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| ONR Gender Pay Report  ONR Gender Pay Report 2024 |



ONR Gender Pay Report

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# Organisational Context

ONR is an organisation that values equality, inclusivity, and diversity. A key aim in our ONR Strategy 2020-2025 is ensuring all our people are supported and able to develop to reach their full potential. How we pay and reward our employees is an essential part of that approach. We recognise that we continue to have a significant gender pay gap and there remains more to be done to improve this. Attracting and retaining a diverse workforce is an ongoing priority and greater gender balance is a key area of our People Strategy 2025.

Inclusion is central to that priority and that is why we have been focused on tackling barriers to address the gender pay gap since we began to publish our data eight years ago. We recognise that we have more to do, however, we are seeing real progress because of taking a long-term, strategic approach to the challenge and we are pleased to see that this has contributed to a reduction in both our mean and median gaps in 2024.

We are confident that we will continue to see an improving progression as we seek to ensure all our jobs and career opportunities, including the most senior and well-remunerated, are inclusive and appealing to women and deliver a changing demographic. There are several reasons why this pay gap exists with a key factor being the high representation of men across our workforce in technical roles which attract a higher salary. This is consistent across the industry and therefore an issue that requires long term solutions.

We firmly believe that our colleagues deliver their best when they feel fully valued and safe to be themselves at work. That is why we put inclusion at the heart of our culture. It is embedded in our values, our expectations of leaders, and is a unifying thread across our organisation. We have been thoughtful and intentional in wanting to be an employer of choice and how we help people to work the way they want to, in line with our regulatory priorities. We have been working hard to break down barriers to inclusion and empower our colleagues, and we are already seeing the benefits of our hybrid working and how it has helped colleagues, find a better work and life balance. Alongside other progressive employment policies, such as our forward-thinking approach to flexible working, menopause and working carers policy, we are accredited to the National Equality Standard, Disability Confident Leader, and Fair Employment Charter.

We have a highly skilled and increasingly diverse workforce; attractive career, learning and development opportunities, and much more. Of course, these factors appeal to all people regardless of their gender identity and our People Strategy 2025 reinforces our commitment to creating a workplace culture in which everyone can succeed.

We are pleased to report that currently 37% of our employees are women, moving us closer to targets set jointly by industry and government in the Nuclear Sector Deal of 40% women in the industry by 2030. We are resolute in our efforts to attract, retain and develop women, particularly through our apprenticeship and graduate training pathways. While we have seen initial success with our Nuclear Engineering Degree Apprentice routes into ONR, it will take time for this to translate into career progression and onwards into higher paying positions within the organisation, meaning that its impact in relation to narrowing the gender pay gap will only be seen in the longer term.

We also need to ensure that we encourage and provide opportunities for the progression of existing female staff into our senior positions and will continue a focus on practical and positive ways to do so including through provision of mentoring, leadership development, talent and succession planning support and challenging any barriers that hinder this objective.

We remain fully committed to driving change and the actions we have employed are designed to create a more diverse and inclusive organisation, and to help us be more reflective of the society we operate in. We will continue to act through a focused strategy, greater collaboration with others across the sector and through transparent reporting, with the ambition of closing the gender pay gap and making this aim a reality.

This report highlights the extent of the challenge that we face, and we are unwavering in our resolve to improve and to be able to meet those challenges.

**David Caton, HR Director**

**11 November 2024**

# Gender Pay Report

# **Introduction**

This is the Office for Nuclear Regulation’s (ONR) eighth Gender Pay Report. It is based on a snapshot of the pay of all ONR employees as of 31 March 2024, as well as annual payments and bonuses paid between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024.

This report has been produced in line with the guidance in the Equalities Act 2010 and associated Advisory, Conciliation & Arbitration Service (ACAS) guidance “Managing gender pay reporting”, February 2019.

# **Why do we have to report on our gender pay gap?**

The Equalities Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) came into force on 6 April 2017 and requires public sector organisations to publish their results against six prescribed indicators of gender pay equality.

As an organisation we are interested in this information as we strive to build greater equality across a more diverse and inclusive workforce. This is in line with our People Strategy 2025 and ONR’s organisational values (fair, open-minded, supportive, accountable). We are committed to our aim of making ONR a great place to work as is to be expected of us as a world class regulator.

This report helps us to better understand and focus on the issues, holding ourselves to account as we plan actions to continue to improve on our current position.

**What do we have to report about our gender pay gap?**

We need to report against six prescribed organisation-wide indicators to show the difference between the average earnings of men and women in the organisation. To support with the understanding of the gender pay gap in a broader organisational context, we have included additional information on our progress and the sector-specific influences.

