Workplace Diversity Strategy

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Contents

Version control

Version	Date	Author/Reviewer	Summary of changes	Status
V1.0	5 February 2010	Human Resources	New policy	Final
V1.1	31 October 2011	Human Resources	EA amendments	Final
V1.2	27 November 2012	Human Resources	Accessibility requirements	Final
V1.3	June 2013	Human Resources	Review	Final
V1.4	21 April 2016	Governance	EA amendments	Draft
V2.0	March 2021	People and Strategy	Review	Draft
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V3.2	June 2021	Director	Endorse/Signature	Final

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1. General information

MoAD is committed to providing a supportive, inclusive and respectful work environment that recognises and values the diversity of all its employees.

The workplace diversity strategy acknowledges that every employee, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity or cultural background, sexual orientation, disability, religious belief, political affiliation, socioeconomic origin, or family responsibilities can make a valuable contribution to achieving business outcomes.

The strategy constitutes, but is not limited to, MoAD's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles.

2. Workplace diversity

The diversity of MoAD's employees is one of its greatest assets. Recognising the value of a diverse workforce is the basis of workplace diversity. It involves valuing the differences in every employee in the workplace and developing a culture where the diverse backgrounds, skills, talents and views of all employees and those seeking employment with MoAD are recognised, valued and encouraged.

Workplace diversity also embraces employment equity where persons seeking employment with MoAD receive fair and equitable treatment, where employment decisions are based on merit and where all employees can work in an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

EEO principles remain a legislative requirement ensuring the elimination of discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people with disabilities. While retaining these principles the concept of workplace diversity takes on a broader focus where the inherent differences in every employee are valued.

3. Strategy

MoAD promotes an environment where fairness and equity is encouraged and supported and where all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying are eliminated.

MoAD will achieve this objective by implementing the following strategies and plan (refer Attachment A):

1. Raise awareness of and promote workplace diversity in MoAD.
2. Integrate the principles of workplace diversity into business and human resource management policies, practices and systems.
3. Encourage employees to identify and maximise use of their life skills and experiences in the workplace.
4. Encourage managers to recognise and draw on the diversity of their employees.
5. Ensure employees are not subjected to discrimination or unfair treatment in the workplace on grounds such as, ethnicity, race, gender, age, physical or mental disability or personal responsibilities.
6. Uphold and promote the APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct whilst continuing to work towards eliminating all forms of harassment and bullying in the workplace.

7. Ensure employees and those seeking employment with MoAD receive fair and equitable treatment in accessing employment opportunities, employees selection processes, career development and mobility arrangements.
8. Promote a work–life balance to be recognised by all managers and employees.
9. Support the use of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

MoAD measures its success by:
- the extent to which flexible work practices are utilised to balance work and personal responsibilities
- monitoring the number of reported grievances and incidents of harassment or bullying
- comparing its data with service wide diversity data
- monitoring the extent to which diversity issues are raised as a concern in exit interviews.

4. Responsibilities

All employees have an ethical and legal responsibility to maintain an environment that is safe, respectful and productive. All employees have the right to be treated fairly within the workplace in an environment that recognises and accepts diversity.

MoAD's responsibilities

- promote workplace diversity, comply with relevant legislation, address barriers and engender a culture of valuing diversity
- be proactive in eliminating all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying
- comply with anti-discrimination legislation to prevent and eliminate any employment related disadvantage attributable to race, colour, gender, sexual preference, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, religion, political opinion, national extraction, or social origin
- consult with employees in developing and maintaining workplace practices that provide flexibility for employees to balance their work and personal commitments
- ensure selection committees adhere to the Employment Principles and apply workplace diversity in selection processes, and consider issues of diversity.

Employees responsibilities

- maintain appropriate standards of ethical behaviour, conduct and performance in accordance with the APS Values, Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct
- comply with anti-discrimination and workplace diversity legislation
- treat each other with courtesy and respect and foster good working relationships;
- draw on the diverse backgrounds, skills and talents of other employees and focus on areas where these attributes may be enhanced and of value to the working environment
- listen to the views of others without prejudice
- commit to eliminating all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying in the workplace.

