Australian Government
Australian Public Service Commission



State of the Service Report

2023–24

Cover artwork

Leading Towards Reconciliation, Kayannie Denigan, 2024.

Artist Statement

Leading Towards Reconciliation represents the unique role that the Australian Public Service Commission plays in leading reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the APSC and the Australian Public Service.

The artwork is based on my *Vibrant Landscapes* style and speaks to the unique and enduring connections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to country. These connections are shown though plants including desert flowers, seaweed and gum leaves and representations of diverse land and sea country through reds and blues throughout the piece.

The main design focus of the artwork is the three places, connected by pathways. These three places also represent three key aims of the APSC for reconciliation. Two hands working together represents the aim of a cultural understanding and learning from each other. People surrounding a large circle represents a culturally safe working environment for all, but particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Three people sitting together represents practising strong reconciliation principles.

Contact us

The Australian Public Service Commission welcomes enquiries and comments on this report.

Australian Public Service Commission
B Block, Treasury Building, Parkes Place West, ACT 2600
Media enquiries: media@apsc.gov.au
Other enquiries: sosr@apsc.gov.au
Website: www.apsc.gov.au

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ISBN 978-1-7635508-5-8

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This document must be attributed as the State of the Service Report 2023–24.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Public Service Commission proudly acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea, waterways, skies, and songlines woven throughout.

We recognise and value the ongoing leadership, contributions and work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

We celebrate the rich cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations and pay our respects to their Elders past and present, for they are the holders of knowledge and wisdom.

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Australian Government
Australian Public Service Commission

The Hon Patrick Gorman MP
Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister
Assistant Minister for the Public Service
Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Assistant Minister

In accordance with Section 44(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, I present you with my report on the state of the Australian Public Service for 2023–24.

Section 44(3) of the *Public Service Act 1999* requires that this report be laid before each House of Parliament by 30 November 2024.

Yours sincerely



Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM
Australian Public Service Commissioner
25 October 2024

Introduction

Section 44 of the *Public Service Act 1999* states that the Australian Public Service Commissioner must give a report to the Agency Minister, to present to the Parliament, on the state of the APS during the past year.

The State of the Service Report is a collaboration between the Australian Public Service Commission and APS agencies.

It shows how the APS supports the Australian Government, the Australian Parliament and the Australian people. This year's report offers:

- an overview of developments impacting the operating environment of the APS
- analysis of how the APS workforce and workplaces are evolving, supported by research and data insights
- consideration of APS capability, leadership and integrity issues, trends and responses
- examples of what APS leadership and stewardship look like in practice
- stories of how APS teams are serving the Australian community, including by connecting with non-government organisations, businesses and the research sector
- an exploration of how the APS is improving its approaches and preparing for the future.

This is the second State of the Service Report to be submitted to the Australian Parliament by APS Commissioner Dr Gordon de Brouwer.

It is prepared as a digital-first report and is the latest in a series of reports on the Australian Public Service dating back to Federation.

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A message from the APS Commissioner

It is my pleasure, and my duty under the Public Service Act, to present the *State of the Service Report 2023–24.*

Another year into my term as APS Commissioner, I have gained an even deeper appreciation for the people, and the work, of the Australian Public Service.

The APS has faced significant challenges, particularly as we responded to the Robodebt Royal Commission, and we have taken system-wide actions to address them.

We are here to do things, but we are also clear about where the boundaries lie.

The policies and services we design and implement must achieve their intended purpose and be ethically sound, as well as legally and technically possible. All of the APS Values matter.

The vast majority of public servants perform their jobs capably and with integrity. Reflecting on our recent lessons learnt in the APS will make us firmer in our resolve to do this.



Australian Public Service Commissioner Dr Gordon de Brouwer

Image: Australian Public Service Commission

The State of the Service Report serves many purposes and audiences.

For the Australian Government, the Australian Parliament, and others with a keen interest in public administration, it provides a wealth of insights into the workforce, capability, leadership and integrity of the APS.

For APS employees, and those considering a career in the APS, it gives a real sense of what we are working on across the service, at the direction of government. It shows the support available to us to deliver outcomes.

We know from the State of the Service roadshows, which explore issues discussed in this report, that staff at all levels are highly engaged in the current and future states of their workplaces.

This year, where it makes sense to do so, we have arranged the content of the report to show information relevant to individual APS staff first, before turning to the broader context of agency-level or APS-wide developments.

There are many areas where the APS is performing well, and others where there are opportunities for further improvement.

One of the Public Service Commissioner's duties under the Public Service Act is to foster an APS workforce that reflects the diversity of the Australian population.

There is excellent progress with efforts to boost First Nations representation in the Senior Executive Service using innovative approaches to recruitment. At 30 June 2024 there were 85 First Nations SES leaders, an increase from 54 at 30 June 2023, and well on the way to the target of 100 leaders by mid-2025.

The APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Strategy and Action Plan has been released. It was developed in consultation with stakeholders in the APS and with external experts. It seeks to build cultural capability and increase representation of CALD people in senior leadership in the APS to ensure that we better deliver and that we are a model workplace. It will be implemented over a timeframe of 6 years for all APS agencies, and agency-specific action plans will be integrated into business operations.

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability Final Report released in September 2023 made it clear there is more we can do in relation to inclusion of people with disability. The recommendations concerning employment in the public sector have been accepted in principle by the Australian Government. The APSC has established a Disability Royal Commission Discovery Project to consider the implementation of these recommendations.

The expanded APS agency benchmarking section in this year's report shows the position of APS agencies relative to the Australian Government's APS employment targets and benchmarks. It also includes agency-level performance across APS Employee Census indices.

The successful conclusion of service-wide bargaining in March 2024 marked a significant turning point for the APS, making it possible to start reversing gaps in remuneration and differences in conditions that have grown over decades.

Whole-of-service bargaining has offered agencies significant efficiencies. At 30 June 2024, 103 new APS enterprise agreements were operational, delivering improved pay and conditions for APS employees over the next three years. In 2024, 82% of the APS Employee Census respondents expressed satisfaction with their non-monetary employment conditions, compared with 74% in 2023. This is the highest level ever recorded for the APS overall. There is a strong literature that shows that employee engagement and satisfaction boosts productivity and effectiveness of organisations.

APS employee engagement is also at the highest level, with 91% of 2024 APS Employee Census respondents indicating they are ‘happy to go the extra mile at work when required’ and 87% agreeing they ‘suggest ideas to improve our ways of doing things.’ The majority of respondents to the Census (93%) understood how their role contributes to achieving an outcome for the Australian public, and an increased proportion (87%) felt a strong personal attachment to the APS (84% in 2023).

There are many ways to find like-minded colleagues in the APS. Whether you are looking for others in your profession, scouting for people working on similar challenges or seeking out others you share things in common with, there is likely an APS community for you. These formal and informal networks enrich connections across and within APS agencies. They make an important contribution to building capability, as we share our knowledge with each other. The maturity of the Professions supports and enables public servants to connect and build skills.

I want to thank everyone who has contributed to this year’s State of the Service Report. This includes the agencies who shared their best practice examples, and the teams and individuals who offered their wonderful stories and perspectives for the Serving the Community and Stewardship in Action sections of the report. This helps to communicate the diversity and positive impact of the work the APS does.

I mentioned at the beginning of this message that the State of the Service Report serves many purposes and audiences. A further purpose is an historical one – taken together, these reports are a valuable record of the evolution of the Australian Public Service from Federation to the present day.

For this reason, I am delighted that the APSC is working with the National Library of Australia and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Library on a stewardship project to bring these reports together as a single digital collection.



Dr Gordon de Brouwer

Summary

The Australian Public Service is supporting the Australian Government to address significant economic, social and geopolitical challenges. Working within the framework of the APS Values, the APS develops major policies and reports and delivers the government's initiatives for the benefit of the Australian people.

- *The Intergenerational Report 2023* was released in August 2023, projecting an outlook for the Australian economy and the federal Budget to 2062–63. The report highlights the forces that will change how Australians live, work and engage with the world.
- The Future Made in Australia plan was funded in the 2024–25 Budget. This commitment over the next decade is intended to maximise the economic and industrial benefits of the international move to net zero and contribute to securing Australia's place in a changing global economic and strategic landscape.
- Landmark economic reports were released in 2023–24. One report released is *Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities*, setting out the government's vision for a dynamic and inclusive labour market. Another is *The State of Australia's Regions 2024*, with a focus on ensuring regional people, communities and industries are vibrant, strong and sustainable – now and over the coming decades.
- The 2024 National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program were released in April 2024. These are intended to provide a coordinated, whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approach to defend Australia and its interests. The Australian Government remains strongly committed to engaging with countries in Australia's region.
- The report of the Multicultural Framework Review, *Towards Fairness – a Multicultural Australia for all*, and the Australian Government response, were released in July 2024. The report makes recommendations for changes to laws, policies and institutional settings that build on the strengths of multiculturalism.
- APS Reform initiatives are strengthening public administration and rebuilding public trust. They support greater transparency and genuine partnership with the community, prioritising integrity and a focus on people and businesses, as well as the capability to deliver. The *Trust in Australian public services: 2024 Annual Report* captured community feedback on the government services they used during 2023–24.

The APS is building a workforce that represents the people it serves, tapping into a diversity of knowledge and skills. Reflecting the community means the APS can provide better informed policy and service delivery.

- The Boosting First Nations employment initiative aims to increase the number of First Nations employees in the APS to 5% by 2030 and increase representation at senior levels. APS enterprise agreements now require all agencies to take reasonable action to upskill their employees' cultural capability.
- The APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employment Strategy and Action Plan was released in April 2024, with key actions relating to cultural safety and literacy, cultural understanding, leadership and management, recruitment and progression, and senior representation.
- Gender equality in the APS is supported by actions to improve both working conditions and workplace culture. In 2023–24, APS bargaining led to the creation of common clauses in agency enterprise agreements relating to equal parental leave entitlements, flexible work, family and domestic violence support and respect at work.

- The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has made recommendations concerning public sector employment of people with disability. The APS is working to implement these recommendations.
- The APS LGBTIQA+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse) is growing. Employee networks across and within agencies are supporting LGBTIQA+ colleagues, promoting a work environment where everyone feels accepted and safe to be themselves.
- The proportion of APS employees who consider themselves to be neurodivergent is increasing. APS agency programs and neurodiversity networks are helping to create better working environments and promoting the importance of diverse skills and capabilities.

