



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**

Gender Equity Charter for Australian Aviation—Consultation Paper

February 2026



© Commonwealth of Australia 2026

Ownership of intellectual property rights in this publication

Unless otherwise noted, copyright (and any other intellectual property rights, if any) in this publication is owned by the Commonwealth of Australia (referred to below as the Commonwealth).

Disclaimer

The material contained in this publication is made available on the understanding that the Commonwealth is not providing professional advice, and that users exercise their own skill and care with respect to its use, and seek independent advice if necessary.

The Commonwealth makes no representations or warranties as to the contents or accuracy of the information contained in this publication. To the extent permitted by law, the Commonwealth disclaims liability to any person or organisation in respect of anything done, or omitted to be done, in reliance upon information contained in this publication.

Creative Commons licence



With the exception of (a) the Coat of Arms; (b) the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts photos and graphics; (c) content supplied by third parties; (d) content otherwise labelled; copyright in this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons BY Attribution 4.0 International Licence.

Use of the Coat of Arms

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) sets the terms under which the Coat of Arms is used. Please refer to the [Commonwealth Coat of Arms Information and Guidelines | PM&C](#).

Image credit

Cover image: Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Contact us

This publication is available in Word and PDF format All other rights are reserved, including in relation to any departmental logos or trademarks which may exist. For enquiries regarding the licence and any use of this publication, please contact:

Email: dap@infrastructure.gov.au

Website: www.infrastructure.gov.au/have-your-say/

Acknowledgment of Country

First Nations people have the oldest continuing cultures in the world. It is fitting to reflect on the thousands of generations of traditional knowledges that First Nations people hold, and generously share.

We acknowledge the diversity of First Nations cultures, languages and practices across the country and the resilience of First Nations people in keeping these alive. In delivering this consultation paper, we recognise the importance of listening to the voices and perspectives of local First Nations people and responding to the uniqueness of each place.

We thank First Nations people for their continuing custodianship of, and care for, the Country that we live and work on today.

Table of contents

Introduction	4
Purpose of this consultation.....	4
Draft Gender Equity Charter for Australian Aviation	5
Preamble.....	5
Overview.....	5
Charter vision.....	5
Role of signatories	6
Have your say	7

Introduction

In the *Aviation White Paper: Towards 2050*, the Australian Government committed to establish a new Gender Equity Charter for Aviation (initiative 20), in partnership with industry and unions. The Charter will set the foundation for inclusive, dynamic workplaces and help address key workforce shortages across the Australian aviation industry.

Purpose of this consultation

Through the Charter, the Australian Government is seeking to partner with the Australian aviation industry to increase employment targets for women in senior and operational aviation roles, reduce gender pay gaps, and improve policies and practices to support and promote inclusive workplace culture across the aviation sector.

This paper seeks feedback from interested stakeholders on the draft Charter, and to identify factors to strengthen stakeholder uptake of, and engagement with, the Charter.

The draft Charter draws heavily from the United Kingdom's *Women in Aviation and Aerospace Charter*, which the Aviation White Paper recognised as a successful model to address barriers to more inclusive workplaces.

Draft Gender Equity Charter for Australian Aviation

Preamble

Gender Equality was made part of international human rights law by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948. United Nations, [Gender equality – the unfinished business of our time](#)

Air transport must address head-on why women are still under-represented in the majority of the technical and executive positions in aviation. (Former) ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu, in [56th Conference of Directors General of Civil Aviation Asia and Pacific Regions, 2019](#)

Research shows that more diverse teams create better solutions. If something's designed solely by men then we've missed the views of almost half the population. Magdalena Olczak-Rancitelli, International Transport Forum, in [Aviation has a problem with gender equality](#)

Overview

Despite international initiatives over the past decade to encourage change in aviation industries, research shows that around two-thirds of people employed in the sector in Australia are men. There is an even higher gender imbalance in many operational and technical roles.

The research shows that problems exist in both the attraction of women to aviation careers and the retention of women once they join the sector.

- The lack of women in specialised roles, among executives, or as board members, means a lack of role models in the sector – both for women within organisations and for women looking at career options.
- Organisational structures and cultures in aviation industries impede advancement or upward mobility for women.
- Discrimination, sexual harassment and cultural issues drive women from the industry.

However, the aviation industry currently faces shortages of key workers – including pilots, flight instructors, engineers, cabin crew, security screening personnel, baggage handlers, and air traffic controllers.

If the sector does not modify its recruitment and development practices to ensure that it attracts women to these roles and fails to make improvements in workplace cultures to retain women in these roles, the workforce shortages could reach a critical level. These shortages may result in difficulties in finding the necessary skills as the demand for aviation services grows.

In addition, numerous studies have consistently shown that having diversity in management teams leads to better decision-making, improved performance, and higher revenues.

Charter vision

This charter is a partnership between the Australian Government and organisations across the aviation industry in Australia to act on four principles.

1. Eliminate the salary and employment condition differences between women and men in each organisation.
2. Promote positive attitudes and eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and cultural disadvantage in each workplace.

3. Ensure inclusivity with facilities suitable for all individuals, enabling them to work effectively regardless of gender.
4. Make genuine progress in each organisation towards specific targets for the employment of women, including senior and operational roles, by providing opportunities for internal promotion.

This charter is an industry-driven initiative to address gender-based issues while also ensuring the continued viability of the aviation sector in Australia.

Role of signatories

Aviation organisations that sign up to the charter commit to:

- Developing internal plans to act on the four charter principles
- Setting targets for demonstrating progress in meeting those goals
- Providing evidence of making genuine progress towards meeting the targets
- Adopting and sharing best practice examples for achieving progress
- Report annually on the progress against the charter's principles on their websites.

Charter membership may be a consideration when awarding some Australian Government aviation grants.

Have your say

Submissions in response to this consultation paper are due by **31 MARCH 2026 17:00 AEDT**. To make a submission, visit the department's website: www.infrastructure.gov.au/have-your-say

To help you respond, we have provided consultation questions below. You may choose to respond to the questions or provide a separate response, including alternative options or approaches. Your submission, including any personal information supplied, is being collected by the department in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

The department will make written submissions to this consultation paper publicly available in full on the department's website unless you indicate you would like all or part of your submission to remain in confidence.

Any questions relating to the submission process can be directed to dap@infrastructure.gov.au.

Stakeholder questions for feedback

1. Does the proposed Gender Equity Charter for Australian Aviation address barriers to workforce diversity and promote aviation as a career path for women?
 - a. Do you consider the proposed Gender Equity Charter for Australian Aviation to be implementable and achievable for your company, business or organisation? Why or why not?
 - b. Would you propose any amendments to the Gender Equity Charter for Australian Aviation? Include detail or proposed amendments.
2. Would your company, business or organisation consider signing up to the Gender Equity Charter for Australian Aviation? If not, why?
 - a. What enhancements to the Charter would support your company, business or organisation's decision to sign up?
3. Would guidance materials and practical tools to assist signatories in meeting their commitments be valuable for your company, business or organisation? If so, what type of materials would be most useful?