**When and how do we have to publish the information?**

We are publishing ONR’s gender pay gap results through this report. This report contains background context to the results as well as plans to address issues relating to the gender pay gap.

The prescribed gender pay gap indicators have also been uploaded to [GOV.UK](https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/)

**What do we have to report?**

The legislation requires ONR to report against the following prescribed organisation-wide gender pay gap indicators for 2023/24 (**2022/23 figures are provided in brackets for comparison**).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Mean gap** | The difference between the mean\* hourly rate of pay of men and women | 24.4% (27.3%) |
| \*Average pay for all men and average pay for all women | Difference in hourly rate of men £45.69 (£43.26) and women £35.54 (£31.46) |
| **Median gap** | The difference between the median\* hourly rate of pay of men and women | 31.98% (37.96%) |
| \* Middle value of pay for all men and middle value of pay for all women | Difference in hourly rate of men £46.83 (£46.70) and women £31.86 (£28.97) |
| **Mean bonus gap** | The difference between the mean\* bonus paid to men and women | 1.6% (0.4%) |
| \*Average bonus for all men and average bonus for all women | Difference in bonus pay of men £735.48 (£404.52) and women £723.42 (£403.08) |
| **Median bonus gap** | The difference between the median\* bonus pay paid to men and women | -12.0% (-9.1%) |
| \*Middle values of bonuses paid to all men compared to all women | Difference in bonus payment of men £500.00 (£330.00) and women £560.00 (£360.00) |
| **Bonus proportions** | The proportions of men paid a bonus and women paid a bonus | 61.8% (92.5%) of men and 70.4% (87.7%) of women received a bonus payment |

# Executive Summary

ONR’s overall mean gender pay gap reduced by 2.9% to 24.4% during 2023/24 and the median gap reduced from 37.96% to 31.98%. The overall analysis of data shows a shifting trend in favour of women, and this is evident in the 70.4% of women who were in receipt of a bonus compared to 61.8% of men, this is a positive shift in comparison to previous years (2022/23 males 92.5% and women 87.8%). We believe that following the introduction of our new Praise and Recognition approach we are seeing a greater equity in the distribution (proportionately) between genders. Women also received a higher median in bonus payments in comparison to male colleagues.

Between 2017 and 2024 ONR’s gender pay gap has fallen by 8.5%. Following analysis across pay bands, technical specialisms, and corporate functions, ONR is confident that the current gender pay gap does not reflect an equal pay issue. Instead, it reflects the demographic mix of the workforce and the historical legacy of the industry from which many of ONR’s technical employees are drawn. A lower proportion of women work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields which attract a premium, and this is especially pronounced in the nuclear sector, where past figures showed that only 26% of the UK-based workforce is female.

This legacy position is not only an issue for ONR, but also a deep-rooted issue across the nuclear sector and we are encouraged that some progress is being made. However, as with the experience reported by other organisations across the sector, we know that there continues to be a shortage across the UK of young and experienced females working in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Our gender pay gap data for 2024 demonstrates progress, and we will continue to focus on reducing the gap and creating opportunities for better representation of women at senior levels in the organisation. Equality, inclusivity, and diversity remains a core part of our organisational culture and attraction and retention strategy, and we recognise that closing the gender pay gap is not a quick and easy fix. The valuable insights we gain from tracking and reporting our gender pay gap needs to be met with meaningful, consistent, and sustained actions.

As an organisation we are committed to implementing actions that will improve gender diversity at all levels, and with that continue to reduce our gender pay gap and over time eliminate it. We are resolute in our efforts to focus on the right activities to deliver change and take encouragement from the signs of progress this report reflects.

We are working on our recruitment processes to improve fairness, transparency, and the opportunity for every candidate to present themselves at their best. We want our line managers and new employees to be set up for success. Through our improved applicant tracking system, and our partnership with VERCIDA, we are building trust in our employer brand and engaging with candidates at all stages of the recruitment experience. We are working with our recruitment partners to challenge bias and champion what is best for every candidate. We are accommodating candidates’ needs and giving them more opportunities to highlight their skills by removing obstacles in our selection processes and revisiting our recruitment language to make it gender neutral. As a result, we are seeing people from more diverse groups apply for our roles. Our actions have been designed to encourage a more balanced gender diversity approach in recruitment and to concentrate our efforts on attracting and encouraging diversity at all levels.

