



## United Workers Union

# Gender Equity Action Plan Proposal Triple Zero Victoria, 2026

### Purpose

The Gender Equality Act 2020 requires defined entities to:

- Consult with employee representatives in preparing a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)
- Make reasonable and measurable progress against gender equality indicators

Triple Zero Victoria's GEAP is due 1 May 2026.

Despite the commission's advice that consultation commence in December 2025, the United Workers Union (UWU) was only provided with a one-page data summary on 10 March 2026 and asked for written feedback.

This does not constitute genuine or meaningful consultation.

### **Consultation must:**

- Be timely
- Provide sufficient information
- Enable workers and unions to influence outcomes before decisions are made

UWU has advised Triple Zero to seek a submission date extension to meet gender equity planning requirements under the act.



## UWU Position

This proposal reflects:

- Workers' lived experience
- Identified systemic issues
- Evidence-based solutions

It is intended to ensure that Triple Zero Victoria's GEAP is practical, credible, and effective.

## Key Recommendations

Immediate priorities for inclusion in the TZV GEAP:

- Implement a Victim-Centred Reporting System
- Train HSRs in Gendered Violence and Family Violence
- Establish a Contact Officer Program
- Appoint a Contact Officer Program Lead
- Implement the Leave Access Working Group (by 1 July 2026)
- Increase baseline staffing levels to enable leave access
- Develop a Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Introduce 12 Days Reproductive Health Leave
- Establish an Interagency Secondment Program
- Commit to genuine consultation with unions



## Indicator Responses

### INDICATOR 2: Gender Composition of Governing Bodies

#### **Objective**

*Increase leadership commitment to gender equality and intersectionality.*

#### UWU Clarification Sought:

- What reviews of policies, systems, and processes have been completed?
- What changes have resulted from these reviews?

#### **Learning & Development**

*Ensure an inclusive and gender equitable Learning Centre Environment.*

#### UWU Clarification Sought:

How has gender equity been embedded into:

- Training materials
- Assessment practices
- Trainer capability

#### **Women in Leadership Band 5+**

*Achieve gender Equality for Band 5+ positions.*

#### UWU Clarification Sought:

The 2021 - 2025 GEAP outlined a need to increase women in Information Technology roles (i.e. Emergency Communication Information Services – ECIS), with only 12% senior leadership roles held by women in this area.

- What progress has been made since 2021?
- What is the current representation of women in ECIS roles?



- What initiatives support women in IT pathways?

### **Career Progression**

*Continue to identify High Potentials to undertake leadership development training, support with Development Plans, with the aim of attracting a broader gender and intersectional representation.*

### **UWU Clarification Sought:**

- What does the employee development plan process involve?
- Has an Executive Leadership Secondment Program been implemented?
- If yes, what are the participation rates and outcomes?

## **INDICATOR 4: Workplace Sexual Harassment**

### **Objective**

*All team members are committed to a workplace free from sexual harassment, bullying & discrimination.*

*Ensuring our employees who are either impacted by or experience domestic or family violence are supported.*

### **UWU Findings:**

The People Matters Survey outlines that:

- 149 TZV workers reported bullying
- 92 experienced sexual harassment
- Only 7 workers made formal reports

**Key issue from survey:** TZV workers lack trust in reporting systems.

### **UWU Recommendations:**

System Reform



- Undertake an independent external review of TZV reporting systems
- Establish a representative oversight committee

#### Reporting Improvements

- Provide multiple reporting pathways (including anonymous)
- Apply a trauma-informed, victim-centred approach

#### Workforce Capability

- Train HSRS in:
  - Gendered violence
  - Family violence
  - Legal obligations
  - External support services for victims
- Implement a [Contact Officer](#) Network

#### Governance

- Appoint a Contact Officer Program Lead
- Report on deidentified outcomes to the workforce
- Evaluate for continuous improvement

## INDICATOR 6: Leave and Flexibility

### **Objective**

*Strive to ensure that flexibility is embedded and seen as business as usual, so our people feel supported and empowered to successfully manage work and life commitments.*

### **UWU Findings (Leave Arrangements)**

TZV workers face significant barriers to accessing leave, particularly at short notice.

This creates:

- Fatigue and burnout
- Increased exposure to cumulative trauma
- Occupational health and safety risks



This disproportionately impacts women:

- 65% of the operational workforce are women
- Women are more likely to require flexible and short notice leave

This constitutes indirect gender discrimination.

