

CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE
CONSULT AUSTRALIA



20
21

PROGRESS REPORT

Men stepping up beside
women on *gender equality*

“

A focus on behaviours that support an inclusive culture is changing the day-to-day experience for all our people. It requires our leaders to seek feedback, reflect on their biases, actively counter them and try new approaches – in every interaction and decision.

Louise Adams
Chief Operating Officer
Aurecon

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About the **Champions of Change Coalition**

The Champions of Change Coalition is a globally recognised, innovative strategy for achieving gender equality, advancing more and diverse women in leadership and building respectful and inclusive workplaces.

In the strategy, men of power and influence step up beside women leaders. They form a high profile Coalition to lead and be accountable for change on gender equality issues in their organisations and communities – be they local, national or global.

Members cover every major sector of the economy and include representatives from business, government, community, academic and not-for-profit organisations.

We know that women are significantly under-represented in our workforces and leadership positions; gender pay gaps still exist across the world and workplace systems are not geared to enable all women to develop, thrive and advance.

Formally engaging leaders, especially those with the power to drive change, is critical to address these systemic and societal issues.

Our Members recognise that gender inequality is a business, economic, social and human rights issue.

The work of the Coalition focuses on shifting the systems of gender inequality in the workplace. It is backed by a proven methodology for increasing the representation of women in organisations and developing the conditions and cultures that enable them to thrive.

Many of the actions developed and implemented as part of the strategy are now globally accepted standards for organisations wishing to become employers of choice for all.

The strategy demonstrates the power of more than 225 organisations with national and international reach acting together to shift the entrenched workplace systems that have served as barriers to women's advancement.

Our experience together over more than a decade also shows that making work more accessible and inclusive for all women is delivering wider benefits for employees, teams, organisations and communities.

The strategy engages Members as 'champions' not because they are perfect, but because they publicly commit to leading practical, constructive and disruptive actions to accelerate change.

Origins of the Champions of Change

The Champions of Change Coalition is the new name for the Male Champions of Change (MCC) strategy originally established in 2010 by then Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick AO in response to the lack of women in leadership in Australia and a glacial pace of change on gender equality.

The Founding Group began with eight Australian business leaders and has since grown to a group of 24 CEOs, non executive directors and leaders from, government, academia, and the military. New groups have also formed across different organisations, sectors, professions and geographies. The Coalition now encompasses 17 groups, amounting to over 260 leaders covering every major sector of the economy.

The strategy has gained international recognition as a high-impact model for engaging men of power and influence to drive progress on gender equality. The UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment has highlighted the strategy as an opportunity for global scale-up. In 2021 the Coalition welcomed Western Australian based Members from resources and construction sectors our 17th Group, National 2021.

As interest in the strategy developed, and the Coalition and its work expanded, Members and partners collectively agreed that the strategy had evolved to the extent that the name 'Male Champions of Change' was no longer appropriate, especially as our Members were working side-by-side with many women leaders to accelerate progress.

Our experience together over more than a decade shows that making work more accessible and inclusive for all women is delivering wider benefits for employees, teams, organisations and communities.

The Champions of Change Coalition

260⁺



CEO or Board level leaders
across the world

225⁺



Organisations covering every
major sector of the economy

1.5M⁺



Representing more than 1.5 million
employees globally

242
/81



Supported by 242 women and
81 men Implementation Leaders

* It is recognised that references to 'women' and 'men' on this page do not account for gender identities beyond the binary.

Group establishment timeline



20
10

- Founding Group

20
15

- National 2015 Group
- Property Group
- Sport Group
- Architects Group

20
16

- National 2016 Group
- Consult Australia Group
- STEM Group

155



Organisations operating in 155 countries

44



Women who are Members and Convenors

KEY PARTNERS



Coalition Partners

Australian Institute of Company Directors
 Australian Human Rights Commission
 Australians Investing In Women
 Business Council of Australia
 Challenge DV
 Chief Executive Women
 Diversity Council of Australia
 Full Stop Foundation
 No To Violence
 Office for Women (Australia)
 Our Watch
 Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia
 UN Global Compact
 UN Women
 WESNET
 Workplace Gender Equality Agency
 Women's Leadership Institute Australia

Group Partners

accelerateHer
 AFAC
 Consult Australia
 UN Equals
 Makati Business Club
 Microsoft Australia
 Philippine Business Coalition for Women Empowerment
 Philippine Women's Economic Network
 Property Council of Australia
 Science in Australia Gender Equity

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17

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- National 2017 Group
- Fire and Emergency Group

- Global Tech Group
- Pakistan Group

- Health Group
- The Philippines Group
- Insurance Group

- Microsoft Partners Group

- National 2021 Group

The Champions of Change **Strategy**



Our approach is based on a set of guiding principles which all Members support.

We listen, learn and lead through action, with a focus on five interconnected themes, which form our Action Pillars. We use measurable objectives, target specific outcomes and continuously monitor and assess the effectiveness of our work.