Whilst we continue to attract, retain, and develop our female employees, with a focus on our graduate and apprenticeship schemes, we understand that in the short term this disparity will continue to be a contributing factor in our gender pay gap. Our gender split has seen small improvements year on year since 2017, and progress is being made, currently 37% of our employees are women, moving us closer to the target set jointly by industry and government in the Nuclear Sector Deal of 40% women in the industry by 2030. We fully expect to reach this level well in advance of the 2030 target date. Through our People Strategy 2025 and action plan we will continue to ensure that we drive progress.

Encouraging and increasing gender diversity through our recruitment and talent acquisition processes is a priority for ONR, with the goal of reducing and closing the gender pay gap. One of our main aims is to inspire and attract a diverse range of individuals into ONR and increase the number of people recruited and employed from under-represented groups, specifically women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds, members of the LGBTQ+ community and disabled people.

While we have made improvements in the diversity of our recruitment that have led to positive results, we also acknowledge that we need to support work to promote diversity across STEM subjects. Consistent with the experience reported by many other organisations across the nuclear sector, and with those in the wider engineering and science fields, our aggregate overall mean and median gender pay gaps reflect legacy structural arrangements. There continues to be a shortage across the UK of young and experienced females working in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Although 37% of ONR’s employees are women, of these just over 58**%** work in our Corporate Services and Divisional Delivery Support areas. We make determined efforts to attract, retain and develop women, particularly through our apprenticeship and graduate training schemes as well as our talent programmes and to promote opportunities within our regulatory roles.

Our People Strategy has evolved over time and will continue to do so, consequently, much of the progress we have made with our action plans has yet to be fully reflected in both our overall mean and median gender pay gaps. Whilst we have come a long way, our progress has been steady rather than remarkable. We continue to be committed to the actions we have implemented which are designed to create a more diverse organisation as well as driving down our gender pay gap.

**Analysis of the pay gap**

ONR’s workforce profile by grading level is shown below.

The distribution of our workforce drives our mean and median figures: whilst we have a an increasingly diverse workforce, we do still have a higher proportion of our male workforce in the higher paid technical grades.

Overall, ONR employs a higher percentage of men (63%) than women (37%). 70% of ONR’s male workforce are in regulatory technical roles with the associated higher pay scales and only 6**%** of ONR’s male workforce are in a Divisional Delivery Support (DDS) role. ONR’s female workforce are split across DDS, regulatory technical and Corporate Service roles and their associated pay scales.

The proportion of men employed in higher grades is significantly greater at 71% within the senior grades (Bands 1–3).

Table 1: **Distribution of men and women employed at each grading level as of 31 March 2024**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ONR employees by gender and grade 2023/24** | **Band 1** | **Band 2** | **Band 3** | **Band 4** | **Band 5** | **Band 6** | **SCS 1** | **SCS 2** | **Non-Executives** | **Total** |
| Female | 13 | 52 | 81 | 32 | 43 | 30 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 260 |
| Male | 36 | 162 | 173 | 15 | 25 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 432 |
| **Total** | **49** | **214** | **254** | **47** | **68** | **43** | **7** | **3** | **7** | **692** |
| **% Female** | 26.5% | 24.3% | 31.9% | 68.1% | 63.2% | 69.8% | 28.6% | 33.3% | 85.7% | 37.6% |

Table 2: **Mean gender pay gap at each grading level**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ONR 2023/24 mean gender pay gap calculation** | **Band 1** | **Band 2** | **Band 3** | **Band 4** | **Band 5** | **Band 6** | **SCS 1** | **ONR** |
| Hourly pay rates of men divided by number of men (A) | £59.36 | £52.77 | £41.06 | £23.24 | £19.38 | £13.75 | £68.12 | £45.69 |
| Hourly pay rates of women divided by number of women (B) | £47.30 | £47.49 | £37.96 | £24.88 | £20.74 | £15.56 | £60.59 | £34.54 |
| Formula (A-B)/A x 100 | **20.3%** | **10.0%** | **7.6%** | **-7.1%** | **-7.1%** | **-13.2%** | **11.0%** | **24.4%** |

**Note: Columns showing results for SCS 2 and Non-Executives have been excluded due to identifiable data. The data is included in the ONR total results.**

The gender pay gap is different to equal pay, which is the legal requirement that men and women are paid equally for doing the same job under the Equality Act 2010.

We are confident that our current gender pay gap does not reflect an equal pay issue.

We have a well-established pay structure, and we believe it is a legacy position, reflecting the dominance of men in regulatory technical roles in higher grades towards the top of the pay scales, which attract a premium rate of pay and the continuing challenge in wider society to encourage more women to pursue STEM subjects and qualifications.

This is more around the distribution of our gender, and we remain committed to improving our diversity at all levels and, as an inclusive employer, to address the issues highlighted through our gender pay analysis.

