

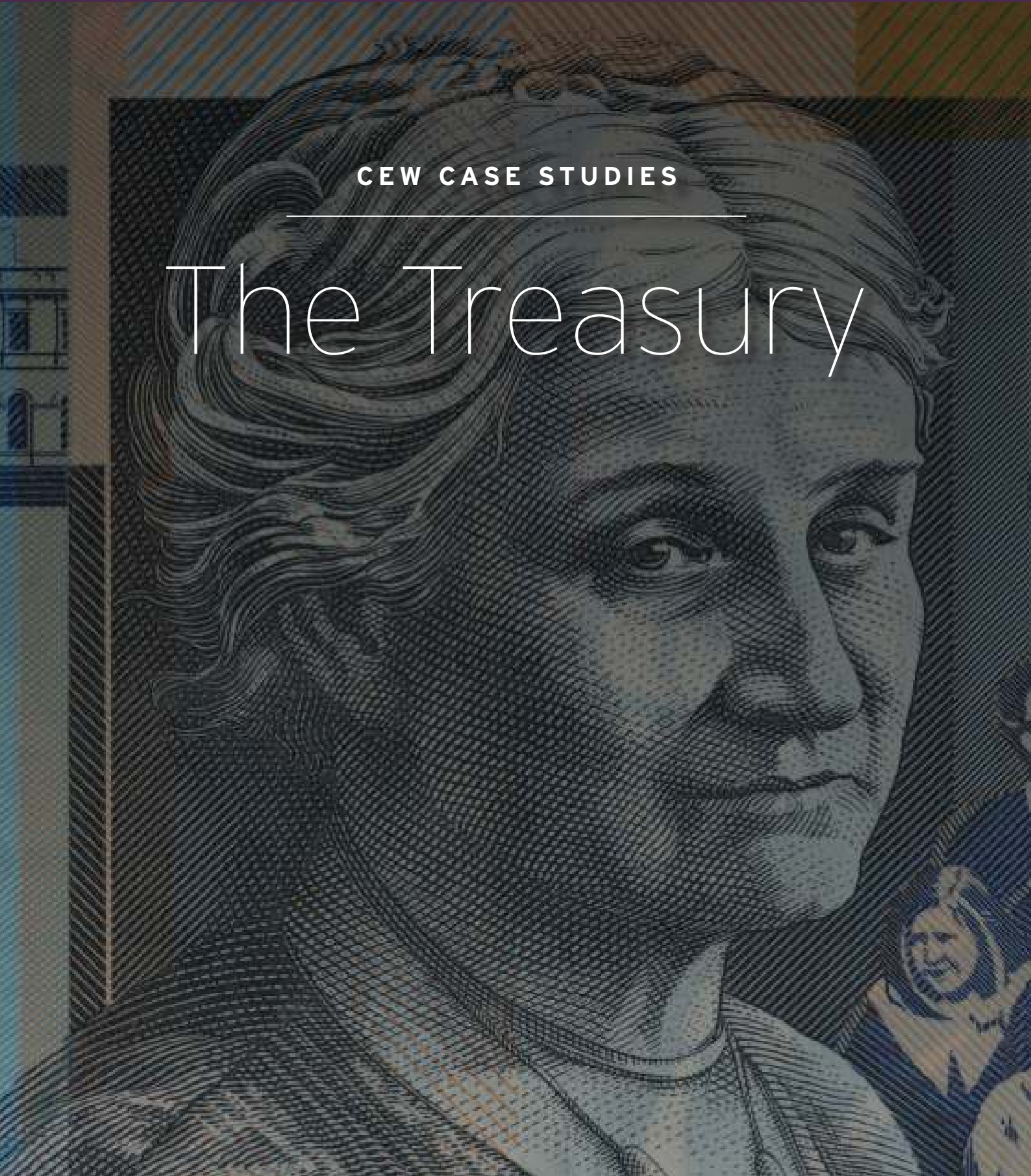


Chief Executive Women

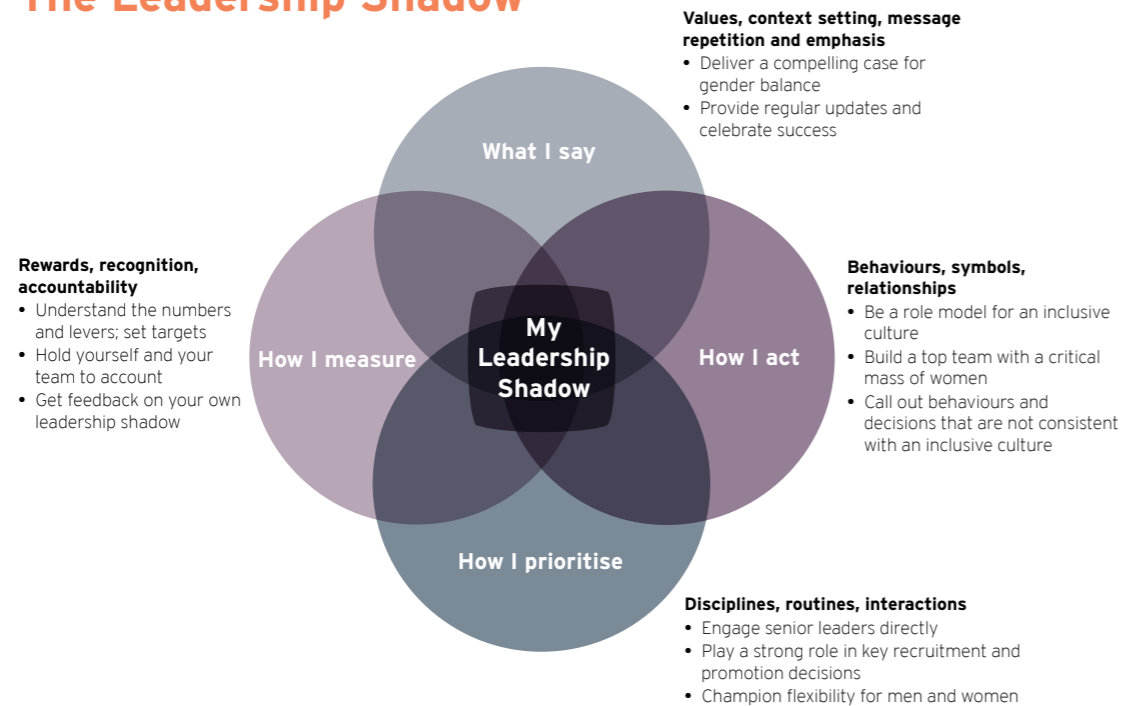
Women leaders enabling women leaders

CEW CASE STUDIES

The Treasury



The Leadership Shadow



What is a CEW case study?

Chief Executive Women has undertaken a series of case studies analysing the genuine progress made in a number of organisations in Australia. This analysis has been undertaken in response to strong feedback from organisations which bought and used a key Chief Executive Women tool: the Gender Diversity Toolkit (formerly known as the CEO Toolkit). To produce this case study, Chief Executive Women undertook a series of detailed interviews with a range of Treasury employees, members of Chief Executive Women and external experts and commentators as well as a detailed review of the policies, practices and outcomes at the Treasury.

The Leadership Shadow:

In 2013 Chief Executive Women collaborated with the Male Champions of Change, a group established by Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick made up of CEOs from some of Australia's leading private and public organisations. The group is committed to changing the unacceptably low number of women in leadership in Australia. Chief Executive Women worked with the Male Champions of Change to create a model called the Leadership Shadow, which helps leaders everywhere to listen, learn and lead by understanding the impact of their personal actions on creating gender balance.

The model's key elements - what I say, how I act, what I prioritise and how I measure - have been used in this case study.

Introduction

The Treasury is the Australian government's central economic policy agency, providing advice to the Treasurer and other Treasury Ministers. Treasury is engaged in a range of issues from macroeconomic policy settings to microeconomic reform, to social policy, as well as tax policy and international agreements and forums. Treasury works with a 'whole-of-economy' perspective, understanding government and stakeholder circumstances, and responding rapidly to changing events and directions' (<http://www.treasury.gov.au/About-Treasury/OurDepartment>).

The Department is divided into five groups: Fiscal, Macroeconomic, Revenue, Markets, and Corporate Strategy and Services.

Treasury employed 881 people as at 30 June 2014, with most working in the Canberra hub and a small number based internationally. Women make up 49 per cent of this total, and 33 per cent of Senior Executive Service (SES) rank (with women at SES Band 1: 33 per cent; SES Band 2: 36 per cent; SES Band 3: 29 per cent at 30 June 2014).

