



United Workers Union

Gender Equity Action Plan Response Ambulance Victoria, 2026

Purpose

Ambulance Victoria's base salary pay gap has worsened (from 9.9% to 10.5%). Women workers at Ambulance Victoria earn roughly 10% less than men and would need to work 13 months to earn what men earn in 12.

For total pay, the gap has improved slightly (from 15.1% to 14.7%) but the gap is still larger than the base salary gap. Women working at Ambulance Victoria earn roughly 15% less overall, meaning they need to work roughly 14 months to match 12 months of men's pay.

While the median gap is low at 1.8%, the reality is that the overall pay gap is being driven by senior roles where the gap has significantly increased from 9.4% to 28.3%. This shows that inequality is concentrated at the top of Ambulance Victoria.

The purpose of this proposal is to outline United Workers Union (UWU) members' expectations for Ambulance Victoria's next Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). Ambulance Victoria's GEAP must deliver clear, enforceable commitments that achieve tangible outcomes for women, and measurable progress towards closing the gender pay gap.

Ambulance Victoria's proposed GEAP presented to UWU on 25 March 2026 relies on non-accountable measures such as additional research, awareness campaigns, and internal education initiatives.

UWU members seek to ensure that the GEAP holds measurable actions that can address structural inequities and deliver measurable outcomes for women.

UWU Position

United Workers Union (UWU) supports a Gender Equality Action Plan that delivers practical, measurable, and sustainable change.

Current data indicates that gender inequality within Ambulance Victoria is shaped by structural and cultural factors. Women are underrepresented in senior leadership roles, which is a key reason why the pay gap exists.

Achieving equity at Ambulance Victoria will require:

- Clear, achievable targets tied to accountability
- Systemic reforms to remove barriers for women
- Active leadership from men to improve workplace culture and behaviours



UWU's position is that gender equality is not solely a women's issue. It requires organisational ownership, with a focus on leadership and workforce groups where current imbalances are most evident, such as within Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance (MICA).

Key Recommendations

UWU Priorities for inclusion in the Ambulance Victoria GEAP:

- Set Targets for Increased Participation in MICA
- Set Targets for Gender Balance within Identified Areas Appendix B Benchmark data (2021-2025)
- Conduct a Pay Equity Assessment of Roles of Equal or Comparable Value
- Develop Initiatives to Upskill Women through Mentoring
- Develop and Implement an EDI Contact Officer Program
- Build Male Leaders Who Champion Workplace Behaviours
- Establish Formal MICA Mentoring Program
- Increase Secondary Carers Leave
- Develop a Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Review and Reform Dispatch Practices
- Pilot Shared Workforce Models
- Mandatory Training for Senior Leaders on Barriers Face by Women
- Implement Solutions to Rostering FWAs in MICA
- Decentralise MICA Training
- Ensure MICA Stream One Funding

Indicator Responses

INDICATOR 1: Gender composition of all levels of the workforce

Women are often underrepresented in leadership roles and overrepresented in lower-level roles. This contributes to the gender pay gap and means that organisations may be missing out on the expertise and skills of women at senior levels.

By collecting and reporting data on gender composition at all levels, organisations can see where they could benefit from greater gender diversity and take action to support women into senior roles.



- Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector

Whole-of-Workforce Recommendations:

Conduct a leadership audit of identified areas within Appendix B Benchmark data (2021-2025) to understand if there are gender gaps within leadership and management positions.

- Managers 41% women
- Technicians and Trade Workers 12% women
- Clerical and Admin Workers 70% women
- Machine Operators and Drivers 20% women

Based on the findings, set targets to achieve within the life of the GEAP, and support women into leadership and management roles through structured initiatives.

MICA Recommendations:

Support women into senior roles through accountability measures.

- Set a gender representation target and report on data in MICA and publish annual progress reports
- Commit to co-designing initiatives with union and workforce representatives
- Include mid-term (2-year) and final (4-year) reviews of progress against targets

INDICATOR 3: Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender

While women, men, and gender diverse workers are being remunerated for the same pay for the same job at Ambulance Victoria, systemic undervaluation persists within the organisation due to women's work being clustered into lower-paid functions.

Segregation drives pay inequality.

Whole-of-Workforce Recommendations:

Set targets for occupational gender balance within areas identified within Appendix B Benchmark data (2021-2025) through strategic initiatives to upskill workers through structured mentoring programs and career pathway design.

- Managers 41% women
- Technicians and Trade Workers 12% women



- Clerical and Admin Workers 70% women
- Machine Operators and Drivers 20% women

Conduct a comprehensive assessment of roles predominantly held by women against male dominated roles of equal or comparable value to identify and address inequalities in classification, remuneration, and progression.

Report on progress to the workforce and unions over the life of the GEAP.

INDICATOR 4: Sexual Harassment in the workplace

Sexual harassment is underreported at Ambulance Victoria. 58% of people didn't submit a formal sexual harassment complaint because they "didn't think it would make a difference" (People matters Survey 2024).

The gender analysis of reports/complaints of sexual harassment received by PSBD since 5 June 2023 found that 61% of complaints were made by women and 90% of respondents were men.

Since most respondents in sexual harassment cases at Ambulance Victoria are men, this is an issue where men's actions and workplace culture among men play a key role, and where men can make the biggest difference in preventing it.

