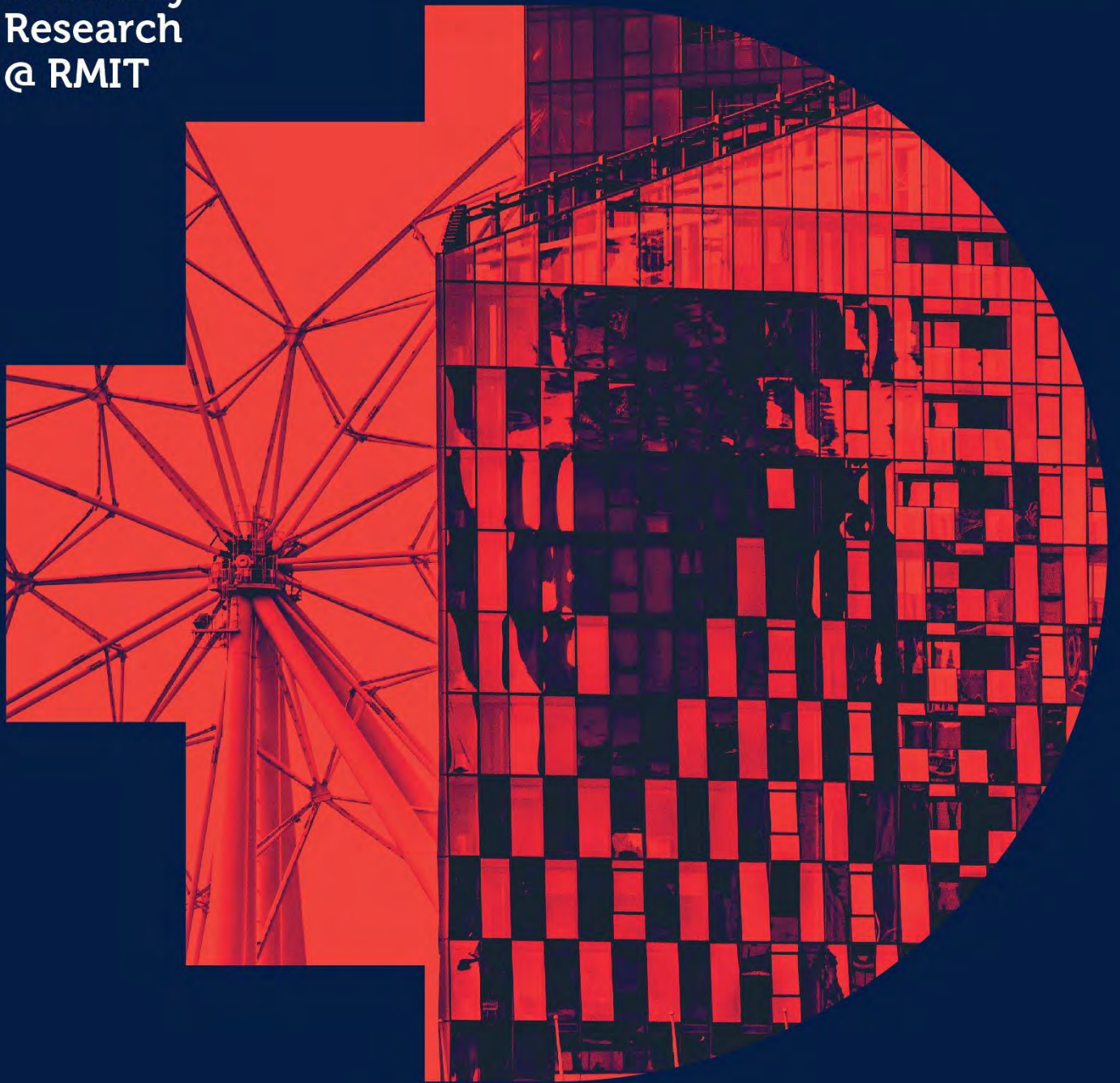


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Construction  
Work Health  
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Culture in Construction Pilot Projects: Interim  
Report

December 2023

Published by

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# Culture in Construction Pilot Projects: Interim Report

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# Executive summary

At the time of writing this Interim Report, data had been collected at five Pilot Projects trialling the Culture Standard. The contents of this report, therefore, draw on the nine interactions conducted to date across the five Pilot Projects. For each of the nine interactions, a comprehensive report has been provided to the related Pilot Project. This Interim Report is a synthesis of the nine interactions and related reports.

Data collection at the nine interactions has included conducting: 158 semi-structured interviews across the five projects. Data was collected in two waves of interviews at four of the Pilot Projects and in a single wave of interviews at the fifth Pilot Project (due to a later commencement date). In addition, one wave of survey data had been collected at three of the Pilot Projects.

Of the interviews, 66 (42%) were undertaken with women working at the Pilot Projects. The majority of survey respondents (n=130, 90%) were men. Most of the survey respondents (n=108, 74%) were waged workers.

The purpose of this Interim Report is to:

- examine the different ways the culture standard has been implemented across different project types, and
- explore how the strategies implemented at the five Pilot Projects are contributing to the three pillars of the Culture Standard.

The data collected to date demonstrates the flexibility of the Culture Standard which is reflected in the different ways that each Pilot Project has modified working time arrangements to reflect the Culture Standard requirements. These arrangements reflect the unique characteristics and circumstances of each project.

Moreover, the Pilot Projects have also implemented different initiatives in response to the requirements of the Culture Standard in relation to supporting gender diversity and promoting workers' health and wellbeing.

Some findings were common across all five Pilot Projects, and some differences were also observed between the Pilot Projects.

There was majority support for the five-day week component of the Culture Standard across all of the five Pilot Projects. The most frequently cited reason that interview participants gave for preferring a five-day week schedule was that it allows them to spend more time with their family, seeing friends or participating in leisure activities. Participants also observed that having a two-day weekend allows them to have better rest and recover from the week of work.

The survey results reflect this majority view with 84% of salaried and 61% of waged workers indicating a preference for working a five-day compared to a six-day week.



Other common findings across all of the Pilot Projects were:

- a strong belief that the management teams are supportive and care about workers' health and wellbeing, and
- the ability to work flexibly when personal circumstances required it.

However, some differences between Pilot Projects were also observed. For example, projects varied in the degree to which the work week was 'compressed' into five days, resulting in workers at some projects reporting longer working days between Monday and Friday. For some workers, long work hours mid-week were perceived to interfere with family life and leave little time for self-care activities (e.g., exercise, being able to wind down after work etc).

The survey data revealed statistically significant differences between the Pilot Projects in terms of perceptions of job demands and work-life balance, with higher demands and poorer work-life balance reported at the project with the highest extent of 'compression' of the work week.

Survey responses in relation to managerial support for work-family interaction did not differ between the Pilot Projects.

Interview participants across the Pilot Projects also shared a common belief that productivity is not adversely affected by the implementation of the Culture Standard. Participants explained this in terms of generally lower productivity on Saturdays (across the industry) combined with productivity improvements associated with a workforce that is healthier (as a result of improved recovery opportunities) and more satisfied.

Waged workers were asked specifically about the effects of the Culture Standard implementation on their pay. Some waged workers (in the first wave of interviews) expressed some concerns about experiencing a reduction in pay. However, during the second wave of interviews these workers commented that the effects on their pay have been minimal and, even though they may have experienced a small reduction, they considered the benefits of spending more time with their family to outweigh the costs.

The survey data similarly reflects this finding with 74% of waged workers indicating a preference to work the same or even fewer hours each week as they are working under the Culture Standard.

However, a minority of waged workers did indicate a preference to work Saturday and it is noteworthy that one of the Pilot Projects has retained Saturday work but made this optional for workers. It was also observed by participants that workers who choose to work on Saturdays are often younger, in the 'establishment' phase of their careers and have not yet started a family.

In relation to gender diversity, women at all of the Pilot Projects indicated they have experienced good provision of amenities for women. Specific initiatives implemented to address gender diversity also included:

- implementing a mentoring program for women, and

- incorporating a Respect Policy in subcontract agreements.

Women indicated they mostly feel respected and accepted in the Pilot Project workplaces. However, at all but one of the Pilot Projects women engaged on-site in direct construction activity did report experiencing banter and behaviour that is sometimes sexist or inappropriate. Examples ranged from comments made about their appearance and challenges to their capability to more overt forms of sexual harassment.

When women raised concerns about these experiences they were dealt with effectively by managers. However, in many cases women described not speaking up about inappropriate banter that 'crosses the line' which they accept as an inevitable part of working in a male-dominated construction site environment.

The survey measured three variables related to gender diversity: perceived (gender-based) organisational fairness, respect and the experience of inappropriate banter that 'crosses the line'. Being treated with respect and organisational fairness were positively correlated with respondents' mental wellbeing and work engagement, while being exposed to offensive/inappropriate banter was negatively correlated with mental wellbeing and work engagement.

In relation to health and wellbeing, specific initiatives implemented at the Pilot Projects include:

- providing facilities to encourage exercise on site (a basketball court and table tennis table),
- provision of a Wellbeing Board to nominate flexible work days
- providing mental health first aiders
- providing a wellbeing allowance and wellbeing days (direct employees only), and
- appointing a health consultant to attend site.

Participants across all of the Pilot Projects perceived their health and wellbeing are well supported by managers. However, the interviews revealed that workers experience of job stress across the Pilot Projects varies. At some projects participants reported experiencing less stress than in their previous employment. However, at other projects participants indicated they are experiencing high levels of stress. In some instances, this was related to the compression of working time and a consequent intensification of work (i.e. some workers reported they struggle to complete six days of work in five days).

The survey data showed clear links between the three pillars of the Culture Standard. That is mental wellbeing and work engagement were significantly and positively linked to characteristics of the gender diversity climate (i.e. respect and organisational fairness), as well as work-life balance. Exposure to high work demands was also significantly inversely associated with reduced work engagement (a facet of work-related wellbeing).



# Part 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Interim Report

This report provides a synthesis of data collected from the five Culture in Construction Pilot Projects between November 2022 and July 2023.

The purpose of the Interim Report is to:

- examine the different ways the culture standard has been implemented across different project types, and
- explore how the strategies implemented at the five Pilot Projects are contributing to the three pillars of the Culture Standard.

## 1.2 Data collection to date

### 1.2.1 Interview data collection

A summary of interview data collection and analysis undertaken at the time of writing the Interim Report is provided in Part 6.1 of this report.

At the time of writing, a total of 158 semi-structured interviews had been conducted across the five Pilot Projects. Of these interviews, 52 (52.9%) were conducted with subcontracted workers and 106 (67.1%) were conducted with workers directly employed by the Principal Contractors delivering the Pilot Projects. Sixty-six (41.8%) of the interviews were conducted with women and 92 interviews (58.2%) were conducted with men.

Two waves of data collection had been undertaken at four of the Pilot Projects, and only one wave of data collection had been undertaken at the fifth Pilot Project (due to a delayed commencement date).

Questions asked during the interviews are provided in Part 6.2 of this report.

### 1.2.2 Survey data collection

At the time of writing, one wave of survey data had also been collected at three of the Pilot Projects.

In total, 148 workers participated in the survey. 53 (35.8%) of these respondents worked on Project A, 65 (43.9%) of these respondents worked on project B, and 30 (20.3%) of these respondents worked on Project C. The survey data across the three projects were combined and analysed. The dataset included missing data as some respondents did not respond to all questions in the survey. During the analysis, missing data was dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

The survey instrument consisted of 33 questions in three sections:

*Section one* asked demographic questions, such as age, gender and family structure.

*Section two* asked questions about respondents' work including their employer, type of pay, work hours, and preference for work hours and schedule.

*Section three* asked questions about:

- work demands (Aronsson et al., 2013)
- time for life and work-life balance (Haar, 2013)
- managerial work-family support (Behson, 2005)
- gender diversity, including perceptions of organisational fairness (Mor Barak, 1998) and respect (Walsh et al., 2012)
- mental wellbeing (Ng Fat et al., 2017), and
- engagement (Demerouti et al., 2010).

Survey scales and items are outlined in Part 6.3 of this report.

The survey was administered using the "TurningPoint" automated response system with "KeePad" hand-held devices. Survey questions were projected onto a screen and read out by a facilitator. Participants were required to press a number on the hand-held devices to indicate their responses to each statement.

The complete survey instrument (33 questions) was administered on Projects A and B. On Project C, a shorter version of the survey was administered. The shorter version consisted of 28 questions and did not include:

- two questions (out of four questions) measuring respect, and
- two questions about preferred work hours and preferred work schedule.

# Part 2: Interview findings

In this section of the report we describe key themes emerging from the data collected at each of the Pilot Projects. A cross-case comparison is made and similarities and differences between the Pilot Projects are described.

## 2.1 Themes relating to time for life

Table 2.1 compares the themes emerging in relation to workers' experience of time for life across the five Pilot Projects. Comparisons across projects were made for the following sub-themes identified in relation to time for life:

- the work schedule implemented at the project
- workers' preferences in relation to the work schedule
- work hours flexibility, and
- time available for family/leisure.

### 2.1.1 Work schedule

The five Pilot Projects adopted different work schedules based on project circumstances and characteristics. Work schedules at two of the projects (both transport infrastructure projects) included two different schedules: one for a 'normal' work activities, and one for periods of high intensity work undertaken during campaigns/occupations.

#### Project A

Project A's normal work hours involve working a 10-day fortnight, with work being undertaken on Saturday every other week when there is an RDO on Monday. Site-based workers typically work 10-hour days between Monday and Friday and 6 hours on alternate Saturdays. Some salaried workers indicated they work from home on the RDO (see below).

Participants at Project A indicated they maintain a 50-hour week which they describe as 'manageable': *"Most days I get here for prestart at 7, except for RDOs where we typically work from home and I would leave between 4.30 and 5 in kind of off-peak times, and between 5 and 5.30 when it's busy. So yeah, generally a 50-hour week comfortably. But yeah, generally I find 7 till 5 manageable. I wouldn't want to do any more than that."*

Another participant at Project A indicated they can sometimes work 11 or 11.5-hour days but commented that, although hours during the week are long, they appreciate having a longer break at the weekend: *"Probably a little bit too long...from about quarter past six, half past six, till half past five, six o'clock. But you know you've got that, it's only for five days. You know you've got that weekend or that long weekend which is awesome."*

Workers at Project A also indicated that managers carefully monitor their hours and require them to adjust their hours if they are close to the thresholds specified in the Culture Standard: *"So my*

*manager already knew that I was pushing the hours already. Because the integrity, the honesty's there in the culture to have the discussion to say, 'hey manager, I'm probably just a little bit over.' And okay, 'well make sure you're working your working week, the Monday, you need to start at 10:00 or whatever that's going to be.'"*

Project A also engages in periods of high-intensity construction activity during campaigns /occupations. During this time workers work four 12-hour shifts (48 hours) followed by 2 days off.

### Project B

Workers at Project B indicated they work 11.5 to 12-hour days between Monday and Friday, and do not work on Saturdays.

Participants at Project B described their hours between Monday and Friday as long: *"Monday to Friday we do work reasonably long hours. It's generally we are here sort of 6.30 (ish) 6.30 a.m. to 7.00 a.m. and generally leaving around 6.00 p.m. so it's a fairly long day during the week for most of us."*

Another participant interviewed at Project B explained that a 12-hour day is typical for them: *"I get to site about 6 o'clock, because it's a five-day a week site we work out on site till 6 every single day."*

Another participant described how the hours have been re-distributed across the days of the week (rather than reduced in number) at Project B: *"You'd normally do your 9 to 10-hour days which is actually the 50 and the Saturday is actually about 60 hours. So, instead of that, we're doing 12-hour days instead of 10-hour days which ends up being about the same."*

### Project C

Workers at Project C indicated they work 10 to 11-hour days between Monday and Friday, and do not work on Saturdays.

Participants described how having a two-day weekend compensates for working long hours between Monday and Friday: *"I think the most amount of hours I do is 10 in a day. Maybe if there's a big concrete pour, 11. That's the longest I've had but it's still only Monday to Friday so, it's good."*

Another participant explained: *"The actual work, we can start 7:00 to 5:00...which is, I believe is the preferred time because we've got those two days to relax now."*

Supervisory workers at Project C explained that they are flexible with regard to rest breaks to help workers to manage the relatively long daily hours: *"I'll get into the site between 6:15 to 6:30. We do our toolbox meeting, then we head up to work. Then we have one break, like a long break. We have one hour straight. Well, we can have another break when we need it. Just smoko break. So first time we work until 11:00, then we have break until 12:00. Then if we stay back, we just tell the boys, we give them a break. We're not strict with that because it's long hours."*

### Project D

Project D's normal work schedule includes 10 to 11-hour days between Monday and Thursday and 7.5 hours on Friday. The site does not typically work Saturdays and workers also have every second Monday (an RDO) off.

However, Project D also engages in periods of high-intensity construction activity during campaigns /occupations. During this time workers indicated they were working 12-hour days on a 6:3 rotation (i.e. six consecutive work days followed by three days off): *"It was a six, three rotation... I ended up working probably about that, minimum 12 hours. I know it was 11 for the campaign but by the time I get here for the handover meeting and then I'm generally the last one here."*

Participants indicated that this was manageable for a limited period of time, i.e. the duration of the occupation/campaign: *"Normally 12, maybe a bit more in my role... So I might get in at 5:30 in the morning, catch up with [crew members] and then I start my day at about 6:00, 6:30, and then I'm here till maybe 6:30 at night sort of thing. But, it's fine. It's for a short period, and then you get your three days off and that's just part of an occupation or a shutdown."*

Some participants indicated that the 'six:three' roster was better than arrangements that they have worked under on projects in the past.