Notably, we remain committed to tackling this at all levels and we are following best practice in this area through actions that are proven to address the gender pay gap over time. Addressing this gender imbalance for regulatory technical roles is the key to making a substantial change to the gender pay gap.

We continue to develop all our staff in their role, which over time should positively impact our pay gap as more women progress into higher paid roles alongside men.

The work we are undertaking to support the progression of women is starting to have an impact, and we are pleased to see positive results in terms of female recruitment and career progression within ONR, of staff promoted in 2023/24, 41% of them were women, which is favourable when compared with 37% ONR’s overall female workforce, indicating women are over-represented in promotion with a grade change.

Looking at this by role type, 45% of grade changes due to promotion for regulatory technical role types were women. Again, this is favourable when compared with available internal talent pipeline against ONR’s female headcount of 30% in eligible roles and which is an 8% increase on 2023. This also compares favourably against 26% of the UK-based STEM workforce which is female.

More women are employed in ONR’s lower paid bands (Bands 5 and 6), where there is a mix of corporate and operational support roles.

Table 3: **Median gender pay gap at each grading level**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ONR 2024 median hourly rate** | **Band 1** | **Band 2** | **Band 3** | **Band 4** | **Band 5** | **Band 6** | **SCS 1** | **ONR** |
| Median hourly rate of men (A) | £61.15 | £54.27 | £42.75 | £23.49 | £19.64 | £13.48 | £113.44 | £46.83 |
| Median hourly rate of women (B) | £45.37 | £51.29 | £37.39 | £24.46 | £20.20 | £15.17 | £83.72 | £31.86 |
| **Formula (A - B) / (A) x 100** | **25.80%** | **5.48%** | **12.53%** | **-4.13%** | **-2.85%** | **-12.54%** | **26.20%** | **31.98%** |

**Note: Columns showing results for (SCS 2 and Non-Executives) have been excluded due to identifiable data. The data is included in the ONR total results.**

The overall median gender pay gap whilst reduced remains significant at 31.9%. The gap at the higher grades reflects the greater distribution of men in regulatory technical roles towards the top of the pay scales, which attract a premium rate of pay, as is the case across this sector. Progress towards narrowing the gap has been made through competency-based pay progression, which enables colleagues at the lower end of the pay scale to be recognised for their attainment.

The workforce profile across all our roles and bands is shown below.

Table 4: **Workforce analysis as of 31 March 2024**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Support roles  (men) | Support roles  (women) | Technical specialists (men) | Technical specialists (women) | Total |
| Band 1 | 5 | 11 | 31 | 2 | 49 |
| Band 2 | 21 | 22 | 142 | 29 | 214 |
| Band 3 | 29 | 22 | 145 | 58 | 254 |
| Band 4 | 9 | 30 | 6 | 2 | 47 |
| Band 5 | 23 | 40 | 2 | 3 | 68 |
| Band 6 | 13 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 43 |
| SCS1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| SCS2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 102 | 157 | 331 | 95 | 685 |
| percentage | 14.89% | 22.91% | 43.32% | 13.86% |  |

**Note:** Table above excludes ONR Board Members

The representation of female colleagues within corporate and support roles (58%) is indicative of having a more gender balanced talent pool to recruit from. Our inclusive policies such as hybrid and flexible working and ‘Balancing your Hours’ policies continue to be valued and highly rated by colleagues regardless of gender and recognised with the Liverpool City Region Fair Employment Charter award, following a robust assessment of evidence against four pillars: Healthy, Fair, Inclusive and Just. The Charter aims to celebrate good employers and help drive up standards for fairer employment practices.

Efforts to encourage women into STEM careers has focused on promoting girls’ interests in maths and science. Such efforts are paying off with the number **of women accepted into full-time STEM undergraduate courses increased by 49% between 2010 -2020**. In the same 10-year span**, the number of UK 18-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds accepted into full time undergraduate STEM courses increased by 79% (GOV.UK).**

We remain focused on broadening the routes into the sector. Over the last five years (between 2019/20 and 2023/24) ONR’s female workforce has increased by 14%. This compares with ONR’s overall headcount which increased by 5% during the same period. We are continuing to collaborate as a sector to attract diverse talent and as part of a longer term strategy, we will continue with our partnerships across the sector working with the Nuclear Skills Delivery Board (NSDB), to ensure we promote opportunities for female students to explore maths and science throughout primary and secondary school and encourage them to pursue career paths in STEM. We are also working to broaden the career routes into our sector with initiatives such as our Nuclear Degree Apprenticeship programme, which is already having an impact.