Manager responsibilities

- display a positive commitment to workplace diversity and encourage and support employees to manage their work and personal life style commitments
- model the APS Values, Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct

- use the performance management process to maximise the diverse qualities of employees in the workplace
- deal with inappropriate behaviour in the workplace
- seek a diverse range of views and encourage all employees to contribute
- adhere to the merit principle and apply workplace diversity in selection processes, and ensure issues of diversity are considered.

Benefits

Workplace diversity strategies help to build MoAD's relationship with the community, enhance the contribution of its employees and improve the quality of its programs, products and services.

Workplace diversity creates a more inclusive and supportive work environment, better team work and more effective client service delivery. It increases productivity, encourages greater creativity and different ways of thinking for improved decision making.

5. Diversity Groups

Minority groups

For the purpose of this strategy minority groups include but are not limited to:

- LGBTIQA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual (and can include many other terms, such as non-binary and pansexual)
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- women in senior leadership roles
- members of racial, ethnic and ethno-religious minority groups
- people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Objectives

In addition to the overall objectives of this strategy, MoAD supports the delivery of the following key objectives:
- ensure people from a minority group have equal access to employment opportunities
- ensure people from minority groups are supported in developing the necessary skills required to effectively and efficiently perform their duties
- establish a workplace culture that values and respects the contributions of minority groups and employees from these minority groups
- ensure MoAD is free from discrimination and workplace harassment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the traditional owners of the land and their rich and diverse cultures are amongst the oldest continuing living cultures in the world.

Objective

In addition to the overall objectives of this strategy, MoAD supports the delivery of the following key objective:
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples working in MoAD and equipping them with the skills required for a long term career within MoAD and more broadly the APS.

MoAD's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) outlines MoAD's vision for reconciliation as one where an improved general awareness of the culture and history of Australia's First Peoples

will contribute towards greater understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australians. Through the RAP we will build better organisational understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories.

Mature aged employees

Age discrimination in the workplace is a very real but often hidden problem. MoAD recognises the Government's desire to create, as far as practicable, an ageless workforce based on talent, skills, experience and willingness to work. MoAD will, as far as practicable, remove the potential barriers to employment faced by mature age people (55 and over).

Objectives

- implement flexible working arrangements and providing a strategy that facilitates continued workforce participation
- promote an environment where mature aged employees can openly and honestly discuss issues related to balancing their work and personal life with their manager
- remain approachable to maintaining and building productive working relationships with mature employees, colleagues and their managers.

6. People with disability

Like all employees, people with disability can bring a range of skills, talents and abilities to the workplace. MoAD will, as far as practicable, remove potential barriers to employment faced by people with disability (see also Recruitment and selection guidelines).

Objectives

- Ensure recruitment processes are accessible to applicants with disability, including accepting applications in different formats, allowing sufficient time for people with a disability and ensuring selection criteria does not unnecessarily exclude applicants with a disability.
- Undertake an assessment of the access requirements for employees with a disability to ensure the reasonable adjustments they require to premises and to the workplace are being met.

7. Reporting requirements

MoAD is required to report on workplace diversity outcomes in the annual report and provide diversity information to the Public Service Commissioner at the end of each financial year for inclusion in the Commissioner's State of the Service Report.

8. Workplace Harassment and Diversity Officers (WHDO)

The role of the WHDO(s) is to:
- provide information and support to anyone who may be involved in a harassment and/or diversity related matter
- provide information only to managers and employees on processes available to resolve complaints
- advise on types of behaviours which are inappropriate at work, in line with the APS Values, Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct.

WHDO(s) do not resolve complaints; it is the responsibility of management to address harassment and or diversity complaints received.

In general, information provided to the WHDO(s) will not be passed on without the person's consent. However there may be occasions where WHDO(s) have a responsibility and duty of care to advise management, such as situations where the safety and well-being of other employees may be at risk. Where it becomes apparent that a person is discussing a matter that may have to be so referred, the WHDO(s) will raise with the person the issue of confidentiality and the possibility of being obliged to pass on the information to management.