What we do

Guiding principles

Our Coalition operates with four guiding principles

- Step up beside women – men take responsibility with women to accelerate improvement
- Prioritise achieving progress on women's representation – set targets that crystallise intent
- Stand behind our numbers, sharing lessons learned – measure and publish results
- Shift the system, not 'fix women' – avoid solutions that put the onus on women to adapt

Action pillars

Our action is aligned to five interconnected themes

- Stepping up as leaders
- Creating accountability
- Disrupting the status quo
- Dismantling barriers for carers
- Gender equality in society

How we do it



Approach

Our approach is to 'Listen, Learn and Lead through Action'.

- Understanding the facts, relevant research, existing frameworks and what has and hasn't worked
- Engaging with women peers, gender experts and our own employees to gain different perspectives on the issues, new ideas and potential solutions
- Leading through action, most importantly within our own organisations
- Tracking the impact of our actions, and sharing successes, failures and learnings
- Advocating for change more broadly in the community

We approach our work both collectively and as individuals

- As Members, we meet together regularly in small action-orientated groups where, centred around a collective work plan, we learn from and challenge our peers
- As a Coalition, we work collectively to publicly share what we learn and our progress
- As individuals, we implement change within our organisations and publicly advocate for gender equality

Our impact



Intended outcomes

- Gender balance in leadership, recruitment, graduates and promotions
- Pay equity between men and women
- Flexible and inclusive employment experiences
- Leadership, advocacy and impact on gender equality issues

Measurable objectives

Our impact is measured by annual progress towards key indicators

- Gender balance in women's representation in leadership*
- Gender balance in women's representation overall*
- Gender balance in recruitment and promotions*
- Closure of the gender pay gap
- Reported levels of employees' access to the flexibility they need
- Employee engagement measures for women and men reflect an inclusive employment experience
- Fewer people leaving employment during or at the end of parental leave
- Visible leadership by Coalition Members

*Gender balance means between 40% and 60% women's representation.

Consult Australia Group

The Consult Australia Group was established in 2016 and comprises 11 Members who lead some 19,000 employees in Australia.

The Group includes representatives from businesses providing design, advisory, and engineering services for large government public works projects through to private sector projects in the built and natural environment. Members work within and across their organisations to increase the representation and influence of women in the industry.

In 2021, Members continued work in two key areas: increasing women in leadership, and co-creating inclusive cultures.

The under-representation of women in leadership, 'boys' club' culture and perceived bias in talent processes are reasons commonly cited by women for leaving STEM industries. To address these issues, the Group collectively:

- Developed a sponsorship toolkit to aid leaders supporting emerging female leaders.
- Scrutinised the hiring process to identify and address any instances of bias.
- Undertook a cross-Group survey to measure the nature and prevalence of everyday sexism and provide recommendations to overcome these behaviours.
- Added sexual harassment as a standing item on the quarterly meeting agenda to work through recommendations in the Coalition's *Disrupting the System - Preventing and responding to sexual harassment in the workplace* report.
- Promoted and celebrated men accessing expanded, non-gendered parental leave.
- Supported child care and parental leave reform via the Consult Australia 2021 budget submission.

The Group welcomed new Members: Richard Barrett, Chief Executive ANZ, AECOM; Kerry Coker, Co-Chair Australasian Region, Arup; and Dean McIntyre, Executive General Manager – Australia, GHD.

Outcomes for 2020–21

33.4%



Women's representation achieved overall across the Group  from 33.2% 2020

37.3%



Women's recruitment achieved overall across the Group  from 37.6% in 2020

36.8%



Women's promotions achieved overall across the Group  from 35.3% in 2020

54.7%



Members achieved or moved closer to gender balance across 54.7% of leadership categories in 2021

Note: Outcomes for 2020-21 represent Group membership and reporting that are common in both years.

Champions of Change



Louise Adams
Chief Operating
Officer
Aurecon



Jamie Alonso
CEO Asia Pacific
Cardno



Richard Barrett
Chief Executive ANZ
AECOM



Kerryn Coker
Co-Chair, Australasia
Arup



Paul Gardiner
Regional Manager
Asia Pacific
SLR Consulting



Richard Hayers
Vice President and
Regional Director
ANZ
Jacobs



Malcolm McDowall
CEO Australia Pacific
Arcadis



Dean McIntyre
Executive General
Manager, Australia
GHD



James Phillis
CEO ANZ
SMEC



Jamie Shelton
CEO
Northrop



Will Wright
Managing Director
Douglas Partners



Convenor

Nicola Grayson
CEO
Consult Australia



Actions and impact 2021

Stepping up as leaders



- **The Group** hosted its 5th annual industry event. The theme 'Can we leverage a crisis to create safe and respectful workplaces?' referenced the 100,000-strong #March4Justice and the need for regulatory, legislative, and cultural reform to end sexual harassment. Louise Adams addressed the source and impact of sexist behaviours. Will Wright, Richard Barrett and GHD's Phil Duthie spoke of initiatives to engage men, overcome the bystander effect and support women in building safe and inclusive workplaces.
- **Louise Adams** spoke at or contributed to nine public events or publications on the topic of gender equality.
- Seven firms were awarded the Workplace Gender Equality Agency Employer of Choice citation: **AECOM, Arcadis, Arup, Aurecon, GHD, Jacobs, SMEC.**

