

# DATA INSIGHTS: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN THE VICTORIAN PUBLIC SECTOR

This data insight looks at employee engagement across the Victorian public sector, including levels of engagement, how employees feel about their organisations and key drivers of engagement.

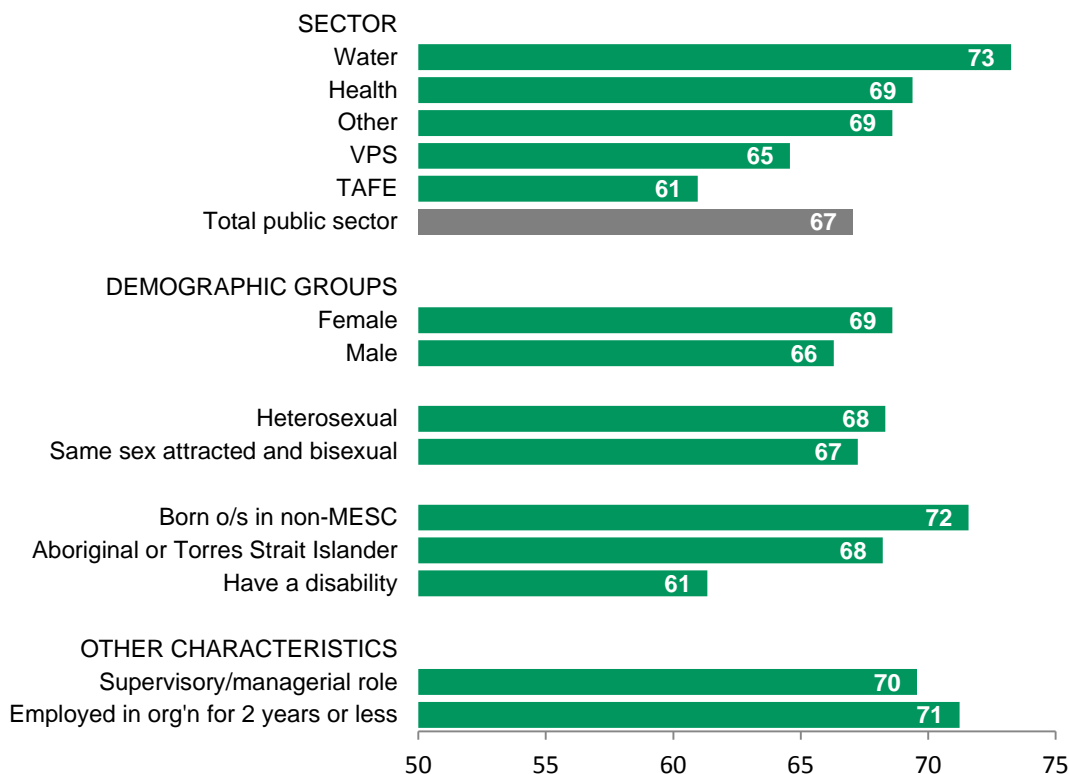
Having engaged employees is one of the key factors that drive an organisation’s success. Businesses with more engaged employees perform better, with engagement linked to higher productivity, creativity and motivation at work. Stronger engagement can also have a positive impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.

## Employee engagement levels are positive in the Victorian public sector

Victorian public sector employees are positively engaged at work across all sectors, with the highest levels of engagement in the water sector (see figure 1). Women and employees born overseas in non-English speaking countries have relatively high engagement levels, as do managers and newer employees.

The 2016 survey has seen engagement levels rise modestly to 67 points from 65 points in 2013<sup>1</sup>. This is positive result particularly given the multidisciplinary nature of the Victorian public sector workforce. An engagement score of more than 50 points indicates a positively engaged workforce.