The APS is creating a workplace where all employees are welcomed, engaged and able to perform at their best. This is a workplace where work conditions are fair and inclusive, remuneration is competitive, and everyone is treated with respect. Engaged and respectful workplaces are more productive, delivering better for Government, Parliament and community.

- The APS Employee Value Proposition was released in November 2023, to communicate the benefits of working in the Australian Government and position the APS to attract, retain and develop the workforce it needs.
- The new APS Value of Stewardship embeds the important and enduring role all employees have in ensuring that the APS serves the government, Parliament, and Australian community into the future.
- Service-wide bargaining concluded in March 2024, paving the way for reduced fragmentation of pay and conditions across the APS and improving entitlements for parental leave and personal/carer's leave. This includes support for employees experiencing family and domestic violence.
- Changes to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* prohibiting workplace sexual harassment, sex discrimination, victimisation and related behaviours are reflected in updated APS employee programs and agency guidance.
- Employee engagement levels in the APS continue to be high. Key drivers include a culture of integrity and inclusion, a willingness to consider frank advice and new ways of doing things, and effective agency communication. APS employees have a positive view of how their health and wellbeing are considered by their managers and their agency.
- The APS workforce is growing, with employees working from 583 locations across Australia as agencies look to attract and develop the people they need.

The APS is working hard to deeply embed and sustain integrity at all levels. This means government is better trusted and outcomes are more enduring.

- Integrity begins with individual decisions and actions. APS employees are expected, and supported, to understand and fulfil their important responsibilities under the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act), including adherence to the APS Values and Code of Conduct. Senior leaders in the APS have an additional responsibility to model and promote the highest standards of ethical behaviour.
- The APS is building a service-wide approach to psychological safety, setting the standard for a workplace that enables and encourages honest communications.

- Integrity systems within APS agencies are being assessed and improved using the Commonwealth Integrity Maturity Framework and other integrity metric resources. The Capability Reinvestment Fund is supporting work to develop ways to better measure and monitor integrity data and analyse the effectiveness of integrity systems.
- *Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*, the final report of the APS Integrity Taskforce, was endorsed by the Secretaries Board and published on 17 November 2023. It made 15 recommendations across the areas of culture, systems and accountability. Implementation is in progress across the APS.
- The Centralised Code of Conduct Inquiry Taskforce found that current and former APS agency heads and employees breached the APS Code of Conduct on 97 occasions in matters associated with the Robodebt Scheme. The APS acknowledges its role and takes responsibility for its actions and is learning from these failures and enacting change.
- An Integrity Strategy for the Commonwealth Public Sector is being developed to enhance coordination and information-sharing across all government agencies.
- The new Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework came into effect on 1 July 2024, supporting a more proactive and targeted approach to minimising fraud and corruption.
- A new Commonwealth Supplier Code of Conduct also came into effect on 1 July 2024, strengthening the Australian Government's ability to identify and respond to supplier misconduct.
- The National Anti-Corruption Commission started operations on 1 July 2023. This independent agency detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corrupt conduct among public officials, and educates the APS and the public about corruption risks and prevention.
- The Administrative Review Tribunal started operations on 14 October 2024, providing the public with an avenue to seek review of government decisions on important matters that affect them.

The APS is using innovative approaches to invest in capability and leadership to do its job better.

- Pathway programs and traineeships present options for joining the APS. Employees have the unique opportunity to undertake important, diverse and interesting work across many different agencies and locations, developing and sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences across their career.
- Learning and development occur throughout an APS career. The APS Academy promotes a continuous learning culture across the public service, and APS Professions continues to build the specialist capability of the APS.
- In-house capability in government is being enhanced and supported. The APS Strategic Commissioning Framework was released in October 2023, setting the expectation that core roles and functions will be delivered by APS employees.
- Workforce planning capability is being strengthened. An APS Data and Digital Workforce Plan is being developed to support the vision outlined in the Data and Digital Government Strategy released in December 2023.
- Australian Government Consulting is delivering services to APS clients across strategic policy, organisational performance, and process optimisation projects. This is building APS capability to deliver projects that would otherwise be outsourced.
- The Australian Centre for Evaluation started operations in July 2023. It aims to improve the volume, quality and use of evaluation evidence and embed a culture of evaluation across the Australian Government.

- APS agencies are developing and sharing specialised data expertise across government, industry and community organisations to support evidence-based insights and decision-making across portfolios and throughout Australia.
- Investments in leadership are having a positive impact. Participants in the Secretaries Talent Council and Deputy Secretaries Talent Council programs are becoming increasingly self-aware, collaborative and inclusive. Building on this success, there is now a strong focus on developing a pipeline of First Nations leaders for the APS.
- The principle that behaviours are as important as outcomes is a key feature of a standardised leadership framework for the Senior Executive Service (SES). The SES Performance Leadership Framework creates the psychological safety necessary for frank and fearless advice and high performance.
- The Capability Review Program published 5 reviews in 2023–24. These reviews give agency heads the information they need to improve their agency's readiness. They facilitate discussions around an organisation's desired future state, highlighting strengths and identifying organisational capability gaps.
- Ten Capability Reinvestment Fund Round 1 projects involving 14 APS agencies were completed in 2023–24. The fund supports the development and implementation of scalable and impactful activities that help all agencies to better prepare for current and future challenges.

The APS is supporting the Australian Government to make sure policy and service delivery meet the current and future needs of the Australian community.

- Investment is occurring in APS futures and foresight capabilities, enabling APS agencies to better explore long-term issues and plausible future scenarios and improve policy, strategy, planning and decision-making.
- The first Long-term Insights Briefing, exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) might affect the trustworthiness of public service delivery, was published in October 2023. The next annual briefing will consider how the Australian Government can better work with communities to deliver outcome-focused services. It will be delivered in late 2024.
- The Charter of Partnerships and Engagement aims to improve the way the APS puts people and business at the centre of policy, implementation and delivery. It sets out 6 aspirational principles to achieve quality engagement and partnerships with external stakeholders.
- Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality was released in March 2024. It is a framework for driving gender equality through government policies and programs. It supports a vision for an Australia where people are safe, treated with respect, have choices and have access to resources and equal outcomes no matter their gender.
- Development of Measuring What Matters, Australia's first national wellbeing framework, continues. Changes to the frequency of data, and larger sample sizes, will increase the value of the framework for policy development so it represents all segments of the Australian population.
- The Data and Digital Government Strategy was released in December 2023. This strategy outlines the Australian Government's vision to deliver simple, secure and connected public services through world-class data and digital capabilities by 2030. It aims to ensure everyone's experience with the Australian Government is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to their needs.
- The policy for using AI in the Australian Government came into effect from 1 September 2024. For the responsible adoption of AI in Australia, government is taking a coordinated approach with 5 pillars of action. These are delivering regulatory clarity and certainty, supporting and promoting best practice, supporting AI capability, government as exemplar, and engaging internationally.

- A new Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program is helping APS agencies understand and treat climate-related risks, and to build climate considerations into business-as-usual practices so Australian communities are resilient and adaptable.

APS teams work extensively with non-government, industry and research partners to identify and respond to the needs of communities and businesses around Australia. Individual employees are embracing their important roles as stewards of the APS by understanding the long-term impacts of what they do.

- At 30 June 2024, the APS was made up of 101 agencies with 185,343 employees delivering services and undertaking policy, regulatory and specialist work.
- For this report, APS agencies have contributed examples of how their teams are delivering government priorities and serving communities. This includes powerful and efficient ways of sharing place-based information, new and improved vital services, designing and implementing infrastructure projects of national importance and encouraging knowledge-sharing and social inclusion.
- As part of amendments to the PS Act in 2024, stewardship becomes a new APS Value. In this report, APS employees in a range of roles and from locations around Australia share their personal understandings of stewardship, and how this impacts the way they work. Their perspectives are shaped by their diverse life experiences, career journeys and cultural backgrounds.

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Operating context

Under the Public Service Act, the Australian Public Service is apolitical and serves the Government, the Parliament and the Australian public.

Working within the framework of the APS Values, the APS develops major policies and reports and delivers the government's initiatives for the benefit of the Australian people. To do this, the APS engages and consults widely with business, research partners and communities.

The Australian Government released its sixth Intergenerational Report in August 2023. It projects the outlook for the Australian economy and the federal Budget to 2062–63. The report highlights the effects of demographic change on economic growth and assesses the long-term financial implications of current policies and trends. It focuses on the forces that will change how Australians live, work and engage with the world.

Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities was released in September 2023. It sets out the government's vision for a dynamic and inclusive labour market. The white paper is about helping more Australians make the most of the big changes underway in the economy and society. It includes a new full employment objective where everyone who wants a job is able to find one without having to search for too long.

The Australian Government released the 2024 National Defence Strategy and 2024 Integrated Investment Program in April 2024. The strategy details the government's approach to addressing Australia's most significant strategic risks, including the threat of conflict and the prospect of coercion. The strategy is based on the concept of National Defence, a coordinated, whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approach that harnesses all aspects of national power to defend Australia and its interests.

In its 2024–25 Budget, the Australian Government committed to investing $22.7 billion over a decade in the Future Made in Australia plan. This investment is designed to maximise the economic and industrial benefits of the international move to net zero. It is intended to contribute to securing Australia's place in a changing global economic and strategic landscape.

The Australian Government remains strongly committed to engaging with countries in Australia's region. Recent highlights include the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit to mark 50 years of partnership with the Association of Southeast Nations and the release of a major report to the government on Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040. More than $2 billion in development assistance has been committed to be delivered to the Pacific in 2024–25.

The Multicultural Framework Review, *Towards Fairness – a multicultural Australia for all* report, and the Australian Government Response, were released in July 2024. The review examines the state of Australia's multicultural society. It recommends changes to laws, policies and institutional settings that build on the strengths of multiculturalism and enable it to respond to contemporary challenges.

In February 2024, the Australian Government released the *State of Australia's Regions 2024* report. In line with the government's Regional Investment Framework, the report supports the government's commitment to targeted, effective and efficient regional investment that works better for people and regions, informed by local voices and priorities.

As the first step to achieving the APS Net Zero 2023 target, the Australian Government released the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy in November 2023, supported by a roadmap. These set out practical actions, targets and measures required to reduce emissions.

Further strengthening public administration through APS Reform initiatives is an Australian Government priority. The priorities of integrity, capability, a genuine focus on people and business, as well as being a model employer, are intended to underpin trust in Australia's public institutions. APS Reform supports greater transparency and genuine partnership with the community.