Creating accountability



- Nine of 11 firms now have targets in place. **Jacobs** increased firm-wide targets to 40:40:20 by 2025. **Cardno** introduced gender targets across **APAC** business.
- **AECOM, Jacobs, and Arcadis** embedded formal accountability measures, tying KPIs and remuneration to gender representation goals.
- **SMEC** amended its Australia Executive Committee Terms of Reference to include monitoring of progress towards gender diversity targets and objectives.
- **Arup** introduced nine, values-driven firm-wide commitments on diversity, equity and inclusion, the first focusing on a diverse and inclusive approach to leadership.
- **SLR** improved clarity around its career framework and progression process resulting in a more accessible and transparent promotion process for women and a 15% increase in female nominees.
- **Douglas Partners** scrutinised consulting classifications for bias as part of its pay gap analysis.
- **Arup Champion Kerry Coker** signed the Pay Equity Pledge and became a WGEA Pay Equity Ambassador.



Disrupting the status quo

- **SLR** achieved gender balance in their graduate intake, increased women's representation on their leadership team to 20% and introduced diverse recruitment panels.
- **Northrop** increased the representation of women in middle management from 10% to 19% through inclusive hiring training for managers.
- **SMEC** appointed the first woman to its SMEC Australia Board, achieving 25% women's representation.
- **SLR** launched its global 'Women in Leadership' program targeting high potential women. Nine of 11 firms (82%) now have a formal sponsorship program in place.
- **SMEC** implemented the second year of the 'Cultivate' sponsorship program having achieved advancement to more senior roles for 83% of participants in the previous cohort.
- **Aurecon** rolled out 'Leading on Gender Equality', an online course educating and empowering managers to advocate for gender equality.
- **AECOM** refreshed its sexual harassment strategy, providing additional online training for all staff and targeted training for managers. Leaders amplified message of zero tolerance, offered additional support to anyone reporting incidents of sexual harassment and made external investigations available for any incident.
- **Jacobs** launched its 'Everyday Respect: Living Inclusive Language and Behaviour' initiative as part of its 'Culture of Caring and Inclusion' program. The project provides employees a safe space to share the impact of inequality, inspiring leaders to be part of co-creating a respectful workplace culture.
- As part of its 'Developing Leaders' program, **Douglas Partners** provided skills training in psychological safety, inclusion and belonging.
- **Arcadis** launched a 'Call it Out' program to enable and support staff in calling out inappropriate language and behaviour and continue to focus on prevention.
- **Arup** further embedded its 'Call it Out' (bystander) training to support prevention of unlawful or disrespectful behaviour.
- **Arup** introduced the Inclusive Leadership Compass 360-degree assessment for a cohort of 30 leaders. The outcome has been the creation of both individual goals for inclusive leadership development, as well as team goals. The impact of inclusive leadership will be measured as part of Arup's next employee engagement survey.
- **Jacobs** introduced a myFlex toolkit and policy, based on a remote and office collaboration hybrid model.
- **Arup** introduced a flexible weekly working model open to all, regardless of reason for accessing.
- **SLR** expanded flexible working across all APAC roles.
- **SLR** launched its 'Respectful Behaviour at SLR' program guiding staff on addressing disrespectful behaviour and focused on bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination in the workplace.
- **SMEC** increased uptake of employees using flexible work through the consistent promotion and communication of support of flexible working, development and promotion of a Flexible Work Arrangements Toolkit, and the roll out of compulsory, bespoke training on flexible work arrangements for all managers.
- **Douglas Partners** updated its flexible work policy introducing a hybrid remote working model.
- **Cardno** revised and relaunched its flexible work policy to include a hybrid working model.



Actions and impact 2021

- **AECOM** increased its women hires from approximately 30% to nearly 40%, by modifying the hiring process so all requisitions go to open market and all referrals to open recruitment. Previously one in four roles were not hired through an open process which resulted in a significant proportion of men hires.
- **Northrop** led the development of a sponsorship toolkit for use among Group Members and across the built industry.
- **AECOM** now has over 20% women at Director level and above. This is, in part, attributed to implementation of an emerging female leaders' sponsorship program.
- **Arcadis** increased the representation of women in their Regional Executive Team from 30% to 40%; increased the number of women managers by 4.2%; and their new graduate intake joining the business in February 2022 comprises 73% women. This was achieved through integrating actions from the Coalition's 40:40:20 resource, conducting hiring manager training for all line managers, and introducing a robust review to ensure parity at offer stage.
- **Cardno** maintained gender equity in its Australian Leadership Group and introduced a process to address bias and ensure equality in recruitments and promotions.
- **GHD** has increased representation of women at the executive level from 22.6% to 26.9%, and middle management from 20% to 23%. This was supported through a review of advertising to ensure non-gendered language, gender-balanced shortlists, female leadership programs and equal representation on general leadership programs.