**Figure 1: Employee engagement scores by sector and personal characteristics, 2016**



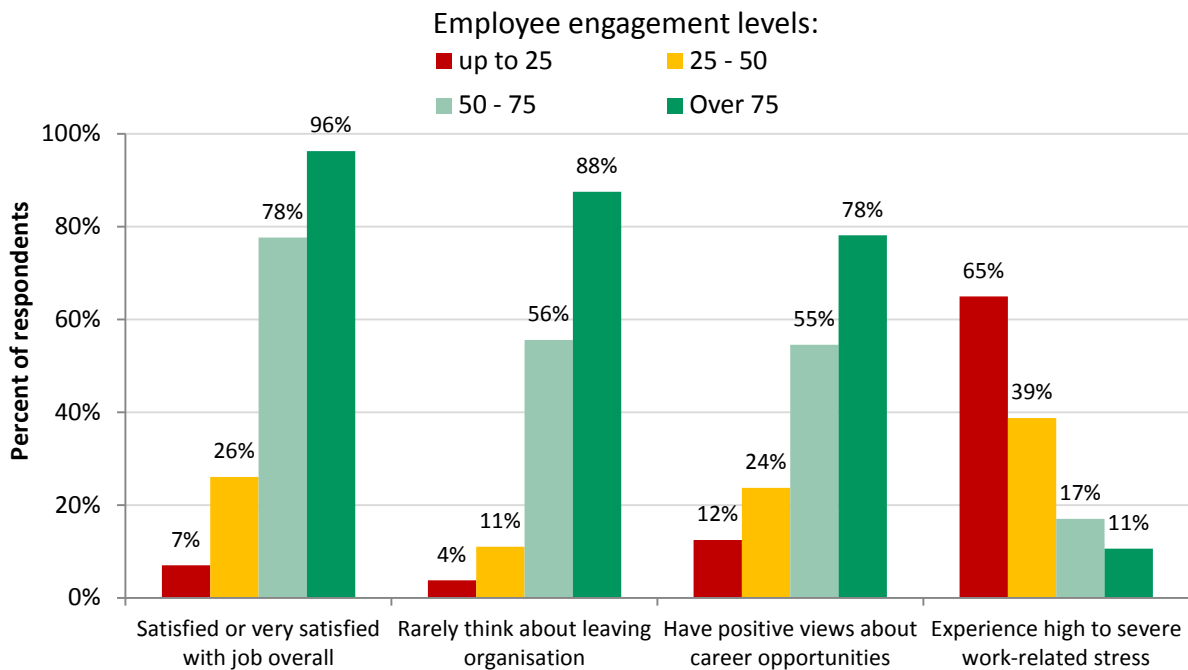
## How engaged employees feel about their organisation

Employees reporting higher levels of engagement have more positive experiences and views about their organisation and overall work environment. In general, employees who are more engaged:

- are more satisfied with their jobs
- rarely think about leaving their organisation
- have more positive views about their career opportunities
- are less likely to experience high or severe stress.

For example, 96 per cent of survey respondents who reported high levels of engagement (score over 75) were satisfied with their jobs overall, compared with seven per cent of respondents satisfied with their jobs amongst those with low levels of engagement (score under 25). Only one in ten respondents with high levels of engagement experienced high to severe work-related stress, compared to 65 per cent experiencing high to severe stress amongst respondents with low engagement levels (see figure 2).

Figure 2: How employees feel about their organisation, by engagement levels



Note: For 2016, 24 per cent of survey respondents have engagement levels of 50 per cent or lower; almost 50 per cent of respondents have engagement levels between 50 and 75 per cent; and 27 per cent of respondents reported engagement levels higher than 75 per cent.