### Project E

Project E implemented a day shift roster of five 11-hour days (Monday to Friday from 7am to 6pm). However, the site remains open on Saturdays between 8am and 1pm and workers are able to work on Saturday if they choose to do so. Workers can also choose to undertake 10 days of night work per month. The maximum number of nights that can be worked a week is three and night shift does not occur on Wednesday or Friday, or during weekends: *"The night shift is easy to manage. We've got restrictions [we can] only work three nights a week. Two consecutive nights, three nights maximum a week and ten nights maximum a month. ... And that's with no weekends."*

Participants explained that the work schedule is related to restrictions associated with noise emissions and the tender did permit some 'after hours' work due to the need for road lane closures: *"...the standard working hours, where you can make a lot of noise and stuff, is Monday to Friday and then a Saturday morning between eight and one. And then the option to do after hours works was in [the tender] because it's a congested road and to do a lot of work on the road we do need to shut down lanes."*

Participants also described how Saturday is used as a 'catch-up' day: *"...we rely on a Saturday as your catch-up day... So if you do get a wet day or if something slips, we typically work every Saturday to catch up on that time or get ahead where possible."*

#### **2.1.2 Preferences in relation to the five-day week**

At four of the five Pilot Projects (A, B, C and D), interview participants indicated a strong preference for working a five-day compared to a six-day work week. Workers at Project E are



still able to work on Saturdays if they choose to do so and some indicated they like to have this choice.

### Project A

Participants at Project A expressed a strong preference for the five-day week:

- *It's awesome. It's f\*\*king great. Especially being on salary knowing I don't have to work that Saturday or you've got that Monday off, that RDO. Whereas technically they don't have to give us that RDO... Yeah, full support of this five-day work week. Yeah, it's awesome. It couldn't be any better to be honest."*
- *"Yeah, really good so far. Just knowing that there... I will never have to work six days. You know, we haven't had to work a Saturday yet. I think there was one Saturday, but I didn't have to come in... just knowing that I will never have to work six days is already like a relief for me."*

### Project B

Participants at Project B indicated a strong preference for the five-day week:

- *"The five-day week has been incredible, a massive step in the right direction and it's good for work life balance and promoting health and wellbeing generally. Giving everyone a bit of a better state of mental wellbeing, having to not be at work on a Saturday. Having that extra time to yourself, so hands down, that's great and I couldn't support that more."*
- *"Heaps better. [I'm] still tired but I think that's just getting used to it, like getting used to not having to think I've got to work tomorrow or next Saturday is my day to work... It's heaps better than what it was previously."*

However, at Project B, some participants also indicated that the length of the working day between Monday and Friday (often 12-hours) is too long:

- *"I'm satisfied with the five-day work week. I'd like to possibly reduce the hours... Glad that it's a five-day work week but I think even just as a construction industry we still need to bring the hours down."*
- *"So we do do big hours, long hours, so I think it's something that we need to change, going to a five-day work week has definitely helped it. But we're still doing big hours."*

Some participants believed that the current work schedule was not conducive to spending time with family during the working week and, for this reason, a six-day work schedule was preferred by these individuals: *"I personally prefer a six-day week over a five-day week, because I finish at 5:00, and I can get home, spend time with the family"*.

### Project C

Participants at Project C indicated a strong preference for the five-day week.

- *“Like I’ve said, definitely an improvement life-wise. Definitely much better I’m all for a five-day week, just after spending 25 years of my life working in construction has been six days a week, 12-hour days minimum...for me, personally, yeah, I’m enjoying it a lot.”*
- *“Do I like it? .... I can’t see myself doing another six-day a week job again. I don’t want to.”*
- *“From going six-day-a-week job, you’re still going all Saturday afternoon, then Sunday you’re just starting to calm down and you’re back into it again. So having that extra day is a big difference.”*

### Project D

Participants at Project D expressed a strong preference for the five-day week:

- *“The people I work with, and all the guys on site, I think, they’re embracing the work week, the five days. I know a lot of them, they love not having to work Saturdays. I think this industry is renowned for working Saturdays and they’re enjoying having two days off, so, I think that keeps them all in good spirits.”*
- *“Not having to do any Saturdays is already a bonus for me. Talking about the previous project there was always the Saturday work there. Not necessarily I have to come in every Saturday but by not doing the Saturdays you get the full weekend is already a win for me.”*
- *“For me it’s brilliant. This is just amazing. I love having the full weekend. The fact that I know there’s no work here, so my phone’s not going to ring. It’s absolutely peaceful.”*

### Project E

Most participants at Project E indicated that they prefer to work a five-day work week: *“It’s good to have my work, my life balance back. I can have my time and still have time with my family. I work Monday to Friday... yes, it’s good for me.”*

However, some participants at Project E indicated a preference to work on Saturdays because it provides an opportunity to increase their weekly wage: *“So it’s [Saturday work] only 8:00 till 1:00. That’s the times we can work. And they’re worth it to a point. In my eyes, every bit helps. Every bit of extra money I can get helps. I’m always pushing for it [Saturday work].”* – waged worker

#### **2.1.3 Work hours flexibility**

Participants at all of the five Pilot Projects indicated that they are able to work flexibly (for example, modifying their start and finish times) in order to meet family or other non-work-related commitments. This flexibility was mostly described as informal and negotiated on an individual basis with participants’ supervisors/managers. However, some participants indicated flexibility of

start and finish times is dependent on an individual's job role. For example, some participants perceived less flexibility is available to site-based workers engaged in direct construction activity.

### Project A

Participants at Project A described being able to work flexibly with the support of their supervisors: *"...if I need to have a day off, or if I need to leave early, or start late, it's really supportive. It starts from the culture, that's why he [supervisor] feels comfortable enough to let me have time off."*

Another Participant at Project A described how they do not feel the need to stay at work 'for appearances' sake: *"I think the biggest difference, the biggest positive I see is that people don't expect you to be around for appearances' sake. If you have gotten your work done, go home. If you've got an appointment and you need to do the rest of the day from home, just do it. So, in that it seems like it's positive steps in the right direction."*

### Project B

Participants at Project B similarly indicated a level of informal flexibility is available to them. One explained: *"We all have challenges in life and we have personal challenges, whether it's family and things happening and it's good to know that if you have something that comes up, you can just take the time to go and do that. The project is resourced sufficiently that someone can step in and take over your role to a point, whether it's a day or two days...the business and the project supports everyone in regards to that."*

Another commented: *"I think they're pretty good at giving you a bit of flexibility. As in if you need, I've had a few things going on in the last couple of months, and if I need to duck away and come back, it's okay for me to do that."*

However, also at Project B, some participants indicated that workers may not always feel comfortable using flexible work options: *There's options but because obviously it's a site... it's an unspoken thing but it's like everybody wants you here. It's like an undertone and I think you'd feel it. Yeah, it's an undertone, or even if you're sick, or a little bit sick or whatever and you want to work from home. It's like, mm 'Yeah you can,' but then it's like, 'she works from home all the time' you know?"*

To counter this perception Project B has implemented an initiative to reinforce the message that flexible working is acceptable: *"I think definitely we still need to improve on some of the flexible working arrangements. That would be my key thing, and that's like why we've tried to put up this board and get people to do something, and not feel uncomfortable about it."*

### Project C

Participants at Project C described managerial support for working flexibly: *"It's good...More around what works for me so if I can get my work done quicker, then I do. I work flexibly and I take on opportunities to do what I need to do. So if I'm going to walk my dog before I come here...it's always supported."*

Another participant explained: *"It's really good because when you need to leave or when you need to stay at home, you don't need to give them [managers] the reason or explain why you want to stay at home. You just say, 'Okay, I think I need to stay at home.' And they said, 'Okay, stay at home or work from home.' I'm very happy with that for sure."*

The support for flexibility was understood to reflect a broader company-level commitment: *"I couldn't imagine there would be any issues if I did have an appointment or need to arrive a little bit later for whatever reason. ... I think we've got a manager that is really good about that kind of stuff and I think that comes from above him as well from the business."*

Site-based workers also indicated they are able to work flexibly at Project C: *"We just give them notice, so the boys can plan their day better. ... And then it should be fine. I've got another one [worker] with me, he's assisting me as well. ... He's the same experience as me, so just in case if I need one day off, I can take that, he can run it. If he's going to need to take one day off, I can run it, so we've got that."*

#### Project D

Participants at Project D indicated a high level of support for flexible working. This helps workers who balance work at the project with caring responsibilities: *"I just so love it here...that people understand that it's not easy to get a nanny; only millionaires get a nanny, so when your child is sick, it's expected that you'll be working from home, and that's totally okay with management and all, which is great. There's no better place to raise a kid."* - woman with caring responsibilities.

Another participant explained: *"I've had a good experience so far. If ever there's been a time, too, where I've needed an early day because I've had to pick up the kids or something like that, because my wife's been busy or whatever, that's not an issue."*

Participants at Project D observed that the project culture supports both men and women working flexibly: *"I think if people needed more flexibility, they'd ask for it. I think the culture here allows you to. They don't shun you. There are men on the project that have young families, so they're given consideration like a woman would be and I think that's the right thing to do."*

At Project D, site-based workers also indicated they are able to exercise some control over their start and finish times: *"I don't think they really mind. I can say I'm going to leave at 2.30 or something and do it."*

Site-based supervisors also acknowledged the benefits of providing some flexibility regarding work hours: *"It's long days for some people because they've got kids and that, you know what I mean, but I tend to let people away early, you know. Just so that everybody's fresh and happy because there's more to life than just work."*

However, other participants at Project D commented that the characteristics of work in some project-based roles make it hard to work flexibly: *"If you work in the office environment, probably a different deal. You could do a bit of it from home or whatever you want to do or change your hours around to suit yourself, but the reality is we've got to start the blokes at 7 o'clock in the morning on the ground there and they walk off the ground at 5 o'clock."*

Another participant at Project D observed that the construction industry culture of long hours and presenteeism may discourage people from working flexibly: “...but I feel like some people who may be new to the industry may not have the courage to do that [ask to work flexibly] and even though I do that there are times I’ve heard other people say, ‘good afternoon’. Even just little comments like that feels like am I doing something wrong...maybe it’s not even your manager, maybe it’s a worker. So even comments like this, it makes you feel pressure.”

It is important to note this latter comment was made about the construction industry in general and not in specific reference to Project D.

### Project E

Participants at Project E described strong managerial support for informal work schedule flexibility: “I think they’re [company name] just supportive...I have children that need me, and they’re very supportive of that, if I need to work from home...if my child’s sick, then I have to be there for that child, and they’re supportive of me being able to work from home, and providing me with the tools to do that.”

This flexibility was available to workers in site- as well as office-based roles: “... if someone says to me that they can’t come in they’re just sick, I say [to my boss], ‘look, [worker’s name] won’t be in he’s sick today’....or if they come up to me during the day and say, ‘Oh, I have a family issue’, or something, I’ll say, ‘mate, go.’ ... I won’t ask them for any permission because I know what they’ll say. They’ll say the same thing as I’m saying.”

Another site-based worker explained: “...my son started primary school this year, so you know, there’s all of those things on at school, whether it be sports carnivals or Mothers’ Day morning teas, or whatever. So I just let the site team know that I’ll be out for an hour and if I can I just make up that hour and time later in the night, or on the weekend...so ... they’re really supportive in me attending those sorts of things.”

Project E implemented a flexibility workshop early in the life of the project to discuss ways to support flexible working: “The flexibility workshop that we held...put on a nice lunch and had everybody get together and share their thoughts as to what flexibility looks like to them. And the other question was, how would flexibility assist you and make you perform better? And then how would flexibility help the project and your team? And so then they had to think outside of themselves.”

The flexibility workshop identified specific strategies for supporting flexible working, for example sharing work between roles: “...it’s probably challenging for those leading hands and supervisors to come up with ways, but they were sort of saying ‘well, you know, if work tapers off at the end of the day or we have a quiet day, we can share our roles’...if they cover each other’s work, then that allows them to be flexible. And they were open to that and the flexibility workshop helped them see that.”

Unlike the other Pilot Projects, at Project E it is also possible for site-based workers to choose to work on Saturdays and/or more hours than prescribed by the Culture Standard: “We target, keeping it definitely to five days and we try to keep it [weekly work hours] under 50 to 55, but if they’ve put their hand up for more work then there is usually opportunities for them to do so.”

#### 2.1.4 Time available for family/leisure

Interview participants at all of the five Pilot Projects described how the implementation of the Culture Standard provides them with greater opportunity to participate in family life, as well as leisure and social activities outside work.

##### Project A

Participants at Project A described how (under the Culture Standard) their work schedule is more compatible with the work/non-work schedules of family and friends: *"I have the same schedule as my friends and family and so when you are wanting to see people other people are free. Saturday mornings is when social things happen, and I don't miss out on that or I'm not too tired or I don't have to go home early on a Friday night because I have to get up to go to work at 7... you're not missing out on time with other people like you would be if you were working on Saturday. So I think it's the biggest plus is that you are around when other people are around."*

Another participant described being able to spend more time with his partner and children: *"It's fantastic. The fact that I don't have to work on Saturdays, my partner was serially upset all the time that I couldn't spend time with the kids, I have to go to work on Saturdays, and it put a bit of strain because family time was being depleted, and now the family time is guaranteed, so it creates a bit of certainty around control."*

Another participant described being able to participate in sport with his children: *"Yeah, it's good. I've just been going down to the local footy ...involved with that. Yeah, it's good. Yeah, my kids play."*

##### Project B

Participants at Project B similarly described being able to participate more actively in family and social life as a result of the project's implementation of the Culture Standard: *"I feel the five-day work week has made a massive impact, to be able to leave to socialise, and still see family, to caring for my family and making sure that I am able to help contribute to looking after my kids, doing the weekend activities, but also being able to socially interact with other friends and family that I might not have been able to do on a six-day work week."*

Another participant explained: *"I actually prefer it because the weekends I actually get to spend and enjoy with my family. Like might be going to the beach, go to the pools, go to lagoon, go for a bush walk, go for a bike ride. I can spend it with them. So I actually enjoy it. Like, you know, catch up with friends."*

Another participant at Project B described the five-day week as 'life-changing': *"[The five-day week] is life-changing to be honest. For most of my working life, we've worked six days a week and everyone accepted that. So, I didn't take the kids to netball because I'm working...But I think now, they can see it's not just this weekend they're not working or the one after or the one after, it's every weekend you've got off. So, you can plan things. Talking to a few of the younger engineers that have colleagues in the industry and the colleagues are working six days a week and of course, they're envious. Very envious. So, I think it's a great initiative."*

Notwithstanding these positive comments about the five-day week, some participants at Project B indicated that the longer hours they work between Monday and Friday mean they have less time to engage in family or leisure activities during the working week: *"I know, from speaking to a couple of them, they're also saying the same thing. They're not spending the family time. I know for a fact the formworkers, some of them are not getting home till 8:00, 9:00 at night. They are not happy."*

### Project C

Participants at Project C described how the two-day weekend provides them with the opportunity to spend 'quality time' with family, rather than spending their only day off undertaking chores: *"When you're doing one day ... it really grinds you, because you get your day of rest and recovery, you've got your day of mowing the lawn and doing all the crap around your house that you need to keep up with each week when you have one day off, and you usually chew it up with that. But at least with that second day, you have that bit of a chance to go and do a day out with the family or something like that."*

Another participant explained: *"Now I take my kids to karate on Saturday morning which I wasn't able to do in the past and we spend the rest of the day together. So it gives my wife a bit of a break as well."*

### Project D

Participants at Project D also indicated they that one of the main reasons they prefer the five-day week is that it allows them to spend time with family that was not possible when working a six-day week: *"I came from [name of other infrastructure construction project] where we can work up to six days a week, seven days a week. Coming here, it's a lot easier. Maximum hours during the day, and, I like to have my weekends free for my family life, so it's a good thing that they don't work on the weekends here."*

Another participant commented: *"I think you're a lot happier because you know, you get two days off regardless, you can plan your life. So knowing that you don't work weekends, you can plan family time with the kids and that sort of stuff."*

This view was shared by another participant who explained: *"It works out well for me. I've got kids, play a lot of sport, I get to see them play that sport now, I get to help my wife out with her running around. And I've been doing this for that long [working on Saturday] and missed out on so much. For me, it's a bit of fresh air."*

Participants at Project D drew a distinction between their normal work schedule and the schedule they worked under during the campaign/occupation which they explained was difficult for their families: *"I felt like I didn't see my son at all for six weeks. In those few days that we have off the wife's always into me about, 'You haven't done this or you haven't done that.' I'm always tired and whatnot. It does play a ton in the family life. Absolutely."*

### Project E

Some participants at Project E described how they are enjoying being able to spend time with family and engaging in leisure activities at the weekend: *“If I’m on day shift and I don’t work a Saturday, I’m with my kids. I have netball, I have OZtag, I have Everton. Do you know what I mean?”*

Another participant explained that, while he works alternate Saturdays, having every other Saturday off allows him to spend time with his children: *“I get my kids every second weekend, so I don’t work... I work every second Saturday if there’s work there and the Saturday or the weekend I have my kids, then I’ll finish early here on a Friday.”*

However, other participants at Project E indicated that they prefer to work on Saturdays: *“I’ll put my hand up [for Saturday work] as many times as possible. Because my partner, she goes to the gym in the morning. But generally I don’t do anything early on a Saturday anyway. So I’m happy to go into work early. Because otherwise I’ll be in bed until nine o’clock. But I’ve got enough time for the way my life is at the moment. If I had kids, it might be a little bit different as well, which will be down the track, but not yet.”*

It is noteworthy that this participant linked his preference for working on Saturday to his life stage and family status (i.e. being young, partnered and without children).