The [New Taskforce to build UK nuclear skills](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-taskforce-to-build-uk-nuclear-skills) brings together government, employers and academia to meet nuclear skills growth opportunities. This includes encouraging uptake of STEM subjects in schools based on the nuclear curriculum and as of September 2024, 683 UK schools will have interacted with the ‘Developing Experts’ campaign which opens pupils’ eyes to the world of future job possibilities and challenges stereotypes.

However, while more women are studying STEM subjects that is not translating directly into women pursuing careers in STEM. The Government Equalities Office - Workplace and Gender Equality Research into barriers to women’s progression in the workplace, found that women’s progression continues to be held back by barriers such as bias around pay and promotion, difficult workplace cultures, tensions between balancing work with care and a shortage of quality part-time work with a good salary potential.

We have considered how we might reduce these barriers, and hybrid working, and alternative working patterns are providing greater flexibility in terms of where and when people work, while considering their health and wellbeing.

Alongside hybrid working, our revised and refreshed flexible working policy ‘Balancing your Hours’ is designed to enable all staff to achieve a healthier work/life balance and to make sure that we continue to build a more inclusive culture. Recognising that many women are balancing work and an unpaid caring role, we have in place a ‘Carers Passport’ available to all colleagues to enable a carer and their line manager to hold a supportive conversation and document the flexibilities needed to support the carer in combining caring and work.

This enables ONR to become a more attractive employer to a broader talent pool of potential applicants who would benefit from the range of flexible options available, thereby helping us become more inclusive by opening new and diverse recruitment channels. We believe that opening access to more flexible working arrangements is another key step to ONR attracting and retaining female employees and improving gender equality.

Table 5: **New starters over last three years by specialism**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **New starters** | **2021/22** | | **2022/23** | | **2023/24** | |
| **Men** | **Women** | **Men** | **Women** | **Men** | **Women** |
| Technical specialists | 16 | 4 | 22 | 9 | 27 | 10 |
| **% Technical specialists** |  | 20% |  | 29% |  | 27% |
| Support roles | 16 | 13 | 10 | 18 | 12 | 13 |
| **% Support roles** |  | 45% |  | 64% |  | 52% |

Where the talent pool is wider for example in non-STEM roles, our female representation is greater at 52% which is more reflective of the wider UK population.

Table 6: **Distribution of men and women through each pay quartile**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ONR 2023 – 2024**  **Proportions of men and women in each pay quartile** | **Men** | **Women** |
| **Q1 - lower** | 35.8% | 64.2% |
| **Q2 - lower middles** | 57.2% | 42.8% |
| **Q3 - upper middle** | 74.6% | 25.4% |
| **Q4 - upper** | 83.2% | 16.8% |
| **Total** | 62.7% | 37.3% |
| **692** | 432 | 260 |

Table 7: **Mean gender pay gap by specialism**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ONR 2024 Mean gender pay gap by specialism** | **Band 1** | **Band 2** | **Band 3** | **Band 4** | **Band 5** | **Band 6** | **SCS 1** | **ONR** |
| **TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS** | | | | | | | | |
| Hourly pay rates of men divided by number of men (A) | £61.35 | £55.01 | £43.40 | £22.01 | £14.76 |  | £104.20 | £465.97 |
| Hourly pay rates of women divided by number of women (B) | £60.30 | £55.34 | £41.13 | £18.52 | £15.50 |  | £115.31 | £306.11 |
| Formula (A-B)/A x 100 | 1.7% | -0.6% | 5.2% | 15.9% | -5.0% |  | -10.7% | 34.3% |
| **CORPORATE/SUPPORT** | | | | | | | | |
| Hourly pay rates of men divided by number of men (A) | £47.09 | £37.66 | £29.36 | £24.06 | £19.78 | £13.75 | £112.41 | £284.10 |
| Hourly pay rates of women divided by number of women (B) | £44.93 | £37.15 | £29.59 | £25.31 | £21.14 | £15.56 | £52.12 | £376.31 |
| Formula (A-B)/A x 100 | 4.6% | 1.3% | -0.8% | -5.2% | -6.9% | -13.2% | 53.6% | -32.5% |

**Note:** Columns showing results for SCS2 have been excluded due to identifiable data. The data is included in the overall results.

# Targeted action to reduce and close the Gender Pay Gap

**What else do we need to do?**

We are not complacent when it comes to reducing the pay gap and as the analysis indicates many of the factors are historical and our strategy is to adjust the structural balance, not just at ONR, but that of the wider nuclear industry (from which ONR necessarily draws most of its technical resource). We appreciate that it is a long-term task, potentially five to ten years or more. There remains much to do to both employ more women and advance them to higher paid roles.