Because of its pivotal role in government, and the intellectually demanding and technical nature of many roles, there is strong competition for graduate entry and indeed all roles in Treasury. The department has been long regarded as a prestigious and even elitist workplace attracting

the cream of economics and finance graduates. It's also sticky - many who join choose to spend their entire career in Treasury, with their work a vocation, and many describing their workplace as a 'family'. But historically, Treasury also had a reputation for employing a narrow cohort of professionals - the Treasury 'type'. The workplace atmosphere, according to feedback from those both inside and outside Treasury, was perceived to be professional, conservative and very clubby - dominated by introverted intellectuals rather than alpha males.

"It was a very male place where...there was one way of operating." *External female*

"Walking into Treasury is like walking into a chess club. It's a different kind of masculine culture." *Male EL2*

Myths about Treasury, its practices, people and norms circulated (see box).

Some of these continue to have an impact on the progression of women in the Department.

In early 2011, former Deputy Secretary of Treasury, Dr Martin Parkinson was appointed as Secretary having returned from heading the Department of Climate Change from 2007. In his four years away, Dr Parkinson had built the Department of Climate Change from scratch, creating a team with diverse technical expertise and experiences. Dr Parkinson, in his earlier Treasury career, had been concerned about the low number of female SES and on his return was struck by the limited improvement that had occurred despite reasonably balanced numbers of male and female graduates and previous efforts to build a pipeline of women for the most senior roles over many years.

“At Treasury, we’d focussed on addressing the symptoms not addressing the underlying problem.” *Dr Martin Parkinson*

“Men and women had allocated roles. But Treasury now has to create an internal system which is more reflective of the way culturally Australia works now.” *External female*

A number of senior executives both within and outside the Department also recognised that

MYTHS ABOUT TREASURY

The ‘cleverest little agency in town’ syndrome

This is a meritocracy - talented people automatically rise

The tribal norms - the mythical Treasury ‘type’ starts as a graduate and has perfect technical skills above all

Robust debate and intellectual jousting means anyone with ideas can be heard and valued

Pay and promotion practices are always fair and transparent

Flexibility is not a career de-railer

Smart individuals are more important than teams

The mantra ‘whatever it takes’ is what it means to identify as Treasury

Treasury is a family - we all feel like insiders

Treasury had seen little change in the number of women progressing to the top. There is increasing demand for advice from Treasury that reflects shifting social, political and economic trends, and a ‘new normal’ - responses at short notice rather than the more predictable rhythm of operation in the past.

A broader set of skills is now needed to succeed in Treasury, as many of those interviewed for this report pointed out. Technical expertise must be combined with agility, adaptability and sophisticated communication skills. Awareness of the breadth of talent to meet this emerging

demand is growing and means a shift away from more traditional skills. This has meant the low rates of senior women and progression of female graduates in Treasury has become much more than just an HR concern. As Dr Parkinson himself made it clear, it is a risk to future capability.

“Treasury has to change... More interconnectedness is required than ever and Treasury is being asked to deal with new issues all the time. And the graduate pool is changing... the cohorts are becoming more diverse.” *Female EL2*

“We need to adapt working style to the ‘new normal’. Just working harder will not work and is not sustainable. There’s nowhere near as much ‘certainty’ in what we need to do to respond to the government of the day than before. We need to adapt to having fewer people, more ambiguity and uncertainty. That means job sharing, improved teaming, better personal resilience...”

The quality is not different, but the way we get there is different.” *Female SES*

In mid-2011, a report analysing data on the recruitment, retention and progression of women in the Department was released. The results were stark and surprising. Rather than showing that women took longer to progress through each level of seniority, stalled by long absences due to child bearing as many had presumed, it was clear that women and men progressed in relatively equal terms until they hit EL1 level, two steps before reaching SES.

After that crucial point, the numbers of women progressing plummeted. Treasury sought expertise from outside the Department (a significant change in itself) to conduct employee consultations to examine the opportunities and challenges faced by Treasury women. The findings revealed systemic and behavioural gender bias and a range of examples of overt sexism which sent shock waves through the Department.