Dismantling barriers for carers



- **SMEC** and **Northrop** introduced superannuation for both paid and unpaid parental leave.
- **Northrop** introduced extended, non-gendered parental leave as well as enhanced benefits for secondary carers.
- **Arup** increased 'supporter carer' paid leave to four weeks.
- **Arup, AECOM** and **Arcadis** removed eligibility periods to access employer funded paid parental leave.
- With the introduction and promotion of non-gendered parental leave, the following firms experienced an increase in the representation of men accessing the scheme: **Cardno, Jacobs, Douglas Partners, SLR, Northrop, SMEC, Arup.**

Gender equality in society



- **Arup** ensured victims of family and/or domestic violence could access spaces other than home to work during the pandemic where possible.
- **SLR** enhanced paid leave to 10 days across APAC for those experiencing domestic and family violence and rolled out training across the firm.
- **SMEC** introduced 10 days Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave.
- **Douglas Partners** launched a guide for leaders to identify and support employees who experience domestic and family violence.
- **Northrop** updated its Domestic and Family Violence Guide with the "Three R" support model and provided additional support.
- **Jacobs** is monitoring the use and impact of its renewed Family and Domestic Abuse Policy.

Practical actions

Table 1: Practical actions

	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%
Stepping up as Leaders	Leadership Commitment - strategy, action plan, annual review by Board/senior team									
	Leaders' Behaviour - gender equality reflected in expectations of leaders									
	Champions of Change Panel Pledge - commitment by Coalition Member									
Creating Accountability	Gender Equality Targets - targets disclosed and annual public reporting									
	Gender Equality KPIs - in scorecards of Champions' direct reports									
	Gender Pay Equity - audit completed and actioned at least every two years, oversight by Champion									
Disrupting the Status Quo	Merit - systems and structures address "merit trap" in recruitment, promotion, bias									
	Sponsorship - practice expected by Champion of all leaders									
	Flexible work - approach to mainstreaming flexibility									
	Flexible work - approach revised and relaunched in past 12 months due to pandemic									
	Gender Equal Public Face - test external image of organisation for gender equality									
	Everyday Sexism - action to highlight and address									
	Backlash and Buy-In - specific action to address and amplify									
	Sexual Harassment - Board and/or senior team commitment to eradicate and zero-tolerance									
	Sexual Harassment - Board and/or senior team release new policy or relaunch existing policy with stronger commitment									
	Sexual Harassment - Board and/or senior team regular reporting established									
	Sexual Harassment - safety strategies adapted to incorporate									
	Sexual Harassment - review employee education tools, in past year, to help them identify and respond									
	Sexual Harassment - review reporting options for employees impacted									
	Sexual Harassment - build internal support capability or expand relationships with external support services									
Dismantling Barriers for Carers	Parental Leave - flexible access for all parents									
	Superannuation - paid during paid and unpaid parental leave periods									
Gender Equality in Society	Domestic and Family Violence - support for employees, family or friends experiencing									
	Domestic and Family Violence - approach to respond to employees who are or who may be using									
	Domestic and Family Violence - initiatives for positive community impact									
	Future of Work - organisation giving consideration to gender equality									

◆ Complete or currently underway

◆ In plan to commence or complete by 2023

◆ Under consideration



Impact details 2021

Gender balance in leadership, recruitment, graduates, promotions and exits

Table 2: Gender balance in leadership

Consult Australia Group Organisations	Women's Representation (%)						
	Overall Employees	Key Management Personnel	Other Execs / General Managers	Senior Managers	Other Managers	Non-Managers	Board
AECOM	34.8	20.0	24.6	19.2	23.7	39.3	37.5
Arcadis	29.8	60.0	19.4	25.0	21.4	30.4	20.0
Arup	41.6	40.0	25.7	30.8	27.7	44.5	12.5
Aurecon	38.4	25.0	20.9	18.6	28.3	43.4	33.3
Cardno	30.2	50.0	33.3	26.8	19.4	30.6	40.0
Douglas Partners	20.9	0.0	33.3	0.0	23.5	21.4	0.0
GHD	32.3	26.7	29.7	33.1	15.0	33.6	50.0
Jacobs	30.9	35.0	29.6	28.4	26.9	31.6	33.3
Northrop	31.5	0.0	-	13.0	14.6	36.4	28.6
SLR	36.0	25.0	-	16.7	50.0	37.1	25.0
SMEC	26.9	12.5	30.0	22.7	24.7	27.4	0.0
Consult Australia Group Totals	33.4	25.0	25.6	21.9	24.0	35.4	28.0

Note: For Aurecon, the data for "Key Management Personnel" and "Other Execs / General Managers" categories includes the WGEA categories "Head of Business" and "Key Management Personnel / Head of Business".