**Table 2.1: Cross-case comparison of themes relating to time for life**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Project A</b>	<b>Project B</b>	<b>Project C</b>	<b>Project D</b>	<b>Project E</b>
Work schedule	10-day fortnight (work Saturday every other week when there is an RDO on Monday) 10-hour days Mon-Friday and, 6 hours on alternate Saturday. Campaign 4 x 12-hour shifts (48 hours) followed by 2 days off.	11.5 to 12-hour days Monday to Friday. Site closed on Saturday.	10 to 11-hour days Monday to Friday. Site closed on Saturday.	10 to 11-hour days (Monday to Thursday, 7.5 hours on Friday). Every second Monday off (RDO). Campaign 12-hour days, 6:3 rotation.	Day shift: 5 x 11 hour days (Monday to Friday 7am and 6pm). Saturdays (between 8am and 1pm) where required. Up to 10 days of night work per month (3 nights/week). Night shift do not work on Wednesday and Friday.
Preferences	Participants strongly favour 5-day week.	Participants strongly favour 5-day week, but some indicated daily hours are too long.	Participants strongly favour the 5-day week.	Participants strongly favour the 5-day week.	Participants perceive good work-life balance but are able to work Saturday if they choose.
Flexibility	Informal support for flexible work time.	Informal support for flexible work time. Some felt working flexibly would attract negative attention.	Informal support for flexible work time.	Informal support for flexible work time, but some perceive this is dependent on role.	Informal support for flexible work time. Workers have some control over hours – can work more than 55 hours if choose.
Family/Leisure	More time with family and in social/leisure activities at weekend.	More time with family and in social/leisure activities at weekend, but little time for life during the week.	More time with family and in social/leisure activities at weekend.	More time for family and in social/leisure time in BAU schedule. Campaign difficult for workers and families.	More time with family but some workers indicate a preference to work on Saturdays. This is linked to life stage and parental status.

## 2.2 Themes relating to pay and productivity

Table 2.2 compares the themes emerging across the five Pilot Projects relating to pay and productivity.

### 2.2.1 Pay

Interview participants at the Pilot Projects (particularly waged workers) were asked to comment specifically on the implications of the five-day work schedule on their pay. Comments made about the implications for pay were mixed across the five projects. At Project A there was a change between waged workers' comments in the first and second rounds of interviews. During the first interview some waged workers expressed concern about the financial implications of the five-day week. However, in the second round of interviews, the same waged workers commented that the reduction in pay was minimal and they consider the benefits of being able to spend time with family and friends to outweigh any costs (in terms of reduced income). Waged interview participants at Project C described the implication of the five-day week on wages as minimal. While at Project D waged workers indicated they prefer not working on Saturday but would prefer to work a ten-day fortnight, i.e. working on the fortnightly RDO that is currently a non-work day in the project schedule. Some waged workers at Project E (where Saturday work is optional) expressed a strong desire to work on Saturday to maximise their earnings.

#### Project A

In the first wave of interview data collection, waged workers at Project A were concerned about the impact of the five-day schedule on their pay: *"Yeah, definitely, it does [have an impact]. Probably about \$600 a week worse off with a five-day working week... I'll probably find myself finding a Saturday here and there on another site not doing this five-day week. So then what, 600 times, what are we doing, 40 weeks, it's 20 grand."*

However, by the second wave of interviews, participants were less concerned about the financial impact of the modified work schedule implemented at Project A: *"You're still getting lots of hours. We do an extra half hour every day other than different projects and you work every second Saturday, so you're really not losing much."*

A supervisor observed: *"But I know on past projects, they don't work every Saturday due to weather or whatever. If we're ahead in program, then we won't bring the boys in on a Saturday and waste cash. So if they work every single Saturday, the most they're missing out is essentially two weeks of pay. So \$4,000 just over. I think that's pretty good over the 12 months. [Expletive] not bad and then you throw the occasional occo and stuff like that and it evens out."*

A waged worker similarly observed: *"I honestly think most people know it's f\*\*k-all that they lose and they'd rather not work the Saturday if they don't have to. That's my feeling."*

#### Project B

Very few waged workers were interviewed at Project B and the effect of the five-day week on waged workers' pay was not identified as a theme in the data. Subsequent interviews will target more waged workers at Project B.

### Project C

At Project C salaried workers explained that working longer hours between Monday and Friday offsets any reduction in wages that would occur on Saturday: *"We're doing some overtime during the week... It's not really a big impact to be honest. They are on wages. ... For them, no, they haven't got impact that much because every day they're doing these two extra hours, so it's makes up that Saturday."*

Waged workers interviewed at Project C indicated that there is a small reduction in their weekly earnings but this is acceptable to them given the benefits associated with having Saturday off work: *"I feel like you miss out on a little bit, but it's not that much. It could be maybe \$100, \$200 difference, which okay, over a month, yes, it does add up, but I'd rather lose that \$200 a week and have that extra day than having to come to work and then most of it go into the tax.... So it has a slight difference, but I feel like if you put the hours in during the week, during your 6:30 or 5:00 or 6:30 to 5:30, you make up for it in a way. So, there's a slight difference, but then I preferably would choose to lose that bit of money then have to come into work because you work to live, not live to work."*

Another waged worker explained: *"For me, money, work, comes and goes. Money can always be made but time with your children doesn't come back."*

### Project D

Some waged workers at Project D indicated that working at the weekend is financially rewarding, but also indicated that there is a point at which money is no longer an incentive to work long hours: *"I get paid by the hour. So if I'm working longer hours I get paid obviously and if you're working on the weekend or an RDO, it's double time. So you are rewarded for it definitely, remunerated well for it. I think that's part of the reason you're happy to do it obviously. ...but at some point you go, 'it doesn't matter how much money you're getting, you've got to have a life'. It's not worth it if you don't have, if you can't enjoy it, so what's the point?"*

Other waged workers at Project D indicated a preference to work a ten-day (rather than a nine-day) fortnight to reduce the financial impact of the modified work schedule: *"So it's probably the one negative I would say to what we're doing with your Culture and Construction is that talking to the boys, it's that ... it would be good if we were just Monday to Friday and that way if we did five ten-hour days or five eleven-hour days, we've still got Friday night, Saturday, Sunday. But to have that second Monday off, you're kind of, from a financial perspective, you're screaming for overtime that second week."*

### Project E

Project E allows workers to work on Saturday if they choose to do so. Some waged workers at Project E indicated that they seek to work on Saturdays as frequently as possible in order to maximise their earnings: *"I'll try and go every Saturday. If they've got work on, I'll try and go every Saturday. But recently I think, I don't know, I've probably only worked two in the last four, because they had no work on those other Saturdays."*

## 2.2.2 Productivity

The majority of interview participants across the five Pilot Projects indicated that the implementation of the Culture Standard has had no adverse effect on productivity. Some participants identified productivity improvements that are attributed to workers being better able to rest and recover at the weekend.

### Project A

Some participants at Project A suggested that Saturdays are often not very productive work days in the construction industry and, consequently, eliminating Saturday work has minimal impact on productivity: *“Because Saturday there is a general kind of culture of ‘I’m here, that’s enough. I’m not going to sit down and do six hours of intense work like I would on a Tuesday’, because you’re not getting paid extra, you’re just there because you have to be. So there’s a different feel on a Saturday. It’s just like ‘I’m here to supervise in case anything goes wrong, but let’s just get it done and get out of here.’”* – salaried worker

Other participants described how, knowing they will not work on Saturday, encourages them to be more efficient between Monday and Friday: *“Knowing that I don’t have a sixth day makes me, you know, not want... not that I waste time, but like makes me really think about every single day, what I have to do for the day, all the things I have to prepare in advance. So in that way I do think it’s made me more productive, yeah.”*

Participants also reflected that working very long hours reduces productivity and reducing work hours will potentially enable people to complete the same amount of work in fewer hours because they will work more effectively: *“I think, if anything, when you do stupid hours, like 70 to 80 hours, I don’t think you get any more work done. I think you’re just less effective and you’re tired. Yeah. I think I haven’t noticed us doing less or anything like that at all.”*

### Project B

Participants at Project B similarly reported no adverse effects on productivity as a result of the implementation of the Culture Standard: *“I think it’s the same productivity. I don’t know if it’s necessarily improved it. [but] it hasn’t reduced it.”*

Another participant explained: *“I think it’s more productive than what it was. I feel like we just get the full day, Monday to Friday, and full production throughout that whole day, whereas previous six-day week, from 3:00 onwards, the productivity from Monday to Friday is very low. And then on the Saturdays, people just come to work for the money more than anything else.”*

Some participants suggested that some activities may be affected more so than others when working a five-day week but this can be managed with careful planning, even though there may be a slight cost increase: *“There’s a few activities that may be a little bit impeded by the five-day program, like your structure activities...I suppose what you’re trying to do is plan around ideally not pouring [concrete] on the Friday, if you’re going to do it, or you’re actually adding in might be additional mesh, so that you can do the initial stress two or three days later, on the Monday, which does come at a little bit of a cost...and trying to work around not having that requirement for somebody to come in on a Saturday to do those works.”*

Other participants at Project B suggested that work that would have previously been conducted over six days is now being completed in five: *“if you had the six days, I would schedule it for six days. So bringing things in five days, I don't find it any harder in what I do. It's hard regardless because you always push. We were working six, and we've managed to do it in five.”*

### Project C

Participants at Project C similarly described how they are more productive between Monday and Friday because they know they will not work on Saturday: *“Five is so much more productive. On previous projects, I've had to come in on a Saturday, and I know that on a Friday there's things that I won't do on Friday because I've got to come in on a Saturday, I'm like, 'I can just do that tomorrow morning.’”*

Others commented that Saturdays are typically less productive than weekdays and having a happy and well-rested workforce produces a net improvement in productivity: *“I think they're [the workers] more productive Monday to Friday, because even working Saturdays, the productivity is never the same. I think people are tired and then, when you start the week tired, there's more risk of things going wrong, accidents and stress. People get stressed because they haven't rested and they have issues at home. They're not spending quality time with their families. I think it's all related, but productivity Monday to Friday, I'm finding that my guys are responding better on the Monday to Friday because they are more relaxed and they're more focused when they come in on the Monday and it carries on through the week.”* - supervisor

Participants who were initially apprehensive about the potential productivity impacts of the five-day week indicated that effective planning has ensured no significant productivity issues: *“At first, yeah, I was worried about that one extra day. ...But seriously, no, that didn't impact us. We're going very well outside...So far, so good, yeah... like planning ahead. So sometimes we're pouring Thursday instead of Friday. It's all about planning.”*

### Project D

Participants at Project D described how careful planning and working 'smarter not harder' minimises productivity impacts associated with the modified work schedule. However, it was also noted that workers are more productive because they are less tired and able to recover sufficiently at the weekend: *“I think you've got to be smarter with your time. So definitely, there's nothing wrong with that, it's just programming differently ... I think, generally people's attitude at work is definitely better. That's what I've found. Productivity from a person because they're not so tired, I think would be better. That's the way I look at it, people rock up to work on the Monday, they're fresh. I brought a lot of people with me from my previous projects and you can notice the difference in them.”* - supervisor

Another participant at Project D explained that when workers are well-rested they work more efficiently enabling the same amount of work to be completed in five compared to six working days: *“...over the long term [working six days a week will be] less productive because fatigue might set in. You're just constantly working, working, working. Were you more productive or less productive? Will you get more work done because there's more work hours? but could you be a bit more efficient and get that Saturday done in the five days? You probably could.”*

### Project E

Project E is in its early stages. However, participants are not anticipating that the work schedule that has been implemented will adversely affect productivity. However, unlike the other Pilot Projects, Project E has maintained optional Saturday work and this is seen as a factor that will help to reduce productivity impacts: *“I don’t think it will affect the productivity so long as we remain open to allowing people who do want to work Saturday or a bit longer to do so. We probably haven’t set it in as a hard and fast rule, you must not work 50 hours or more than 50 or you will be disciplined. We definitely try to promote it and foster it as it’s best for you, best for the culture, your longevity, this is a long job, it’s a marathon not a race, that’s the messaging that goes out there. But when the people are willing to chip in and go a little further and do a bit more when the time is needed, if they’re also given the opportunity to leave early when needed. So I think it will be reciprocated and therefore there won’t be any impact on productivity.”*

Management at Project E has also implemented an initiative to reduce the number of meetings people are required to attend to improve productivity and reduce the need for people to work after-hours (which would typically be worked by salaried workers as unpaid overtime): *“We were quite focused to try and limit the amount of meetings that we have... I’ve had days when you just sit down and have meetings from 8:00-4:00 in the afternoon ... You don’t get your work done, and the only time you can work is from 7:00-10:00 at night.”*

**Table 2.2: Cross-case analysis of themes relating to pay and productivity**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Project A</b>	<b>Project B</b>	<b>Project C</b>	<b>Project D</b>	<b>Project E</b>
Pay	Some concern from waged workers about pay reductions in first wave of interviews. Small reduction in pay considered 'worth it' by many in second wave.	Not raised – interviewed salaried workers. Will target waged workers in next round.	Reduction in pay offset by longer hours during the week. Small reduction in pay considered 'worth it' by many waged workers.	Concern about pay reduction linked to capped hours and RDO every second week. Preference for 10-day fortnight among some waged workers.	Not clear – some suggestion there will be a slight reduction but workers are able to work longer hours and Saturday if they choose.
Productivity	No effect on productivity - Saturdays unproductive anyway. Workers more efficient and effective as a result of working fewer days/hours	No effect on productivity. Longer daily hours and effective planning ensure productivity is maintained. However, there may be workload/intensification and cost implications	5 full days is more productive than 5 shorter days and half day Saturday. Effective planning/scheduling overcomes productivity impacts. More rested and happy workforce is more productive	Effective planning/scheduling overcomes productivity impacts. Productivity likely to be better because of reduced fatigue.	Productivity good but very early in project. Maintaining opportunity to work on Saturday seen as key to minimizing productivity impacts. Strategy to reduce number of meetings.

## 2.3 Themes relating to health and wellbeing

### 2.3.1 Programs

Four of the five Pilot Projects have implemented various programs to support workers' health and wellbeing. Some of these health and wellbeing initiatives are project-specific, while others are organisation-level initiatives that are implemented by the principal contractor.

#### Project A

Participants at Project A described site facilities and initiatives which are provided to support workers to encourage them to engage in healthy activities, relieve stress and stay fit. For example:

- *"We have one full room for table tennis and people, when they are stressed, they just say, 'Hey, have you've got five minutes? do you want to have a quick hit?' and people just jump up. So I guess that's really helping each other from wellbeing, releasing stress point of view."*
- *"I think for this project particularly it's really great to see, you know, we even have a basketball court set up here."*

To support workers' wellbeing, Project A has also appointed mental health advisors *"We have mental health advisors on our project as well...they're up on our main board in the main compound their names, their phone numbers, and they're also very accessible through the office. All over the site there's things about mental health, and there's always help here, and also give a shout if you're feeling you're not comfortable about something, we can speak up about anything. There's always everyone here that we can speak to."*

Project A has also implemented a fatigue policy to support workers' wellbeing: *"their genuine culture around fatigue management. And they have a policy, and they want everyone to adhere to it."*

#### Project B

Project B has appointed mental first aiders to support workers: *"There's some support for mental health first aiders or phone numbers you can call. I haven't utilised any myself, but they make you aware that they are available if you need them"*.

The project has also implemented a "wellbeing board" in the project office where team members are encouraged to nominate a day in which they planned to come into the office late or leave the office early: *"We've put up a new wellbeing board for everyone, trying to get people to nominate either one morning or one afternoon every week that they either come in late or leave early to go and do something that's for their wellbeing. We've specifically made it visible so that everyone can support it, and if people say that they're going to do something on a certain day, we support that and try to make that happen"*.



### Project C

Project C offers workers the opportunity to leave early one day each week, which participants identified as being very helpful to their ability to spend time with family and/or rest and recover from work:

- *“On this project in particular, we’ve implemented a flee by three structure as well, so once a week anyone can just leave early, one day, and it can be to go pick your kids up, could be to go to sport, go home and watch TV”.*
- *“The flee by three is something to look forward to. You can plan. Like for me, I can plan to do something with my daughter on a Wednesday afternoon. It’s good. I don’t have to just wait for the weekend. I can do something midweek”.*
- *“I like the working hours that I currently have, especially with the flee by three that we are doing that is a really nice, also like a breather. You can go do something after work, get a few extra hours to get away and stop thinking about everything, which is really nice”.*

Participants who are directly employed by the principal contractor at Project C also receive a wellbeing day every four months: *“Well, in general, they give us a wellbeing day off every four months. You get three extra paid days off [per year]. You can use them whenever you like, you have to use them in the four months. That’s a good initiative. I hadn’t had that before”.*

Direct employees of the principal contractor are also provided with an annual wellbeing allowance which they can use to support any aspect of their wellbeing: *“Obviously head office has a lot of different things in place, like we have got our \$1,000 health and wellbeing allowance that they give every staff member, every year, which is money to be spent on anything to do with wellbeing. Could be a gym membership, might be golf lessons, it could just be anything basically”.*

### Project D

Outside of the campaign/occupation periods, Project D is working a nine-day fortnight, with every second Monday as a rostered day off (RDO). The fortnightly RDOs are available to waged workers and have been available to some salaried workers as well – which is not the normal practice in infrastructure construction projects. The nine-day fortnight has received mixed reactions. In some cases, participants were very positive about it: *“RDOs is a big one. They’re fantastic. It just gives you that extra day every two weeks to get the chores done at home, get the stuff you can’t do during the week. The RDOs are fantastic and they push that. If we don’t have much on then take the RDO, which is great. I haven’t had that before.”* – salaried worker.