“I remember very clearly hearing the findings with my Executive Board, and Nigel Ray turned to us and said “we are not leading the organisation we thought we were leading”. The Executive Board was bound together on this issue from that moment onwards. We could see clearly why we were having difficulty holding onto women in Treasury.” *Dr Martin Parkinson*

These findings were the basis for a series of steps taken by the Treasury Executive Board - the senior leadership team - to identify and address a range of structural and cultural factors contributing to the slow progress of women, which collectively became known as ‘the Progressing Women Initiative’ (PWI).

While the impact of the PWI continues to emerge, the latest data shows increasing levels of women employed at EL1/EL2 and SES by mid-2014.

The increase in senior female leaders comes not just from changes to policy and processes but a significant shift in attitudes. For Treasury, one of the key challenges was always going to be gaining intellectual acceptance of gender imbalance as a core problem

affecting the 'what' Treasury delivers, as well as the 'how'. This has significant ramifications for a workforce that has typically prided itself on its objectivity and excellent 'conceptual and analytical' skills: a belief that you can think your way out of any challenge had become a part of Treasury's identity. While this too is a work in progress, signs of success are on the increase.

In 2012 Dr Martin Parkinson joined the Male Champions of Change group, established by Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick in 2010 and made up of CEOs from some of Australia's leading private and public organisations. The group is committed to changing the unacceptably low number of women in leadership in Australia. In 2013 Male Champions of Change collaborated with Chief Executive Women to create a model called

the Leadership Shadow, which helps leaders everywhere to listen, learn and lead by understanding the impact of their personal actions on creating gender balance.

The model's key elements - what I say, how I act, what I prioritise and how I measure - have been used in this case study. A series of detailed interviews were also conducted with a range of Treasury employees and external experts and commentators.

environment - to take a detailed reading of the Department's climate as well as the policies and practices that affected women. The process of collecting detailed information about the status of women in Treasury at times produced some

		2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
EL1	Total Staff	220	211	210	215	213
	Total Female	99	103	108	110	111
	% Female	45%	49%	51%	51%	52%
EL2	Total Staff	208	200	181	186	179
	Total Female	78	79	76	81	80
	% Female	38%	40%	42%	44%	45%
SES	Total Staff	96	97	87	90	90
	Total Female	22	21	21	22	30
	% Female	23%	22%	24%	24%	33%

Stage 1: What I say

The first steps in Treasury's renewed commitment to progress women had to come from the top. But before Dr Martin Parkinson could send a clear message on what was needed and why, it was essential - particularly in a data-driven

startled, and even incredulous, reactions from both men and women.

Many, particularly those that had progressed to senior levels, held firm beliefs that Treasury was a smoothly oiled meritocracy which inherently and consciously identified and valued talent. The employee survey findings and other data suggested otherwise. Feedback in the form of consistently low numbers of women in senior ranks and bias in practices left a number of executives feeling they could barely recognise their own organisation.

"I was taken aback, like the rest of my colleagues, but not as much. I had been worrying about this issue for a long time. I didn't like what we found, but it was a relief to have found the issue." *Dr Martin Parkinson*

The senior team was very surprised by the information: "We don't see ourselves as these unfair people." *External female*

"The research shone a light on the issue, and the evidence we needed to hear came from our junior female colleagues. There was a disconnect between our experience

and theirs. We didn't recognise that there was a strong male culture, and that younger females didn't want it, and it inhibited their ability to advance." *Female SES*

Along with internal analysis, the research by an external consultancy revealed a series of problem areas with men largely believing slower career progress for women was due to family responsibilities while women saw many other barriers impeding their progress. These included the dominant communication and leadership style; the "at all costs" approach to delivery; and the assumption that the most talented people would be promoted based on applications received to advertised positions. Practices such as individuals being 'tapped on the shoulder' to take on opportunities, such as special projects, only acted to reinforce these barriers.

Gender bias in some systems had been normalised so it was difficult for men and women to even recognise much less address. Although available as an option, electing to work flexibly was regarded as a career de-railer. Detailed analysis of career progression found women were pigeon-holed early on as great team leaders, and less actively seeking opportunities to broaden and deepen their policy experiences. This was inadvertently creating negative assumptions about women's skills and abilities particularly in the core areas measured in performance management and an impact on women's promotion rates to SES.

