



# Strategic Plan 2016

7 March 2016

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## 1. Overview

The Government Women's Network (GWN) is a professional network connecting women in agencies across the public sector. It has been designed by women, for women, reaching right across government and all around New Zealand. GWN is designed to harness effort and interest in the challenges women face in the workforce today and increase the impact and reach of gender diversity action.

Women want to achieve their potential in the public sector today. We offer support by:

- Backing women's groups within government agencies
- Connecting women through professional networking events
- Supporting new groups to form and grow
- Organising the Women in Public Sector Summit with others
- Partnering with others who share the vision of women achieving their potential
- Providing a voice for women in the public sector
- Reaching into the community to give back to others.

## 2. Purpose

GWN is passionate about women achieving their potential. We want women to achieve what they are capable of and what they want, but a lot of things can get in their way. Historical baggage such as the gender pay gap and unconscious bias is unhelpful to women. While nobody intended for it to be this way women have received mixed messages about how to improve, being told that their innate behavioural characteristics are the problem. We want to get the message out that *"it's not about you!"* ie the problem is not women individually and their personal or family choices. The issues that slow women's progress are structural and systemic in nature. Together we can work to remove these barriers and so all women achieve their potential.

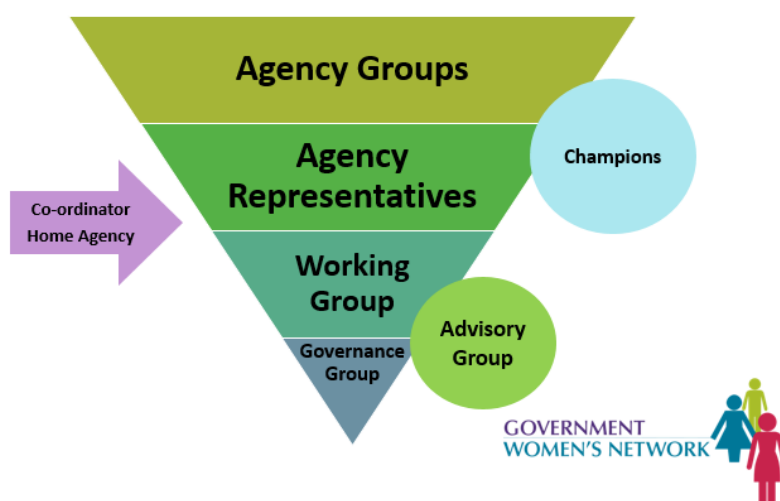
We operate as a community of engagement and work at different levels by:

- connecting agencies as a virtual community backed by networked leaders and organisers
- harnessing effort and interest in diversity and leadership
- increasing the impact and reach of gender diversity action in practical ways
- removing barriers and encouraging women to own their aspirations and potential
- providing professional networking, tools and professional development support.



### 3. Structure

#### GWN structure and key roles



GWN's national organisational structure is supported by three core groups:

1. **Working Group** which makes GWN a reality. It does the everyday tasks that are needed to grow the network now.
2. **Advisory Group** which uses independent perspectives to guide GWN's presence, voice and action.
3. **Governance Group** which focuses on GWN's foundations, strategy and vision.

Our Governance, Working and Advisory groups are made up of 35 individuals. We have been in contact with over 41 different government agencies and hold a database of over 200 interested people.

GWN is also establishing in Auckland. An Auckland-based working group is leading formation, including two Auckland-based members of GWN's national Governance Group.

Agency Representatives are the link between their agency and GWN as an organisation. Our 36 strong agency reps work to keep GWN visible to their agency's people and leaders, ensuring their agency participates in GWN dialogue and action.

To ensure the network flourishes, GWN is further supported by Champions, and a Home Agency. Champions are people at all levels inside government and beyond who back gender diversity action and help grow our support base. Activities include hosting events, providing members for our three key groups and sponsoring campaigns.

The Home agency is an active sponsor providing GWN with a part-time co-ordinator and modest financial support and administration. Inland Revenue is the Home agency for GWN in 2016.



## 4. Governance

GWN's governance is being established according to both applicable public sector standards and relevant governance best practice. Relevant public sector guidance and Institute of Directors input will be sought where applicable.

Governance includes building and maintaining a constructive and viable relationship with the Home agency and wider support base.

## 5. Vision

Our vision is to connect people across New Zealand to achieve a step change that will see women in government achieving their potential.

This vision will only be achieved when the barriers facing women are relegated to the past. This includes challenges to women's progression such as unconscious bias, the gender pay gap, income inequality, occupational segregation and discrimination - whether conscious or unconscious, historical, structural or social.

