

Gender neutral toilets 2019-2020 timeline:

- Prior to having a LGBTQ+ Champion in 2019, gender neutral toilets were discussed by the inspire network with [REDACTED] as Gender Champion. No action was taken as it was seen to be too difficult at the time.
- June 2019 [REDACTED] won IPA's IDAHOBIT competition. Her suggestion was to tackle Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia in the workplace by providing gender neutral bathrooms (one per floor). She provided a couple of articles including this one:
[REDACTED] Discussions began with our new LGBTQ+ Champion and Diversity regarding IPA having gender neutral toilets. Our commitment was to ensure staff felt safe to be themselves.
- July 2019. Discussions with [REDACTED] (LGBTQ+ Champion). [REDACTED] advised that she supported gender neutral bathrooms. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] met regarding the toilets and were also supportive.
- July 2019 [REDACTED] requested that consultation on signage should occur with the key group (LGBTQ+staff). If the Exec are to be involved, [REDACTED] thought it should be in the context of providing the outcome of the consultation, like the EVP discussion.
- [REDACTED] suggested that HR consult with staff on the signage. [REDACTED] (from a property perspective) was happy to support any decision that was made by the key group.
- HR investigated options for signage including consulting with Pride in Diversity, and other government departments to provide options to staff.
- August 2019 Prime Minister Scott Morrison ordered the removal of a "ridiculous" gender neutral toilet sign in the office of Prime Minister and Cabinet in Canberra
<https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/scott-morrison-slams-ridiculous-gender-neutral-bathroom-sign-in-prime-minister-and-cabinet-office/news-story/891d5141f3ac970ae6b690381d58cd2f>
- Following the announcement from the Prime Minister, a decision was made by [REDACTED] to focus on other areas of action in the LGBTQ+ space and come back to the gender neutral toilet discussion in 2020.

Some key considerations:

- CSIRO have gender neutral toilets. I have a meeting with them 25/9/20 to discuss their journey.
- 2019 Employee census results on gender(attached):
<https://intranet.aipo.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-07/APS-2019-Employee-Census.pdf>.
Note: 5% of staff preferred not to state their gender, 4% identify as LGBTI+, 11% experienced discrimination(43% based on gender), 80% state that we are committed to creating a diverse workforcewe have 20% to go 😊.
- Unisex toilets are not gender-neutral toilets.
- The AWEI(best practice) under the section of Inclusion of trans/gender diverse people asks if "We have (or are working towards) having 'Gender Neutral' or 'All Gender' bathrooms and/or facilities with clear and visible signage available to employees. Note: "Unisex" signage will is not given points for this question."

Last year I provided the following information to [REDACTED]:

- The LGBTQ+ community may not be comfortable identifying as either male/female and using gendered toilets.

- There are non-lethal genetic mutations in gender, meaning we all aren't either male (XY) or female (XX) – this is intersex. For example there is XXY (Klinefelter syndrome), XO (Turner Syndrome) and other variations. <https://www.who.int/genomics/gender/en/index1.html>
- It is estimated that 1.7% of the population are born intersex ([AHRC](#))
- Transgender people are born and raised as either male or female, but identify as the opposite and undergo hormone therapy/surgery to transition. [USA statistics](#) founds that transgender people represent approximately 0.6% of the community – I wasn't able to find equivalent Australian statistics.
- Based on a working population of 1,100 people, it is likely that we do have staff in the agency who are intersex and/or transgender.
- 2018 employee census data, 32 respondents (4.4% of total responders) identified as LGBTI, and another 36 (4.4%) chose to not answer the question. Although nobody has actively identified as intersex or transgender, based on these statistics I consider it likely that we have some people who would feel more included if there were non-binary toilet signage in the workplace, beyond the disabled access toilet. Sadly the [AHRC](#) reports that 39% of the LGBTIQ community hide their sexual orientation or gender identity at work.
- DFAT, DHS, Treasury, Comcare didn't have gender neutral toilets, except the disabled access toilet which has the same signage (male/female/disabled) that we have in the new fit out. None have [the symbol](#) which has caused previous controversy.
- Both DHS and Treasury indicated an interest in what we were doing so there may be opportunity to 'join forces'.
- Industry and Dept of Environment have indicated that they have gender neutral toilet arrangements in place. Specifically Industry who stated that they have signage on all bathrooms stating that bathrooms are for all people to use (not gender specific).
- Comments from the IP Pride Steering Committee are below for consideration. Please note that this was a conversation had via email and they are happy for me to provide you with their comments.

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As for the use of the unisex/disabled bathrooms, I overheard an exchange last year where someone exited the bathroom and someone in the hall said "Oh! Were all the others full?" The first person had a funny reply that I can't remember. It stuck with me because it was while I was recovering from some injuries, and it felt a bit like the universe was telling me that if I used the disabled/unisex bathroom, I would have to justify myself to my peers.

The experience of genderless bathrooms is probably not foreign for a lot of people, its just a matter of where they exist. At workplaces it's been uncommon for them, but at café's, restaurants and nightclubs, genderless cubicles and entire bathrooms are fairly common. And its almost never an issue for people there, so it can surely be a non-issue everywhere else. Just put a sign up saying "Bathroom: Urinals + Cubicles" and "Bathroom: Cubicles" and be done with it is my two cents

This is the thing about policing. It doesn't matter whether others are actively doing it to someone, or if their behaviour is subtle but just enough that that person feels like it is happening because of their past experience. The end result is the same: they start policing their own behaviour and feel uncomfortable using the bathroom they want to use.

It is also definitely worth pointing out to the powers that be that it isn't just trans people affected by this. I also have cis friends (not at IP Australia) who have been hassled in bathrooms because they didn't "look female" enough according to other cis women in those bathrooms the time.

Able-bodied people using disabled bathrooms also opens another can of worms.

and agree with

Toilets should simply be labelled with whatever is in there- cubicles or cubicles with a urinal. It's an elegant solution, doesn't talk about gender and people can make their own choice and it increases the resources available to everyone

I want to share some thoughts on why some people do want gendered bathrooms. It's a sensitive issue, and I think it is important to be kind and considerate when talking about the matter. My goal in sharing this is not to derail the conversation, or to argue against gender neutral bathrooms (I am very much in favour of them!), but to flag some concerns or feedback that we might see in response to gender neutral bathrooms if the proposal gains some traction. These are experiences I had and stories/comments I heard in my previous career, working in medical research.

Content warning for mentions s 47E

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My hope is that everyone will be supportive and chill, and the whole thing will go smoothly 🙏

[Redacted] I think those are some really good points and ideas, team.

I agree with both sides of this.

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This also brings up a possibility of having additional safe spaces for women if we wanted to move some of them from gendered to gender-neutral.

Gender-neutral bathrooms, and the consequences of, are a hard balancing act... There's no question that I think they're a great idea and something we need to do if we want everyone to feel included, but I also think implementing them is a delicate process and things have to be thought out carefully to take into account who it'll affect and how.

I appreciate this entirely and agree there are issues as you say.

s 47E

