

Aligned with our vision, mission and values, Housing Choices Australia (HCA) prides itself in having a safe, healthy, diverse and inclusive workforce that is respectful to cultural and all other differences, ensuring equal opportunity in the workplace and in the provision of services to our clients, families, and the community.

HCA welcomes the publication of gender pay gap information by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), as a catalyst for change. At HCA, we are passionate about workplace gender equality and inclusion for all. We recognise the reality and existence of gender pay gaps in Australia and the need for organisations to take proactive steps to identify, address and eliminate any disparities that may exist.

The gender pay gap is the difference in earnings between men and women in an organisation.

The *average (mean) gender pay gap (GPG)* is the difference between the average earnings for men and women, expressed as a % of men's average earnings.

A *median gender pay gap (GPG)* is the difference between the median of what men are paid and the median of what women are paid, expressed as a % of the median man's earnings.

Gender pay gaps are not a comparison of like roles and the gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay, which is paying men and women the same for equivalent work. HCA's current pay structures provide fair and equal pay. These are underpinned by both awards and market data and applied on a position and accountability level basis. HCA recognises that gender binary is not inclusive of non-binary, agender and people of other genders. Please note, that currently WGEA does not collect mandatory information from employers on non-binary employees and therefore, employees identifying as non-binary cannot be statistically analysed for the purposes of the gender pay gap.

For the 2022-2023 reporting period, WGEA has calculated HCA average (mean) total remuneration GPG as 7.3%, median total remuneration GPG as 8.9% and median base salary GPG 9.3%. Our 7.3% average (mean) GPG and 8.9% median total remuneration GPG are much lower than our Industry Comparison Group (Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Service) GPG, 25.5% and 20.8% respectively, however we recognise the need to analyse, review and improve our GPG.

Our initial analysis is that although the makeup of our workforce at time of reporting was 78% female (and our board 50%), our GPG can primarily be attributed to a higher proportion of the total number of men employed by HCA are employed in higher pay level roles (upper middle to upper quartile of role pay level) and in industry sectors that are higher paying. Conversely, there was a higher proportion of female representation in the lower to lower middle pay level roles (85% and 88% respectively), notably 96% in clerical and administration roles. This data reflects the current occupational composition of our workforce, but this can also skew organisational gender pay gap.

Other significant data to note for the reporting period: 82% female Executives and GM's, 67% female all managers, 75% female management appointments (inc promotions), 80% female non-manager appointments (inc promotions) and 100% female promotions.

However, in 2024, a major focus will be analysing our pay data further to understand what the data says and to identify any drivers for gender pay gap. Understanding the reasons behind our gender pay gap is a crucial step which will guide us to workable actions.

To assist us in gaining greater insights into our gender pay gap, HCA will be undertaking a remuneration review in the first half of 2024, and a key element will be analysis and review of any gender pay differences. We also have a range of strategies, policies and other initiatives/actions focused on improving gender equity now and for future:

- **Inclusive and Equitable Strategies and Policies:** including but not limited to our Business Strategy, People Strategy, Equal Opportunity Policy, Flexible Working Policy, Parental Leave Policy and Respectful Workplace Behaviour and Complaint Policy. In 2023, we updated our Parental Leave policy to be more flexible and accessible for both women and men, increased paid parental leave to 16 weeks and now provide for superannuation during paid parental leave. We are continuously reviewing and refining our policies and procedures to ensure they promote fairness and equity in all aspects of employment.

- **Equal Access to Career Development:** equal access to learning opportunities for career growth, internal career pathways through secondment and promotions, communities of practice, working groups and a range of professional development offerings.
- **Education and Training:** offering ongoing training and education programs to raise awareness of gender and other biases, empowering our employees to recognise and address these issues within our workplace. Our current mandatory training incorporates *Core Inclusion, Cultural Diversity* and *Appropriate Workplace Behaviour*. *Gender Equity* and *Generational Diversity* training are being implemented in 2024.
- **Diverse and Inclusive Culture:** HCA has introduced an Employee Listening strategy and channels to provide transparency for staff on avenues to share views, provide feedback and be heard. A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Committee has recently formed at the end of 2023 with a view to developing a DEIB strategy and action plan. This is in addition to other working groups and committees across our business (including but not limited to our RAP Committee and HS&W Committee).
- **Inclusive Leadership:** we strive to embed an inclusive culture and enable leaders to play a pivotal role. In 2023, we established a Leadership Centre providing tools and resources to enable leaders and their teams to create a positive and inclusive culture. In addition, a People Leaders community of practice has been established which includes People Leader coaching and learning opportunities to foster effective leadership of diverse teams that support staff well-being.
- **Transparent and Equal Pay Structures:** we ensure fair, equal pay and transparency in our pay structures with published pay structures for staff that are underpinned by awards, market data informed pay and all our remuneration is role and accountability based. Notwithstanding, as noted above, we are undertaking a remuneration review and pay equity analysis in 2024 to identify and resolve any gender-based disparities.

And finally, but most significantly, we will seek to plan and act to continuously improve and hold ourselves accountable to regularly evaluating our progress towards closing any gender pay gap.

David Fisher
CEO, HCA