## 6. Goals

By 30 June 2017, every woman in the public service is aware of GWN and the value that it can add as an active and credible professional network. This is evidenced by GWN's brand recognition, its clear governance and operating model and positive recognition and engagement among its members.

By 2020 GWN has helped to achieve a clear cultural and structural shift where gender diversity action is normalised ('the way we always do things around here'), gender-based gaps have been uniformly closed for all women and the focus can shift from problem-solving to opportunity maximisation for women and other diverse groups across New Zealand.

## 7. Priorities

***Establish visibility and an enduring presence across the public sector***

We want to be an agent for change and to effectively achieve this requires us to take deliberate action. One of our key priorities is to establish GWN as an active and visible network, doing so in a manner that will ensure we have an enduring presence as a viable ongoing entity.

We will continue to offer a collective voice for women in the public sector by facilitating conversations and connecting women from different professions and career stages. Our focus will remain on the medium to long term, building our three key network groups to make GWN a reality, ensuring our goals are achieved and building strong foundations.



### ***Develop tools and channels to provide support and promote best-practice***

Because system-wide change will take time we want to be active in the short term too. GWN will achieve this through partnering with others and sharing solutions, with the goal of providing women with support to navigate their career pathways, pipelines and pitfalls for the here and now. We believe colleagues, managers and agency groups are best placed to provide support while we focus on the insight, back up and best practice. GWN will remain focused on identifying and raising issues of interest as well as exploring new ways to resolve the challenges facing women today.

None of this can be achieved without fit-for-purpose tools and a focus for GWN will be to extend our communication channels through the launch of a customer-centric website and development of a collaboration tool.

### ***Deliver a medium-term work programme to drive a system-wide approach to change***

Nothing less than system level change will create a lasting and effective shift in gender diversity issues. Unfortunately the prevalent thinking is that things will improve by themselves over time. However women still face major historical issues such as occupational segregation and lack of pay equity, and these issues are not going anywhere fast. GWN's strength is its reach across and deep within agencies. Through the development of a work programme our focus will be to leverage this reach to form an accurate picture of what barriers are getting in the way for women and identify priorities for future work to remove them.

## **8. How we work**

Three groups are at the core of GWN: the Governance, Advisory and Working groups.

The working group has been in place since mid-2015 with a core active membership of 8-10 individuals. The Governance and Working groups were constituted through an expression of interest process in September 2015, which also increased the membership of the working group. The Governance group consists of 7 individuals and the Advisory group is made up of 8 members. The three groups met together for the first time in early December 2015 to share GWN's strategic planning, facilitated by an independent external consultant. GWN continues to be co-created by its members through an adaptive approach.

The day-to-day management of GWN is handled by a co-ordinator currently sponsored by the Inland Revenue Department (IR). This role functions as a central, shared resource and operates the [GWN@ird.govt.nz](mailto:GWN@ird.govt.nz) address.

Activities organised by members linked to GWN include: speaker sessions (internal, external and international figures); seminar series; mentoring; speed-mentoring; recognition of key events (ie Women's Suffrage Day, International Women's Day); unconscious bias training; promotion of TED talks and Lean-In resources; communications; video-conferencing and



sharing learnings from related events (ie Public Sector Women In Leadership Summit, Women in Law conference).

GWN's official launches will occur in Wellington on 10 March 2016 and in Auckland on 18 March 2016. These events are hosted by the Treasury and the Auckland Council respectively, with support in Auckland from the New Zealand Customs Service and the Auckland Career Board.

GWN is also a significant contributor to the inaugural Women in the Public Sector Summit on 13 April 2016, which is being provided by the Public Sector for the Public Sector. GWN is has helped to design and create the Summit with the *Women in Government* senior leaders group and agency chief executives and representatives who also sit on its steering group.

The remainder of GWN's work programme for 2016/17 will be confirmed by 30 June 2016.

Terms of reference provide further detail on GWN's background, structure and operation.

## 9. Demonstrating Success

GWN's success will be demonstrated when its goals and priorities are met and the work programme is successfully delivered. In the interim we have five key objectives that will measure our achievement towards our goals.

Objectives for 2015/16 FY	How will we measure	Standard
Create visibility for the Government Women's Network	Deliver 'soft launch' events in Wellington and Auckland	Achieved
Ensure the Network responds to demand	Percentage of respondents who found a launch event to be useful and informative	75%
Establish a viable Wellington presence	Deliver a launch event in Wellington	Achieved
Contribute to a successful Women in the Public Sector summit in April 2016	Percentage of respondents who found the summit to provide professional development	75%
Establish a viable Auckland presence	Deliver a launch event in Auckland	Achieved

Performance against these measures will be reported in the Government Women's Network 2015/16 Annual Report.