Figure 3: Key drivers of employee engagement



## Key drivers of employee engagement

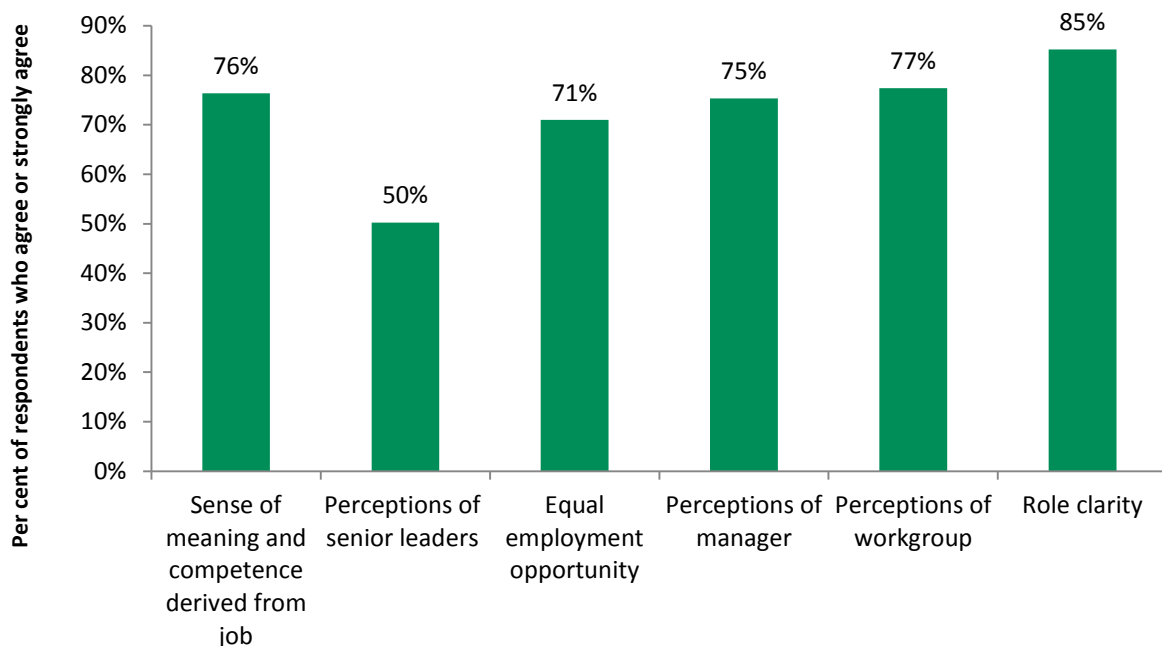
Strategies to increase employee engagement should focus on designing and offering jobs that are more fulfilling, meaningful and which maximise utilisation of employees' skills and talents<sup>2</sup>. These are the strongest drivers of engagement according to the 2016 survey.

Positive engagement results are also driven by employee perceptions of senior leaders<sup>3</sup>.

A climate of equal employment opportunity is the third largest predictor of employee engagement, followed by employee perceptions of their immediate manager and workgroup. Role clarity is also positively associated with changes in levels of employee engagement (see figure 3).

For 2016, most employees have positive perceptions against these key factors of engagement (see figure 4), with perceptions of role clarity being particularly high. This is a positive result, as clarity about how our work fits into the overall organisation strategy is a key requirement in ensuring employees remain engaged. There is still however room for improvement across all of these drivers, with employee perceptions of senior leaders being an area where scores could be higher.

Figure 4: Key drivers of employee engagement, percentage agreement scores, 2016



## About the People Matter Survey

The People Matter Survey gauges Victorian public sector employee perceptions of their workplaces.

The 2016 survey was conducted during May-July 2016. A total of 62,354 staff employed by 177 public sector organisations participated in the survey, achieving an overall response rate of 35 percent.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The survey measures employee engagement with a set of five questions that follow the 'Say, stay, strive' framework used by the United Kingdom government to measure the Civil Service's employee engagement. These questions are: I am proud to tell others I work for my organisation; I would recommend my organisation as a good place to work; I feel a strong personal attachment to my organisation; my organisation inspires me to do the best in my job; and my organisation motivates me to help achieve its objectives.