The Australian Government has released its report on the results of the 2024 Survey of Trust in Australian public services. This national survey captured community feedback from around 1,000 people each month on Australian public services during 2023–24. Measuring trust and satisfaction in public services ensures transparency in community feedback. This allows the public to have a voice in evaluating the effectiveness of services.

Intergenerational Report 2023

The outlook for the economy and the government's Budget to 2062–63 is projected in the sixth Intergenerational Report, released by the Australian Government in August 2023.

The *Intergenerational Report 2023: Australia's future to 2063* (cover in Figure 1) highlights the effects of demographic change on economic growth and assesses the long-term financial implications of current policies and trends.

Figure 1: Intergenerational Report 2023 cover



Source: The Treasury

It focuses on 5 major forces shaping the Australian economy over the coming decades:

- population ageing
- technological and digital transformation
- climate change and the net zero transformation
- rising demand for care and support services
- geopolitical risk and fragmentation.

These forces will influence the future path and structure of the economy, and change how Australians live, work and engage with the world. The Intergenerational Report 2023 helps extend the horizon of policy decisions, with its projections and analysis of long-term challenges and opportunities informing policy decisions made today.

The report is a vital resource for assessing Australia's long-term fiscal sustainability – the government's ability to manage its finances so it can meet its spending commitments now and in the future. The 5 long-term spending pressures identified in the report are health, aged care, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, defence and interest on government debt.

Long-term projections of Australia's economy, fiscal sustainability and demographics are a major feature of each intergenerational report. These projections are bolstered by detailed analysis of key trends and anticipated structural changes over the next 40 years.

The *Intergenerational Report 2023: Australia's future to 2063* was the first to include detailed modelling on the impact of climate change on Australia's economy. This included new insights into the physical impacts of climate change over time, and analysis of how climate change could impact selected expenditure, revenue and exports.

Intergenerational reports are produced under the *Charter of Budget Honesty Act 1998*. They assess the long-term sustainability of current government policies. The Act requires the report to be produced every 5 years. The first one was released in 2002.

Find out more

Australian Government (2023) *Intergenerational Report 2023: Australia's future to 2063*, The Treasury website, accessed 3 July 2024. treasury.gov.au/publication/2023-intergenerational-report

Australia's working future

The Government's vision for a dynamic and inclusive labour market is set out in *Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities,* released in September 2023. This white paper is about helping more Australians make the most of the big changes underway in the economy and society. It includes a full employment objective where everyone who wants a job is able to find one without having to search for too long.

Figure 2: The 5 objectives contributing to the Australian Government's Working Future vision



Source: The Treasury

Australia's economy and labour market will be shaped by 5 forces in the coming decades:

- population ageing
- technological and digital transformation
- climate change and the net zero transformation
- rising demand for care and support services
- geopolitical risk and fragmentation.

Maximising the opportunities these shifts present, and ensuring all Australians can participate and benefit, will require a more productive, dynamic and resilient economy. This is an economy with a bigger, better-skilled and more adaptable workforce.

Achieving the Working Future vision requires concerted action across a comprehensive range of policy levers. The white paper provides a roadmap to position the Australian labour market for the future, through:

- investing more in education, skills and training
- expanding opportunities to work
- boosting labour productivity.

The roadmap outlines the practical actions being taken, and the further reform directions required, to achieve Australia's potential. Steps have already been taken towards achieving the future reform directions outlined in the roadmap.

Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities is built on the solid foundations provided by the Jobs and Skills Summit held in September 2022. Extensive consultation informed the approach taken in the white paper, including with over 250 stakeholders from civil society, unions, employers, and state and territory governments.

Find out more

Australian Government (2023) *Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities*, The Treasury website, accessed 22 July 2024. treasury.gov.au/employment-whitepaper/final-report

2024 National Defence Strategy and 2024 Integrated Investment Program

The Australian Government released the 2024 National Defence Strategy and 2024 Integrated Investment Program on 17 April 2024. The NDS details the government's approach to addressing Australia's most significant risks, including the threat of conflict and the prospect of coercion. The Strategy of Denial is now the cornerstone of Defence planning.

The Strategy of Denial is designed to deter a potential adversary from taking actions against Australia's interests and regional stability. The National Defence Strategy is based on the concept of 'National Defence', a coordinated, whole-of-government and whole-of-nation approach that harnesses all aspects of national power to defend Australia and its interests.

National Defence complements broader whole-of-government initiatives aimed at supporting:

- integrated statecraft
- national resilience
- industry resilience
- supply chain resilience
- innovation, science and technology
- workforce and skills base
- robust national intelligence community.



Defence APS staff work alongside Australia Defence Force members.

Image: Defence

As a key element of National Defence, the government is making investments over the next decade to shift the Australian Defence Force to an integrated, focused force designed to address Australia's most significant strategic risks. The Integrated Investment Program sets out the specific capabilities the government will invest in to support the NDS.

These changes to the ADF will see Australia become more capable and self-reliant. Defence's international engagement efforts will focus on enhancing interoperability and collective deterrence.

With capability needs continuing to evolve, Defence will focus on recruiting, retaining and growing its highly specialised and skilled workforce. There will be important roles for the Australian Public Service workforce across government to contribute to National Defence.

The focus is on upskilling and professionalising the APS workforce to further reduce reliance on contracted staff and develop the agile APS workforce required to meet future capability needs. The government is also prioritising the targeted recruitment of APS personnel with skills and experience in science, technology, engineering and mathematics-related fields and project management to support the delivery of the National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program.

The Australian Government will update the strategy, investment program and associated plans every 2 years. This update will replace periodic white papers. This allows defence policy to keep pace with the rapidly evolving strategic environment and ensure national efforts address the most pressing government priorities by aligning strategy, capability and resources.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *2024 National Defence Strategy and 2024 Integrated Investment Program*, Defence website, accessed 11 July 2024. www.defence.gov.au/about/strategic-planning/2024-national-defence-strategy-2024-integrated-investment-program

Future Made in Australia plan

The Australian Government announced a $22.7 billion investment over a decade for Future Made in Australia in the 2024–25 Budget. The Investing in a Future Made in Australia plan is designed to maximise the economic and industrial benefits of the international move to net zero. It is intended to contribute to securing Australia's place in a changing global economic and strategic landscape.

Future Made in Australia is about:

- attracting and enabling investment
- making Australia a renewable energy superpower
- adding value to Australia's resources
- strengthening economic security
- backing Australian ideas
- investing in the people, communities and services that will drive national success.

The net zero transition and heightened geostrategic competition are transforming the global economy. Future Made in Australia is intended to maximise Australia's resilience and security and realise the economic and industrial benefits of the global transformation to net zero. This will secure Australia's place in a changing global strategic landscape.

Priorities that align with the principles in the National Interest Framework are identified in the 2024–25 Budget. These are:

- renewable hydrogen
- critical minerals processing
- green metals
- low carbon liquid fuels
- clean energy manufacturing (including battery and solar panel supply chains).

On 3 July 2024, the Australian Government introduced the Future Made in Australia Bill 2024 to legislate the National Interest Framework. This framework supports government consideration and decision-making on the significant public investment that unlocks private investment at scale in the national interest.

Through the framework, additional priority sectors will be identified under the:

- **Net Zero Transformation Stream** – sectors that will significantly contribute to the net zero transition and are expected to have an enduring comparative advantage. Public investment is needed for these sectors to significantly contribute to emissions reduction at an efficient cost.
- **Economic Resilience and Security Stream** – sectors where some level of domestic capability is necessary or efficient to deliver adequate economic resilience and security. The private sector would not invest in this capability in the absence of public investment.

The Treasury worked closely with other government departments to develop the criteria that would shape Future Made in Australia, and the policies which would underpin it. Agencies included: Prime Minister and Cabinet; Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water; and Industry, Science and Resources.

The Australian Government will also establish a new front door for investors with major transformational investment proposals related to Future Made in Australia. This will make it simpler to invest in Australia and will help attract more global and domestic capital.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *Investing in a Future Made in Australia*, The Treasury website, accessed 22 July 2024. budget.gov.au/content/03-future-made

Engaging with Australia's region

The Australian Government is committed to engaging with countries in its region.

Regional engagement contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability and enhances cooperation for sustainable development and prosperity.

The 2024 ASEAN-Australia Special Summit was held on 4 to 6 March in Melbourne. This marked 50 years of Australia's partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Leaders shared their vision for the region, and discussed ways to strengthen practical cooperation on economic, environmental and education issues. They discussed people-to-people ties.

Leaders released 2 statements following the Special Summit:

- Leaders' Vision Statement setting out their strategic vision for next 50 years
- Joint Leaders' Declaration (the Melbourne Declaration).

Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040, the report of the Special Envoy for Southeast Asia, Mr Nicholas Moore AO, was released on 1 September 2023. It made recommendations across a wide range of sectors and included 10 country profiles and action plans. The report informed dialogue at the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit.

The Australian Government reaffirmed its commitment to a peaceful, stable and prosperous Pacific region in the May 2024 Budget, with more than $2 billion in development assistance to be delivered to the Pacific in 2024–25. Respect for Pacific priorities underpins Australia's development partnerships and will be reflected in new bilateral and regional development partnership plans.

Current priorities with the Pacific include climate change mitigation and adaptation, infrastructure, education, gender equality, health and connectivity.

Developing the capability of Australian Public Service employees is essential to effectively navigate the complex and evolving dynamics of the region, where strategic engagement and cultural understanding are key to better development relationships and outcomes.

As part of the APS Reform program, 2 capability development projects were successfully piloted in a partnership between the APS Academy and Foreign Affairs and Trade's Diplomatic Academy. Both pilots delivered excellent results in enhancing Asia and the Pacific expertise among APS employees and contributing to a more agile and responsive APS.

The APS Indo-Pacific Executive Development Program, and the Pacific Engagement: Building long-term relationships through cultural capability postgraduate microcredential, cover cultural competency, geopolitical awareness, Pacific history and culture.

Participants experienced professional growth, forged valuable connections with colleagues across agencies and gained a deeper understanding of both domestic and international contexts. This uplift enhances individual performance and strengthens the overall capability of the APS to engage with regional partners and address challenges.

The long-term benefits of these programs will be seen in a more strategically aware and culturally competent workforce that is better equipped to advance Australia's interests in the region. Learning resources are available through the APS Academy and the Diplomatic Academy to further support these outcomes.

See also in this report

Operating context – Further strengthening the Australian Public Service, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 39.