## 10. Risks

GWN is currently in its start-up phase and this presents a particular set of challenges that need to be managed. Below is a summary of the key risks that may affect our ability to deliver on our strategic plan over the next year and how these are being mitigated.

Risk	Explanation	Mitigation strategy
Undefined roles and responsibilities of members	GWN has a number of different groups involved in both promoting our cause and also delivering on work priorities. There is a risk the distinct roles and responsibilities of each group are not clearly defined and communicated.	We will provide an updated version of the terms of reference and strategic plan documents in which roles and responsibilities of each group will be defined and provided to members.
Increase in scope	GWN aims to have a wide and deep impact on all issues that affect gender diversity .There is a risk that we try to achieve too much too quickly and take on board more activities than we have resource for.	GWN is developing a work programme that will clearly outline the activities we will focus on in the 2015 financial year.
Insufficient resources and capacity	GWN relies on public professionals who have chosen to use some of their time for this cause. Major risks in this area that we face are insufficient resource, lack of specialist skills and unplanned turnover of our key working group's members.	GWN is using the governance and champion groups to promote the network and build the number and type of members for our working group.
Negative public perceptions	GWN's goal is to make a lasting and substantial change across the public sector. We face the risk that politically we may be seen as high risk or unhelpful. Another risk is that we will not meet our stakeholders' expectations with regard to impact and pace of change.	GWN is gathering support from CEs across the public sector and will enlist their endorsement to ensure we have the backing necessary to bring our stakeholders on board with our vision.

These risks will also be mitigated by effectively leveraging the three core GWN groups, agency representatives and champions. Communications will be positive and proactive, promoting success where it occurs.





## 11. Capability

GWN is a people-led initiative, reliant on public professionals taking their own initiative to become involved in this collaboration. They are supported by their agencies and immediate managers, contributing both a portion of their BAU time and discretionary effort.

During this first start-up phase we have focused on maximising our existing capacity and capabilities to deliver our first year goals. As we move into our second year of operation we have identified specific skills we need to attract in future members, these skills include communications, strategy, marketing, design and events management.

Our current capability make-up includes:

- 1 co-ordinator who is a central, shared resource and has dedicated time commitment to GWN
- 35 self-nominated public professionals in lead roles in the three core GWN groups
- 36 agency reps confirmed by their agency
- 200 interested stakeholders on the GWN database
- Champions and CEs.

## 12. Financial Information

A modest budget was requested of Inland Revenue and approved in year one. An operating principle has been agreed with the host agency that the budget is ring-fenced for any costs that cannot be met by the host agency elsewhere. In general terms, costs lie where they fall across all participating agencies. Other agencies support GWN by hosting events and absorbing costs including venue, event planning and catering.

## 13. Key Assumptions

The table on page 10 sets out the risks associated with the key assumptions underpinning our strategic plan.

Guide to likelihood or changes to assumptions:

- Almost certain: more than 80% chance of occurrence over the one year period
- Likely: 50-80% chance of occurrence over the one year period
- Possible: 30-50% chance of occurrence over the one year period
- Unlikely: 5-30% chance of occurrence over the one year period
- Rare: less than 5% chance of occurrence over the one year period
- Long-term: chance of occurrence beyond the one year period.



Key assumption	Risk	Consequence	Likelihood	Mitigation
Ongoing availability of resource	<p>Funding arrangements for the co-ordinator role are not sustainable</p> <p>Members and agency representatives supporting GWN have conflicting demands and cannot actively participate in GWN activities</p>	Impact on our ability to deliver our work programme and stall efforts to see woman reach their potential	Likely	Resource is dependent on ongoing agency and managerial priorities. Getting the backing of CEs and managers to support GWN and having conversations about realistic time commitments is important.
Tools are available and work	<p>Challenges developing our key tools (website and collaboration tool “Jam”) and it becomes resource intensive.</p> <p>Host arrangements cannot be made to meet the ongoing costs of these channels.</p> <p>Tools are not fit-for-purpose or difficult to use.</p>	Slow down our progress to communicate to a wide audience and spread the networks reach across the country	Possible	A shared workplace is in place for the website until it can go live and host arrangements are being investigated.
Stakeholders support GWN	<p>Support from Women in Government, champions and stakeholders diminish over time.</p> <p>Agencies do not support their employees’ participation in events.</p> <p>Agencies do not host events as needed</p>	<p>Lack of support from stakeholders and those women in the top levels of the public sector could impact on our progress to reducing the barriers woman face.</p> <p>Costs are not shared across agencies and too much financial pressure is put on a select agencies and funding may be withdrawn</p>	Long term	Monitor engagement levels of agencies and rotate hosting requirements. Refresh key members of groups to ensure new advocates come on board.