◆ Gender balance achieved
(40%-60% women's representation)

◆ Unchanged since 2020

◆ Moving closer to gender balance since 2020

◆ Not applicable

◆ Increase in under-representation of women
since 2020

Table 3: Gender balance in recruitment, retention, promotions and exits

Consult Australia Group Organisations	Recruitment & Retention			Promotions	
	Women graduates (%)	Women hires (%)	Women exits (%)	Women promotions (%)	Overall women's representation at end of period (%)
AECOM +	-	43.5	40.4	39.0	34.8
Arcadis	65.8	31.3	37.9	40.3	29.8
Arup +	-	43.3	42.9	44.2	41.6
Aurecon +	-	43.4	37.8	39.2	38.4
Cardno	26.8	27.1	29.7	26.9	30.2
Douglas Partners	-	18.2	23.9	29.2	20.9
GHD +	-	37.8	32.3	34.7	32.3
Jacobs	32.8	30.7	25.3	27.3	30.9
Northrop	34.8	32.8	19.0	25.0	31.5
SLR	-	36.4	44.9	35.4	36.0
SMEC	49.0	37.2	28.1	32.4	26.9
Consult Australia Group Totals	43.9	37.3	33.5	36.8	33.4

Recruitment

- ◆ Gender balance achieved (40%-60% women in graduate and overall recruitment)
- ◆ Women graduates or hires under 40% or over 60%, and overall gender balance in the organisation is improving
- ◆ Women graduates or hires under 40%, and overall gender balance in the organisation has not improved
- ◇ Not applicable

Retention

- ◆ Women % of total exits is within gender balance (40%-60% of total exits) and number of total women exits is not more than number of women recruited
- ◆ Women % of total exits is less than 40% or greater than 60% and number of total women exits is not more than number of women recruited
- ◆ Women % of total exits is within gender balance (40%-60% of total exits) but number of total women exits is greater than number of women recruited
- ◆ Women % of total exits is less than 40% or greater than 60% and number of total women exits is greater than number of women recruited
- ◇ Exit data includes resignations only

Promotions

- ◆ Women promotions equal to or more than women's representation overall
- ◆ Women promotions at least 40%, but not equal to or more than women's representation overall
- ◆ Women promotions less than women's representation overall

Gender pay equity

The following organisation in the Consult Australia Group publicly discloses their pay equity gap:

- Jacobs – [UK Government reporting](#)

Flexible and inclusive employment experiences

Table 4: Access to flexible work and experiencing an inclusive culture

Consult Australia Group Organisations	Flexible Work <i>Percentage of employees reporting they have access to the flexibility they need</i>			Inclusive Culture <i>Percentage of employees reporting they have an inclusive employment experience</i>		
	Women	Men	All	Women	Men	All
AECOM	96.0	95.0	95.0	79.0	81.0	80.0
Arcadis	96.0	94.0	94.0	90.0	93.0	91.0
Arup	88.0	94.0	91.0	-	-	-
Aurecon	94.6	91.9	93.3	91.3	90.3	90.8
GHD	85.0	83.0	84.0	-	-	72.0
Jacobs	91.0	91.0	91.0	81.0	79.0	80.0
SLR	-	-	-	-	-	91.0
SMEC	86.9	81.9	83.3	-	-	-
Consult Australia Group Averages	91.1	90.1	90.2	85.3	85.8	84.1
Consult Australia Group Averages (adjusted)	90.3	89.3	89.4	85.5	86.0	85.5

Note: Adjusted averages represent Group membership and reporting that are common in 2020 and 2021.

◆ Improved since 2020

◆ Not improved since 2020

◆ Not reported in 2020

◆ Data not available

Table 6: Sexual harassment – respect and safety at work

Consult Australia Group Organisations	Percentage of employees who believe that their organisation takes a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment			Percentage of employees who believe that at their organisation it is safe to raise issues of sexual harassment without fear of victimisation or negative career implications		
	Women	Men	All	Women	Men	All
AECOM	86.0	92.0	89.0	79.0	86.0	82.0
Arcadis	97.0	97.0	96.0	90.0	89.0	87.0
Arup	85.0	91.0	90.0	-	-	-
Aurecon	92.0	96.6	94.8	-	-	-
GHD	89.0	92.0	91.0	-	-	-
Jacobs	93.0	95.0	95.0	83.0	85.0	84.0
SLR	-	-	91.0	-	-	91.0
SMEC	85.8	93.5	90.7	-	-	-
Consult Australia Group Averages	89.7	93.9	92.2	84.0	86.7	86.0
Consult Australia Group Averages (adjusted)	90.3	94.2	92.9	86.5	87.0	85.5

Note: Adjusted averages represent Group membership and reporting that are common in 2020 and 2021.

◆ Improved since 2020

◆ Not improved since 2020

◆ Not reported in 2020

◆ Data not available

Table 5: Exits during or at the end of parental leave

Consult Australia Group Organisations	Percentage of employees (of those who took parental leave) who left their organisation during or at the end of their parental leave in the past year		
	Women	Men	All
AECOM	0.0	1.2	0.7
Arcadis	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arup	3.0	0.0	3.0
Aurecon	4.0	0.0	2.0
Cardno	7.0	0.0	2.5
Douglas Partners	10.0	0.0	13.0
GHD	0.0	0.0	0.0
Jacobs	2.0	3.4	2.4
Northrop	0.0	0.0	0.0
SLR	1.0	0.0	5.0
SMEC	8.0	10.0	9.0
Consult Australia Group Averages	12.2	1.3	3.4
Consult Australia Group Averages (adjusted)	3.2	1.7	2.3

Note: Adjusted averages represent Group membership and reporting that are common in 2020 and 2021.