## UWU Recommendations

- Establish the Leave Access Working Group (by 1 July 2026) Refer to:
  - Clause 18 of the EBA
  - Section 13 - *Access to Leave* within the Heads of Agreement
- Increase baseline staffing levels
- Develop a Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Increase secondary carers leave
- Provide unions with the default flexibility policy

## UWU Recommendation: Reproductive Health Leave

Reproductive and related health issues can have a significant physical and psychological impact on employees, directly affecting their capacity to participate fully in the workforce. Across the course of their working lives, a substantial proportion of employees, particularly women, will experience reproductive health conditions. Chronic conditions such as endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) are associated with increased absenteeism, presenteeism (where employees attend work but are unable to perform at full capacity), underemployment, and, in some cases, premature exit from the workforce.

Research indicates that menopause contributes to early retirement and reduced workforce participation. Approximately 40% of perimenopausal women report depressive symptoms when seeking primary healthcare, which can significantly impact work performance and attendance at work. National estimates suggest that around 20,000 Australian women transition from full-time to part-time work, and a further 10,000 temporarily leave the workforce, as a direct result of menopause-related challenges.

Despite these well-documented impacts, reproductive health is not adequately addressed through existing leave provisions. Introducing 12 days of Reproductive Health Leave, alongside



genuinely flexible working arrangements, would provide employees with the capacity to attend preventative health screenings, manage symptoms, and maintain consistent workforce participation.

Importantly, this initiative is not only a health and wellbeing measure, but a strategic gender equality intervention. Embedding Reproductive Health Leave within organisational policy:

- Reduces stigma associated with reproductive health challenges
- Supports retention and workforce participation of women and gender-diverse employees
- Contributes to closing the gender pay gap
- Improves productivity by reducing presenteeism and unplanned absenteeism

While this entitlement is not currently available through the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, there is a clear opportunity for Triple Zero Victoria to implement Reproductive Health Leave through organisational policy, pilot programs, or discretionary leave frameworks within the Gender Equality Action Plan.

Providing dedicated reproductive health leave demonstrates a proactive commitment to duty of care obligations, including the prevention of sex-based discrimination and the promotion of safe, inclusive workplaces. It positions Triple Zero as a leader in gender-responsive workforce policy and aligns directly with gender equality objectives and legislative expectations.

The new Ambulance Victoria Management and Administrative Agreement provides workers with Reproductive Health Leave, as does the Victorian Public Sector (VPS) Agreement.

## INDICATOR 7: Gendered segregation within the workplace

### **Objective:**

*Strive for gender Equality and intersectional representation across all occupations within ESTA.*

### UWU Clarification Sought

- Which specific cohorts of the workforce have TZV have been targeted for recruitment and secondment arrangements to grow the skills of internal women at TZV?
- What have the internal awareness initiatives looked like?



## UWU Recommendations

- Establish an inter-agency secondment program and report on:
  - Number of secondments
  - Outcomes and career pathways

## Indicator Unknown: Consultation, Monitoring & Reporting

### **Objective:**

*Develop monitoring and evaluation framework for Gender Equality Action Plan over the next 4 years (2021 – 2025).*

## UWU Recommendations

- Develop a GEAP timeline with multiple consultation points
- Embed co-design with workers and unions
- Use unions as a standing consultation partner
- Provide regular progress updates to workers and unions

## Conclusion

Triple Zero Victoria must take a collaborative and transparent approach to the development and implementation of its Gender Equality Action Plan.

This requires:

- Working in genuine partnership with workers and unions as key stakeholders
- Providing clear and timely responses to all matters where clarification has been sought
- Engaging in ongoing, two-way consultation throughout the lifecycle of the GEAP

To meet its obligations under the Gender Equality Act 2020 and deliver meaningful change, Triple Zero Victoria must take concrete, measurable action.

This includes:

- Implementing the recommendations put forward by the United Workers Union



- Addressing identified systemic barriers impacting women and gender-diverse employees
- Embedding accountability through transparent reporting and evaluation mechanisms

A GEAP that is co-designed with workers, informed by lived experience, and backed by tangible actions will not only meet compliance requirements; it will drive real progress toward a safer, more equitable and sustainable workplace.