Capability and leadership – APS Academy, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 99.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *2024 ASEAN-Australia Special Summit*, Prime Minister and Cabinet website, accessed 28 August 2024. aseanaustralia.pmc.gov.au/index

Australian Government (2024) *Australia's official development assistance budget summary 2024–25*, Foreign Affairs and Trade website, accessed 28 August 2024. www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/portfolio-budget-statements/australias-official-development-assistance-budget-summary-2024-25

Australian Government (2023) *Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040,* Foreign Affairs and Trade website, accessed 28 August 2024. www.dfat.gov.au/southeastasiaeconomicstrategy

Australian Government (2024) *APS Indo-Pacific Development Program*, APS Academy website, accessed 4 September 2024. www.apsacademy.gov.au/aps-indo-pacific-executive-development-program

Australian Government (2024) *Microcredentials, innovation and strategic partnership at the Academy*, APS Academy website, accessed 4 September 2024. www.apsacademy.gov.au/news-events/news/microcredentials-innovation-and-strategic-partnerships-academy

Multicultural Framework Review

The report of the Multicultural Framework Review, *Towards Fairness – a multicultural Australia for all*, and the Australian Government response, were released on 24 July 2024.

The review examines the state of Australia's multicultural society, and recommends changes to laws, policies and institutional settings that build on the strengths of multiculturalism and enable it to respond to contemporary challenges.

Australia's increasingly diverse make-up is highlighted in the 2021 Census of Population and Housing. More than half of Australian residents (51.5%) were born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas. Over 5.5 million Australians speak a language other than English at home.

The Review Panel travelled across Australia to consult more than 1,430 individuals and 750 organisations. This included community and faith groups, First Nations bodies, local government, business representatives, and service and sports clubs.

A total of 216 public consultations in 22 locations across Australia informed Towards Fairness. The Review Panel, Dr Bulent Hass Dellal AO, Ms Nyadol Nyuon OAM and Ms Christine Castley, considered 796 public submissions (15% in languages other than English).



Multicultural Framework Review community meeting in Victoria in August 2023.

Image: Home Affairs

Home Affairs used innovative communication and consultation approaches to enhance access to the Multicultural Framework Review, including a submission functionality in languages other than English, and in written, audio and video formats. Translated summaries of the Review Panel's report and the Australian Government response were published on the department's website.

Engaging younger Australians in an inclusive way was a Review Panel priority. The views of children and young people were sought on the question 'What does multicultural Australia look like?' Home Affairs then designed and facilitated a national art competition which received over 100 entries. These were displayed in the Multicultural Framework Review Online Art Exhibition, increasing community access to and visibility of the review.

The Review Panel heard a strong, united voice from communities wanting to be a part of decision-making processes to co-design and co-produce with relevant layers of government, to share responsibility and have a role in accountability.

The review and the Australian Government's response identified 3 core principles:

- **Connection** – setting the foundations of a multicultural Australia through leadership, planning and accountability between 3 tiers of government and communities.
- **Identity and belonging** – creating a welcoming Australia through English language programs, citizenship policy, and participation in arts, culture, sports and media. Experiences of discrimination and racism comprise the second of the top 10 themes identified in submissions to the review.
- **Inclusion** – building cultural capability into public services, modernising grant programs, ensuring digital inclusion, ensuring a sustainable language services sector, and meeting the unique needs of young people and regional areas.

The Australian Government welcomed the Review Panel's report, recognising the significant scale of consultation and engagement undertaken. In response, the Government will be guided by the framework's principles. This will build on the commitment to make Australia's multicultural settings fit for purpose for harnessing the talents of all Australians.

See also in this report

APS profile – CALD Employment Strategy and Action Plan – *State of the Service Report 2023–24,* page 56.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Multicultural Framework Review*, Home Affairs website, accessed 26 August 2024. www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/multicultural-framework-review

Australian Government (n.d.) *Multicultural Framework Review – Australian Government Response*, Home Affairs website, accessed 26 August 2024. www.homeaffairs.gov.au/multicultural-framework-review/Pages/australian-government-response.aspx

State of Australia's Regions 2024 report

The Australian Government released the *State of Australia's Regions 2024* report on 6 February 2024 (cover Figure 3).

In line with the government's Regional Investment Framework, this report supports the government's commitment to targeted, effective and efficient regional investment. This is investment that works better for people and regions, informed by local voices and priorities.

The report demonstrates the important need for continued focus on ensuring regional people, communities and industries are vibrant, strong and sustainable – now and over the coming decades.

Figure 3: *State of Australia's Regions 2024* report cover



Source: Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

State of Australia's Regions 2024 recognises the significant contribution regional Australia makes to the nation. It highlights some of the pressures and opportunities arising in the regions as the world continues to change.

The report brings together the latest data and local insights on what matters to regions across the 4 focus areas of the Regional Investment Framework – people, places, services, industries and local economies.

Governments, industries and communities must have the information required to navigate change and support evidence-based planning, prioritisation and investments.

The report highlights key government initiatives supporting regional Australia to respond to these issues, across portfolios that support regional development.

Consistent with the Regional Investment Framework, the report recognises that many regional opportunities and challenges require collaborative work between communities, businesses and levels of government, and place-based approaches that respond to experiences at local level.

State of Australia's Regions 2024 draws on ministerial and Australian Public Service engagement with regional stakeholders, including Regional Development Australia committees, the Australian Council of Local Government, and ministerial roundtables.

Report findings add to the regional evidence base, complementing other sources like the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Data Hub and Regional Australia Institute.

The Australian Government committed to delivering a regular State of Australia's Regions report when launching the Regional Investment Framework in the 2023–24 Budget.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *State of Australia's Regions 2024*, Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts website, accessed 17 July 2024. www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/media/publications/state-australias-regions-2024

Australian Government (2023) *Regional Investment Framework,* Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts website, accessed 17 July 2024. www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/regional-australia/regional-investment-framework

Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy

As the first step to achieving the Australian Public Service Net Zero 2030 target, the Australian Government released the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy in November 2023, supported by a roadmap.

The strategy describes the approach for implementing the government's commitment to achieve net zero, as included in Australia's Nationally Determined Contribution Communication 2022 under the Paris Agreement.

Practical actions, targets and measures required to reduce emissions are set out in the strategy (overview in Figure 4). These reductions will come from sources including:

- electricity
- buildings and energy efficiency
- procurement
- vehicle fleet
- business travel
- computing and data systems.

Reductions will also come from driving change through people, culture and capability.

Figure 4: Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy overview



Source: Finance

Non-corporate and corporate Commonwealth entities started emissions reporting in 2022–23. Finance aggregated this emissions data and published the Australian Government's *Net Zero in Government Operations Annual Progress Report* in 2022–23. This data forms an initial baseline for emissions. Future publications will track progress towards APS Net Zero by 2030.

Based on 2022–23 emissions data, non-corporate and corporate Commonwealth entities emitted an approximate total of 3,286,328 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (location-based method) emissions. The single largest source of emissions was from electricity consumption.

Entities committed to the APS Net Zero by 2030 are to publish their emissions reduction plans in the second half of 2024. These plans define the priorities and actions each entity will take to support the 2030 target.

Development and implementation of the complementary climate action in government operations policy, Commonwealth Climate Disclosure, is also underway. All departments of state will report on climate risk management activities in their 2023–24 annual reports against a limited range of criteria.

Find out more

Finance (n.d.) *APS Net Zero Emissions by 2030*, Finance website, accessed 09 July 2024. www.finance.gov.au/government/climate-action-government-operations/aps-net-zero-emissions-2030

Finance (2023) *2022-23 Net Zero in Government Operations Annual Progress Report*, Finance website, accessed 09 July 2024. www.finance.gov.au/government/climate-action-government-operations/commonwealth-emission-reporting/net-zero-government-operations-annual-progress-report

Finance (2024) *Commonwealth Climate Disclosure*, Finance website, accessed 09 July 2024. www.finance.gov.au/government/climate-action-government-operations/commonwealth-climate-disclosure

Further strengthening the Australian Public Service

In October 2022, Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for the Public Service, announced the Australian Government's plan for APS Reform to further strengthen the public service.

The Minister outlined 4 priority reform areas:

- An APS that embodies integrity in everything it does
- An APS that puts people and business at the centre of policy and services
- An APS that is a model employer
- An APS that has the capability to do its job well.

Community needs and expectations change over time. The government's reform priorities are intended to strengthen the ability of the APS to deliver the high quality advice and services necessary to respond to these changes. APS Reform initiatives promote high standards of integrity, drive development of quality workforce management policy, build capability and leadership for the future, and foster engagement and partnership with people, communities and businesses.

Together, this reinforces the APS as a reliable and contemporary service that delivers for all Australians. It also helps build trust in government and public administration. People trust public institutions when they do their job well and are open and fair in how they go about it.

The Australian Public Service Commission works with agencies and departments leading and implementing reforms across the service, supporting improvements in over 100 agencies and government entities. The APSC uses its broad perspective to target areas that most benefit from reform. Substantial progress has been made with 19 of the 59 initiatives completed.

Significant milestones include:

- amending the *Public Service Act 1999* to include stewardship as an APS Value and further clarifying the responsibilities of Ministers and Agency Heads
- progressing the program of capability reviews for all large departments and agencies, assessing their ability to meet future objectives and challenges
- establishing an ongoing series of Long-Term Insights Briefings on topics that matter to the Australian community
- establishing an in-house consulting model, Australian Government Consulting, which has begun delivering projects for APS clients as well as building APS capabilities
- establishing the Australian Centre for Evaluation to help put evaluation evidence at the heart of policy design and decision-making
- improving and embedding governance processes to support senior consideration of whole-of-service challenges as well as to drive implementation and risk management of reform initiatives
- implementing the Strategic Commissioning Framework to support agencies to bring their core public service work back in-house
- developing the APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employment Strategy and Action Plan to ensure the APS reflects the community it serves
- pursuing the SES100 Initiative, which reflects the Government's commitment to boost First Nations employment by increasing First Nations leadership representation at the SES level to 100 by 2024–25.

See also in this report

APS profile – Boosting First Nations employment, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 54.

APS profile – CALD Employment Strategy and Action Plan, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 56.

Working in the APS – Stewardship as a new APS Value, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 67.

Capability and leadership – Strategic Commissioning Framework, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 101.

Capability and leadership – Australian Government Consulting, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 108.

Capability and leadership – Australian Centre for Evaluation, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 111.