While we have made good progress on gender equality over the past few years, we have sought to drive forward further change. To provide everyone with equal access to opportunities, and support everyone to fulfil their potential, we are introducing ‘Listening Circles’ to understand multiple perspectives and foster a sense of belonging and connectedness within a hybrid working environment. We want everyone in ONR to feel they belong and aim to do this by developing a truly inclusive culture, making our colleagues feel valued, respected, and supported through shared knowledge and understanding. We promote a diverse, inclusive work environment where employees are valued for their differences, able to bring their whole self to work and are empowered to succeed. We are committed to living our values, including being ‘supportive’ and ensuring our workplaces are safe, accessible and promote health and wellbeing, so everyone feels respected, included, and able to perform at their best.

A diverse workforce that is more representative of society, on behalf of which we hold the nuclear industry to account, is key to achieving our strategic aims and being a world class regulator. We are confident that we have put steps in place to continue the longer-term positive trajectory showing the impact of our outreach, recruitment, training and development programmes and wider diversity and inclusion initiatives.

We recognise that the significantly higher proportion of men in our more highly paid technical specialist roles will continue to result in a significant gender pay gap. The aim going forward is to draw more women into technical specialist and more senior roles. This will be done by continuing to support recruitment pipelines that reach a more diverse field of candidates and continuing with our gender-neutral attraction and selection processes, aimed at both attracting and retaining the best person for the job.

We are committed in our strategies and plans to improve our diversity at all levels. Being successful in addressing these diversity issues will impact directly on focusing on the issues that the gender pay analysis has highlighted. Some of the work we have been doing recently to support this is outlined below.

**Improving the representation of women in our workforce**

To reduce the current gender pay gap and improve our diversity more generally, we must continue to improve our ability to attract women into higher paid roles, in particular higher band nuclear specialist roles. Our recruitment strategy aims to achieve this through the following activities:

* **Promoting ONR to others** – We remain committed to achieving 40% women in ONR by 2030 as part of the Nuclear Sector Deal. Our actions have been designed to encourage a more balanced gender diversity approach in recruitment and to concentrate our efforts on attracting and encouraging diversity at all levels. To help us attract more women and retain a diverse workforce, we have partnered with VERCIDA, a careers site that collaborates with employers who respect a culture of inclusivity, diversity and accessibility and are committed to these attributes. The site is an opportunity to highlight the diversity of roles that we have and the benefits we offer including hybrid and flexible working, reverse mentoring, workplace adjustments, carers support, staff networks and others to attract a rich variety of people. We have also updated the ‘ONR Work for Us’ segment of our website with a broader representation of ‘Our People’ section to be more representative.
* **Recruitment –** Inclusive recruitment continues to be a vital part of our People Strategy 2025 as we recognise that attracting more women into our organisation requires innovative approaches to recruitment. We have continued to develop robust data collection to monitor our applicants’ diversity through the employee lifecycle. Our People Services team continually monitor recruitment channel activity to ensure they are inclusive, and we make every effort to ensure our recruitment literature contains gender neutral language. Equality and the Law and Being a Good Ally training is provided for all colleagues including recruiting managers and this emphasises the need for a gender balance of applicants and progression within the organisation (including flexible and hybrid working arrangements). Whenever we can we have gender balance and ensure female representation in our recruitment selection panels.
* **Selection arrangements** **–** We have name- and gender-anonymous selection and use gender-neutral wording throughout our recruitment process to remove unconscious bias at an early stage. All selection panels for external or internal recruitment have at least one female panel member as far as possible. All selection panels have an HR professional involved as a panel member or advisor. We review our recruitment and selection processes annually to ensure any equality issues are identified. During 2023/24, 35% of new hires were women and when we consider this by role type 27% of new hires for technical roles were women, which is positive when compared with STEM talent pipeline for technical roles including female UK STEM workforce 26%, female nuclear workforce 23%, female STEM graduates 26% and ONR female technical headcount 22%.
* **Inclusive Leadership**– we lead authentically from the top and we are proud of the fact our Board is now 71**%** female and 23% of our senior leadership roles at SCS to Band 2 are held by women.
* **External engagement –** we have maintained external partnerships with wider sector organisations including the Nuclear Skills Delivery Board and participating in the Women in Nuclear mentoring training pilot, through which we are supporting the cross-Channel  mentoring opportunities and Women in Nuclear mentoring training pilot. We further engage with the Environment Agency, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and EDI Alliance, both to raise our profile externally as an employer of choice for women and to bring about positive change across the sector. These partnerships help us to create an inclusive culture and provide valuable insights into best practices from other organisations.
* **Nuclear graduates’ scheme** – since 2014, ONR has sponsored an annual cohort participating in the industry-wide Nuclear Graduates training programme. To date, over 34% of the ONR sponsored participants have been women. We are also pleased that 17 women have subsequently joined ONR as technical specialists on permanent appointments through this route. Twelve have gone on to gain promotion to Band 3 (Equivalence) and eight of those have progressed from Band 3 Equivalence to Nuclear Band 3 Safety/Security Inspector with one gaining promotion to Band 2.
* **Degree level apprenticeships** – we are proud and delighted to see our first cohort of nuclear engineering degree apprentices, 60% of which are women graduate this year. Apprenticeships offer an alternative and appealing entry point into a career in the sector and ONR has an active programme that is supporting women to enter STEM-based careers. We are looking to develop a new talent pipeline that allows people to combine both the academic study of a traditional university degree and the practical experience and wider employment skills of working in a nuclear environment.