◆ Improved since 2020

◆% Not improved since 2020

◆ Not reported in 2020

Shared Care: Overcoming Gendered Norms

As part of fostering inclusive workplaces, Champions of Change Consult Australia Members have been working to overcome outdated gendered norms that hold both women and men back. Part of that is highlighting and celebrating stories of fathers accessing 'shared care' parental leave.

"Shared Care Parental Leave" offers equal access of up to 16 weeks parental leave for either parent. It has provided fathers the opportunity to build stronger bonds with their newborns (and their siblings) and given greater peace of mind to mothers returning to work.

The focus on addressing gendered norms reflects evolving societal attitudes, and the results of a national survey conducted in 2021 revealed most Australians now believe parenting should be shared equally.¹ This followed pre-COVID studies indicating 83% of millennial dads believe family is more important than career,² and 79% want to work flexibly and choose their hours.³ It's an important initiative given Australia has one of the least generous and most globally gendered parental leave policies in the OECD, perpetuating a male breadwinner/female carer culture.

Shared parental leave helps to address stereotypes. In survey undertaken by the Champions of Change

Consult Australia Group in 2021, one in four women reported experiencing or witnessing discriminatory comments related to role stereotyping and assertions that career and caring don't mix.

Providing all parents with equal opportunity to share care and career is contributing to improved work-life balance, stronger relationships, better mental health outcomes – all of which contributes to enhanced employee engagement.

If I could choose one thing to change (in support of gender equality), it would be for caring responsibilities to be shared equally between men and women.

Elizabeth Broderick AO
Founder, Champions of Change Coalition

“

While awaiting the arrival of our daughter, some of my colleagues in the same situation were reticent to access their full parental leave. I reminded them, “work will always be here, but the first months of a child’s life will never come back again”.

My experience exceeded all expectations. I enjoyed six months of leave from the time my daughter turned one. We had lots of fun baking, cooking and cleaning the house to the beat of nursery rhymes. We discovered all the parks and cafes in our neighborhood, explored fresh food markets and had picnics on the grass.

When I came back to work my job was still there, I hadn't missed any opportunities and my colleagues held the fort. Now, no one can tell if I was away for two weeks, three months, or six months...well, that's not true... some can: My daughter and me.

Pau Arevalo Vilanova, *Senior Associate Engineer- Geotechnics, SMEC*



”

¹ ABC Australia Talks. 2021 national survey of 60,000 Australians from every federal electorate across all states and territories.

² Neilson survey 2017. Survey of 900,000 Australian millennial fathers.

³ Diversity Council of Australia, 2016



“ Parental leave provided so much more than just precious time with a baby. It really helped me appreciate the extent of “invisible” work that women have traditionally performed; it allowed my wife to pursue her career with purpose; and on my return it helped foster a positive change in the culture of our workplace.

Ben Anderson
Technical Director, Environment
GHD”

“

Having the chance to just concentrate on learning to be a dad without any work stresses or distractions was an amazing opportunity. Weekday hangouts and mini adventures were so much fun and really helped us bond. Our time together went way too fast!

Nathan Archer
Principal, Environmental Assessment and Management, SLR Consulting”



“

SLR’s parental leave allowed me to spend priceless bonding time with my daughter during her first year and allowed my wife to return to her career much sooner than she would have otherwise.

Duncan Barnes
Principal, Civil and Structural Engineering
SLR Consulting”



“

We’re so grateful for shared care because it permitted our partners to return to work full-time, gave us valuable time with our kids and didn’t hinder our career advancement.

Trevor Chiang – Asset Strategies team,
Engineers and **Adrian Kho** – Geoscience team
Cardno”



”



“Raising my kids is a responsibility I shoulder equally – it comes with the perks of all the fun times including being there for all the ‘firsts’. It’s also only fair that my wife has the opportunity to progress in her career, especially since this is the second time she has had to take a break.”

Anoop Sridhar

Principal Engineer, Traffic, AECOM



“I’m so grateful for the opportunity to spend invaluable time with my son Rupert of the past few months.”

Shared Care is a fantastic initiative and really has given me an entirely new perspective on life and the possibilities of a parent who is the primary caregiver.

Nicholas Moore

Lead Spatial Consultant, Aurecon

“Like SLR, my husband’s firm provides shared parental leave. He’s recently taken over care of our beautiful daughter Calli as I’ve returned to work. It’s helped me feel extremely comfortable knowing she’s in the best hands and they can enjoy this wonderful time together.”

Romi Hoffenberg

People and Culture Business Partner, SLR Consulting



“I knew the parental leave policy existed, but I hadn’t thought about if and when it would be appropriate for me. To be honest, I was hesitant to hit pause on my career, particularly after a role change. However, conversations with Rowenna Walker and Katrina Dawson made me think – ‘if it’s not now, then when?’ They really encouraged me to take parental leave, and I’m so grateful to have spent this time with my son, Diego.”

Daniel San Martin, *Design to Innovate Partner, Aurecon*



“Telling friends and family that I am in the midst of 12 weeks parental leave is met with gasps and questions. “Paid?! As a father?!”