Capability and leadership – Capability reviews, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 113.

Fit for the future – Long-Term Insights Briefings, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 176.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Australian Public Service Reform: Annual progress report 2023*, APS Reform website, accessed 31 July 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/resources/reports/australian-public-service-reform-annual-progress-report-2023

Prime Minister and Cabinet (2023) *Annual Statement of APS Reform*, PM&C website, accessed 31 July 2024. ministers.pmc.gov.au/gallagher/2023/annual-statement-aps-reform

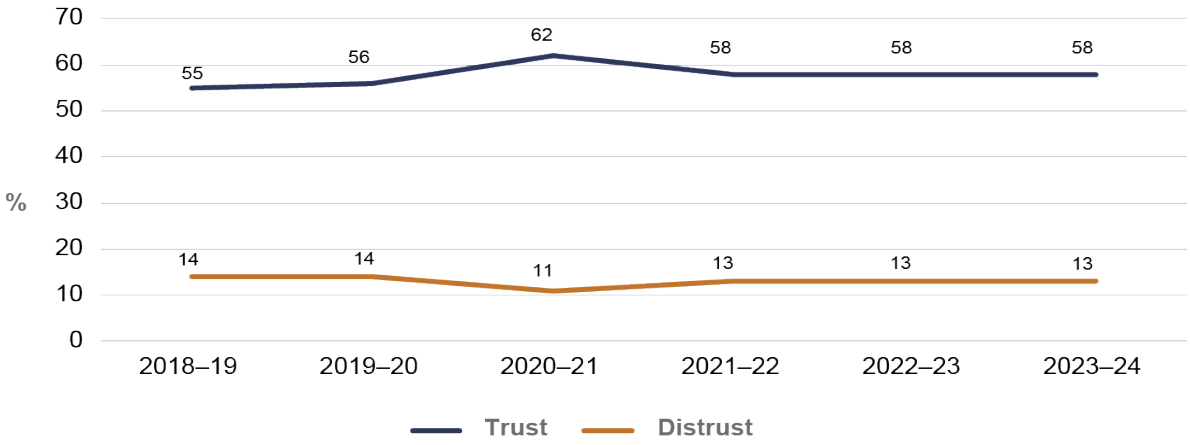
Australian public services – trust and satisfaction

Trust in Australian public services: 2024 Annual Report was released by the Australian Government in November 2024. The report captures community feedback from around 1,000 people surveyed each month on trust and satisfaction with Australian public services in the period July 2023 to June 2024.

Measuring trust and satisfaction in public services is important as it ensures transparency in community feedback, allowing the public to have a voice in evaluating the effectiveness of services. The process supports the APS Reform priority to promote an APS that places people and businesses at the centre of policy and services.

Trust remained steady in 2023–24, with 58% of people indicating that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement 'I can trust Australian public services' (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Trust in Australian public services (2018–19 to 2023–24)



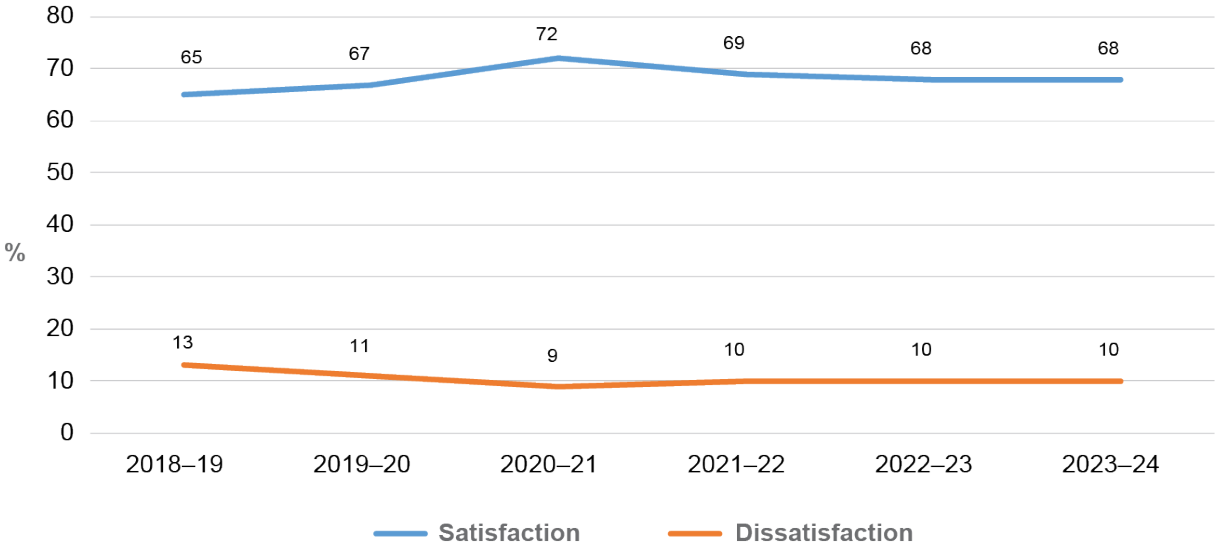
Source: Australian Public Service Commission

Also in 2023–24:

- a greater proportion of men are trusting than women, at 63% and 53% respectively
- trust is higher for those aged 18 to 34 years (61%), and those aged 65 and over (60%), compared with those aged 35 to 64 (55%).
- those who live in metro areas are more trusting than people who live in regional areas, at 60% and 53% respectively.

On general satisfaction with services, 68% of survey respondents stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the services they accessed in 2023–24, which holds steady with 2022–23 results (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Satisfaction with Australian public services (2018–19 to 2023–24)



Source: Australian Public Service Commission

In 2023–24:

- satisfaction levels with public services by gender widened slightly, at 70% for men and 66% for women
- satisfaction levels were highest for those aged 65 and older (75%), compared with those aged 35 to 64 (67%) and those aged 18 to 34 (65%)
- a lower proportion of people in regional areas were satisfied (53%), compared with those living in metro areas (60%).

Partnering with Home Affairs, the Australian Public Service Commission also produced the *Trust and Satisfaction in Australian Democracy: 2023 National Survey* report, engaging with over 6,000 Australians on their views on democracy in June and November 2023. Home Affairs then released *Strengthening Australian democracy: A practical agenda for democratic resilience* in July 2024.

The Australian Government deepened its collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) by commissioning a country study on the drivers of trust in public institutions. This study complements the recently released *OECD Report: Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions 2024 Results*. It is expected to provide valuable insights to inform strategies for building public trust. The country study report will be available in early 2025.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Trust in Australian public services: 2024 Annual Report*, APSC website, accessed 12 November 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/resources/reports/trust-australian-public-services-2024-annual-report

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Trust and satisfaction in Australian democracy survey report*, APS Reform website, accessed 14 August 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/resources/reports/trust-and-satisfaction-australian-democracy-survey-report

Home Affairs (2024) *Strengthening Australian democracy: A practical agenda for democratic resilience*, Home Affairs website, accessed 14 August 2024. www.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/archive/article?itemId=1223

OECD (2024) *OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions - 2024 Results: Building Trust in a Complex Policy Environment*, OECD website, accessed 14 August 2024. www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-survey-on-drivers-of-trust-in-public-institutions-2024-results_9a20554b-en

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APS profile

In accordance with the Public Service Act, the Australian Public Service is building and supporting a workforce that reflects the Australian people it serves.

The APS workforce spans 583 locations across Australia in 101 agencies. At 30 June 2024, the APS had 185,343 employees, working across 234 job roles in fields such as service delivery, research, regulation, project management and policy development.

In addition to being a geographically dispersed workforce, APS-wide and agency-level strategies and programs exist to promote and enhance diversity, equity and inclusion. These programs are complemented by employee-led networks and communities of practice.

The Boosting First Nations employment initiative aims to increase the number of First Nations employees in the APS to 5% by 2030 and increase representation at senior levels. This is critical to ensure that First Nations knowledge and perspectives contribute to all aspects of the work of the APS. At 30 June 2024, there were 85 First Nations Senior Executive Service leaders in the APS, up from 54 a year earlier.

Strengthening First Nations cultural capability is being supported through the changes to APS enterprise agreements requiring departments and agencies to take reasonable action to upskill their employees' cultural capability.

The APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Employment Strategy and Action Plan was released in April 2024. It sets out clear standards and expectations for the APS to better reflect the community it serves and ensure better policy and service delivery.

Key aspects of the CALD strategy are being delivered through 5 headline actions relating to cultural safety and literacy, cultural understanding, leadership and management, recruitment and progression, and senior representation. Both the CALD strategy and action plan will be delivered over 6 years for all APS agencies. Agency-specific plans will be integrated into business operations.

Gender equality in the APS is supported by actions to improve both working conditions and workplace culture. In 2023–24, APS bargaining led to the creation of common clauses in agency enterprise agreements relating to equal parental leave entitlements, flexible work, family and domestic violence support, and respect at work.

Employee development programs and agency guidance have been updated to help prevent, and respond to, workplace sexual harassment, sex discrimination, victimisation and related unlawful behaviours. Updates reflect changes to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*.

Recommendations about public sector employment of people with disability were made by The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. The Australian Government has agreed to all of these recommendations in principle and the APS is working on implementation.