However, the nine-day fortnight was identified as being problematic for engineers because they previously used RDOs to catch up on work without interruption: *“No site works going on. So, you don’t get any phone calls from the site just asking for your presence or any issues like that. So it’s really just a quiet time to just catch up on things.”*

Project D has also appointed a health consultant who attended the site every week for an eight week period: *“[the organisation] has engaged a consultant that comes out every week for eight*

weeks. He does an assessment on your body and your physicality, and all those types of things and we get a weekly update on strategies to help improve something in your life, whether that be weight reduction, reduce alcohol intake or whatever it is, so really good, really good”.

### Project E

No specific programs supporting health and wellbeing were mentioned by participants at Project E. Unlike Projects A – D, Project E is in the early stages of the project and only one round of interviews has been conducted.

### **2.3.2 Rest and recovery**

Consistent across Projects A, B, C, and D was the importance of a two-day weekend to enable adequate rest and recovery, and a feeling of being refreshed when starting the working week.

### Project A

Participants at Project A commented that a two-day weekend helps them to recover from the working week. Importantly, the two-day break helps participants to feel refreshed and ready for the following week of work: *“When I do come in Monday morning, I feel like you’ve had your two days off, and then you’re like, ‘Let’s go again”*. Similarly, another participant commented that having a two-day weekend enables them to have enough rest and improves their quality of life: *“When you’re at home you’ve got to be present and I feel if you are copping a flogging and you’re doing your six days every week. That day when you’re off, you’re too tired to do anything anyway. What’s the point of life mate? It’s so shit. So I think what [the Cultural Standard] is doing here is great”*.

Some participants acknowledged that they felt fatigued by the end of the working week, and this can carry over to the weekend: *“I think sometimes you can feel quite tired the first day and sort of catch up on sleep. But I definitely think you end up getting one and a half days of good rest. Good time off”*.

### Project B

Many participants at Project B regarded the two-day weekend as critical in helping them to rest, relax and recover from the long work week:

- *“Recover, catch up on sleep. Hang out with my husband and my family, catch up with friends, all that sort of thing. Yeah, it’s definitely...I’m really enjoying the five-day week”*.
- *“Knowing at the start of the week you’ve got a Saturday and a Sunday, it puts you at rest a little bit, your mind at rest, because you know you’ve got that time if that makes sense. You’ve got that time, so you put in the hard yards for your five days, do your 60 hours, and you think, that’s really good. I can now do whatever”*.
- *“I can unwind, I can properly sit down and unwind. I can, you know, take the stress of that last week away, relax, refresh, and go again. It makes me feel good”*.

Workers at Project B indicated they work 11.5 to 12-hour days between Monday and Friday. Some participants felt like they didn't get enough rest during the week as they got home from work late, spent time doing chores, and then went straight to bed. For these participants, there is little 'down time' between getting home each day and going to bed:

- *“by the time you get home it's 7:30, 8:00 sometimes, depending on when you actually leave work. It could always be longer, and then you've only got two hours to cook dinner and do whatever before you go to bed”.*
- *“by the time you get home and you are having to do all the things that you do, you get time to take the dogs out, cook, clean, whatever and then it's like bedtime. And for me, there's not much time to exercise or do anything because you are up at 5.00 to do what you have to do and then you get to work. So during the week you really just work”.*

### Project C

Participants interviewed at Project C reported experiencing rest and recovery during the two-day weekend: *“This is the first time in a long while that I've had a good work-life balance. I'm enjoying it. I'm not burnt out. Even like the whole work weekends. It's a good balance and we're doing a lot more things about my life now”.*

Some participants also reported having time and energy after work to undertake exercise and rest which they identified as contributing to them feeling refreshed for the following work day: *“I have time to exercise every night still. I play sport, go to the gym, swim, all kinds of stuff. I've got time to do that every night. And then probably with my work, I do that, I go home and I eat and I go to bed. I'm happy doing that. I might watch an hour of TV with my wife or whatever, and come back here the next day, which is plenty of time to refresh and get the rest for the next day”.*

### Project D

Like participants at Projects A, B and C, interview participants at Project D highlighted the importance of having a two-day weekend to help them rest and disconnect from work: *“And obviously Saturdays are off, and that's a good way to get a bit of rest and have at least two days off where you're, by the second day you stop thinking about work”.* For many workers, this is the first time they have experienced a two-day weekend. Two days was considered an adequate time to rest and recover, whereas one day was not regarded as providing sufficient time for effective recovery: *“Having a full Saturday and Sunday, at least I can plan more activities in the weekend. If it's just one day you feel one day is gone and it's back to work again, you feel like you never have a rest.”*

During the campaign/occupation period at Project D, team members were encouraged to take rest breaks as needed: *“The discussions in prestart about if anyone was tired or feeling unwell to let people know and have a rest. There was no feeling of being pushed, which is really important”.* However, despite the encouragement to take rest breaks as needed, participants described the physical and emotional toll associated with working long hours during the campaign: *“People are fatigued. The campaign was running 24/7. I wasn't on the ground myself*

*but even just for simple things that I used to go to some of the engineers, it's hard to get hold of them because some will be on night shift. Even when you just see them they will be fatigued, tired, you know, a bit emotional compared to how they are used to. Everyone is exhausted."*

### Project E

Participants at Project E did not mention rest and recovery, however some perceived that daily hours from Monday to Friday are long. However, at this early stage of the project, long hours did not appear to be having negative consequences: *"I do accept that these hours are big and that this job is big, but I do like it. I enjoy being on this job. I enjoy doing this work. And through the week, I've got enough time at home to have some downtime to chill out in the evenings and do it all over again and then just thrive for the weekends."*

### **2.3.3 Stress and work overload**

The experience of stress and work overload differed between projects. Project E is in the early stages of the project and participants are not reporting stress and work overload at this stage. Project A and Project D had both undertaken campaigns/occupations and interview participants at Project D reported stress and fatigue due to long working hours. One of the contributors to stress is work overload, particularly in cases where a six-day workload is compressed into five days. However, participants at all of the Pilot Projects expressed the belief that feeling stressed is inevitable when working in project-based construction work.

### Project A

Interview participants at Project A reported experiencing less stress than on previous projects and attributed this to the cap on hours and the five-day week:

- *"If this [the Cultural Standard] had have been going ten years ago, it would've made the career a lot easier. For all the other jobs I've done, it's been stressful and hard. I think it's really good for people to start to look at this".*
- *"[other company name] was a meat grinder. 70-hour weeks, every Saturday, long days starting at 6 o'clock to prepare for pre-start and finishing an hour and a half after the last crew finishes to get your paperwork done".*

### Project B

Irrespective of project work schedule, some participants at Project B commented that feeling stressed is normal and is inevitable in construction given the high work pressures and long work hours:

- *"To be honest, even when it was a bit quieter, there was still always a bit of stress around, that's just construction sites. There's always a bit of stress. Maybe in certain situations it gets a bit more intense".*
- *"It [stress] can be high, but it's not any more than what I expected. I think that's probably just an industry thing. It's nothing specific to this project".*

- *“Just normal, I suppose. I've worked in this role and industry my whole life. I know we work longer hours and probably a little bit more stressful than other industries, but I'm used to it.”*
- *“Tired and I'm stressed, I'm both of those things. I'm always tired and I'm always stressed”.*

The interview data suggests that, for some participants are still experiencing work as stressful, notwithstanding the implementation of the Culture Standard at Project B.

Irrespective of hours worked, some participants felt stressed (and overloaded) due to feeling like they do not have enough time to complete all of their work tasks: *“There's never enough time. There's always more things to do. There's always things falling behind that you're just playing catch-up”*. Similarly: *“It's [the workload] pretty intense. I think because it always is, just this flat-out, lots to do, never-ending stuff to deal with. It's pretty high-pressure. I feel pretty under the pump and have a lot going on. Sometimes it's unmanageable, but just doing my best”*.

### Project C

The majority of interview participants at Project C indicated that they are currently managing their workload well and are not feeling overly stressed. This was the case for office- and site-based workers and people in salaried and waged roles. Example comments are as follows:

- *“I'm pretty good at the moment. I feel I'm not overstretched or overworked or burnt out. I've got a good kind of workload”.*
- *“yes, it's pretty good. Everyone does their part, so you don't have to take on additional work. The workload is spread pretty evenly”.*
- *“I need to change my mind because I always think, ‘okay, this is the construction, you have to adapt yourself. This is the way you have to work’. But now I understand this is the team that tell you can have less stress, you can have your time to do your things”.*

However, there was a concern that, as the project progresses, the workload may increase: *“It's still good. I just want to see what's going on in the future, because we're going to get busier”*.

### Project D

While a five-day week was favoured at Project D, some workers were concerned that reducing the number of days worked each week without reducing workload can increase stress:

- *“No Saturdays and on one hand, they're [engineers] quite happy they got their weekend back, but I think the stress levels are still high, and growing because they're trying to fit the same amount of work into less days now”.*
- *“I think the approach of Culture in Construction, the whole model, it's good in this project. The aim of working five days is good. But I think it depends. Workload is still there. We still have a target that we need to meet in order [to meet] the project finish day”.*

Project D's normal work schedule includes 10 to 11-hour days between Monday and Thursday and 7.5 hours on Friday. Despite capping hours and not working on weekends, participants reported feeling stressed much of the time: *"You don't really get much of a working life balance. There's a lot of stress that we carry as well. Obviously we don't show it, but I can tell you like myself and others we carry a lot of pressure actually."*

During the campaign/occupation, many participants at Project D reported feeling stressed due to the pressure to complete all activity during the road closure: *"I think it was stressful for everybody. Yes, definitely. It's always just when you have that target date that you're trying to open, that's just extra stress, and you know that's the fixed date and everyone is not going to be happy if we miss it"*.

### Project E

Participants at Project E described how the workload expected of them is appropriate and manageable at this early stage of the project:

- *"You don't get pushed, you don't get forced to finish a job or anything like that"*.
- *"Yes, this project so far, it's very laid back, it's good"*.

Participants at Project E reflected that in previous projects and with previous employers they experienced much higher levels of work stress: *"Look, that's the reason why I left [name of another organisation], you know, you were pretty much, you were whipped. You're only a number. [organisation name] is different"*.

### **2.3.4 Management support**

Across all projects, there is perceived to be strong support from management for workers' health and wellbeing.

### Project A

- *"I think there is a recognition that overall wellbeing is more important than work and whilst everybody wants a good result I feel like there is a genuine care for your personhood and that you are generally healthy and happy"*.
- *"[The principal contractor] have a good attitude towards looking after people's wellbeing, mental wellbeing"*.

### Project B

- *"We've got a management here that, they're good communicators. So, basically, if they see that you're struggling at any time with anything, they'll pull you aside and say 'How you going? What's up?' So, they have that mentality and that's why I like working with the crew I'm with at the moment."*

- *“The management here do check in with you, which is good... And although the workload has been quite high in the last five weeks, they’re also recruiting for additional personnel and are keeping me updated on that”.*
- *“I think just the team culture in this office sort of supports health and wellbeing. We have an office where we have a lunch table outside. It’s in a nice area so you can go for a walk at lunchtime, that sort of thing if you like”.*

#### Project C

- *“My Project Manager is very conscious of supporting wellbeing. He is really approachable. I think if there was ever that I had an issue or anything, I could go to him with it and he would help me.”*
- *“They’re really supportive of the team here. When you need help or something, they’re organised. So everything’s organised. No pressure, no stress. Nothing can get to a hundred percent, but still there’s a way like we can work it out”.*
- *“I feel well supported, and generally I get all I need from head office...If we need more people because we’re only doing a five-day work week or we’ve got a flee-by-three roster, if I need more people to supplement”.*
- *“There’s a lot of marketing that the company does about work-life balance, mental health and diversity and things like that. But from my perspective, someone who’s based on a project and not in head office, I do think they practise what they preach”.*

#### Project D

- *“I think all the guys on the project, my sort of senior management, are very approachable. I think they’re pretty helpful in the way the project runs and what we do and we’ve got a pretty good culture of ‘are you okay?’ and having a chat with everyone”.*
- *“Just the people above me, the general care about the hours, the efforts and consistently doing it as well. Not just a one-off sort of thing. I guess they’re making sure you’re not overworking and all that stuff.”*
- *“Mainly they try and put a cap on your hours. Other companies, they don’t care what hours you do. You can do 100 hours and they’ll just still keep going. You know, and they try and enforce it, like they try and cap you out at 55 hours a week which is good.”*
- *“They had extra people on in my role, so there was extra peggies so we had extra support. So it went really well. I wasn’t feeling like I was overworked. It was just long days that’s all.”*

#### Project E

- *“If I ever need to talk to anyone, we have our little chats with supervisors and our buddies and we always ask everyone if they’re okay, if they need time off, or that’s what we were told to make sure the lads underneath me are happy and that if you need time*

*off there's no problem, I just say, yeah, go for it. If you need time off, go. If you have family issues or you're sick there's no issues there, family comes first in my eyes."*

- *"Managers on this project actually come up to you, talk to you, ask you how you are."*
- *"I have had the support yes, there is, I've had a few days off here and there, just like sort of mental health days, if you can call it that. Like time off where it's needed"*
- *"I feel like I am well supported. I can see this through the activities they are doing. I can see they are actually putting effort for everyone's wellbeing and they actually care about whoever is working for the company"*



**Table 2.3: Cross-case analysis of themes relating to health and wellbeing**

Theme	Project A	Project B	Project C	Project D	Project E
Programs	Site facilities support exercise. Mental health advisors. Fatigue policy.	Mental health first aiders. 'Wellbeing board' in office to nominate day to come in late or leave early.	Opportunity to leave early one day a week. Wellbeing day every 4 months. Wellbeing allowance.	Fortnightly RDO's. Health consultant.	None mentioned.
Rest and recovery	2-day weekend improves recovery.	2-day weekend provides opportunity to recover from work. Some experience insufficient rest on week nights.	2-day weekend provides opportunity for rest/recovery at the weekend.	2-day weekend provides opportunity to recover from work. Encouragement of rest breaks during campaign. Campaign was exhausting.	Not mentioned – but some perceived daily hours Mon-Friday as long.
Stress/work overload	Less stress than previous projects.	Sometimes feel overloaded. Stress is inevitable in construction work.	Sometimes stressed but stress is mitigated by the 5-day week.	Working fewer days can contribute to work intensification and stress. Experience of stress/fatigue during campaign.	Participants perceive their workload is reasonable and well managed – still in design stage.
Management support	Strong support from management for workers' health and wellbeing.	Strong support from management for workers' health and wellbeing.	Strong management support for health and wellbeing, evidenced by programs provided.	Strong management support and communication	Strong management support for health and wellbeing – people to talk to.

## 2.4 Themes relating to gender diversity

### 2.4.1 Acceptance of and respect for women

Across all of the five Pilot Projects, women based in the project site office generally indicated they feel respected and accepted. Women employed on-site in direct construction roles did occasionally experience offensive language and behaviour which was usually called out and managed in instances where women chose to report. On Project C, all women, irrespective of role, had experienced acceptance and respect and no disrespectful or inappropriate banter or behaviour was reported.

#### Project A

Participants at Project A generally believe that offensive behaviour is not tolerated and will be called out if witnessed.

At Project A, women mostly experienced respect from their colleagues:

- *“I was worried coming into a construction site... I had concerns whether being a female coming into a construction zone, not knowing a thing about construction, so simple things like not even knowing how to spot someone or, you know, anything like that, but all the guys that I’ve been working with have been brilliant. They’ve all been helping me, asking me questions, telling me things, showing me things, so I feel very welcomed. I feel at ease”.*
- *“I think it’s awesome. Like, the guys are not treating me any different like they would, you know, [man’s name] or [man’s name] or whoever”.*
- *“You know, they say to me, go get your roller ticket and digger ticket and you know, your truck licence, get it all.’ And it’s good that they’re not discriminating me saying, ‘No, you can’t drive a truck or you can’t drive a roller,’ because I’ve got hands and that just like them”.*

Despite these positive comments, several women suggested that prevalent masculine cultural norms in the construction industry can sometimes result in discriminatory comments or behaviour:

- *“You have the occasional, underlying, ‘Can you do this, because you’re a female?’ But without saying it out loud. I think it’s just people’s mindset, how they treat women and it’s happening here. I don’t usually accept it.”*
- *“At the moment it’s still the norm that women fit in with the male way to do things and if they want to do things a female-way they better be able to go at it hard and feel really confident that they are able to do that because you’re going to receive scrutiny.”*
- *“Like I’ve felt patronised or condescended but it hasn’t been explicitly offensive language per se.”*

- *“There are definitely people on this project that I don’t like the way that they behave but I don’t think that is going to really change that much. I think you can definitely instil a project culture but you can’t dictate how someone behaves.”*

These women framed these behaviours as an industry-wide challenge and not specific to Project A.

One woman at Project A described her experience of inappropriate behaviour from a male co-worker:

- *“He was very upfront. I was in the ladies and he paged me over the two way to see where I was. When I came out of the ladies, he was standing right there at the doorway and wanted to sniff my hands...really creeped me out. That’s probably the only incident that has really got to me, in being a female in this industry”.*

This woman described how, after raising the incident with her manager, the perpetrator of this harassment was asked to leave the project. She chose not to make a formal complaint to the human resource department and was satisfied with the way the issue was resolved.