Despite a level of shock and denial, the focus from the leadership team and the clear results

meant the need to act was taken seriously. The external consulting report was delivered to the Executive Board in mid-2011 and soon after Dr Parkinson spent two hours addressing all staff about the issue and the results, and taking questions. He made it clear the commitment was non-negotiable, telling his audience, "if you think I am on a frolic and you can wait me out, then you are wrong".

"The lid's been lifted - all of a sudden we have permission to change things and to talk about these issues." *Female SES*

It was soon apparent that the message sent that day to the entire Department was a circuit breaker. Instead of dictating strategy, the leadership team asked each group to provide a plan for progress which addressed concerns in their own environment. Dr Martin Parkinson stressed the need for strong data analysis, which appealed to many Treasury employees given that it was "the Treasury way", but made it clear accountability rested with a broad group of managers and influencers throughout the ranks and not just the top team. Improved gender balance was positioned as a strategic business issue and not as a feel-good HR exercise. A number of initiatives were soon established across the Department, with some trial and error inevitably producing important lessons for further success.

In late 2011, an Inclusive Workplace Committee (IWC) was established as a decision-making body, to guide and monitor the development and implementation of longer-term strategies. The

IWC is chaired by the Secretary and includes all members of the Executive Board, plus a mixture of men and women across different levels and Groups in the Department.

Critically, two women with experience in prominent leadership roles external to Treasury, Sue Vardon from the public sector and Rachel Cobb from the private sector, were asked to join the IWC, bringing experiences and perspectives to the table and an opportunity to challenge and hold the mirror up to long held cultural beliefs and practices. The IWC develops the program for the PWI, including milestones and reporting mechanisms to staff. Nigel Ray, Executive Director of Fiscal Group, is the Progressing Women sponsor, and his involvement emphasised the commitment of the most senior ranks to tackling the issue as a core operational challenge.

The PWI has five areas of strategy focus: leadership, governance and accountability; workplace policies; training and networks; performance assessment and career development; and measuring success.

The case for change enunciated by Dr Martin Parkinson began to percolate into different strategies across groups. The message was clear - don't wait for orders from above, it's your workplace and everyone plays a role in finding out how to change it. Each of the five Groups in Treasury were asked to present analysis and a plan. Fiscal Group, led by Nigel Ray, was the first to respond to the challenge, establishing a high benchmark with a keen analysis of, and frank disclosure about, areas of concern and priorities for change.

Stage 2: How I act

One of the most striking discoveries as Treasury tackled this issue was the lack of awareness about which specific personal behaviours, and aspects of Treasury processes and systems created a culture which, in Dr Martin Parkinson's words, "struggled with gender". This was an emotional as well as an intellectual challenge, and it became clear that Treasury needed external expertise and guidance. Again in Dr Martin Parkinson's words, there was a "sense that conversations that conveyed important information happened between men, in a way that excluded women and some men".

Unrecognised bias training focuses on helping individuals to be mindful of the impact of personal behaviours on others (especially when in groups), detecting patterns in those behaviours and connecting those patterns to outcomes. Unconscious bias training was prioritised: Dr Martin Parkinson and the IWC initially attended, followed by SES and EL2 staff and has most recently been rolled out to EL1s. Feedback has been positive with many finding the process challenging but illuminating.

"It doesn't tell you what to do but changes the way you think." *Female SES*

"Unconscious bias training opened a lot of peoples' eyes." *Female SES*

For some men and women in Treasury, unconscious bias training was their first taste of what it feels like to be an outsider within the Department. Cultural change has only been possible as a result of individuals having their own 'aha' moments, and making a conscious decision to act differently. Anecdotes and stories from women were powerful and helped Treasury staff to understand that it was about more than just individuals acting alone, but about spotting the systems and patterns in collective behaviours.

Seeing a willingness to embrace change at the most senior levels gave many in Treasury the courage to participate and permission to challenge the status quo. The gender research revealed there was a real need for women or men throughout the department to be able to call out behaviour that was not inclusive without fear of reprisal, built on awareness of the consequences of failing to do so.

Forthright communication norms were also entrenched in some sections of the Treasury with common use of a 'male' style to argue a case and

less emphasis and reward for a more nuanced and less confrontational approach. This meant women could encounter double standards, with a risk of being labelled bossy if they reflected the dominant male style.