Ambulance Victoria holds a positive duty to prevent sexual harassment through the GEAP.

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) review into Ambulance Victoria provided **Recommendation 9 Implementation of Contact Officers and Local Champions Network**.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Contact Officers is an achieved outcome of enterprise bargaining the Management and Administrative Agreement (AVMA), 2025.

Within one year of the commencement of the agreement, Ambulance Victoria is to develop and implement an EDI Contact Officer program.

Whole-of-Workforce Recommendations:

Develop targeted initiatives to build male leaders who champion workplace behaviours and support others to call out sexual harassment.

Implement an EDI Contact Officer program across the corporate and operational workforce with a dedicated Program Lead to support the effective operation, oversight, and continuous improvement of EDI Contact Officers.

Conduct a review of training and education programs regarding gendered violence in the workplace, equity and inclusion, racism and discrimination to ensure all workers receive mandatory, **in-person training** regarding Ambulance Victoria's zero tolerance policy.



INDICATOR 5: Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace

Union members have reported that a persistent challenge within corporate support roles, particularly in administrative roles at Ambulance Victoria, is a lack of investment in their professional development.

Whole-of-Workforce Recommendations:

Set clear, targeted goals to increase women's professional development in identified work areas.

Ensure managers utilise a structured Professional Development and Assessment Program (PDAP) to support the development of women in support roles.

Establish an inter-agency secondment program for women in corporate roles identified as emerging leaders.

Report to unions on the number of secondments undertaken and outcomes for career progression pathways.

MICA Recommendations:

Increase the number of women entering and progressing through the MICA program.

- Set clear recruitment targets for women entering the MICA program annually
- Introduce early identification and fast-tracking mechanisms for ALS clinicians (particularly women) who have completed the MICA Graduate Diploma
- Develop a targeted recruitment strategy to increase women in MICA beyond the current PDAP process
- Deliver regular recruitment information sessions (online and in-person) outlining:
 - Application process
 - Career pathways (MICA, ALS Flight, etc.)
 - Flexible work options
- Provide all applicants with:
 - Clear timelines
 - Information on legal rights to flexible work
 - Available support systems

Improve MICA uptake and progression of women through better support, transparency, and workplace culture.

- Establish a formal mentoring program, pairing Senior Leaders with women in, or aspiring to join, MICA



- Set participation targets and report annually on outcomes
- Improve transparency regarding:
 - Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) during and after training
 - Career progression pathways
- Build organisational awareness of flexible training options, ensuring these are actively promoted and normalised
- Conduct regular staff engagement surveys to assess barriers faced by women in MICA and track improvement over time

INDICATOR 6: Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to: family violence, flexible working arrangements, and working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities

Research finds that increasing secondary carers' leave supports women's career progression by encouraging shared caregiving responsibilities and enabling greater participation in leadership and development opportunities.

Whole-of-Workforce Recommendations:

Increase Secondary Carers Leave within the Operational Enterprise Agreement and the Management and Administrative Agreement.

In collaboration with unions, develop a Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

MICA Recommendations:

Remove operational barriers that prevent women from participating fully in MICA.

- Codesign new flexible work arrangements within the MICA program with workforce representatives and unions
- Review and reform dispatch practices to ensure they do not disadvantage workers with flexible arrangements
- Pilot workforce models, such as:
 - Shared MICA supervision roles across regions
 - Flexible rostering configurations outside of standard practice



Ensure that leadership actively supports and enables gender equity in MICA.

- Implement mandatory training for Senior Leaders on:
 - Gender bias and its impact on career progression
 - Barriers faced by women in MICA
 - Their obligations to actively support and champion gender equity
 - Introduce KPIs tied to measurable improvements in women's participation and retention in MICA
 - Flexible work rights and implementation
 - Reasonable Adjustments
- Develop and implement guidelines requiring regular flexibility discussions between leaders
- Require leaders to:
 - Proactively identify and implement flexible solutions to rostering across MICA, particularly for those on FWAs
 - Consider reasonable adjustments in all workforce planning
 - Utilise accountability measures (e.g. KPIs) tied to gender equity outcomes in MICA

INDICATOR 7: Gendered Segregation within the workplace

Organisations can use data on their workforce composition to see which roles and areas have more women or more men and consider how to achieve better gender diversity.

- Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector

Whole-of-Workforce Recommendations:

Utilise the current gender breakdown data to establish work areas that require greater diversity within corporate support roles.

Set targets and strategies to increase diversity.

MICA Recommendations:

To achieve better gender diversity within MICA, redesign the MICA training model to remove structural barriers to women's participation.

- Undertake a gender equity review of the MICA training model and implement reforms within the first 2 years



- Decentralise training delivery to ensure equitable access across metropolitan, regional, and rural areas
- Enable cross-regional training access to support flexibility and participation
- Increase the availability of rural-based training opportunities

Ensure access to funding, development opportunities, and participation pathways for women in MICA.

- Commit to ensuring all eligible MICA participants have full access to Stream One funding
- Establish targeted investment benchmarks to increase women's participation in MICA (e.g. % increase over 4 years)
- Pilot and evaluate flexibility-focused initiatives
- Publicly report annually on funding allocation and participation rates by gender

[END]