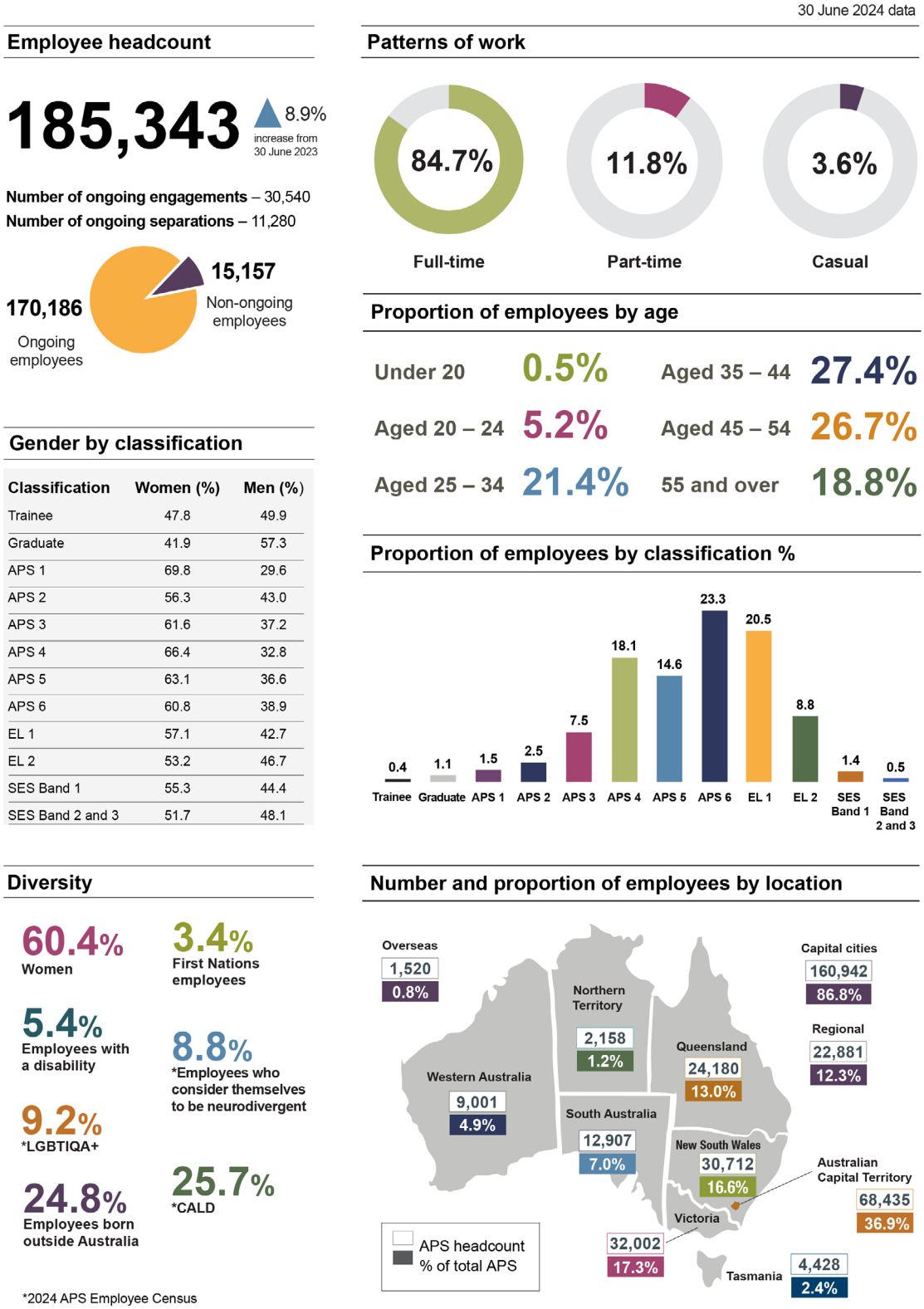
The APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25 includes action to examine the accessibility of Australian Government-owned and rented premises. The final report of an accessibility audit was released in March 2024. It focuses on dignified access as a means of creating inclusive workplaces and includes ways agencies can improve the accessibility of their physical assets.

The APS LGBTIQA+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse) is also growing. The 2024 APS Employee Census indicates that 9.2% of the APS workforce identifies as LGBTIQA+. Employee networks across and within agencies are supporting LGBTIQA+ colleagues and advocating for equal treatment. Networks are celebrating events that are significant to the LGBTIQA+ community, promoting a work environment where everyone feels accepted and safe to be themselves.

APS employees who consider themselves to be neurodivergent is increasing as a proportion, as indicated by responses to the APS Employee Census over the past 2 years. APS agency programs and neurodiversity networks, including the Public Sector Neurodiversity Community of Practice, are helping create better working environments and promoting the importance of the availability of diverse skills and capabilities.

APS at a glance

Figure 7: APS at a glance data (at 30 June 2024)



Sources: APS Employment Database (APSED) and APS Employee Census

Table 1: APS employee headcount (at 30 June 2024)

Employee type	Number and percentage (%)
APS employee headcount	185,343
Percentage increase from 30 June 2023	8.9%
Number of ongoing engagements	30,540
Number of ongoing separations	11,280

Sources: APSED

Table 2: Ongoing and non-ongoing APS employees (at 30 June 2024)

Employee type	Number
Number of ongoing employees	170,186
Number of non-ongoing employees	15,157

Sources: APSED

Table 3: Patterns of work as a proportion of total APS (at 30 June 2024)

Proportion of total APS	Percentage (%)
Full-time	84.7
Part-time	11.8
Casual	3.6

Sources: APSED

Table 4: Proportion of APS employees by age group (at 30 June 2024)

Age group	Percentage (%)
Under 20	0.5
20–24	5.2
25–34	21.4
35–44	27.4
45–54	26.7
55 and over	18.8

Sources: APSED

Table 5: Proportion of APS employees by classification (at 30 June 2024)

Classification	Percentage (%)
Trainee	0.4
Graduate	1.1
APS 1	1.5
APS 2	2.5
APS 3	7.5

Classification	Percentage (%)
APS 4	18.1
APS 5	14.6
APS 6	23.3
EL 1	20.5
EL 2	8.8
SES Band 1	1.4
SES Band 2 and 3	0.5

Sources: APSED

Note: EL = Executive Level; SES = Senior Executive Service.

Table 6: Number and proportion of APS employees by location (at 30 June 2024)

Location	Number	Percentage (%)
Australian Capital Territory	68,435	36.9
Victoria	32,002	17.3
New South Wales	30,712	16.6
Queensland	24,180	13.0
South Australia	12,907	7.0
Western Australia	9,001	4.9
Tasmania	4,428	2.4
Northern Territory	2,158	1.2
Total capital cities	160,942	86.8
Total regional	22,881	12.3
Overseas	1,520	0.8
All	185,343	100.0

Sources: APSED

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Table 7: Gender by APS role classification as a percentage of women and men (at 30 June 2024)

Classification	Women (%)	Men (%)
Trainee	47.8	49.9
Graduate	41.9	57.3
APS 1	69.8	29.6
APS 2	56.3	43.0
APS 3	61.6	37.2
APS 4	66.4	32.8
APS 5	63.1	36.6
APS 6	60.8	38.9

Classification	Women (%)	Men (%)
EL 1	57.1	42.7
EL 2	53.2	46.7
SES Band 1	55.3	44.4
SES Band 2 and 3	51.7	48.1

Sources: APSED

Table 8: Diversity

Diversity group	Percentage (%)
First Nations employees (APSED, 30 June 2024)	3.4
Employees born outside Australia (APSED, 30 June 2024)	24.8
Employees who identify as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) (2024 APS Employee Census)	25.7
Employees with a disability (APSED, 30 June 2024)	5.4
Employees who consider themselves to be neurodivergent (2024 APS Employee Census)	8.8
Employees who identify as LGBTIQA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse) (2024 APS Employee Census)	9.2
Women (APSED, 30 June 2024)	60.4

Sources: APSED and APS Employee Census

Workforce size and distribution

The Australian Public Service workforce spans 583 locations across Australia in 101 agencies.

At 30 June 2024, the APS had 185,343 employees, working across 234 job roles in fields such as service delivery, research, regulation, project management and policy development.

The size of the APS relative to the population it serves, and to the wider labour force, has changed over time. Table 9 shows APS headcount in the context of the Australian population size, and the Australian labour force, over time.

Table 9: APS headcount as a proportion of Australian population and Australian labour force, over time

	June 2008	June 2012	June 2016	June 2020	June 2024
APS employees	159,299	167,343	155,607	150,360	185,343
Australian population	21,249,200	22,733,500	24,190,900	25,649,200	27,095,255
APS employees as % of population	0.75%	0.74%	0.64%	0.59%	0.68%
Employed persons	10,487,557	10,958,923	11,507,887	11,733,447	13,647,452
APS employees as % of employed persons	1.52%	1.53%	1.35%	1.28%	1.36%

Sources:

1. APSED
2. Estimated Residential Population (Australian Bureau of Statistics), National, state and territory population, Series: A2133251W, Population and components of change - national. The June 2024 estimate is a population projection figure: 'High Series' (Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022-base---2071), Population Projections, Australia
3. Labour Force, Australia, (Australian Bureau of Statistics), Labour Force, Australia, Series: A84425129C (Labour force status for 15-64 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted).

At 30 June 2024, the proportion of APS employees located in Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia was higher, while the proportion located in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Tasmania was lower than a decade earlier (Table 10).

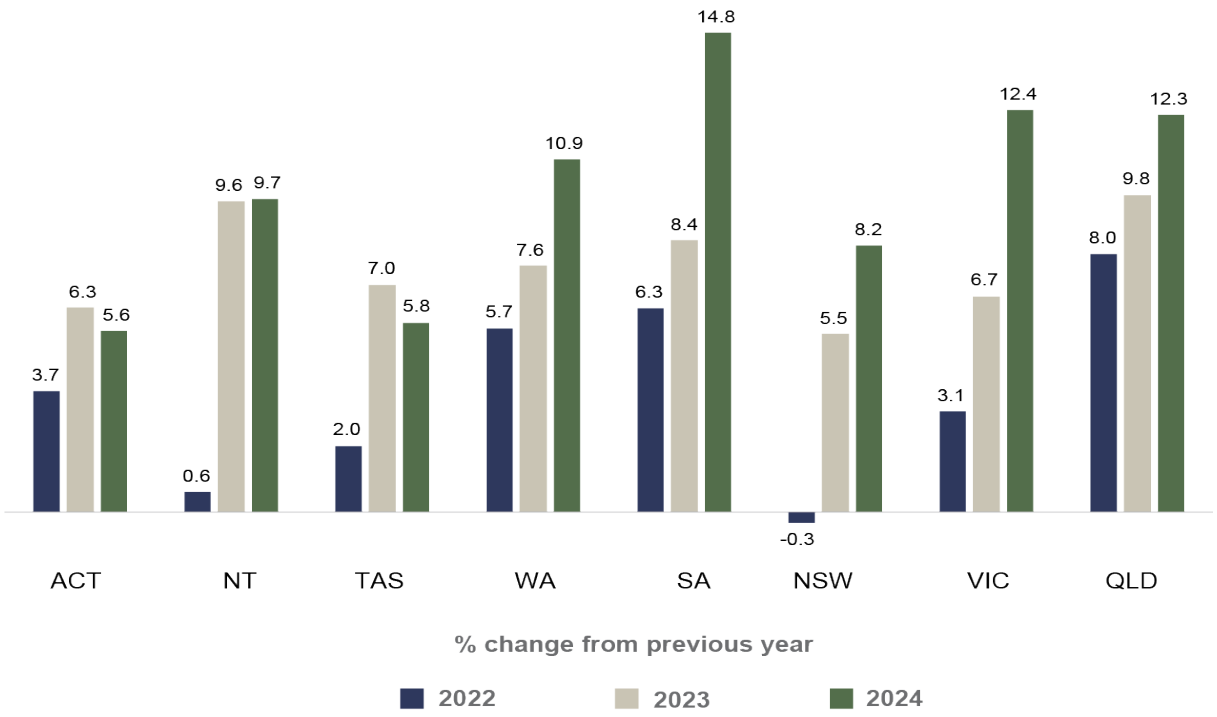
Table 10: Location of APS employees at 30 June (2015 and 2024)