“More leadership development is required. People need to have more conversations and be held accountable for follow-through.”

Male SES

“Letting one person dominate a meeting usually means that we were assuming that one person has all the ideas. Similarly, robust intellectual jousting actually isolated and prevented certain people from participating in the debate. Instead of interpreting this as a sign of weakness or intellectual feebleness, it’s about recognising that it’s just an aversion to competitive confrontation, and that that could be gendered.” *Female EL2*

Stage 3: What I prioritise

The insights gained from unconscious bias training also delivered another organisational benefit: leaders in Treasury (both men and women) quickly understood that it wasn’t enough to identify the problem, they had to do something about it. The lid had been lifted and Treasury had permission to change and to talk about these issues.

“I didn’t think of the gender issue as a taboo previously, but it is funny how these things just don’t come up. Now it always comes up.” *Female SES*

As the PWI developed, and responsibility was delegated to leaders at many levels, a range of strategies was introduced with varying levels of success. But several key planks for the program were quickly identified.

Accountability and transparency

From the launch of the PWI, there has been a strong emphasis on all leaders and managers being accountable for change in their teams and Groups rather than relying on prescriptive direction from above. The need for senior leadership to hold each other accountable was also firmly established. While Treasury has a set reporting structure, many employees reported it is less hierarchical than some other Departments, with decision-making more frequently delegated to lower levels and roles. It was therefore essential that the rationale for cultural change and the means to tackle barriers was not confined to senior ranks.

The key to dispersed responsibility was the deci-

sion for each Group to report to the IWC, and describe the issues they had uncovered. Small cross functional teams drawing from a variety of levels of seniority were formed to prepare each Group report, and outline the proposed steps to address those issues. Actually crunching and distributing the data was a crucial step in galvanising action from individuals and Groups.

“Understanding that the issues might not be the same [for each Group], plus the experience of having to own the problem through [doing] the analysis was invaluable.” *Male EL2*

The IWC’s decision to put all reports and IWC notices on the Intranet allowed a level of transparency described as ‘unprecedented’. Information about hiring/promotions has also been made available to all employees.

“Making information available to the whole Department - hiring, promotions, proportions of performance management allocations - was revolutionary. It has taken a lot of the heat out of the discussions. I love that Treasury can be so honest about what is actually happening, that it is acknowledged and now we are doing something about it.” *Female EL2*

Performance management review

A review of the Performance Management system (PMS) was conducted and a decision made to move the entire department to the Integrated Leadership System (ILS) which until then had only been used for Treasury SES. Treasury had been using a ‘customised’ performance management set of criteria since 1998 which, although

prepared with good intentions, had become interpreted in a way that amplified the preference for technical capability over all other skill sets. While this structural change is continuing, there has been scrutiny of the existing system and a gender bias lens applied. One of the findings was that while graduates were indistinguishable before arriving in the Department, within a short time male graduates were rated higher on average than women in the crucial area of ‘conceptual and analytical’ performance, which is not an explicit feature of the ILS, but embodied in other criteria.

“This change will hopefully break the power of the cult of C&A (conceptual and analytical). Treasury is highly wedded to that criterion.” *Female SES*

Flexible work

An ‘if not, why not’ approach to flexible work requests has been introduced to help challenge biases about working norms. The approach states that all roles may be worked flexibly unless there are business reasons that the proposed arrangements are not suitable. Inspiration for the initiative came directly from Dr Parkinson’s membership of the Male Champions of Change, and exposure to CEO David Thodey’s approach at Telstra. Drawing on ‘typical’ Treasury attributes of competitiveness, and having the benefit of smaller size, on learning about the strides taken at Telstra, Dr Parkinson thought **“I bet we can do it faster than David Thodey can!”** Senior staff who have worked part-time and in other flexible working arrangements participated in open

forums to discuss their experiences as part of a community of practice, and employees were consulted about flexible working arrangements and invited to join a Flexible Work forum.

In 2014, 13 per cent of Treasury male and female staff worked part time, a subset of flexible work arrangements, with around three fifths of these in executive level or SES ranks. Access to job-share arrangements and home-based work has also been offered. Furthermore, a number of staff involved in the Financial Systems Inquiry chose to continue to work flexibly while on the Secretariat. In the past this sort of opportunity may not have been contemplated by staff who work flexible hours or by staff with family commitments.

