**Election 2019 – Machineries of government for women**

# Why is this an issue for women?

* When Government policies and programs are developed and managed in the absence of an informed and evidence-based gender analysis, they are at risk of delivering poor service, as is the case with effective marginal tax rates, or actual harm as is the case with ParentsNext.
* Effective marginal tax rates have a significantly greater impact on women than on men, affecting both women’s workforce participation and the design of tax transfers. Gender insensitive tax policy cannot be simply written off with one-liners such as: “You don’t fill out pink forms and blue forms on your tax return.” ([The Guardian](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjenni%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CPackages%5Cmicrosoft.windowscommunicationsapps_8wekyb3d8bbwe%5CLocalState%5CFiles%5CS0%5C52%5CAttachments%5C%E2%80%A2%09https%3A%5Cwww.theguardian.com%5Caustralia-news%5C2018%5Cjun%5C08%5Cpink-and-blue-forms-is-gender-based-tax-really-as-crazy-as-it-sounds), 8 June 2018)
* The Office for Women (OfW) in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) has responsibility for advising the Prime Minister and working with all government agencies to enhance the gender equality in their policy and program development and review, including the preparation and review of Budget initiatives.
	+ Budget outcomes suggest that OfW requires reach and influence underpinned by high level political and bureaucratic backing. The economic expertise of OFW has been allowed to run down (NFAW’s [Gender Lens of the Budget 2017](https://nfaw.cdn.prismic.io/nfaw/b8630cb5-60a1-4bd6-aa69-c38e68a8b2c4_gender%2Blens%2Bon%2Bthe%2Bbudget%2B2017.pdf), pp. 4-5). Since 2014 there has been no Women’s Budget Statement. Its publications mainly present gender-blind policies as policies for women.
* Evidence-based policy cannot be developed without gender-disaggregated data. To NFAW’s knowledge, agencies have not invested in extending their datasets to include gender, or often even using the gender-disaggregated data that they have –with the honourable exception of the data being collected by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). There has been no Time Use Survey to inform community service and employment policy since 2006.

**Election commitments**

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| Full implementation | Partial implementation | No or negative response |

The table below sets out how fully parties’ current election commitments address NFAW recommendations:

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| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| The Office for Women (OfW) should remain in Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C). |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
| OfW to remain in PM&C.  | OfW to remain in PM&C.  |  |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| Measures continue to be taken to strengthen the OfW’s economic and overall capacity. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
| Staffing issues not identified, but role significantly enhanced—see below. | Secondments to OfW-- a Treasury officer and an academic—have now begun work. However, offsetting this initiative is a significant cut to OfW’s overall capacity: administered expenses fall from $4,975,000 in 2018-19 to $3,482,000 in 2023. |  |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| More should be done to integrate gender budgeting into the broader budget cycle, including initial program design and post-implementation program reviews. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
| Labor will:* place the Office for Women at the centre of a new program of gender responsive policy-making. The Office for Women will form a hub of technical expertise and will provide oversight of all policies that impact on the social and economic wellbeing and participation of

Australian women.* introduce gender impact assessment on cabinet submissions

and new policy proposals. |  |  |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| The prime minister acting through the secretary of PM&C should have responsibility for conduct of successful gender budgeting, and the deputy secretary should chair a committee of agency deputy secretaries with operational responsible for the implementation and conduct of gender budgeting in each agency. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
| The Office for Women will work with the Secretaries’ Equality and Diversity Council to ensure that all public service leaders’ key performance indicatorsspecifically include diversity. |  |  |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| OfW have capacity to outpost gender trained officers to departments during budget planning to ensure gender is considered in developing savings/expenditure proposals |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
|  | OfW is pursuing a focus on capacity building in Treasury and in OfW itself and then other departments. This could increase the gender responsiveness of subsequent budgets. |  |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| Agency collections of gender disaggregated program data be strengthened; used in budget analysis; and made publicly available. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
| Federal government departments will be required to set and reporton gender indicators across all areas of government**.** |  |  |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| Budget publications that enhance transparency of budget outcomes should be reinstated, and in particular that budget data presenting projected changes to the real disposable incomes and the net tax thresholds of different household types, formerly contained in Appendix C of the Budget overview. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
| Labor will:* bring back the annual Women’s Budget Statement to assess the impact of new budget measures on women and examine how the allocation of public resources affects gender equality.
* report on progress against our gender equality targets and indicators through an annual update to Parliament. This will provide greater transparency about the impact of government policies and budgets on women.
 |  | The Greens will also work to re-introduce a Women’sBudget Impact Statement which used to accompany theFederal Government’s annual Budget, but was axed byPrime Minister Tony Abbott in 2014**.** |
| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| The Parliamentary Budget Office be required to develop a distributional impact statement of budget proposals with gender as well as income age regional analysis. |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
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| **NFAW RECOMMENDATION** |
| Time-use data should be collected regularly in a dedicated survey.  |
| **PARTY COMMITMENTS** |
| **ALP** | **LNP** | **GREENS** |
| A Labor Government will provide $15.2 million in funding to the Australian Bureau of Statistics to conduct the Time Use Survey in 2020 and 2027. (6/3/18) | $10.4m made available in 2018-19 MYEFO. This is a one-off commitment. |  |

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| OTHER ELECTION COMMITMENTS |
| Commitment | **Party** | **Comments** |
| Labor will reconvene a Ministerial Council on Gender Equality withrelevant Ministers in state and territory governments. The Ministerial Council will include an annual meeting with the forum of National Women’s Alliances.  | ALP | Strongly endorsed. |
| Labor will align gender equality reporting with “SustainableDevelopment Goal 5: Gender Equality”, participate in the UN Committee for the Status of Women, and continue to meet national responsibilities across international forums. | ALP | Strongly endorsed. |
|  | Choose an item. |  |

Authorised by Kate Gunn, Sydney.