### Project B

There is a zero-tolerance approach to offensive language at Project B. Together with this, a respect policy has been included in all subcontractor contracts. Despite these initiatives, women onsite indicated that they have experienced harassment by subcontractors:

- *“I mean everyday there is always incidences, but people are just always making comments. I don’t think they are doing it intentionally, so I don’t really take it onboard, but if it happens repetitively sometimes I’m like, that’s enough”.*
- *“One of the traffic controllers that I work with said one of the guys onsite said to her, ‘you look really good in those pants today. They make you look really good’. She didn’t respond that day, but the following day she said something to him: ‘that was a bit inappropriate yesterday. I think you crossed the line’. He wasn’t happy about that, and he said, ‘you wear those pants to look good, so I’m only complementing you on what you’re wearing’. That was the answer. Then the guy that said it actually came to me a few days later and he said, ‘what’s the story with the traffic controller up there? She can’t even take a compliment. I’m not going to speak to her again’. It’s just inappropriate”.*

Some women chose not to report incidences of disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour because they did not want to create a “fuss”: *“I want to lay low. I want an easy life. Don’t want to bring any attention. In my head, it’s better to say nothing”*. Other women chose not to report disrespectful behaviour as they believed it would not be taken seriously, as the men onsite protected one another: *“I think that it is a boys’ club and I think you have to be careful on what issues you report”*.

In contrast to women in site-based roles, women who work in the site office at Project B indicated that they consistently experience a respectful work environment:

- *“In terms of our [the principal contractor] team here in the office, we're very inclusive to women. They get invited and brought along to everything that men are doing. We're quite a social team. When we have team events, it's everyone”.*
- *“Females are well accepted on this project and respected as well. Even from the subcontractors. You'd get the odd person who just doesn't think that we belong here and that's fine, that's what they believe in. But I don't think we've had that on this project to be fair”.*
- *“I just feel like a person, like a part of the team. I don't feel like there's any difference with being male or female, you're just part of the team”.*
- *“I find it really respectful here. Everyone respects each other”.*

### Project C

At Project C, women felt accepted and supported and this was attributed to the strong commitment of the principal contractor to promoting gender diversity and inclusion in the industry. No women reported experiencing offensive banter at Project C, including those who work on-site in direct construction activity.

- *“I think everyone's really friendly, but I never feel uncomfortable anyway... most of the [principal contractor] boys always come out and make sure I am okay. 'Is everything good?' One of the guys on the crane crew was, like, 'If you want to use that lunch shed, you are more than welcome to,' ...They are just making sure that I'm okay; it is nice”.*
- *“... my team here listens and always thinks about equity and equality. So, I'm thinking it [offensive language or behaviour] has never happened here”.*

### Project D

At Project D, there is a zero-tolerance approach to offensive language, material and behaviour:

- *“It's one of our principles, above and below the line behaviour. It's all over, plastered over the walls and in the induction”.*
- *“...it's below the line behaviour, so we don't accept it and you don't see it”.*

Women mostly experienced respect from colleagues at Project D:

- *“I think everyone's very inclusive. I feel great coming to work. I like it here. Everyone is just very inclusive, everyone's friendly, everyone gets around you and does everything. Everyone helps out, even if you don't know each other”.*
- *“I like the people that work here, and compared to another project I worked on, they weren't as nice so I prefer this one; they're pretty nice to us and treat us equal here”.*

However, women who work onsite in direct construction roles indicated they have experienced banter and language that could be offensive to some workers:

- *"I won't lie, there's a lot of bad language. It doesn't offend me".*
- *"But if you want to be correct about it, these days it's probably something that they shouldn't be saying some of the stuff. Some, it'll be something will come up in the news and it could be racism. Then again, they've never really been sexist that I can remember, but there's definitely racism there. They say it in jest, like it's a joke ... but you can't say it and at the end of the day, you shouldn't be saying it".*
- *"I guess, there's two sorts of languages, when you're thinking about it, swearing and carrying on, that's going. Anyone can do it, as long as it's not sort of sexualised".*

### Project E

At Project E, there is also a zero tolerance of offensive behaviour. Women feel respected, accepted and supported and this is attributed to management support for gender diversity and inclusion:

- *"I would describe the culture as very good. It was probably something I was a bit worried about when I started in the industry, being a young female, but there's more females in this office than there were in my previous office. So I definitely feel that in the office here everybody is open, it's very diverse group of people...there's not obviously an equal split of female and male, but there's way more females in here than I've seen in the past, which is pretty good".*
- *"I feel like everybody I work with was very respectful especially myself being female and having to direct lots of men around when I needed them to be in certain places. Everyone listened to what I said and then needed to be where I needed them to. I had to get them to stop a few times...everything was pretty respectful, which is good".*
- *"I do feel like there's that support in both [name] in here and the managers in here and also the site supervisors and the leading hands out on site as well. I think that both of those people, if I went to them and actually did say something that they would act with my best interests at heart then and take it on seriously".*

At Project E, workers are held accountable for their behaviour, and inappropriate behaviour is called out:

- *"I've got a really simple policy ... it starts with zero and ends with zero." This manager explained: "I do the investigations and as I've told every single person, I've made sure every single person has done the full induction, which I went through with a fine tooth comb. I've told them point blank any of that crap on my site, I will be investigating. I will find out what's going on, and if you are guilty of any part of that you will be taken to task".*
- *"I've only ever pulled up one person. It was that they were talking about one of the subcontractors, and he said, 'Oh, the boys are going down there today,' but they'd actually had a girl start that day, and I said to him, 'You can't say that anymore. You need to say the guys,' because 'the guys' to me, is not male ... And he's been mindful of*

*it ever since. And you see him sort of smirk, like he goes to say sometimes, he goes, 'Um, yeah, the guys'".*

To support women, the principal contractor at Project E has implemented a women's mentorship program:

- *"We're pretty focused on it [gender diversity. We try and hire as many female candidates as we can, deliberately trying to get females in where we can. We've got a female mentorship program that [the principal contractor] runs. So we try and push those things and just make sure they feel supported. Maybe give them a little bit extra support where we can".*

#### **2.4.2 Leadership roles**

While there are women in professional roles across all projects, women were less likely to be in project leadership positions in the 'horizontal' compared to the 'vertical' construction projects. It was suggested that this may be due to a lack of support for women in the civil engineering sector of the construction industry in the past.

##### Project A

At Project A, women are well represented in professional roles: *"Most of my managers, actually three out of the four managers I've had have all been women who have all moved up, and up, and up and it's so nice to see. It makes you want to get inspired by that and it's really, really awesome stuff".*

##### Project B

There was a high representation of women in senior project management roles at Project B:

- *"Our project director is female. I'm obviously female. Our safety manager is female. We've got three females in quite senior positions, which you don't really find on many other projects. We've also just had a services manager start who's female. It's definitely supportive. My kids are grown up, but the project director has two young children. It's nice to have a female-led team".*
- *"It is nice to actually be on a project where you have female leadership. I think that that is a real difference with this project".*
- *"I feel like we've got quite a good respect for women in construction, like our Senior EHS Manager, she commands a lot of respect onsite ... We have a lot of leaders who are women in our office at the moment, so [name of Project Director] being overall Project Director, the Commercial Manager, we've very high women in leadership roles on this project, which is great to see".*

##### Project C

At Project C there are women in senior leadership positions at both the principal contractor organisation and the project levels: *"My boss is female; my direct line manager is female; our previous CEO is a female."*

Despite the positive experiences of women at Project C, the interviews revealed some limitations to women's ability to progress careers in certain roles if they choose to work part-time. For example, a male managerial worker explained that part-time roles occupied by women tend to be: "...the roles that are less reactive 'cause they don't have to be here to fix stuff. They can do it from home. So I think it's even just about having the opportunity, or having a company that would be happy for you to move into those other things, to show that you can move laterally from role to role." Despite women having the opportunity to move into other – less 'reactive' – roles, sometimes women perceive these roles to be limiting in terms of their personal and career development.

#### Project D

At Project D, it was reported that it's hard for women to enter managerial or senior roles due to a lack of support from industry in the past:

- *"I think there are opportunities for everyone. I think the problem isn't now, the problem is that for the last 10 years there was already a lack of females in the industry. And let's say when you get to a point of a senior project engineer or area manager, you need that experience. You can't just pull someone off university and say that you are an area manager or senior project engineer. So I think it's hard when you look for females that have that experience to put them in that particular important role when the lack of support was 10 or 20 years ago and not now. But if we start now then maybe 20 years later we will see the difference. It just takes time."*

In order to bring more women into the industry, Project D has developed specific recruitment programs with educational institutions:

- *"At this project we've done a sponsorship with [education organisation] to promote female graduates. I also know they will be sponsoring high school as well, so embedding the engineering culture for the younger generation so that more females can go into the industry."*

#### Project E

There was no evidence of women in leadership roles at Project E. However, the project is in its early stages.

### **2.4.3 Few women in onsite roles**

Across all projects there are very few women in onsite roles. The reason for this is that few women enter construction in technical, trade or labourer roles. To support the attraction of more women into construction, the principal contractor at Project C has built gender diversity targets into their subcontractors' contracts and is working to support subcontractors to achieve these targets.

#### **2.4.4 Site facilities**

Across all projects there was agreement that the site facilities provided for women are very good. For example, women-only toilets, women's change rooms, women-only sheds and the provision of sanitary products were typical features of amenities provided for women at the five Pilot Projects.



**Table 2.4: Cross-case analysis of themes relating to gender diversity**

Theme	Project A	Project B	Project C	Project D	Project E
Acceptance of and respect for women	Women mostly experience respect from colleagues. Banter is mostly non-offensive but there is occasional discriminatory or offensive behaviour. Women onsite have been harassed by subcontractors.	Zero-tolerance approach to offensive language. Respect policy written into subcontractor contracts. Women onsite have been harassed by subcontractors. Women in site office experience respect.	Accepted and supported. Attributed to the strong commitment of the principal contractor. No reported experience of offensive banter.	Zero-tolerance approach to offensive language, material and behaviour. Women mostly experience respect from colleagues. Some offensive banter is experienced.	Zero tolerance of offensive behaviour. Women feel respected, accepted and supported. Attributed to management support for gender diversity and inclusion. Contractor has women's mentorship program.
Leadership roles	Women well represented in professional roles.	High representation of women in project management roles.	Women in senior leadership positions. Part time work can hinder women's career progress.	Hard for women to enter managerial or senior roles due to a lack of support from industry in the past.	No evidence of women in leadership roles.
Few women in onsite roles	Not mentioned.	Very few women working onsite.	Gender diversity targets in subcontractors' contracts.	Not mentioned.	Few women working onsite.
Site facilities	Site amenities very good resulting in a workplace that feels very inclusive for women.	Site amenities very good.	Site amenities very good.	Site amenities very good.	Site amenities very good.

## 2.5 Shift in perceptions between first and second interviews

Between the first and second interviews there was a positive shift in perception among participants about the Culture Standard. Of particular note is that experience of the Culture Standard has alleviated some of the initial concerns held by participants about whether a five-day week program is actually practicable and possible in the delivery of a construction project:

- *“When they first started talking about doing a five-day week, I was a bit sceptical. I thought I don’t know how that’s really going to work. I’m sure there would be plenty of reasons to come in on a Saturday and it will still be a six-day week. I really thought it was more like lip service saying it was a five-day week. But it genuinely is a five-day week here, and so we’ve transitioned into it really easily. So I think if everyone just starts promoting it and saying what a benefit it is, I think that the industry could move to a five-day week.”*

After experiencing a five-day week, many participants indicated that they do not intend to return to working a six-day working week in the future:

- *“I don’t want to go back to that [six-day week].”*
- *“Definitely choose a five-day project. The thought of working six days a week is dreadful.”*

Some participants noted that implementation of the Culture Standard, in particular the five-day week, is having a positive impact on recruitment of new workers to the Pilot Projects:

- *“I’ve heard nothing but positive. I’ve had a few people come over from other projects and they give you the pump up, ‘\*\*\* this job’s great.’ I get lots of phone calls through the week from subbies and stuff who are like, ‘When can we come over?’ And I feel good, it makes me feel good.”*

One of the key findings emerging across the interviews is the impact of life stage and family status in shaping workers’ preferences in relation to work hours and schedule. For example, younger waged workers may prefer to work longer hours to maximise their earning capacity in order to establish themselves financially. However, older workers may have different priorities:

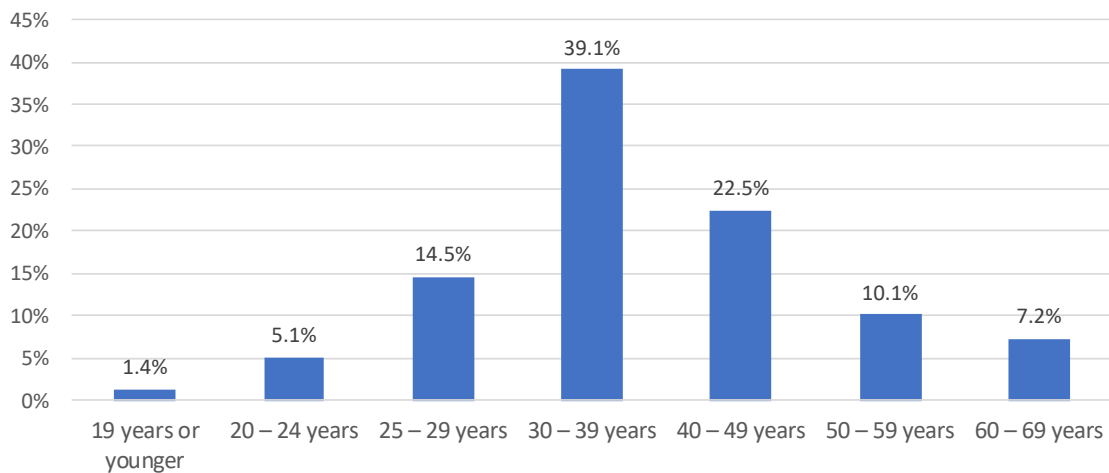
- *“If I was in a financial situation where I was a lot younger and just took on a massive mortgage because I was just starting my family and all that, I’d probably be sitting here saying, well, I’m loving having time with the family, but it’s putting a lot of pressure on me because I’ve just lost X amount of dollars a week and I can’t get that back, and it’s a catch 22. I guess if I was in that situation, that’s the conversation I’d be having now. But it comes down to individuality and where you are in your stage of life.”*

# Part 3: Survey Findings

## 3.1 Sample demographics

**Gender:** 130 (90.3%) survey respondents were men, and 9 (6.3%) respondents were women. One respondent (0.7%) identified themselves as non-binary, four respondents (2.7%) preferred not to say their gender. Four respondents did not respond to this question.

**Age:** Survey respondents' age ranged from 19 years old to 69 years old. 54 (39.1%) respondents were between 30 and 39 years old, 31 (22.5%) respondents were between 40 and 49 years old, and 20 (14.5%) respondents were between 25 to 29 years old. 24 (17.3%) respondents were older than 50 years. Only two (1.4%) respondents were younger than 20 years old. Figure 3.1 shows the age distribution of participants.



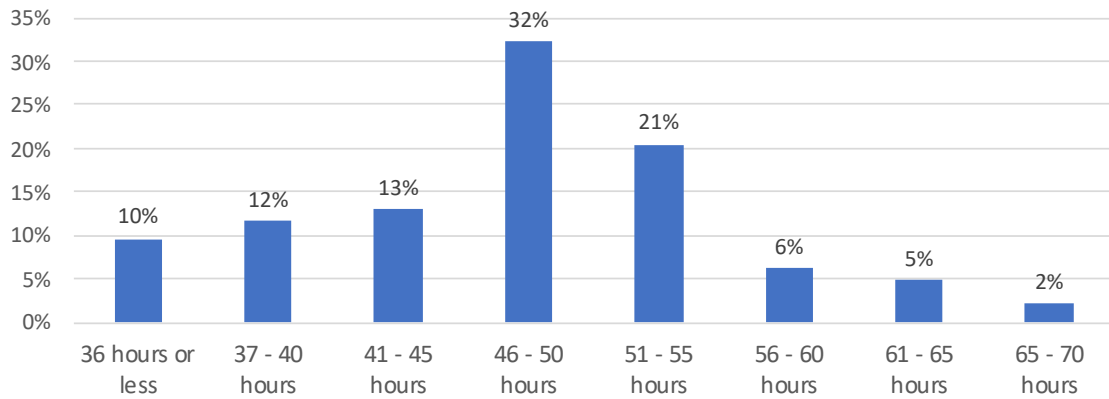
**Figure 3.1: Age distribution of respondents**

**Family structure:** The majority of survey respondents (n=82, 56.2%) were part of a couple with child/children as their family structure. A quarter of respondents (n=37, 25.3%) being part of couple without child/children. 20 (13.7%) respondents indicated they single. Four (2.7%) respondents indicated being a single parent and three (2.1%) respondents selected other as their family structure.

**Pay type:** The majority of survey respondents (n=108, 73.5%) were waged workers, whilst 39 (26.5%) respondents were waged workers.