Location	2015		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Australian Capital Territory	58,079	38.1	68,435	36.9
Victoria	24,465	16.1	32,002	17.3
New South Wales	29,323	19.3	30,712	16.6
Queensland	16,646	10.9	24,180	13.0
South Australia	9,302	6.1	12,907	7.0
Western Australia	7,030	4.6	9,001	4.9
Tasmania	3,819	2.5	4,428	2.4
Northern Territory	2,192	1.4	2,158	1.2
Total capital cities	130,067	85.4	160,942	86.8
Total regional	20,789	13.7	22,881	12.3
Overseas	1,385	0.9	1,520	0.8
All	**152,241**	**100.0**	**185,343**	**100.0**

Source: APSED

Year-on-year changes within the APS employee headcount in each state and territory over the 3 years to 30 June 2024 are shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Employee headcount (% change from previous year, 2022 to 2024)



Source: APSED

See also in this report

Working in the APS – APS Location Framework, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 77.

Appendix 1 – APS workforce trends, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 291.

Appendix 6 – APS workforce planning, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 335.

Boosting First Nations employment

The Boosting First Nations employment initiative aims to increase representation and strengthen cultural safety for First Nations people in the APS.

First Nations employment in the APS has not increased over the last 2 decades, with representation levels around 3.5% of the APS workforce. Achieving the Australian Government's target of 5% for First Nations employment in the APS by 2030 requires a substantial shift in approach.

Barriers to advancement and high attrition are key drivers of lower retention rates for First Nations employees. At 30 June 2024, the average (median) tenure of First Nations employees was 4.7 years, compared with 6.2 years for non-Indigenous employees.

The First Nations Unit in the Australian Public Service Commission is leading the implementation of the government's commitment to increase First Nations employment across the APS to 5% by 2030.

Representation at senior levels is critical to ensure First Nations perspectives, knowledge and voices are involved in decision-making processes. This has a positive impact on lifting cultural capability and cultural safety within agencies.

The Senior Executive Service (SES)100 initiative aims to increase the representation of First Nations SES leaders in the APS from 54 to 100 by mid-2025 through an increase in new senior executive recruits and promotions of First Nations employees to the SES. At 30 June 2024, there were 85 First Nations SES leaders, and the second round of SES100 recruitment is in development.

Investment in emerging First Nations talent at the Executive Level (EL) 2 and SES Band 1 levels is occurring through co-designed development and coaching programs, 360-degree feedback, mentoring, and networks to support First Nations employees to progress in their careers and prepare them as future leaders.

The development of a First Nations Employee Value Proposition is planned to showcase the opportunities First Nations people have in the APS, and better position the APS as an employer of choice.

The First Nations Unit is working to strengthen and standardise baseline system-wide cultural capability and accountability in the APS, by sharing knowledge and expertise across the service.

New approaches include the work of the Collaboration Circle through the role of First Nations Systems Lead, which aims to improve recruitment and retention rates for First Nations people in the APS. This initiative includes an evaluation of the efficacy and adequacy of current cultural competency training.

Cultural capability knowledge and understanding are also being supported through the changes to APS enterprise agreements requiring departments and agencies to take reasonable action to upskill their employees' cultural capability.

The unit works closely with other agencies including the National Indigenous Australians Agency and the First Nations Community Controlled sector, through the Coalition of Peaks.

This work directly contributes to the Closing the Gap Priority Reform Three – Transforming Government Organisations. It does so to identify and eliminate racism and embed and practise meaningful cultural safety. It supports the expectation of the government, Parliament and the community that the APS genuinely represents the diverse needs and aspirations of Australia.

See also in this report

APS agency benchmarking – First Nations employment, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 191.

Appendix 1 – APS Workforce trends, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 291.

Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *First Nations employment*, APSC website, accessed 13 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/first-nations-employment

CALD Employment Strategy and Action Plan

Actions to build cultural capability and increase the representation of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people in senior leadership is an Australian Government priority. These are set out in the CALD Employment Strategy and Action Plan published on 30 April 2024.

Using a strengths-based approach, the strategy will improve the level of cultural awareness, cultural literacy and cultural capability across the Australian Public Service. This will enable cultural safety and an inclusive work environment for CALD staff.

The strategy will develop APS capability through greater cultural literacy that will ensure CALD employees can work in an inclusive environment and bring their whole selves to work. It will support equal opportunity for career development and progression, and strengthen the work of the APS by ensuring CALD employees can contribute their skills, knowledge and experience.

Key aspects of the strategy are being delivered through 5 headline actions:

- cultural safety and literacy
- cultural understanding
- leadership and management
- recruitment and progression
- senior representation.

Twenty lead agencies have been selected by the APSC to engage with on the implementation of these headline actions and the development of agency-specific plans. The strategy will be implemented over 6 years for all APS agencies. Agency-specific action plans will be integrated into business operations.

The CALD Employment Strategy and Action Plan sets out clear standards and expectations for the APS to better reflect the community it serves and ensures better policy and service delivery.

See also in this report

Capability and leadership – Capability Reinvestment Fund, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 114.

Agency benchmarking – Senior Executive Service cultural and linguistic diversity, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 198.

Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *APS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employment Strategy and Action Plan*, Australian Public Service Commission website, accessed 31 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/publication/aps-culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-employment-strategy-and-action-plan

Prime Minister and Cabinet (2024) *A new strategy to achieve culturally representative leadership in the APS*, PM&C website, accessed 31 July 2024. ministers.pmc.gov.au/gallagher/2024/new-strategy-achieve-culturally-representative-leadership-aps

Gender equality

Gender quality in the Australian Public Service is supported by actions to improve both working conditions and workplace culture.

Gender equality in the workplace has advantages for employees, agencies and the Australian community. It improves employee engagement and wellbeing and builds more positive work environments. It allows the APS to better represent the community it serves. That means more productive and effective public administration.

In 2023–24, APS bargaining created common conditions to support gender equality. These conditions include clauses related to family and domestic violence support, respect at work, equal parental leave entitlements, and flexible work.

The Australian Public Service Commission has developed guidance to help agencies provide greater support in their workplace arrangements, policies and practices, for employees experiencing family and domestic violence. This guidance provides advice on the implementation of the common conditions in agency enterprise agreements as well as provisions of the *Fair Work Act 2009*.

Employee development programs and agency guidance have been updated to help prevent, and respond to, workplace sexual harassment, sex discrimination, victimisation and related unlawful behaviours. These reflect changes to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*.

Work to improve gender equality in the APS is part of the APS Reform agenda. It complements government initiatives supporting the position of women in the wider community. This includes gender responsive budgeting and putting gender equality and impacts on women at the centre of budget decision-making. The Office for Women has developed guidance material that supports APS policy officers to identify when and how to apply gender analysis in the Budget process.

The APS Academy, in partnership with the Office for Women and the University of New South Wales, has developed a postgraduate microcredential on gender impact analysis. Crafting Inclusive Policy for Gender Equality equips participants with the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to engage in gender analysis across various public policy fields. The focus is to make gender visible in public policy processes and outcomes and promote social and economic equality. Following a successful pilot, the University of New South Wales will facilitate its first cohort in early October 2024.

The APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26 aims to embed gender equality in all that the APS does. It promotes shifting gender norms, normalising respectful and flexible workplaces and asking leaders to hold themselves to account for demonstrating gender-equitable and inclusive behaviour.

Progress has been made against most of the strategy's 30 actions, including minimum standards, as reported in the interim evaluation of the APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26. The strategy has been successful in raising greater awareness of gender equality issues and has received support from leaders across the APS.

At June 2024, women in the APS have equal or greater representation at every level from APS 1 to Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 2. The SES Band 3 cohort is nearing gender parity, with women now representing 49.1% at this level. The APS achieved its lowest-ever gender pay gap in December 2023, at 4.5%.

See also in this report

Working in the APS – APS-wide bargaining, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 69.

Working in the APS – Sex Discrimination Act changes, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 76.

Fit for the future – A Strategy for Gender Equality, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 178.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Family and domestic violence support*, APSC website, accessed 28 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/workplace-relations/public-sector-workplace-relations-policy-2022/policy-qas/family-and-domestic-violence-support

Prime Minister and Cabinet (2024) *Gender Responsive Budgeting: Including gender analysis in budget proposals*, PM&C website, accessed 27 August 2024. www.pmc.gov.au/office-women/gender-responsive-budgeting

APS Academy (2024) *Crafting Inclusive Policy for Gender Equality,* APS Academy website, accessed 28 August 2024. www.apsacademy.gov.au/crafting-inclusive-policy-gender-equality

Australian Government (2022) *Australian Public Service gender equality strategy 2021–2026*, Australian Public Service Commission website, accessed 30 September 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/publication/australian-public-service-gender-equality-strategy-2021-26

Employees with disability

Increasing opportunities for people with disability in public sector employment is an Australian Government commitment.

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability Final Report was released in September 2023. Recommendations include setting new disability employment targets, introducing consistent adjustment principles and passports, and annual reporting on the progress of public sector disability employment strategies.

Recommendations 7.18 to 7.23 concerning disability employment in the public sector have been accepted in principle by the Australian Government. The Australian Public Service Commission has established a Disability Royal Commission Discovery Project to consider the implementation of these recommendations.

The Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25 includes action to examine the accessibility of Australian Government-owned and rented premises.

The Department of Finance, with support from the APSC, has undertaken an accessibility audit highlighting the accessibility barriers faced by current staff, potential new staff and visitors. The final audit report was released in March 2024. It focuses on dignified access as a means of creating inclusive workplaces and includes ways agencies can improve the accessibility of their physical assets.

Prime Minister and Cabinet's Behavioural Economics Team has partnered with the APSC to conduct research into disability identification in human resource systems and improved data collection. Employees report disability more often in the APS Employee Census than in HR systems (in 2024, this was 11.7% compared with 5.4% in APSED). Guidance materials for APS HR professionals have been developed to improve communication to APS staff about disability data collection and use. The final research report was published in June 2024.