However, feedback suggests there is a continuing concern that using flexible work practices risks creating a career stigma and more work is needed to identify and address this perception. A core step in this process is for managers to actively co-ordinate teams and work opportunities, rather than corralling high performing individuals and tasks. Treasury has begun formalising this change by introducing a "cluster" model, where staff from different teams can work across groups on a particular topic, forcing teams across Treasury to think more broadly about issues:

"We've always had successful teams in Treasury, focussing on the task at hand. But what we are now better at are elements of the matrix management model. We've formed clusters - and people are accountable for sharing knowledge and drawing out capability in others". *Dr Martin Parkinson*

Work Planning/Allocation

The specialised work of Treasury tended to result in employees being streamed from the beginning of their careers, sometimes inadvertently along gender lines. A number of senior leaders in Treasury noted that female graduates joining Treasury were, on the whole, much more "work ready" than the majority of male recruits.

"Female graduates had the maturity to manage and co-ordinate a range of people and outputs. [Young women] do those roles, get praised for it and get promoted the first few times on the back of it. Then they apply for EL2 promotion and they can't engage with the Selection Committee on policy. Males had depth on policy (because they'd done so much of it having not had the opportunity to develop a broader skill set initially). But on [promotion to EL2 and SES] policy experience trumped all other skills. Then the women would leave because they weren't being promoted." *Female SES*

As part of the PWI, managers were encouraged to think about who was given certain tasks and opportunities to gain certain experience, and look at development options that avoided creating siloes and broadened skills.

"Managers needed to think proactively about who got what work, and look at allocation as more than just a means to an end for Treasury as a Department, but as a development opportunity for people at Treasury too. An understanding that you needed to invest in individuals more broadly." *Male EL2*

Mentoring

Mentoring programs have had mixed results at Treasury. A program was introduced for EL1/EL2 staff but implementation for the SES proved more difficult due to a lack of suitable mentors and the need to change cultural attitudes.

"The original view was that mentoring was remedial. It tied back into dominant cultural attribute of self-sufficiency at all costs/individualism." *Female SES*

The realisation that the leadership skills of managers would drive the success of the program actually emerged after the formal mentoring program was launched. Treasury came to understand that successful mentoring was not going to come from an off-the-shelf program. The ingredients for effective leadership and inclusiveness had to develop organically over time.

Stage 4: What I measure

The emphasis by Dr Martin Parkinson on accountability for all aspects of the women in Treasury program has made measurement of progress a strong focus. Benchmarks were a core requirement for the PWI, with each group establishing their own framework and some basic Department-wide requirements were also established.

For the first time in its history, Treasury introduced gender targets and reporting in 2011. It was the move that Secretary Martin Parkinson agonised over the most, anticipating the ensuing debate about compromising merit and boosting numbers rather than addressing underlying issues. The goal is for 35 per cent women in the SES by 2016 (the current proportion is 33 per cent), with a longer term target of at least 40 per cent.

"The Executive Board were clear that targets were an important part of identifying what success would look like, and keeping momentum focussed." *Male SES*

"We may not hit [our targets], but if we don't, we've given our people permission to call on the Secretary and the Executive Board and demand 'what are you going to do about it?'" *Dr Martin Parkinson*

The reality has been that after the initial debate on announcement, targets have quickly become 'business as usual'. In 2013 Treasury also formally committed to gender reporting using the framework developed jointly with the Australian Stock Exchange and adopted by the Male Champions

of Change which has committed to better transparency in reporting the number of women in senior leadership. Treasury reported on the progress of women for the three senior layers of management in the Australian Public Service Commission's State of the Service Report 2012-13. Gender balance has also now become a key KPI for managers. No strict formula was dictated for meeting targets or delivering progress, with groups developing their own approach.

"Being able to do the individual Group diagnostics was a masterstroke. As was the decision to get Groups (in Treasury) to report individually to the IWC." *Male SES*

The devolved responsibility for progress has inevitably led to a variety of initiatives within Treasury, some more successful than others. Change has been rapid in some areas and slower in others. Some elements were not smoothly handled or attention was spread too thinly in the initial phases.

"We tried to do too many things at once and under-estimated the complexity of some things." *Female SES*

While the message about engagement with the changes has resonated for some, others find the idea of being monitored on

this kind of progress difficult and outside their comfort zone. There has been some confusion about the various approaches within Groups.