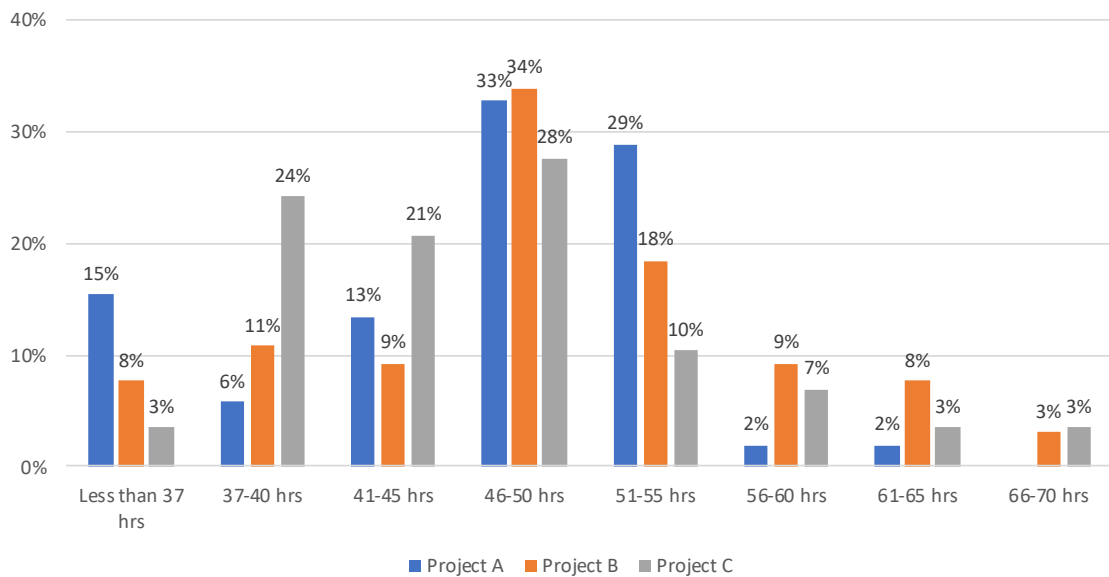
**Employer:** The majority of survey respondents (n=95, 65.5%) were subcontracted workers, whilst around one-third of the respondents (n=50, 34.5%) were direct employees of the principal contractor.

**Work hours:** Survey respondents were asked how many hours they work at their project, including paid and unpaid overtime. The majority of the respondents (n=77, 52.7%) indicated they work between 46 and 55 hours. Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of work hours.



**Figure 3.2: Work hours distribution of respondents**

A comparison of work hours between projects indicated that respondents from Project A and B mostly work 46 and 55 hours per week. Respondents from Project C reported working relatively fewer hours compared to the other respondents. The majority of respondents from Project C (n=21, 72.4%) indicated working between 37 and 50 hours per week. Figure 3.3 shows the distribution of respondents' work hours by project.

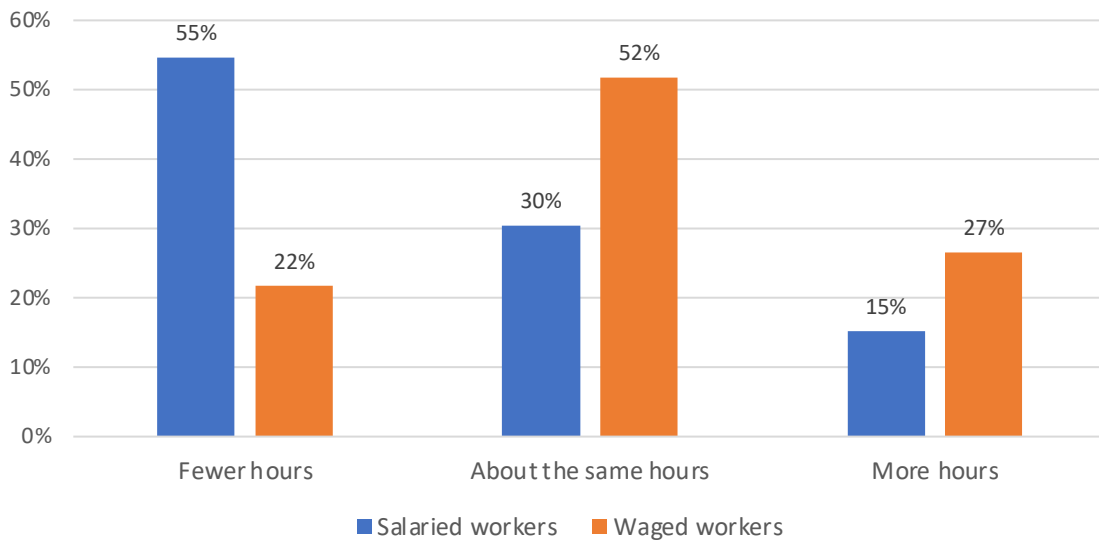


**Figure 3.3: Distribution of respondents' work hours by project**

**Preferred work hours:** Respondents from Project A and Project B were asked to indicate the number of hours they preferred to work. They were asked if they would prefer to work fewer, more, or about the same hours as they were working at the time of survey, taking into account the impact on their income. 53 (45.3%) respondents indicated they prefer to work about the

same number of hours as they currently do, 37 (31.6%) preferred to work fewer hours, and 27 (23.1%) indicated a preference to work more hours.

Comparison of work hour preference between waged and salaried respondents indicated that the majority of salaried respondents (n=18, 55%) preferred to work fewer hours while the majority of waged respondents (n= 43, 52%) preferred to work about the same number of hours as they currently do. Figure 3.4 compared preferred work hours between waged and salaried respondents.

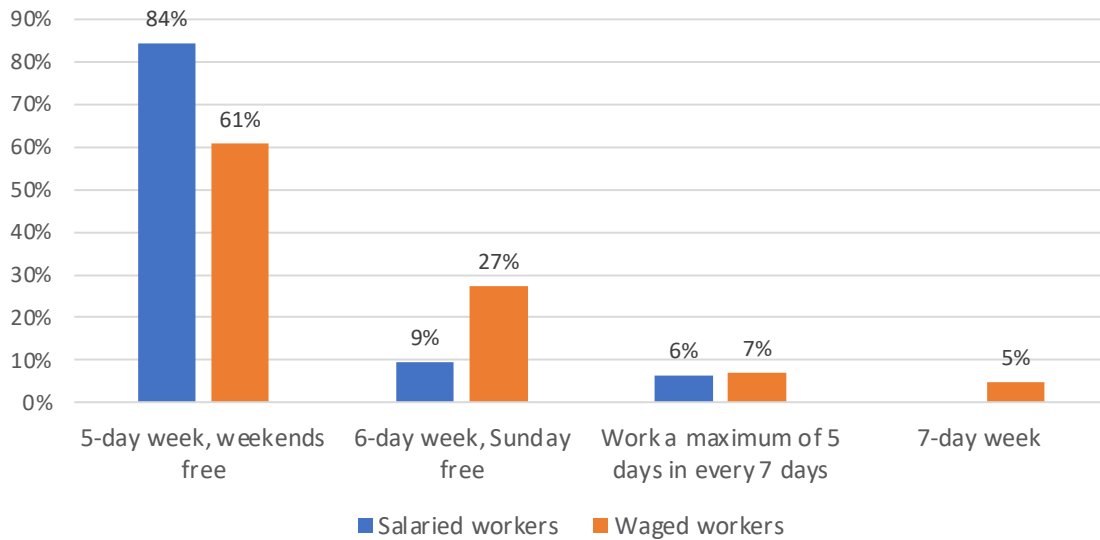


**Figure 3.4: Comparison of work hour preference between salaried and waged respondents**

**Preferred work schedule:** Respondents from projects A and B were asked to indicate their preferred work schedule choosing between: (1) five-day week and have weekends free, (2) six-day week and only have Sunday free, (3) work a maximum of five in every seven days, and (4) seven-day week.

Most respondents (n= 79, 67.5%) preferred to work a five-day week and have weekends free. 26 (22.2%) respondents preferred to work a six-day week and only have Sunday free, eight respondents (6.8%) preferred to work a maximum of five in every seven days, and four respondents (3.4%) respondents preferred to work a seven-day week.

A comparison of preferred work schedule between salaried and waged respondents indicated that the majority of both salaried and waged respondents prefer working a five-day week and having weekends free. This work schedule was more popular among salaried respondents, i.e. 84% of salaried respondents preferred working a five-day week and having weekends free, while 61% of waged respondents preferred this schedule. In contrast, working a six-day week and only having Sunday free was slightly more popular among the waged workers, i.e. 27% of the waged respondents preferred working a six-day week and only having Sunday free, while only 9% of the salaried respondents preferred this schedule. Figure 3.5 compares work schedule preferences between salaried and waged respondents.



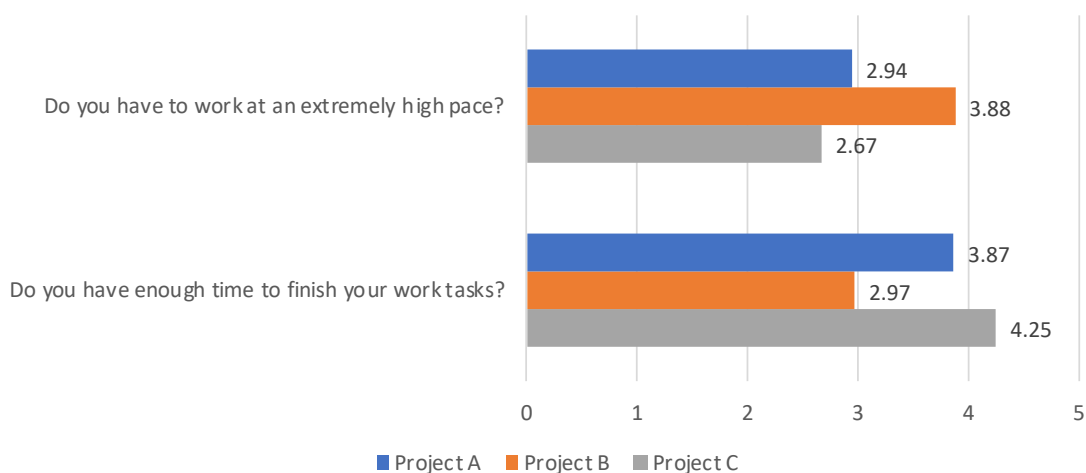
**Figure 3.5: Comparison of work schedule preference between salaried and waged respondents**

### 3.2 Work demands

To measure work demands, participants were asked to indicate the frequency of:

- having enough time to finish their work tasks, and
- having to work at an extremely high pace.

Responses were captured on 5-point scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). A mean score was calculated for each question. Results across the three projects are shown in Figure 3.6.



**Figure 3.6: Mean scores for work demand items by project**

The results indicate that respondents from Project B indicated that they have to work at an extremely high pace more often compared to the participants from Projects A and C. Similarly, participants from Project B indicated that they less frequently have enough time to finish their work tasks compared to participants from Projects A and C.

For each respondent, an overall work demands score was calculated by averaging the scores for the above two items. When calculating the mean score for work demands, the scores for the item which asks participants if they have enough time to finish their work tasks were reversed. This is because the other item in the work demand scale was negatively worded. Therefore, higher mean scores indicate higher levels of work demands as perceived by respondents.

The overall mean work demand scores for projects A, B, and C were 2.53, 3.45, and 2.27 respectively. Overall, Project B had a higher work demand score than Projects A and C. Further statistical analysis (One-way Analysis of Variance – ANOVA) indicated that the differences between work demand scores for Project B and Projects A and C were both statistically significant.

### **3.3 Time for life**

#### **3.3.1 Managerial work-family support**

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement:

- My supervisor accommodates me when I have family or personal business to take care of – e.g., medical appointments, meeting with child's teacher, etc.

Responses were captured on a 5-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

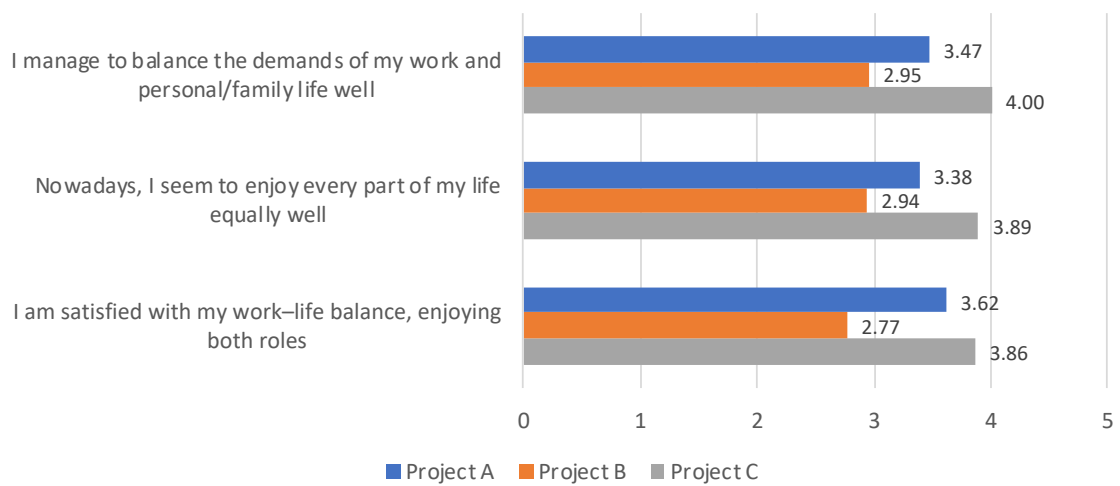
A mean score was calculated for each project. The mean scores for Projects A, B, and C were 4.36, 3.95, and 4.13 respectively. The differences between projects' mean scores for managerial work-family support were not statistically significant.

#### **3.3.2 Work-life balance**

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements:

- I am satisfied with my work–life balance, enjoying both roles
- Nowadays, I seem to enjoy every part of my life equally well, and
- I manage to balance the demands of my work and personal/family life well.

Responses were captured on a 5-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Figure 3.7 indicates the mean scores for each item across the three projects.



**Figure 3.7: Mean scores for work-life balance items by project**

An overall work-life balance score was calculated for each individual respondent by averaging the scores for the above three items. These scores were used to calculate a mean score for each project. The overall mean work-life balance scores for respondents from Projects A, B, and C were 3.50, 2.88, and 3.90 respectively. Overall, Project B has a lower work-life balance score than Projects A and C. Further statistical analysis (One-way ANOVA) indicated that the differences between work-life balance score for Project B and Projects A and C were both statistically significant.



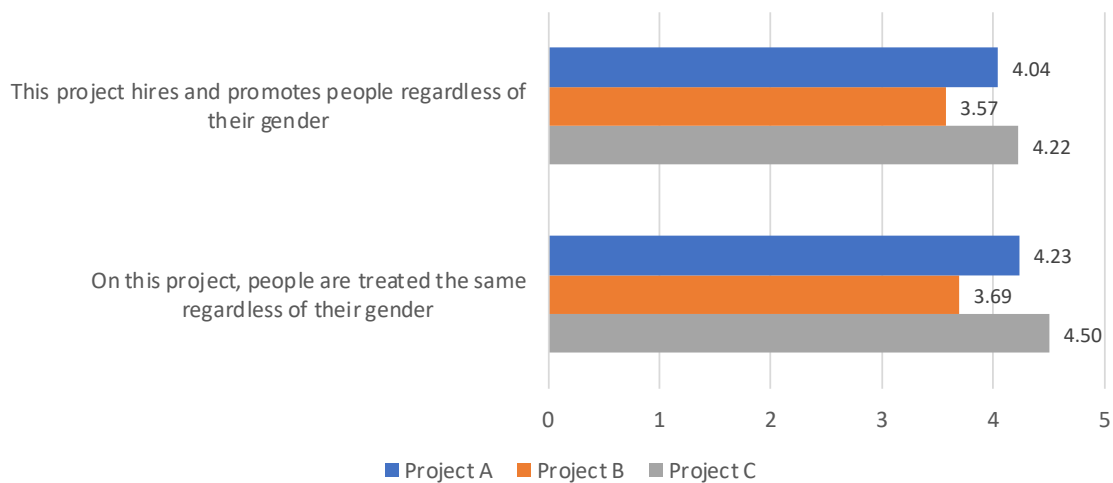
### 3.4 Gender diversity

#### 3.4.1 Organisational fairness

Organisational fairness was measured using two items:

- On this project, people are treated the same regardless of their gender, and
- This project hires and promotes people regardless of their gender.

Participants indicated their level of agreement with the following two statements on a 5-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). For each statement a mean score was calculated based on the respondents' ratings. Figure 3.8 shows the mean scores by project.



**Figure 3.8: Mean scores for organisational fairness items by project**

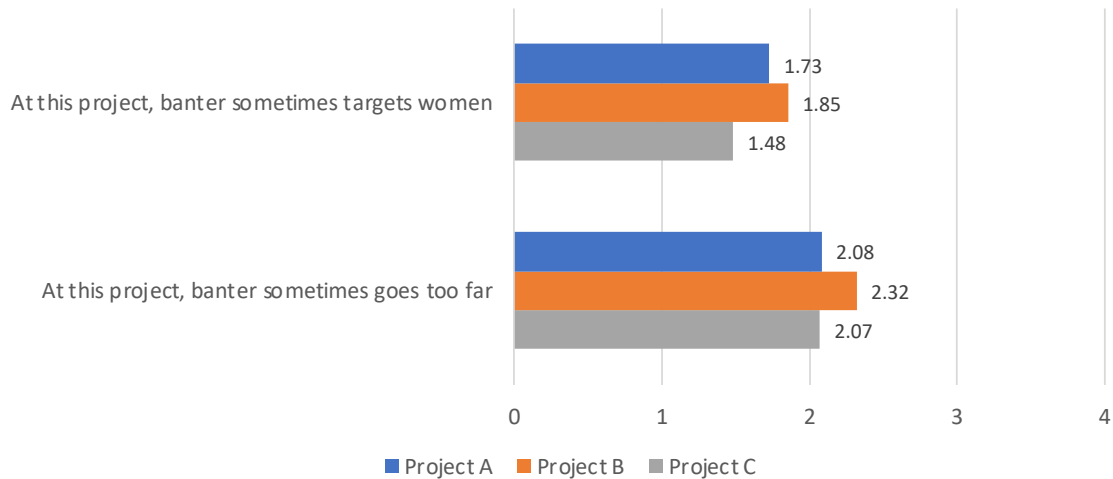
An overall organisational fairness score was calculated for each individual respondent by averaging the scores for the above two items. These scores were used to calculate a mean score for each project. The overall mean organisational fairness scores of respondents at Projects A, B, and C were 4.14, 3.63, and 4.44 respectively. Overall, Project B had a lower organisational fairness score than Projects A and C. Further statistical analysis (One-way ANOVA) indicated that the differences between organisational fairness score for Project B and Projects A and C were both statistically significant.