Engagement levels are presented using an index that takes values between 0 and 100. In calculating this index, each respondent is given a score for each of the five engagement question where strongly agree equates to 100 points, agree equates to 75 points, neither agree nor disagree equates to 50 points, disagree equates to 25 points and strongly disagree equates to 0 points. The engagement index is the average score for the five questions.

<sup>2</sup> The sense of meaning and competence that employees derived from performing their jobs is measured through the People Matter Survey using the following questions:

- I believe the work I do is important
- I enjoy the work in my current job
- I get a sense of accomplishment from my work
- I receive adequate recognition for my contributions and accomplishments
- my job allows me to utilise my skills
- my job gives me the opportunity to work on the tasks I do best
- I have the authority to do my job effectively.

<sup>3</sup> Employee perceptions of senior leaders are measured using the following questions:

- Senior managers provide clear strategy and direction
- Senior managers model the public sector values
- In times of change, senior managers provide sufficient information about the purpose of the change
- Communications about change from senior managers are timely.

## Chart descriptors

### Figure 1: Employee engagement levels by sector and personal characteristics

Bar chart demonstrating employee engagement levels, broken down by sector and personal characteristics. There are small variations between the different identifiers.

The chart has 15 identifiers separated into 3 groups – Sector, which has 6 identifiers; Demographic groups, which has 7 identifiers; and Other characteristics, which has 2 identifiers. Numbers are expressed as a percentage of all responses, and may have been rounded up.

#### Sector

Water 73  
Health 69  
Other 69  
  
VPS 65  
TAFE 61  
Total public sector 67

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### Demographic groups

Female 69  
Male 66  
  
Heterosexual 68  
Same sex attracted and bisexual 67  
  
Born overseas in non-MESC 72  
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander 68  
Have a disability 61

### Other characteristics

Supervisory/managerial role 70  
Employed in organisation for 2 years or less 71

## Figure 2: How employees feel about their organisation by engagement levels

Column chart demonstrating how employees feel about their organisation by engagement levels. It is clear in the chart that the higher the employee engagement level, the more likely the employee will agree that they have high job satisfaction, low intentions to leave, positive views about career opportunities, and less likely the employee will agree they experience high to severe work-related stress.

The chart has 4 identifiers based on their score in their engagement levels – up to 25, 25 – 50, 50 – 75 and Over 75. These identifiers are duplicated over 4 categories of response – Satisfied or very satisfied with job overall, I rarely think about leaving this organisation, Have positive views about career opportunities, and Experience high to severe work-related stress. Numbers are expressed as a percentage of all responses and have been rounded up.

### Satisfied or very satisfied with job overall

Up to 25: 7  
25 – 50: 26  
50 – 75: 78  
Over 75: 96

### I rarely think about leaving this organisation

Up to 25: 4  
25 – 50: 11  
50 – 75: 56  
Over 75: 88

### Have positive views about career opportunities

Up to 25: 12  
25 – 50: 24  
50 – 75: 55  
Over 75: 78

### Experience high to severe work-related stress

Up to 25: 65  
25 – 50: 39  
50 – 75: 17  
Over 75: 11

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### Figure 3: Key drivers of employee engagement (in descending order of importance)

Diagram listing the key drivers of employee engagement, ranked from highest importance to lowest importance

- Sense of meaningfulness and competence derived from job performance
- Leadership performance/support
- Provision of equal employment opportunities
- Manager performance/support
- Workgroup performance/support
- Role clarity

### Figure 4: Key drivers of employee engagement, percentage agreement scores

Column chart demonstrating level of agreement. The chart has 6 identifiers – Job meaningfulness and competence, Leadership performance/support, Equal employment opportunity, Manager performance/support, Workgroup performance/support, and Role clarity. Numbers are expressed as a percentage of all responses, and have been rounded up.

- Job meaningfulness and competence 76
- Leadership performance/support 50
- Equal employment opportunity 71
- Manager performance/support 75
- Workgroup performance/support 77
- Role clarity 85