"In Markets Group, PWI has a very devolved model. Commitments have been made at a Divisional and Unit level, committing to actions that will lead to outcomes, which are broader than just targets. But the challenge has been that there has not been enough visibility across Markets Group about what we were delivering." *Female SES*

However some Groups came up with their own way of tackling the need for widespread commitment and action.

"Revenue Group established "divisional champions": so they could really understand the exact nature of the issues in their area and keep others on track and engaged. There are 15 people from various levels of seniority and gender." *Male SES*

As with many organisations embarking on this

kind of change, there has been backlash around the focus on women rather than inclusiveness. This is rarely expressed formally but reinforces the need to continually articulate the thinking and reasons for the program.

"There's been a bit of backlash about why women should get this and people still say you got promoted because you are a woman."

Female SES

But Dr Parkinson and the Executive Board have

LESSONS LEARNED

The impact of PWI is continuing but there have been several key lessons learnt, reported by Treasury to the MCC

- There is no substitute for visible personal leadership**
- A deep understanding of the views of women and men in the organisation is a critical first step; barriers found were due to subtle attitudes and behaviours**
- External expertise can provide credibility and a safe space to explore confronting issues**
- "External members of the IWC were a key theme, the view from ARS the outside plus their ability to constructively challenge cultural norms that were second nature."* *Female EL2*
- Accepting difficult messages strengthens resolve**
- "A lot of people were shocked by the data, it was a real shock for the Department but we've moved beyond that now."* *Female SES*
- Engaging unexpected champions can stem resistance and expand conviction**
- Making all leaders accountable for inclusiveness in their workplace enables greater momentum**
- Buy-in is required from all levels, not just senior management**

been clear about why they started with gender and why gender should continue to be front and centre. Many other segments of diversity will benefit from the new skills acquired by Treasury staff through the PWI.

“Ultimately the PWI is about diversity & inclusivity. But we’ve struggled with gender, and we should start here. It has morphed into something that is broader, but that has happened organically.” *Dr Martin Parkinson*

Sustaining the change

The future of the PWI following the departure of Dr Martin Parkinson in December 2014 remains a challenge for Treasury. Feedback for this report confirmed some concerns about sustainability of the PWI but also growing confidence that a solid base has been established. While research by the Groups confirms that leadership on gender balance has and is having an impact, some staff also remain unsure of how this process relates to them. After the initial success more work is needed to embed the purpose and benefits of PWI.

“PWI is evolving, and it has to have a life beyond Martin Parkinson. We need to maintain the momentum and can’t let it go underground.” *Female SES*

Dr Parkinson, Nigel Ray and the Inclusive Workplace Committee have focussed on structural changes, like the changes to the performance management system and the incorporation of unconscious bias training in standard leadership

development, which will outlast individual leaders. The PWI programs will also evolve to reflect the growing maturity and skills in the Department. Even more importantly, context about the way these changes were introduced in Treasury needs to be communicated so that new recruits understand the importance of PWI.

“The Steering Group in Markets Group have actively promoted discussions with new starters. It is informal enough so that people can ask open questions, and really understand why PWI is so important for Treasury.” *Female SES*

The link between the PWI and the future of Treasury is, however, resonating right across the Department.

“If we are successful under PWI, then in 10 years’ time we are more open in a number of ways with more integration across the 5 groups/cross fertilisation. A more agile workplace and the ability to work differently.” *Female EL2*

For Dr Parkinson the effort and progress so far has been both hard won and gratifying but he is well aware much more remains to be done after his departure. Perhaps his most rewarding legacy, however, is the robust intellectual engagement that now matches the practical steps taken to address gender balance in Treasury:

“I thought we’d fall short of 35 per cent (targets for women in senior roles), but we are at 33 per cent. We’ve made progress strengthening the cohorts. We’ve authorised the conversations. It was clunky for a while but we have to have those conversations. It’s uncomfortable, for the first 12 months, but now we are able to have subtle and nuanced conversations about gender. We couldn’t have done that before, and it has morphed into conversations about diversity and inclusion. And then became a conversation about leadership and accountability. We are an organisation of problem solvers, and now we have a common language about the issues we need to solve.” *Dr Martin Parkinson*

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