MoAD's workplace harassment and diversity contact officer's details can be found on the intranet under key contacts.

Supporting documentation

Age Discrimination Act 2004
APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Old Parliament House Enterprise Agreement 2017-2020
Public Service Act 1999
Racial Discrimination Act 1975
Reconciliation Action Plan
Sex Discrimination Act 1984
Workplace Harassment and Bullying Guidelines

Attachment A

Workplace Diversity Strategy - current and future actions committed and agreed to in the Diversity Strategy

MoAD strategies	Action
1. Raise awareness of and promote workplace diversity in MoAD.	➢ Offer Cultural Awareness training to all employees. ➢ Promote Reconciliation Australia through MoAD's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). ➢ Promote and celebrate Harmony Day. ➢ Incorporate Indigenous and disability issues into learning and development programs. ➢ Offer harassment free workplace training to all employees.
2. Integrate the principles of workplace diversity into business and human resource management policies, practices and systems.	➢ Ensure recruitment and selection processes including selection panel training, incorporates diversity principles for flexible, fair and equitable outcomes. ➢ Advertise employment vacancies through various media to attract a wider range of applicants. ➢ Integrate the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles into the MoAD Recruitment & Selection Policy. ➢ Encourage employees to be aware of, and committed to, workplace diversity principles.
3. Encourage employees to identify and maximise use of their life skills and experiences in the workplace.	➢ Encourage diverse representation in decision-making forums. ➢ Allow employees to take part in networking and corporate committee/project opportunities. ➢ Offer mobility opportunities to all employees.
4. Encourage managers to recognise and draw on the diversity of their employees.	➢ Actively encourage employees to contribute their ideas and provide opportunities for employees to participate in workplace discussions and decision-making. ➢ Ensure diversity principles are integrated into everyday management practices.
5. Ensure employees are not subjected to discrimination or unfair treatment in the workplace on grounds such as, ethnicity, race, gender, age, physical or mental disability or personal responsibilities.	➢ Employees are made aware of the *Workplace Harassment and Bullying guidelines* and the *Suspected Breaches of the Code of Conduct policy*. ➢ Promote Performance Management and Respect workshops - available in house for all employees. ➢ Promote Workplace Harassment & Diversity (WHD) Officers. ➢ Promote Employee Assistant Program (EAP).

MoAD strategies	Action
6. Uphold and promote the APS Values, Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct whilst continuing to work towards eliminating all forms of harassment and bullying in the workplace.	➢ Employees are made aware of the new APS Values, Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct guidelines. ➢ Informing all employees of their role and responsibilities in creating a positive work culture within their workplace. ➢ Employees are made aware of the Workplace Harassment and Bullying guidelines and *Suspected Breaches of the Code of Conduct* policy ➢ Promote Workplace Harassment & Diversity (WHD) Officers. ➢ Promote Employee Assistant Program (EAP).
7. Ensure employees and those seeking employment with MoAD receive fair and equitable treatment in accessing employment opportunities, employee selection processes, career development and mobility arrangements.	➢ Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles integrated into the MoAD Recruitment and Selection Policy and information readily available on the Website and or other means. ➢ Disability Action Plan initiatives implemented to enable people with disability access and/or to participate in MoAD activities. ➢ Identify and remove any possible barriers to attracting and employing Indigenous people, people with disability and people from non-English speaking backgrounds. ➢ All recruitment actions are available to employees, including higher duties, temp transfers and job rotation.
8. Promote a work–life balance to be recognised by all managers and employees.	➢ Ensure employees are aware of options to help them balance work and personal responsibilities. ➢ Promote school holiday programs ➢ Ensure Managers/Supervisor support and encourage employees to balance their work and personal lives.
9. Support the use of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).	➢ Ensure current information and website links on intranet. ➢ EAP access is communicated to new employees through induction. ➢ Topical or new information is emailed to employees as it comes to hand.