WomenInTasmania/> provide information about Tasmanian Government policies and programs for women and links to useful information and resources for women, including board members and leadership opportunities. Notifications of board vacancies are also circulated through the Women's e-list, which currently has approximately 500 subscribers. Communities Tasmania administers these online communication platforms.

## **4. RELATIONSHIPS WITH REPRESENTATIVES, SECTOR BODIES AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS ARE DEVELOPED**

Communities Tasmania continues to promote the *Women on Boards Strategy* and the Tasmanian Women's Register to representative and sector bodies and relevant stakeholder groups through the website ([www.women.tas.gov.au](http://www.women.tas.gov.au)) and the Facebook page. Notifications of board vacancies are also circulated through the Women's e-list.

## 5. MENTORING, TRAINING AND NETWORKING FOR WOMEN IS SUPPORTED

Under the *Women on Boards Strategy*, in 2015 the Tasmanian Government approved \$150,000 over three years for the *Board Diversity Governance Scholarship Program 2015-2018*. The Program awarded scholarships for women to undertake training through the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD). Fifty-eight scholarships were awarded over the period 2015-2017, with 10 scholarships for the Company Directors Course (CDC) and 48 scholarships for the Foundations of Directorship course (FOD).

As at 31 August 2018, seven recipients (four FOD and three CDC) hold membership on government boards.

A formal review of the Program was undertaken by CSR in February that included consultation with stakeholders and feedback from participants. As result the *2018-19 Board Diversity Governance Scholarship Program* has been reconfigured to offer scholarships for Tasmanian women who are emerging leaders to develop their skills and become board ready. The program includes the Foundations of Directorship course and a six month tailored program of events and activities designed to strengthen skills and build networking opportunities. The events program is designed to build on the course work component and engage the scholarship winners in workshops, briefings and networking activities that give them practical training, skills and confidence development.

Each scholarship holder will be matched with a mentor at the commencement of the program. Notably, the Program is directed towards Tasmanian women who face the most barriers to professional development opportunities and leadership roles. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disability and women from migrant and refugee backgrounds were strongly encouraged to apply. Applications from women working in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine were also expressly sought.

The *State Service Diversity and Inclusion Policy*, supported by the *Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2017-2020* outlines the initiatives that the State Service is undertaking between 2017 and 2020 to ensure that policies and management practices support people who work, or want to work, in the State Service. The Department of Premier and Cabinet is developing and implementing a number of actions to improve diversity in the Tasmanian State Service. This includes the implementation of *the Gender Diversity in the Tasmanian State Service* report, which addresses the relatively low representation of women in the senior executive service. It includes the target of at least 40 per cent representation by women in the senior service by 2020. As at 30 June 2018, women made up 39 per cent of senior executive service positions.

## CONCLUSION

Since the release of the Strategy in July 2015, there has been a steady increase in the number of board and committee positions held by women and the overall percentage of board positions held by women. The new data compiled through the DPAC audit has enabled a more comprehensive analysis of the membership of Tasmanian Government boards and committees, including remuneration, positions and regional distribution of members, as well as their gender composition. This will inform reporting and support progress toward the gender equity target in 2020.

Agencies across the State Service are engaging in processes to identify women for board appointments and supporting women to gain the governance skills and experience to be board-ready. The Tasmanian Women's Register is used regularly as a source of potential candidates for board appointment, with the current approach of broad distribution of vacancies receiving a positive response.

The data presented in this report shows a strongly positive trajectory towards the target of 50 per cent representation of women across Tasmanian Government boards and committees by 2020. The increase in overall numbers to date demonstrates that greater awareness of gender equity and the benefits of leadership diversity, and a clear and committed process will result in positive change. However, there is still work to be done. Based on current data, 66 new board and committee vacancies will need to be filled by women, in addition to the positions currently held by women, to meet the 2020 target.







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