The privilege provides me the opportunity to build a stronger relationship with my daughter, to support my partner’s transition back to work, and an appreciation of the emotions, challenges and priceless moments encountered as a full-time parent. I would strongly recommend that those offered shared leave to grasp it wholeheartedly.

Ronnie Paulus, *Principal Engineer – Transport and Advisory Team, AECOM*



“ Parental leave with my daughter was unforgettable and something no father should miss. My wife’s confidence in me as a Dad grew, it restored balance to my life, and it renewed my focus at work in way that was quite different from simply returning from a holiday, I felt more purposeful. An additional bonus of being offered a vast amount of time at such an important moment was the opportunity to slow down and take stock of your life as a mature adult which isn’t so common in Australia.

Glen Clifton, Senior Engineer- Rail, SMEC

”



“ First day of my 16-week secondment doing a challenging, but rewarding role being a stay-at-home dad! Thank you Cardno for this opportunity to access paid parental leave, allowing me to hang out with my wee girl and make my wife’s transition back to work easier!”

Andy Johnston
Senior Principal, Transport and Advisory,
Cardno

”



“

The increased time I’ve been able to spend with my wife and children has strengthened our bonds and provided many special moments. Stigma exists though, reducing the likelihood of men accessing parental leave and flexible work. That’s a shame. Be the change!

Anthony Druc, Project Manager, Jacobs

”



“ I took 14 weeks parental leave when my youngest was 8-months old and my wife was returning to work. It was full-on and daunting at first, but a truly magical time for me and the family. I would strongly encourage anyone who has this opportunity to access it.

Killian Courtney
Team Leader Roads & Highway
Design, SMEC

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“

I had the privilege of caring for our son, allowing me to experience both the success and challenges my partner faced in the first 9 months of Madi’s life. It’s been so special to witness his development over this period; he’s growing more capable and independent every day. I would recommend this to any future parent and appreciate SMEC for having provided me the opportunity.

Russell Whiting
Project Manager, Survey, SMEC

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Fostering **safe, respectful and inclusive** workplace cultures



Keynote speaker Alison Mirams (Roberts Co) with Consult Australia Champions of Change members. Louise Adams (Aurecon), Phil Duthie (GHD), Richard Barrett (AECOM) and Will Wright (Douglas Partners)

On 25 August 2021, Champions of Change Consult Australia hosted the 4th annual industry event with the theme “Can we leverage a crisis to create safe and inclusive workplaces?” The following are highlights from the event, a courageous conversation regarding the prevalence and persistence of workplace sexual harassment and what we can all do to create safer, more respectful cultures.

Nicola Grayson, CEO, Consult Australia opened the session:

“Earlier this year, workplace culture took centre stage when allegations of impropriety in our nation’s capital prompted a 100,000-strong March for Justice. It launched a national conversation regarding the need for workplace reform and a laser-like focus on the 55 recommendations put forth in the Australian Human Rights Commission Respect@Work report. The question we’ll explore today:

“Can we leverage a crisis to create safe and respectful workplaces?”

In her opening remarks, **Louise Adams**, COO, Aurecon and Chair of the Champions of Change Consult Australia spoke of the prevalence, source and impact of sexual harassment:

“2 in 5 women experience workplace sexual harassment. An uncomfortable truth. In many cases, the abuse starts early. Let me share the story of a bright, young woman who aspired to become an engineer. Her dreams were thwarted when she endured sustained bullying and harassment at one of Australia’s leading engineering schools. She suffers ongoing mental health issues that impact her every day.

“The proposed regulatory and legislative reforms in the Australian Human Rights Commission Respect@Work report are critical and welcome. And as a society, we must work to interrupt sexist behaviours before they become entrenched.”

“As a parent raising a young boy, I want him to have every opportunity to grow up happy and healthy, with deep respect for himself and others. And that means critically questioning damaging and outdated sexist norms.”

Phil Duthie, COO, GHD spoke of the critical role leaders play in creating safe and respectful cultures.

“It’s not enough to mandate zero-tolerance, it’s essential leaders understand the source of traditional, often sexist, beliefs and behaviours and the impact they have on peers, and our partners.”

“From my own reflections, I realised my traditional upbringing (working dad, caregiver mum) informed my beliefs around the roles I expected my wife and I to play. I had to confront these views when my wife decided to go back to school. At GHD, all our senior men participate in a program exploring their own influences, the impact of gendered norms and self-determine solutions to overcome them.

Richard Barrett, CEO, AECOM ANZ addressed the role of power dynamics in sexual harassment and the need for more women in senior leadership to disrupt it.

“In scrutinising our talent processes to determine where bias might impact hiring, we learned: in ‘sole source’ offers, often based on referrals, 100% of hires were men; where we used a formal open process, 41% of hires were women; where we had at least one female candidate, female hires increased to 47%; where a recruitment agency was engaged, female hires dropped to 23%.

“Today, all our hiring goes through an open process, we continue to use diverse hiring panels and we’re working with our recruitment agencies to ensure they’re across our diversity strategy and goals.”

Will Wright, Managing Director, Douglas Partners commented on the under-reporting of sexual harassment (only 17% report) and the importance of creating psychologically safe environments and processes.