**Starting young – our support for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) activity**

ONR also sees the challenge in the longer term and as such is actively engaging with schools to promote STEM careers for girls and women. We recognise there is a shortage of skilled and trained people, in particular women, in STEM-related subjects. Therefore, it is in our interest to ensure that we are attracting as many people as possible from a diverse background, given the competitive market environment for talent, and that ONR is representative of our wider community.

* We have developed a STEM strategy supporting the Nuclear Energy Agency on “Mentoring a Future Generation of Female Leaders in Science and Engineering.” We can directly impact young people, particularly girls, by inspiring and supporting the next generation of nuclear specialists and therefore improving the gender balance. ONR colleagues can play a vital role in inspiring future generations of female engineers and scientists, both through our work in ONR or by supporting other bodies with which we are proud to be connected.
* In conjunction with others from across the sector we continue with our strong partnerships working with Nuclear Skills Delivery Group (formerly Nuclear Skills Strategy Group), to champion gender balance and to engage with schools, colleges, and universities to encourage young people of all genders to take up STEM subjects and attract more female applicants into ONR and the wider nuclear industry.
* We continue to develop our outreach strategy with local schools and colleges to improve diversity across all socio-economic groups. We promote STEM career opportunities for women through our participation in activities in local schools and the STEM Ambassadors programme. ONR actively supports our colleagues as STEM Ambassadors, getting involved in a range of activities that can have an impact on young people’s learning and enjoyment of STEM subjects. We have hosted several school-aged children undertaking a period of work experience in the organisation. We will continue to engage with schools, colleges, and universities to encourage young people of all genders to study STEM subjects and attract more female applicants into ONR and the wider nuclear industry.

**Developing and supporting our women**

* We strongly believe in empowering others and creating an environment that enables everyone to be their best. We lead authentically from the top and our new Advanced Leadership Programme sets the right tone around expectations from our leaders. It has a strong focus on inclusion within our working environment recognising there is a diverse range of people who co-exist and depend on each other, and how we are all responsible for promoting - through positive behaviours and interactions, an inclusive culture which embraces equality and diversity.
* Following the successful introduction of our Reverse Mentoring programme, now rebranded Reciprocal Mentoring because of the mutual benefits it brings to both parties, we have established our first female-only cohort running alongside a mixed cohort of colleagues from other under-represented groups.
* We are a menopause friendly employer, and in 2021 we launched our menopause policy and guidance for staff, their managers, and colleagues to provide the right support to help manage menopausal symptoms at work. This has been updated to be more inclusive to everyone who faces menopausal symptoms and to encourage a safe space for transgender members of staff. The policy and guidance are supported by dedicated menopause training events and awareness days to equip everyone to understand the impact of menopause on individuals and their wider family and how to help and support others.
* In twice achieving the National Equality Standard, Disability Confident Leader, and Fair Employment Charter accreditation, we have recognised the strategic value of being a diverse and inclusive organisation. We are transforming the way we attract, recruit, and develop talented people from different backgrounds, and identifying more ways we can make ONR a great place to work for everyone.
* We recognise and celebrate key days such as International Women’s Day, using these opportunities to promote inspirational female role models in ONR.

**Flexible working**

We have revised and refreshed our flexible working policy, now called ‘Balancing your Hours’ to encourage and support a healthy work/life balance, support family commitments, improved health, and wellbeing and to drive inclusivity.