#### 3.4.2 Banter

The prevalence of banter in the workplace was measured by the following two items:

- At this project, banter sometimes goes too far, and
- At this project, banter sometimes targets women.

Participants indicated their level of agreement with the following two statements on a 4-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). For each item, a mean score was calculated based on the respondents' ratings. Figure 3.9 shows the mean scores for the items across the three projects.



**Figure 3.9: Mean scores for banter by project**

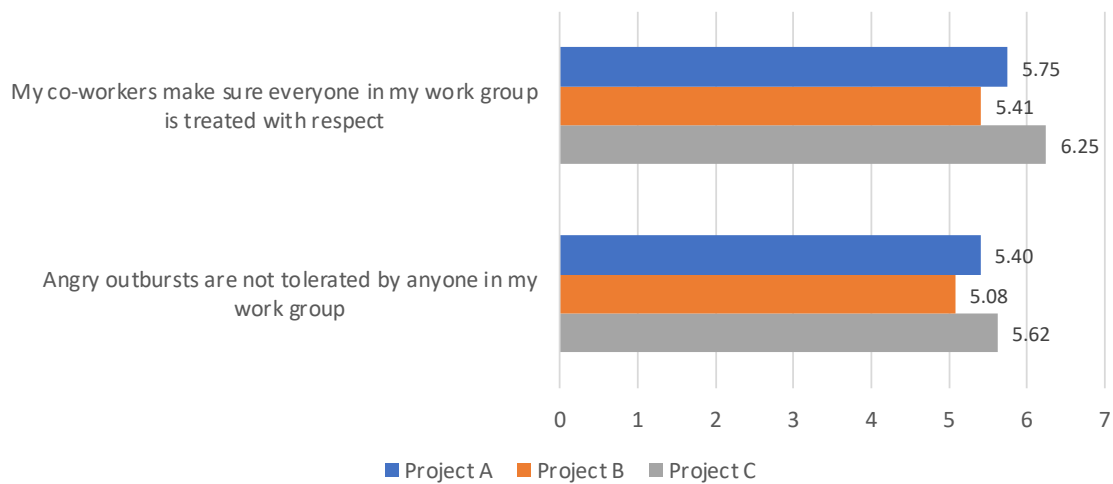
Project B had slightly higher mean scores for both of the items, however, further statistical analysis (One-way ANOVA) indicated that the differences in mean banter scores between projects were not statistically significant.

### 3.4.3 Respect

Respect was measured using the following two survey items:

- Angry outbursts are not tolerated by anyone in my work group,
- My co-workers make sure everyone in my work group is treated with respect.

Participants indicated their level of agreement with the two statements on a 7-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). For each item, a mean score was calculated based on respondents' ratings. Figure 3.10 shows the mean scores for the items across the three Pilot Projects at which the survey was conducted.



**Figure 3.10: Mean scores for respect by project**

An overall respect score was calculated for each individual respondent by averaging the scores for the above two items. These scores were used to calculate a mean score for each project. The overall mean respect scores for respondents at Projects A, B, and C were 5.56, 5.25, and 5.92 respectively. Overall, Project B had a slightly lower mean score for respect than projects A and C. Further statistical analysis (One-way ANOVA) indicated that the differences in mean respect scores between projects were not statistically significant.

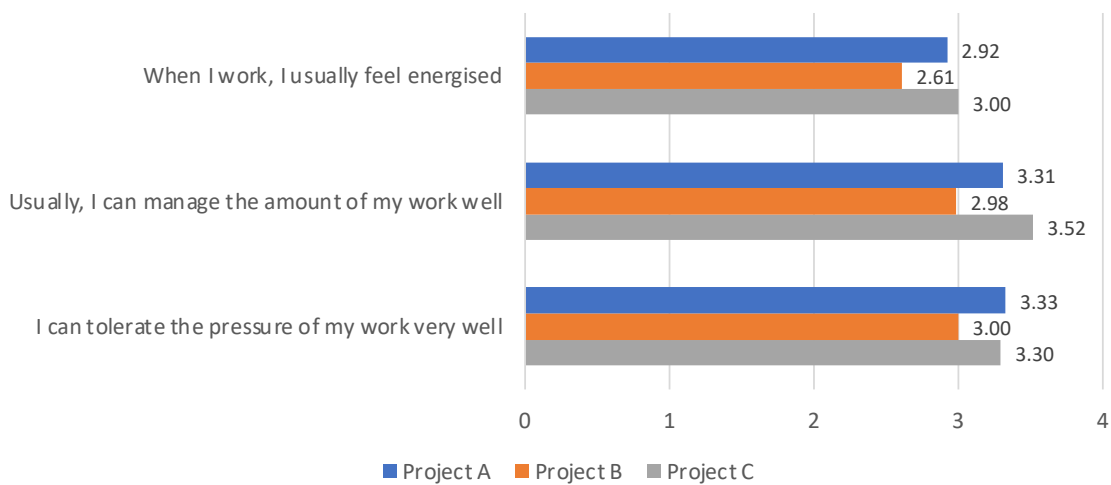
### 3.5 Work engagement

Engagement was measured using the following three items:

- I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well.
- Usually, I can manage the amount of my work well.
- When I work, I usually feel energised.

Participants indicated their level of agreement with the following two statement on a 4-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

A mean score was calculated for each item. Figure 3.11 shows the mean scores for the items in the engagement scale across the three projects.

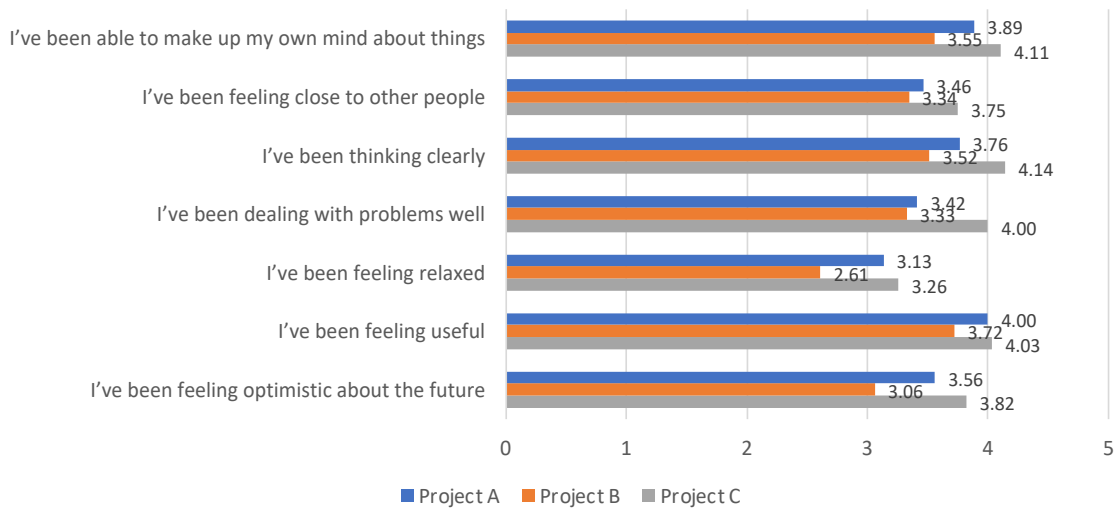


**Figure 3.11: Mean scores for work engagement by project**

An overall work engagement score was calculated for each individual respondent by averaging the scores for the above two items. These scores were used to calculate a mean work engagement score for each project. The overall mean work engagement scores of projects A, B, and C were 3.18, 2.85, and 3.25 respectively. Overall, Project B has a lower work engagement score than projects A and C. Further statistical analysis (One-way ANOVA) indicated that the differences between work engagement scores for Project B and projects A and C were both statistically significant.

### 3.6 Mental wellbeing

Mental wellbeing was measured using the seven-item short-form Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale<sup>1</sup>. Responses to each item were captured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (none of the time) to 5 (all the time). The responses reflected how frequently the respondents experienced each feeling over the past two weeks. Mean scores were calculated for each item. Items and their associated mean scores across the three projects are shown in Figure 3.12.



**Figure 3.12: Mean scores for mental wellbeing items by project**

For each respondent, an overall mental wellbeing score was calculated by adding up the scores of all the items and transforming the score according to the specified procedure. Calculating an overall score for mental wellbeing required that participants respond to all the seven items in the SWEMWBS.

Subsequently, a mean mental wellbeing score was calculated for each project. The overall mean mental wellbeing scores of Projects A, B, and C were 22.74, 23.11, and 24.69 respectively. Overall, the mean scores across the three projects were close. Further statistical analysis (One-way ANOVA) indicated that the differences between mental wellbeing scores between the three projects were not statistically significant.

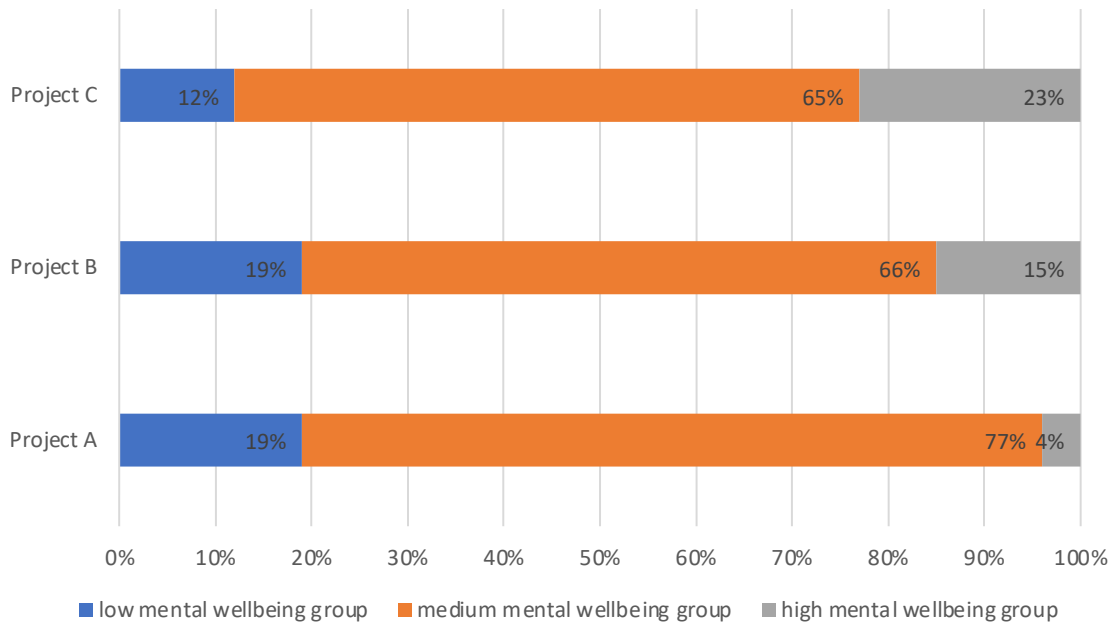
<sup>1</sup> Stewart-Brown, S., Tennant, A., Tennant, R., Platt, S., Parkinson, J., & Weich, S. (2009). Internal construct validity of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS): a Rasch analysis using data from the Scottish Health Education Population Survey. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, 7(1), 1-8.

### 3.6.1 Mental wellbeing groups

Participants were divided into three groups reflecting whether they reported low, medium or high wellbeing scores. The allocation of participants to groups was based upon the application of population norm scores for the short version of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) used in the survey.

The SWEMWBS has a mean of 23.5 and a standard deviation of 3.9 in general population samples<sup>2</sup>. This means that 15% of the population can be expected to have a score >27.4. Consequently, we have set the threshold for high wellbeing at 27.5. Conversely, 15% of the population can be expected to have a score <19.6, so we established a threshold point of 19.5, below which participants were deemed to have low wellbeing.

Figure 3.13 shows the percentage of participants in each mental wellbeing group across the three projects.



**Figure 3.13: Respondents with low, medium and high mental wellbeing scores by project**

In all the projects, most respondents were allocated to the medium mental wellbeing group. Compared to projects A and B, Project C had more respondents in the high mental wellbeing group. Project A had the highest percentage of respondents in the medium mental wellbeing

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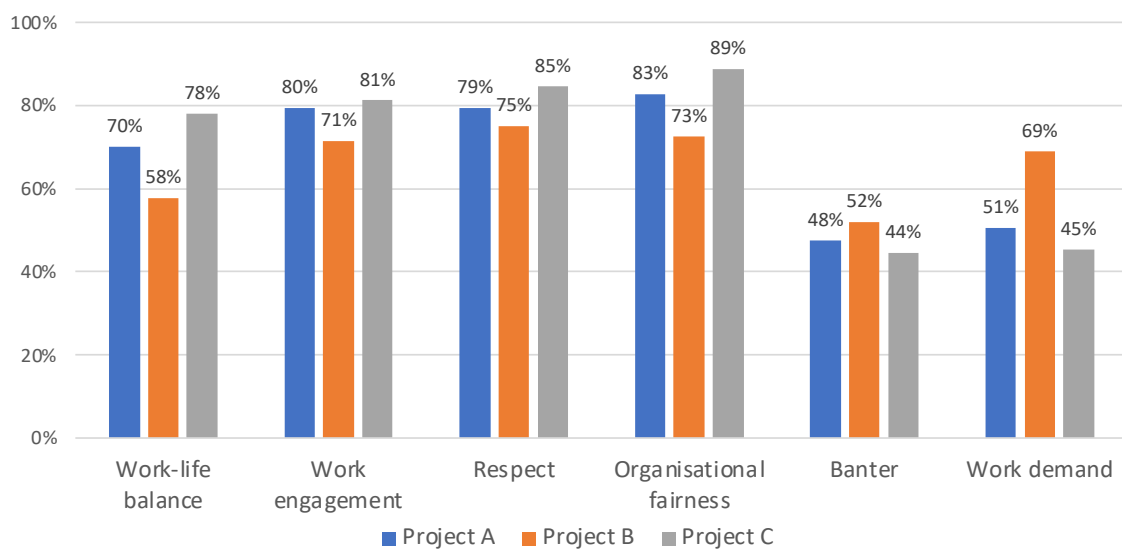
<sup>2</sup> Ng F., L., Scholes, S., Boniface, S., Mindell, J., & Stewart-Brown, S. (2017). Evaluating and establishing national norms for mental wellbeing using the short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS): findings from the Health Survey for England. *Quality of Life Research*, 26(5), 1129-1144.

group. Both projects A and B had the same percentage of respondents in the low mental wellbeing group.

### 3.7 Comparisons of key variables between projects

Overall scores for work demand and aspects of time for life and gender diversity were compared across the projects. Because different scales were used to measure the above aspects, normalised scores were used to enable a meaningful comparison between key variables and projects. Figure 3.14 shows the normalised scores across the three projects.

It should be noted that work demand and banter are negative constructs; therefore, a lower score for work demands and banter is desirable.



**Figure 3.14: Normalised scores for work characteristics, time for life and gender diversity by project**

Overall, Project C had higher scores for work-life balance, work engagement, respect and organisational fairness compared to Projects A and B. Project B had higher scores for Banter and work demands compared to the other two projects. Further statistical analysis (one-way ANOVA) indicated the following statistically significant differences in the scores between projects:

- *Work life balance* - Project B had a lower mean score than other projects.
- *Work engagement* - Project B had a lower mean score than other projects.
- *Organisational fairness* - Project B had a lower mean score than other projects.
- *Work demands* - Project B had a higher mean score than other projects.

### 3.8 Relationships between variables

A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between different variables measured by the survey. Table 3.1 indicates the associations between mental wellbeing and other variables.

The results indicated mental wellbeing was positively and significantly associated with work engagement, work-life balance, organisational fairness, and respect. These associations indicate that respondents who perceive higher levels of work engagement, work-life balance, organisational fairness, and respect generally indicate a higher level of mental wellbeing.

Further, mental wellbeing was negatively and significantly associated with banter, indicating that those who perceived higher levels of banter generally reflected a lower level of mental wellbeing.

**Table 3.1: Bivariate correlations between mental wellbeing and other aspects of work and life**

		Work-life balance	Work engagement	Fairness	Respect	Banter	Work demand
<b>Mental wellbeing</b>	Pearson correlation	0.437**	0.543**	0.196*	0.360**	-0.319**	-0.137
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	0.022	<.001	<.001	0.114

Similarly, Table 3.2 indicates the associations between work engagement and other variables.

**Table 3.2: Bivariate correlations between work engagement and other aspects of work and life**

		Work-life balance	Fairness	Respect	Banter	Work demand
<b>Work engagement</b>	Pearson correlation	0.540**	0.281*	0.422**	-0.258**	-0.391**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	0.001	<.001	0.003	<.001

The results indicated work engagement was positively and significantly associated with work work-life balance, organisational fairness, and respect. These associations indicate that respondents who perceive higher levels of work-life balance, organisational fairness, and respect generally indicate a higher level of work engagement.