“Years ago, we learned women were uncomfortable to report sexual harassment given most of their managers and the Head of HR were all blokes. Consequently, we set up a support group of senior women to whom incidents can be directed.

“Since then, we’ve worked to create a psychologically safe workplace informed by our values of safety and respect. We’ve created a space for people to ask questions and to call out behaviours that are unsafe or disrespectful. In a case involving a young female engineer on site, it was a peer who called it out. In our new employee orientation, I make it clear sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

Reflecting on the fact that one in three people witness sexual harassment yet only one-third intervene, **Phil** shared his views on what can be done to overcome the bystander effect.

“First up, this is a leadership responsibility and one that can’t be delegated.

“Our words and actions define what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and contributes to workplace culture. Preventing inappropriate behaviour starts with us.”

“Intervention to end inappropriate behaviour is also key. We must act respectfully when and where it occurs and follow up with both the victim and the perpetrator – the former to ensure they’re okay, the latter to explain the source and impact of sexist behaviours. It’s more effective than mandating behavioural change.”

Returning to the relevance of increasing women in leadership to help end sexual harassment, **Richard Barrett** spoke of the importance of formal sponsorship programs for emerging female leaders.

“Now in its third year, the program pairs senior executives with high-performing women in our business. As executive ‘sponsors’ we help them build business networks and advocate on their behalf for career opportunities.

“Sponsorship helps to overcome bias, level the playing field and ensure women have equal opportunity for advancement.”

Keynote **Alison Mirams**, CEO, Roberts Co spoke to the contributions of and challenges within the Construction industry, along with encouraging news around vital cultural reform.

Construction - the third largest sector employer in the country - generates over \$360 million in revenue and comprises nine percent of GDP. In the sector employees are six times more likely to die from suicide than workplace accidents, divorce is common

and presenteeism is a problem. Women comprise only 12.7% of the industry, less than two percent of tradespeople are female and the gender pay gap is the second highest in the country at 29.4%. As Construction is part of the broader Infrastructure ecosystem, these statistics are highly relevant to Champions of Change Consult Australia Members.

In 2021, Roberts Co led a study comparing the effects of five- vs six-day work week to address these issues. The shorter work week that most Australians take for granted produced positive results: decreased fatigue, better work life balance and improved family relationships.

Whilst Alison has faced some pushback from those resistant to change, she’s not giving up. Better mental health outcomes for workers, a more gender equal industry and satisfied clients serve to strengthen her resolve.



Our thanks

The work of the Champions of Change Coalition is continuously informed and inspired by feedback and ideas from our staff and the hard work of our Implementation Leaders who support and advise each Champion of Change and Convenor with their expertise and drive for gender equality. Our Implementation Leaders for the Consult Australia Group are as follows:

Organisations	Implementation Leaders
AECOM	Lisa Cronk
Arcadis	Amy Cotterell
Arup	Abbie Wright
Aurecon	Penny Rush
Cardno	Keren Gifford
Douglas Partners	Amy Singh
GHD	Stuart McLean
Jacobs	Fiona Rose
Northrop	Stephen Troilo
SLR Consulting	Leonie Kerley
SMEC	Kate Campbell
Program Director	Coleen MacKinnon

Appendix

Standardised occupational categories for managers
(Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency)

Key management personnel (KMP)

In line with Australian Accounting Standards Board AASB124, KMPs have the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of an entity, directly or indirectly. This includes any director (executive or otherwise) of that entity.

A defining feature of KMPs is their influence is at the entity level. KMPs are likely to direct the strategic function of their section and are often functional heads, such as head of operations or head of finance. They represent at least one of the major function of an organisation and participate in organisation-wide decisions.

For corporate groups, KMPs will have authority and responsibility across the entire structure.

Other executives/general managers

Other executives and general managers are responsible for a department or business unit within an entity. In large organisations, they may not take part in organisation-wide decisions with the CEO. Alternatively, they may take part in those decisions to share expertise or develop projects, but not have the entity-level or corporate group authority that would make them a KMP.

Senior managers

Senior managers are responsible for one or more functions, departments or outcomes for an entity. They are more likely to take part in both the strategic and operational sides of management, including resourcing, budget and assets (capital expenditure). Some of their decisions need approval from a higher-level manager.

Other managers

Other managers are responsible for operational functions. They oversee day-to-day work, following and enforcing their entity's defined parameters. They may be responsible for strategies, policies and plans to meet business needs for their areas of work. They often manage time, financial and other resources, and assets such as facilities or IT infrastructure. They may also coordinate different functions or people. Line managers belong to this category, but supervisors do not.



Men stepping up beside women on *gender equality*

For more information about the Champions of Change Consult Australia Group contact:

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About the Champions of Change Coalition

The Champions of Change Coalition includes CEOs, secretaries of government departments, non-executive directors and community leaders who believe gender equality is a major business, economic, societal and human rights issue. Established in 2010 by Elizabeth Broderick AO, our mission is to step up beside women to help achieve gender equality and a significant and sustainable increase in the representation of women in leadership.

championsofchange.org

Thank you to Troy Roderick, Director, Strategic Initiatives and Insights, Champions of Change Coalition, who led the development of this report.

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