

Your Ref:

511/2/6

21 September 2018

Deputy Louise Doublet
Chairperson
Gender Pay Gap Review Panel
Scrutiny Office
States Greffe
Morier House
St Helier
JE1 1DD



Dear Deputy Doublet

I refer to your request for a written submission relating to the Gender Pay Gap Review Panel.

You have asked that Aqua Group make a written submission based on a very brief terms of reference relative to gender pay gap.

It would seem that the terms of reference are so broad as to render any data that will be located somewhat meaningless. I am disappointed at this approach.

Equally, it would appear to us that much of the statistical data will be easily available if data can be released for the purposes of analysis from those that file ITIS or other Government led Reports.

It is clear from all empirical evidence that there are significant gender pay gap.

Aqua Group has only its own data relative to the private sector; but as a public servant you should have access to data from operations in the public sector and one would have expected a much more thought through strategy on this important issue.

That being the case, Aqua Group would not necessarily have a clear and direct understanding of relevant peer groups and salary levels; relative to sex or gender. Nor will, many of the businesses you will have targeted.

If one analyses correct statistical analysis and trends; it is absolutely the case that women receive different rates of pay to men for the equivalent roles.

That is not under dispute albeit the questions and scope raised in your submission are so generic as to render any response as without proper analytical value.

Aqua Trust Company Limited 23 Pier Road St Helier Jersey JE2 4XW

Telephone: +44 1534 729913 www.aquagroup.co
Regulated by The Jersey Financial Services Commission.

Within Aqua; an area on which we are expert; salary and pay is identified using a host of factors which will include the following:

- (i) The level of experience;
- (ii) The level of qualification;
- (iii) The commitment and effort that a particular individual or employee will put into the business;
- (iv) The ability of that individual to complete and perform in relation to tasks or key projects;
- (v) The rate of cost of living;
- (vi) The rates of salary and remuneration; more generally known within the market place and whether it remains effective for a place of employ to remain in Jersey;
- (vii) The other ancillary and ad hoc benefits that the Aqua Group will provide; these include flexibility; these include maternity and paternity pay; these include non-contributory payment for professional exams and a significant investment in a training strategy for all members of staff;
- (viii) These include a discretionary bonus based on performance and contribution; mainly measured against the metrics above.
- (ix) These include development through a "Buddy" System;
- (x) This includes providing flexibility; and, where commercial, economic and other forms of support for working parents.

Aqua operate best practice in line with JACs and leading international criteria and seek to be an inclusive, comfortable, safe and progressive workplace.

That said, Aqua is both run by and wholly owned by a woman.

This may or may not have a significant bearing on the Senior Team and the flexibility and support given.

Again, I make the point that empirical evidence demonstrates it is clear that this is not available in other workplaces but it is important to note that none of the criteria or factors involved above use as a classification the word "gender" or "sex"; albeit clearly it is only women who can give birth to children and this has an impact.

The factors provided by Aqua are designed to ensure the workplace is equal, inclusive and is an effective, safe and fair place to work based upon attitude and ability. That said, Aqua believes the biggest and most relevant factor is not one of gender; but one of childcare.

Aqua Trust Company Limited 23 Pier Road St Helier Jersey JE2 4XW

Telephone: +44 1534 729913 www.aquatrustco.com

Regulated by The Jersey Financial Services Commission.

If women cannot return to work because they have no reassurance or expectation around reasonable support and coverage for their children; it is obvious that they will be unable to provide the same level of commitment to their workplace.

It is, therefore, less relevant for the Scrutiny Panel to focus on differences; these have been there for a significant time; (potentially since the dawning of time) but rather focus on the success stories and how those success stories have come into being.

Equally, bringing in flexibility and making flexibility an acceptable criteria; bringing in effective ways of working and ensuring that both parents can provide some more realistic way of meeting their obligations; both as parents and as employees; or, indeed, employers; would seem to be a much more relevant position to take. This can be achieved through training; tax breaks and utilising effective data to drive in better strategic practises.

For those reasons, it would, therefore, be, to our mind, more effective to understand:

- (i) the percentage of women on the Board in definitive metric terms;
- (ii) the percentage of women who have been eligible for flexible working practices;
- (iii) the percentage of men on the Board;
- (iv) and the percentage of men eligible for flexible working practices;
- (v) the salary range for these criteria within the Business
- (vi) the salary range for those who are working flexibility.

If we were seeking effective data on this subject, we would look to drive in much more around empirical specific information.

It is clear to us that any interpretation of what are very subjective questions will not render any critical data you produce to be either meaningful or capable of driving strategy.

We would also suggest that international evidence and key strategic points that it brings should have been provided with your questionnaire as this would put matters in context.

Aqua has luckily developed to a business with over thirty employees since its inception in 2012.

That is not the normal course of events.

Many small businesses would find it impossible to provide the level of support that is now needed for people if they wish to enforce maternity and paternity leave; and this is a real issue. Aqua would suggest that, again, this is where the Government and, indeed, the business world needs to focus on enabling rather than retrospectively asking for opinions.

Hopefully, this rather blunt response gives you something to mull over.

If one was speaking on a retrospective basis; I have, as an individual and, indeed, as a working woman and mother; definitely experienced the gender pay gap.

I have been paid significantly less than my male colleagues in a number of previous places of employ. This includes both the largest Trust Company where I faced sexism; harassment derogatory comments and was paid significantly less than my male peer group.


I can confirm I have understood and been subject to a wide ranging derogatory comments from senior employers based on assumed (untrue) allegations around an alleged inability to commit; given I remain a working mother and my commitment to the workplaces I have worked within has been questioned over a number of years.

That said, I have always sought to assess myself and others on factual performance evaluated by metric analysis – have I raised more revenue than my colleagues (whether male or female) as a measure of success; have I achieved exams and developed value driven practises (again this should not be gender specific) .

I have seen very significant steps taken to demean, diminish and reduce the actual contribution made by senior and junior professional women within my particular industry, or those perceived as weaker be it because of sexual orientation.

In part, it is for those reasons that I have sought to try and promote the best of breeds within Aqua but this is by no means usual.

Yours sincerely



Joanne Luce
Managing Director
LLB (Hons), FCIS, ATT, TEP
Mobile +44 (0)7797 746485
Direct +44 (0)1534 603072
jo.luce@aquagroup.co