* Flexible working covers a wide range of working patterns, including hybrid working. It allows individuals to be more flexible on when they work their contracted hours to achieve a better work-life balance without adversely affecting the overall efficiency and effectiveness of ONR, including the service we provide to the public.
* We are committed to supporting all colleagues to accept hybrid working, harmonising the wider needs of the organisation with individuals’ personal preferences and circumstances. The benefits from hybrid working have been well documented including a better work–life balance, greater ability to focus with fewer distractions, more time for family and friends, saved commuting time and costs and higher levels of motivation. We recognise these benefits and support a more flexible way of working: to support a better work-life balance for all, whilst ensuring we deliver our mission and continue to build a more inclusive culture. This means that, subject to operational and business requirements, we can enable greater choice to blend the level of working in the office, on site and remotely/at home.

**Policies and procedures**

**Recruitment**

* We have anonymous name and gender recruitment and have gender decoded our job adverts to remove any implicit bias while ensuring gender-neutral language, and where possible we have gender balanced interview panels.
* We aim to encourage more women to stay and progress through employment policies that make it easier to combine a career with a family life. We have also sought to introduce policies and toolkits around menopause, disability, domestic abuse, and race to help us become a more inclusive employer.
* Ensuring all colleagues are more aware and equipped to play their part is key to creating an inclusive workplace that is welcoming to women. While the policies we have in place aim to eliminate any form of discrimination or inappropriate behaviour, we recognise that there is more to do. We continue to promote our revised and refreshed Code of Conduct and ensure that our leadership teams are reinforcing appropriate standards throughout their business areas, and that they are supportive of our diversity and inclusion work, such as promoting our Carers policy and Passport, reciprocal mentoring scheme, and our revised approach to performance management, which has a greater focus on wellbeing.

**Performance management**

* We have introduced a revised performance management approach, simplifying it, and basing it on values-based conversations linked to performance, increasing the focus on wellbeing and career development while providing the opportunity for more regular coaching discussions. We undertake analysis at key stages of our performance management process focusing on diversity specific issues to ensure there is no evidence of conscious or unconscious bias. We have strengthened our guidance to line managers making assessments and shared best practice and experiences to ensure a fair and transparent performance management process.

**Pay and reward**

* The introduction of competence-based pay progression has had a positive impact in helping to address the gender pay gap across grading levels, given the higher ratio of men already at the top of their respective pay scales, a legacy based on length of service that has now been removed.
* Our new Praise and Recognition approach allows all staff to be recognised and rewarded in line with our values in a timely way, whilst being celebratory, fair, and equitable.

**Career progression**

* We continually monitor the progression of female staff through our succession and talent management plans. This helps us to ensure that these are gender neutral, free from bias, and encourage women to progress into more senior roles. This work is supported by a range of other diversity and inclusion measures designed to achieve our 2030 ambitions and we remain committed to achieving 40% women in ONR by 2030.

# Next Steps

While we are pleased with the progress that we have made, our gender pay gap is a sign that the balance of roles held in the organisation remains a challenge for us – and we are committed to doing all we can to address the underlying causes and close the gap. Gender pay gap reporting, and the interrogation of our workforce data that comes with it, brings much needed transparency to the different experiences of men and women in our organisation. It is this insight into our workforce and our people practices that will enable us to make changes that will have deep and lasting impact.

As covered in this report, because more than 60% of our people are male, relatively small changes in people leaving and joining us can have a significant impact on our gender pay gap. This year’s results while positive show that we still have some way to go in closing the gap, and that progress is rarely linear. To progress in the right direction requires a concerted effort at every level of our organisation and at every point in the employee lifecycle, from recruitment through to progression opportunities.

We recognise the benefits of a more gender balanced workforce to help us meet our strategic aims, by enhancing our professional knowledge, bringing challenge and new perspectives, and providing a working environment in which everyone can achieve their full potential.

To continue reducing our pay gap, we will continue to deepen our understanding of the contributing factors, including the growth, and grade distribution of our workforce.

Our focus now is creating the building blocks for the future. To do this we are positive that ONR must have a culture which supports women and their progression to greater levels of representation and removing barriers is key to this. ONR is committed to its vision of being a modern transparent regulator delivering trusted outcomes and value.

We know the important obligation we have to protect society by securing safe nuclear operations. We do this through our people, and it is incumbent on us to provide a great workplace and a positive and inclusive culture that enables us to get the best out of all our staff. Identifying and addressing diversity issues, including those highlighted in this report are integral to improving our delivery and influence on issues of nuclear safety and security.

**Declaration**

We confirm that data reported by the Office for Nuclear Regulation is accurate and has been calculated to the requirements and methodology set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

**Name/job title of Signature**

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Description automatically generated**

**David Caton**

**ONR HR Director**