



SOUTHERN
METROPOLITAN
CEMETERIES TRUST

GENDER EQUALITY



PROGRESS REPORT

AS AT 30 JUNE 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our cemeteries and memorial parks are located, the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation, and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

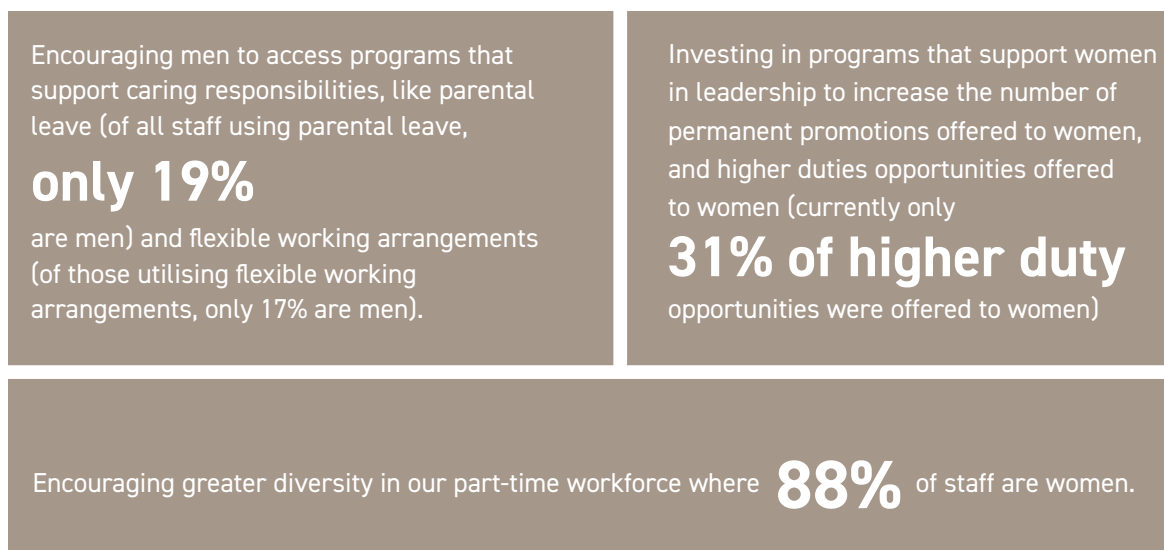
Executive Summary

Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (SMCT) is firmly committed to creating an equitable, diverse and inclusive environment for our employees and customers. We recognise improving gender equality, and our Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), is an integral part of this commitment. The GEAP advances our organisational commitment to gender equality, embedding equitable and intersectional approaches within our operational framework. As we enter the midpoint at our GEAP timeline (2022-2025), this report highlights our strides towards gender equality, recognises areas for further attention and outlines our approach for ongoing initiatives. In recognition of our commitment towards gender equality, we have increased the size of our dedicated team. In addition, SMCT's current annual and 3-year strategic plans have a clear emphasis to advance our efforts in achieving our GEAP and deliver on Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs).

We are encouraged by the progress we have made based on the data in the reporting period, including:



However, SMCT is continuing to invest in our GEAP initiatives to address the following items:



Data is fundamental to helping us understand our current working environment and, by extension, how we can then improve. The People Matter survey provides us with useful insights through additional demographic data regarding carer responsibilities, LGBTIQ+ status, disability status and cultural background which is not captured in our existing systems. We will actively encourage all employees to complete the People Matter survey in future years as we would like to see a higher participation rate. However, we are moving in the right direction (93 people in 2021 and 144 in 2023).

We are taking sustainable steps toward building the capability of leaders to lead inclusively and promote diversity and equity. This includes SMCT Capabilities ratings for end-of-year performance reviews, interviewing and unconscious bias training, and LGBTIQ+ education.

While SMCT has made improvements in increasing the number of women in operations teams and men in administrative and customer service roles, it is evident from the SMCT workforce report that there is still a need to drive these trends further. We intend to do that with several initiatives, such as developing a transition-to-retirement program and partnering with third-party providers to increase our access to untapped and underrepresented talent pools. In addition, the People team has commenced workforce planning and development workshops with our larger teams, and formal succession planning will be commencing in FY2025 with recently developed frameworks and templates.

Engaging all employees, especially men, in conversation about gender equality is paramount. We are committed to creating a psychological safe workplace where men are encouraged to access supports like flexible working arrangements, parental leave and feel secure in their workforce. It is fundamental for the safety of all that men are encouraged to be allies for the women and non-binary people and others who may experience biases in the workplace. This is an ongoing effort to foster a culture of mutual support, and allyship for the betterment of all at SMCT.



Overall SMCT has had significant success in working towards its goals under the GEAP. However, we recognise that to sustainably embed our success, continued action is required.

This will include adopting systems to measure and collate demographic data and implementing a new HR information system.

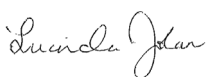
Future progress reports will show the wide array of Financial Year 2024 Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) currently underway, including:

- Reviewing our Community Care and Wellbeing program
- Reviewing company-run events for the community
- Building our first microforest
- Re-designing our website
- Developing the masterplans for our sites

In addition to the next steps within our GEAP mentioned above, SMCT is in the process of:

- Finalising the 3-year business strategy which embeds diversity, equity and inclusion emphasis to meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve, and to attract and retain a diverse workforce, reflective of our customers.
- Developing our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy and roadmap to support the business strategy.
- Commencing an organisational culture review to shape the values, behaviours and expectations of our employees to achieve a fully and sustainably inclusive environment.

With foundational work now taking shape and showing positive impacts, we look forward to sharing future achievements and employee and customer improvements in our next progress report.



Lucinda Nolan
Interim CEO

