



# Our five-point plan

**As part of our submission, we've developed a five-point plan – a roadmap for addressing sexual harassment at work. We recommend legislative change, strengthened victim-centric responses and tailored prevention programs that promote cultural change and respectful workplaces.**

## **1 Acknowledge sexual harassment is a symptom of gender inequality and a form of violence against women**

---

Responses to sexual harassment should address its root causes, including discrimination, stereotyping and other gendered attitudes.

Existing programs and strategies that address violence against women should include a focus on sexual harassment.

A robust gender equality law that promotes substantive equality at work should be enacted and integrated into a national prevention strategy with dedicated investment.

## **2 Strengthen the legal framework and reduce the burden on victims to enforce the law**

---

Anti-discrimination commissions should be empowered to conduct own-motion investigations and inquiries into sexual harassment at work (as well as other matters of public interest), to shine a light on systemic issues related to sexual harassment, without the need for victims to come forward with a formal complaint.

A breach of employers' positive duty in the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* to prevent and eliminate sexual harassment (as well as discrimination and victimisation) should be actionable and the Commission's previous compulsion and enforcement powers reinstated (including the power to compel the production of information or documents, seek enforceable undertakings and issue compliance notices).

Regulators with oversight of sexual harassment should continue to work cooperatively to share information and provide effective support and referrals to victims. Regulators and employers should work together to build capacity in relation to sexual harassment, including as a work health and safety issue.

## **3 Develop and invest in best practice victim-centric dispute resolution**

---

Further investment in anti-discrimination commissions' enquiry and dispute resolution services is needed to address barriers to reporting and enable the timely, flexible and transparent resolution of complaints.

Anti-discrimination commissions should offer restorative justice pathways for victims and

be resourced to develop user-designed online platforms, improve data collection and pilot anonymous reporting.

Time frames for lodging complaints should be extended to six years.

## **4 Address the heightened vulnerability of some groups to sexual harassment**

---

Some people are more vulnerable to sexual harassment at work than others. For example, women with disabilities and women from multicultural and multifaith groups, alongside lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people, may experience multiple and related forms of sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation at work.

Research is needed to better understand sexual harassment against diverse and

marginalised groups and promote their needs.

Models for reporting sexual harassment should be accessible to everyone and allow people to report anonymously.

Programs and strategies to address sexual harassment at work should include a focus on groups with a heightened vulnerability to sexual harassment and be built into broader workplace diversity strategies.

## **5 Support workplaces to create respectful cultures and prevent sexual harassment**

---

User-designed educational packages tailored to workplaces' unique circumstances provide the best opportunity to create cultures that reject sexual harassment.

Education packages should include carrying out policy health checks, delivering and

evaluating training at every organisational level, equipping managers to develop and implement action plans with robust and measurable goals, addressing backlash, supporting bystanders and ensuring continuous improvement.