In addition, work engagement was negatively and significantly associated with banter and work demands, indicating that those who perceive higher levels of banter and work demand generally report lower levels of work engagement.

# Part 4: Discussion

## 4.1 Discussion of time for life results

The five Pilot Projects have all adopted different work schedules in their implementation of the Culture Standard. These differences reflect the flexibility available to organisations in determining how best to implement the Culture Standard given specific project requirements and conditions.

Two of the Pilot Projects (both 'horizontal' construction projects) have combined a 'business as usual' schedule with alternative work arrangements during periods of high intensity work (e.g. occupations or campaigns). Different rosters were implemented during these periods of high intensity work. On one of the Pilot Projects a 'six days on: three days off' roster was adopted which was deemed to be tough but manageable for a limited period of time. On the other project, workers worked four 12-hour shifts followed by two days off.

Implementing the Culture Standard in horizontal construction projects in which occupations or campaigns of high-intensity work are a necessity is challenging, but ways in which this can be achieved are being trialled by the Pilot Projects.

It is noteworthy that the work schedules adopted by the Pilot Projects also reflect varying degrees of 'compression' of work hours into a five-day week. For example, the schedule adopted at Project B compresses relatively more hours into the five days, with many workers indicating they work five 12-hour days and then have a two-day weekend each week.

There are also differences between projects in relation to the retention of Rostered Days Off. One Pilot Project has retained a fortnightly RDO, meaning that work is carried out over a nine-day fortnight, while other projects work a ten-day fortnight. It is noteworthy that on the project where the nine-day fortnight has been adopted some workers indicate a preference to work Monday to Friday each week (including the fortnightly RDO day).

One strong and consistent themes in the interview data is a preference for the five-day week across all of the Pilot Projects. The primary reason that people give for this preference is that it allows them to spend more time with their families and/or engaging in social or leisure activities at the weekend. The interviews include a balanced sample of women and men and the preference for the five-day week is reported irrespective of gender.

At the time of writing this Interim Report, survey data had only been collected at three of the Pilot Projects (due to the stage of projects and workforce numbers). Across these three projects 148 workers have participated in the survey, the majority (74%) of whom are waged workers. The survey data is consistent with the interview findings with 61% of waged workers and 84% of salaried workers indicating they prefer to work a five-day week and have weekends free (compared to a six-day week including Saturday work). A considerably smaller proportion (27%) of waged survey respondents indicated they would prefer to work a six-day week.

Survey data was also collected about respondents' job demands (measured by questions relating to work pace and intensity) and work-life balance. This data shows some differences between projects. For example, workers at Project B reported significantly higher work demands and lower work-life balance than workers at the two other projects at which survey data was collected. Project B is also the project in which a more compressed version of the five-day week was implemented (i.e. more hours are compressed into five working days). Interview data collected at Project B similarly indicates that some workers perceive their workload to be stressful and their daily work hours to have a negative effect on their ability to participate in family, social or leisure activities mid-week.

The survey results revealed that perceptions of work-life balance were significantly and positively correlated with respondents' mental wellbeing and engagement. Perceived work demands were significantly and negatively correlated with work engagement.

#### **4.2 Discussion of results related to effects of the five-day week on pay**

When asked about the implications of the modified work schedule for their pay, most waged workers indicated that the effects are negligible. At horizontal projects, participants explained that waged workers were able to make up for any differences by working non-standard hours during campaigns or occupations. Participants at other projects suggested that working longer hours between Monday and Friday offsets any reduction in pay associated with not working on Saturday. At the projects at which two waves of interview data were collected, some waged workers who initially expressed concern about the implication of the modified work schedule for their pay during the first interview, expressed a different view during the second interview. These workers indicated that, having experienced the five-day week between the two waves of interview data collection, they considered the slight reduction in pay to be 'worth it' because of the benefits in relation to being able to spend more time with their families at the weekends.

However, the preference relating to working on Saturday was also dependent on the age and life stage of workers. Some younger waged workers who are in the 'establishment' phase of their careers and who do not yet have family responsibilities expressed a preference to work on Saturday. On Project E, Saturday work is available, but optional and some waged interview participants indicated that they choose to work as many Saturdays as they can.

However, this was not the majority view of waged workers, as reflected by the survey data. Of the waged survey respondents only 27% expressed a preference to work more hours than they are working under the Culture Standard, while 52% indicated a preference to work 'about the same' hours as they are currently working and 22% of waged workers indicated a preference to work fewer hours each week.

#### **4.3 Discussion of results related to the effects of the five-day week on productivity**

Interviewees were asked to indicate whether they think the Culture Standard implementation at the Pilot Projects is having an effect on productivity. At all of the projects, interview participants

reported a neutral or positive effect on productivity. Reasons given for this is that Saturday is typically not a productive work day in the construction industry and more work can be achieved by working five full week days. Participants also perceived that there are likely to be productivity gains associated with workers being more satisfied and better able to rest and recover during the two-day weekend. At Project E, where Saturday work is optional, participants suggested that Saturday could be used as a 'make-up' day if the project falls behind program.

#### **4.4 Discussion of gender diversity results**

Women who participated in the interviews at the five Pilot Projects indicated that they mostly feel respected and supported in the workplace. Participants at three projects (B, D and E) specifically spoke about the zero-tolerance approach that is taken to offensive material and behaviour in the workplace. Some projects have also implemented specific initiatives to support women in the workforce. For example, Project B has incorporated a Respect Policy into subcontract agreements and Project E has implemented a women's mentorship program. Notwithstanding the fact that most women interviewees indicated that they are generally well-supported, some women in site-based roles reported examples of sexist behaviour or offensive banter. Women interviewees frequently commented that gendered banter (such as comments being made about a woman's appearance) are just part of working in construction and the most frequent response to this is to 'walk away.'

The survey measured respondents' self-reported experience of gender-based banter and being treated with respect at three projects and no significant differences were observed. Perceptions of organisational fairness reflecting workers' perceptions that people are treated the same and hired and promoted regardless of their gender were also measured in the survey. Perceptions of organisational fairness were significantly lower at Project B compared to the other two projects at which the survey was conducted.

Perceptions of being treated with respect and organisational fairness were both significantly and positively correlated with survey participants' mental wellbeing and work engagement. The experience of banter that is perceived to 'go too far' was significantly negatively correlated with wellbeing and work engagement.

#### **4.5 Discussion of health and wellbeing results**

Mental wellbeing was measured in the survey using a short version of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale. Population norms were used to allocate respondents into high, medium and low wellbeing groups. In all three Pilot Projects at which survey data was collected, most respondents were allocated to the medium mental wellbeing group. Compared to Projects A and B, Project C had more respondents in the high mental wellbeing group (23%). Project A had the highest percentage of respondents in the medium mental wellbeing group (77%). Both Projects A and B had the same percentage of respondents in the low mental wellbeing group (19%).

Statistical examination of the relationships between variables found that mental wellbeing was positively correlated with work-life balance, organisational fairness and being treated with

respect in the workplace. Conversely mental wellbeing was negatively correlated with job demands and experiencing banter that sometimes 'goes too far.' These correlations highlight the close interrelationships that exist between the three pillars of the Culture Standard, i.e. time for life, health and wellbeing and gender diversity.

Interview participants at all of the five Pilot Projects perceived there to be a high level of management support for their health and wellbeing at these projects. This support was often described in terms of managers showing genuine care about the health and wellbeing of the workforce and being approachable and willing to listen to workers who may have specific health and wellbeing concerns. At Project D managers' communication about the importance of rest and recovery during campaigns/occupations was identified as an indicator of concern for workers' health.

The Pilot Projects have implemented a variety of health and wellbeing initiatives. For example, at Project A site facilities to encourage exercise have been provided, e.g. a basketball court and table tennis table. At Project C workers directly employed by the principal contractor are able to leave work early one day each week, have an annual wellbeing allowance to spend on a health-related activity and are able to take a wellbeing day off every four months. Project B has provided mental health first aiders and implemented a Wellbeing Board on which office-based workers can indicate which days they plan to work flexibly. At Project D a health consultant has been engaged to provide advice to the workforce.

Interview participants also observed that the five-day week has provided some health and wellbeing benefits as they are better able to rest and recover at the end of the working week. However, at some projects participants also commented that the length of the work day between Monday and Friday can have an adverse effect on recovery, health and wellbeing.

Interview participants' perceptions of work stress were similarly mixed. At some projects (e.g. A and C) participants indicated that they feel less stress than at previous projects and attribute this to working a five-day week. However, at other projects (e.g. B and D) participants suggested that they sometimes feel overloaded and working fewer days contributes to an intensification of work and increased stress.

#### **4.6 Change in perception of the Culture Standard over time**

At the time of writing, two waves of data collection have taken place at four of the five Pilot Projects. This enabled a comparison of themes and comments between the two waves of data collection. For the most part, the experiences of the Culture Standard between wave one and wave two of data collection did not change. However, participants' comments changed in one important respect.

Wave one data collection was typically undertaken early in the life of each of the Pilot Projects. During the 'wave one' interviews some participants expressed concerns about the implementation of the Culture Standard. These concerns related to the potential to affect pay (waged workers) and concerns about the viability of the five-day week when site-based construction activities 'ramped up.' However, in the second wave of interviews, the same

participants expressed far fewer concerns. Many waged participants in the second wave of interviews indicated that, even if they had slightly reduced pay as a result of working a five-day week, they considered this to be 'worth it' in exchange for the benefits associated with having a two-day weekend. By the second wave of data collection, participants also observed that construction work at many of the Pilot Projects was well underway (with more trades and workers engaged in on-site construction activity). Participants commented that, despite the 'ramping up' of site-based construction activity, the modified work schedules adopted as part of the Culture Standard implementation were still being maintained with minimal perceived impact on productivity. Thus, initial concerns about the impact of the Culture Standard on project management teams' ability to deliver the project without additional costs or delays were substantially reduced in the second wave of data collection. Having experienced the implementation of the Culture Standard, participants were more likely to consider it feasible to work to the requirements of the Culture Standard throughout the entire lifecycle of a construction project. Several participants in the second wave of interviews also commented that, having experienced working under the Culture Standard, they would not return to working a six-day week.

# Part 5: References

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# Part 6: Appendices



## 6.1 Interview data collection summary

	Project A	Project B	Project C	Project D	Project E
Time 1	17 interviewees -4 subcontractors -13 directly employed by principal contractor	17 interviewees -4 subcontractors -13 directly employed by principal contractor	16 interviewees -5 subcontractors -11 directly employed by principal contractor	18 interviewees -11 subcontractors -7 directly employed by principal contractor	19 interviewees -8 subcontractors -11 directly employed by principal contractor
Time 2	17 interviewees -3 subcontractors -14 directly employed by principal contractor	16 interviewees -1 subcontractor -15 directly employed by principal contractor	20 interviewees -5 subcontractors -15 directly employed by principal contractor	18 interviewees -11 subcontractors -7 directly employed by principal contractor	Yet to be collected

## 6.2 Interview questions

Question	Prompts
A. Introduction	
<p>B. Background Questionnaire  <i>Ethics - Standard Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form</i>            Start recording:</p> <p>Name:            Age:            Gender:            Role:            Years with current employer            Family structure: married/defacto/children/other caring responsibilities (parents/aunt/uncle)            When did they start on this project?</p>	
<p>C. Wellbeing</p> <p><b>1. Do you feel your health and wellbeing is supported at this project?</b></p> <p><u>For people who just started working on the project the start of the project</u></p> <p><b>How do you expect your health and wellbeing to be on this project compared to other projects?</b></p> <p><b>1a. Is the way your health and wellbeing is supported on this project different to your experience on past projects?</b></p>	<p>Why? How? What do the project team do?</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>How?</p> <p>[HoC, job demand, pace, pressure, work overload ...]</p>
<p>D. Work schedule</p> <p><b>2. Can you pls describe to me your current work schedule?</b></p> <p>Is it the same as <u>pervious projects</u>?</p> <p>Is there any implication for your <u>pay</u>?</p> <p>How do you find it in terms of your <u>productivity</u>?            Can you do all your work within the hours you currently work?</p> <p>Does that work for you? Do you like working those hours?</p> <p>Does it affect your <u>health or wellbeing</u>?</p> <p>Are you <u>satisfied with the balance between work and non-work life at this project</u>?</p>	<p>[Days, start-finish time, number of construction sites they work on, number of hours per week]</p> <p>If so, how? Do you get enough rest/recovery between shifts?</p> <p>Why? (length of work hours as well as flexibility/control overwork time) – is it different from other projects you have worked on?</p>

<p><i>On this project, what <u>options</u> are there to work flexibly – e.g. part-time, shorter hours, different start times?</i></p> <p><u>If they have caring responsibility:</u></p> <p><i>How do you fit in your care responsibilities (children, aged parents) with your work schedule?</i></p> <p><b>3. Is participating in volunteering or community related activities something you like to do?</b></p> <p><u>If yes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>on this project, are you able to participate in volunteering or community related activities (coaching sport, playing sport, volunteering)?</i></li> </ul> <p><u>If no:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>What prevents you from participating?</i></li> <li>○ <i>Is this different to past projects you have worked on? How?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>4. Do you have a partner who works in a paid job?</b></p> <p><u>If yes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How many hours, on average do your partner work per week?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is this influenced by the number of hours you work?</i></li> <li>• <i>If you could continue working the number of hours you work on this site, would your partner be able to increase the number of hours they work?</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Is it easier than other projects? Why?</i></p>
<p>F. Inclusive culture</p> <p><b>5. What is the work culture at this project like for workers?</b></p> <p><b>6. Do you think it is different for women compared to men? Why/how?</b></p>	<p><i>Is it any different to other projects you've worked at? How?</i></p> <p>Offensive behaviour called out? Respectful interactions? Strategies to support women in construction? Amenities/and equipment? Other things that make it an inclusive culture?</p>
<p>G. Formal policies</p> <p><b>7. Do you know if policies have been put in place to support women at this project?</b></p> <p><i>Are the policies the same as other projects you've worked on or different? How?</i></p>	<p>Gender pay equality How are women recruited into project roles? Do they have the same opportunities as men? Are they working? How/why? Give examples.</p>

<p>Implementation of the standard into the future:</p> <p><b>8. Now that you have had a bit of time working under the Culture Standard, what do you think it would be like if your workplace kept doing this beyond the life of the project, say for 5 or 10 years?</b></p> <p><b>9. How long do you think it would take for the whole construction industry to adopt this new way of working?</b></p> <p><b>10. Now that you have had a bit of time working under the Culture Standard, what changes would you make (if any) to make it work better?</b></p>	<p>These questions were only asked of people in the second wave of interviews</p>
<p><b>Are there any other things you would like to add or any questions you have for me?</b></p> <p>[How are we circulating the findings from this study back to participants?]</p>	

### 6.3 Survey content and scales

Variable	Question (item)	Answer	Reference
Work demand	While working at this project, do you have enough time to finish your work tasks?	1 = Never 2 = Hardly ever 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Always	Aronson et al. (2013)
	While working at this project, do you have to work at an extremely high pace?		
Managerial work-family support	My supervisor accommodates me when I have family or personal business to take care of – e.g., medical appointments, meeting with child’s teacher, etc.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree	Behson (2005)
Fairness	On this project, people are treated the same regardless of their gender.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree	Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman (1998)
	This project hires and promoted people regardless of their gender.		
Work-life balance	I am satisfied with my work–life balance, enjoying both roles.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree	Haar (2013)
	Nowadays, I seem to enjoy every part of my life equally well.		
	I manage to balance the demands of my work and personal/family life well.		
Banter	At this project, banter sometimes goes too far.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Strongly agree	
	At this project, banter sometimes targets women.		
Respect	Rude behaviour is not accepted by my co-workers	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Somewhat disagree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat agree 6 = Agree 7 = Strongly agree	Walsh et al. (2012)
	Angry outbursts are not tolerated by anyone in my work group		
	Respectful treatment is the norm in my work group		
	My co-workers make sure everyone in my work group is treated with respect		
Engagement	I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Strongly agree	Demerouti et al. (2010)
	Usually, I can manage the amount of my work well.		
	When I work, I usually feel energised.		

Variable	Question (item)	Answer	Reference
Work hour preference	If you could choose the number of hours you normally work, would you prefer to work:	1 = fewer hours 2 = about the same 3 = more hours	
Work schedule preference	What is your preference for how your work hours are scheduled?	1 = 5-day week, and have weekends free 2 = 6-day week, and only have Sunday free 3 = work a maximum of 5 in every 7 days 4 = 7-day week	
Mental wellbeing	I've been feeling optimistic about the future. I've been feeling useful. I've been feeling relaxed. I've been dealing with problems well. I've been thinking clearly. I've been feeling close to other people. I've been able to make up my own mind about things.	1 = None of the time 2 = Rarely 3 = Some of the time 4 = Often 5 = All of the time	Ng et al. (2017)

## **6.4 Statistical procedures**

### **6.4.1 One way ANOVA procedure**

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of three or more unrelated groups. During the analysis, the variance of data between different groups is compared with the variance of data within the groups using the F test statistic. The null hypothesis is that all group means are exactly equal. A larger F ratio indicates a larger variance between the groups compared to the variance within the groups, therefore, equal group means would be less likely in case of obtaining a larger F ratio. To test the statistical significance and decide whether to reject the null hypothesis, a p-value is calculated. The p-value indicates the probability of finding a given deviation from the null hypothesis, or a more extreme one, in a sample. A small p-value means that the data we have is unlikely under the null hypothesis. The convention is that if  $p < 0.05$ , then there is evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the groups.