A new Secretary-level Disability Champion has been appointed to provide an enterprise view of disability employment across the service, and provide strategic direction to the Disability Champions Network. Champions work to strengthen the connections and collaboration between the Champions Network and the Senior Executive Service Disability Network.

The APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25 aims to increase the employment of people with disability across the APS to 7% by 2025. It supports Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031.

See also in this report

APS agency benchmarking – Employment of people with disability, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 193.

Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2020) *APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25*, APSC website, accessed 29 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/publication/aps-disability-employment-strategy-2020-25

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (n.d.) *Final Report*, Royal Commission website, accessed 29 August 2024. disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/final-report

Australian Government (2023) *Increasing disability identification in the Australian Public Service*, Prime Minister and Cabinet website, accessed 29 August 2024. behaviouraleconomics.pmc.gov.au/projects/increasing-disability-identification-australian-public-service

Australian Government (2024) *Final Report on Action 10 of the Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25*, Finance website, accessed 29 August 2024. www.finance.gov.au/publications/reviews/final-report-action-10-australian-public-service-disability-employment-strategy-2020-25

LGBTIQA+ community

In the 2024 APS Employee Census, 9.2% of respondents identified as LGBTIQA+. This compares with 8.7% in 2023 and 7.9% in 2022.

APS agencies are building supportive workplaces where everyone feels accepted and can perform at their best.

Employee networks across and within agencies are supporting LGBTIQA+ colleagues and advocating for equal treatment. Networks are celebrating events that are significant to the LGBTIQA+ community, promoting a work environment where everyone feels safe to be themselves.

Events celebrated by Pride Networks in APS agencies in 2023–24 include:

- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT)
- Pride Month
- Wear it Purple Day
- Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

Defence APS employees marched alongside Australian Defence Force personnel in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade on 2 March 2024, reflecting their commitment to support colleagues who identify as LGBTIQA+ and the broader LGBTIQA+ community.



The Australian Defence Force and Defence Civilian contingent before the 2024 Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade in Hyde Park, Sydney.

Image: Defence

Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Pride Network celebrated Wear It Purple Day in 2023 by bringing together staff from all over Australia, including remote employees in national parks. Celebrations meant that staff could participate, no matter where they worked or lived, even as far away as Norfolk Island and Antarctica.

Agency working groups dedicated to supporting LGBTIQA+ employees are being championed at senior levels, providing impetus for new initiatives.

Veterans' Affairs established a Pride Committee in late 2023, with a dedicated Senior Executive Service Champion. The committee assisted with the launch of an eLearning module by Pride in Diversity, known as Foundations of LGBTIQA+ Inclusion. It published an editorial piece for IDAHOBIT which included short stories from some staff within the community and their allies.

Geoscience Australia's Gender Affirmation Policy and Procedure was officially endorsed by its Executive Board in November 2023. Developed by members of the agency's Pride Network, Geoscience Australia has shared these materials with other government agencies as a model for similar policies.

Actions by APS agencies and employees to support LGBTIQA+ community members in the APS workforce align with a public service that is inclusive, a safe and productive workplace for all, and one that represents the Australian community it serves.

See also in this report

Appendix 2 – State of the service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Neurodiversity

The Australian Public Service is working to improve understanding and acceptance of neurodiversity in its workplaces.

In the 2024 APS Employee Census, 8.8% of respondents considered themselves to be neurodivergent. Another 9.3% of respondents considered that they may be neurodivergent, and 9.5% of respondents said they were unsure what neurodivergent means.

A question on neurodivergence was first asked in the 2023 APS Employee Census, with 7.7% of respondents indicating they considered themselves to be neurodivergent and another 11.5% responding that they were not sure.

Since 2023, the Australian Public Service Commission has worked to include and refine questions on neurodivergence to support relevant actions in the APS. Greater awareness of neurodiversity, and support for neurodivergent employees, helps create better work environments for everyone. It means the APS represents the diverse community it serves.

The Public Sector Neurodiversity Community of Practice facilitates collaboration on neurodiversity inclusion across the Australian public sector. It allows employees across government agencies to share resources and initiatives. It provides interested staff with information on establishing a neurodiversity network in their agency.

Public sector employees can subscribe to email updates and join a GovTEAMS community to connect with other Community of Practice members and access shared resources. In 2024, more than 800 employees from 80 agencies are members.



Andrew Pfeiffer, Co-chair Public Sector Neurodiversity CoP, Kate Halpin, Principal Neurodiversity Consultant at Employ for Ability, and Shaila Dane Ang, Co-chair Prime Minister and Cabinet Ability Network.

Image: Prime Minister and Cabinet

Agencies are implementing programs to attract and support neurodivergent employees.

Home Affairs Apollo Neurodiversity Program recruited 10 participants to a 12-month program in 2023, with a 100% retention rate. Participants and managers are supported by a qualified Neurodiversity Consultant and a dedicated Home Affairs Apollo Program Relationship Manager before participants started and throughout the program.

Eligibility for the Aurora Neuroinclusion Program at Services Australia has expanded to include individuals with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The program actively engages with potential candidates in multiple locations across the country. It has conducted 6 recruitment rounds resulting in 28 candidates placed into ongoing employment. The program aims to place 75 candidates into employment by mid-2025.

In July 2023, the APSC published a Community of Practice article on ways human resources professionals can support neurodivergent staff. Ways include building capability in inclusive leadership, promoting a flexible approach to workplace adjustments and accessibility, and supporting staff networks. The article highlights the importance of never making assumptions about what an individual may need to feel safe and be productive at work.

See also in this report

Appendix 2 – State of the service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Public Sector Neurodiversity Community of Practice*, APSC website, accessed 2 September 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/disability/public-sector-neurodiversity-community-practice

Australian Public Service Commission (2023) *Six ways to support neurodivergent staff*, APSC website, accessed 10 September 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aps-professional-streams/aps-human-resources-hr-profession/aps-hr-professional-news/six-ways-support-neurodivergent-staff

Services Australia (2024) *Aurora Neuroinclusion Program,* Services Australia website, accessed 10 September 2024. www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/aurora-neuroinclusion-program?context=22

Home Affairs (n.d.) *Apollo Neurodiversity Program*, Home Affairs website, accessed 10 September 2024. www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/careers/neurodiverse-apollo-program

Working in the APS

The Australian Public Service aims to be a model employer. This is an employer that offers competitive remuneration and attractive working arrangements and creates workplaces where employees are engaged in their work and perform at their best.

The APS Employee Value Proposition was released on APS Jobs in November 2023 to communicate the benefits of working in the APS. It was developed by the Australian Public Service Commission under the sponsorship of the Future of Work Sub-committee of the Secretaries Board (now the Capability and Workforce Committee). Its aim is to position the APS to attract, retain and develop the workforce it needs in a competitive and challenging labour market.

The new APS Value of Stewardship embeds the important and enduring role all employees have in ensuring that the APS serves the government, Parliament, and the Australian community into the future. This includes stewardship of information, critical to providing the best advice and highest level of service.

Service-wide bargaining concluded in March 2024, paving the way for reduced fragmentation of pay and conditions across the APS. Bargaining resulted in 59 common conditions, including substantial improvements to entitlements for parental leave and personal/carer's leave, and support for employees experiencing family and domestic violence.

APS enterprise agreements now contain a common clause on flexible working arrangements. The ways agencies implement these arrangements will consider the delivery of services, the needs of the agency and team, and the individual circumstances of the employee. Flexibility makes the APS a more competitive employer in the labour market and supports diversity in the workforce and a more productive and effective public service.

Employee engagement levels in the APS continue to be high. Key drivers identified in the APS Employee Census include a culture of integrity and inclusion, a willingness to consider frank advice, new ways of doing things and effective agency communication.

APS employees have a positive view of the ways their health and wellbeing are considered by their managers and their agency. Service-wide resources are already available to agencies and new resources are being developed, including about psychosocial hazards.

Employee programs and agency guidance have been updated to help prevent, and respond to, workplace sexual harassment, sex discrimination, victimisation and related unlawful behaviours. This reflects changes to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

APS agencies are reporting critical skills shortages. Employing staff in a broader range of locations is one way agencies are addressing these gaps. The APS Location Framework has been developed to help agencies navigate this opportunity.

APS Employee Value Proposition

The Australian Public Service Employee Value Proposition (EVP) was released on APSJobs in November 2023.

Research conducted by the Australian Public Service Commission in 2023 highlighted a lack of public awareness about the APS as an employer. The EVP communicates what it is like to work for the APS by highlighting 5 key attributes:

- purpose and meaning
- opportunities to learn and grow
- community and belonging
- flexibility and balance
- conditions and lifestyle.

This helps to raise the employer profile of the APS and allows APS employees and potential candidates to evaluate the benefits of working in the Australian Government against other employment options.

Agencies are promoting the EVP through relevant networks and channels. A social media campaign featuring APS employee stories ran from January to March 2024.

The APS EVP was developed under the sponsorship of the Future of Work Sub-committee of the Secretaries Board (now the Capability and Workforce Committee). It is underpinned by extensive research, co-design and testing so it reflects the lived experience of a wide range of APS employees.

The EVP supports the government's APS Reform agenda, particularly Priority 3: An APS that is a model employer and Priority 4: An APS that has the capability to do its job well.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Work with us*, APSJobs website, accessed 15 July 2024. content.apsjobs.gov.au/work-with-us

Australian Public Service Commission (n.d.) *APS Employee Value Proposition*, APSC website, accessed 15 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/joining-aps/aps-employee-value-proposition

Stewardship as a new APS Value

Australian Public Service Values in the *Public Service Act 1999* have been amended to include stewardship:

> The APS builds its capability and institutional knowledge and supports the public interest now and into the future, by understanding the long-term impacts of what it does.

Legislating stewardship as an APS Value reflects the important and enduring role that all APS employees have to ensure the APS serves the government, the Parliament, and the Australian community.

The APS Value of Stewardship gives employees at all levels, and in all types of jobs, a greater sense of ownership of the APS as an institution. It empowers individuals to take responsibility for their contributions to its ongoing success.

Depending on their role and responsibilities, the stewardship behaviours employees may be expected to demonstrate include:

- looking ahead when making decisions and undertaking courses of action
- connecting agency goals and responsibilities to individual work
- building and sustaining core knowledge and expertise
- reflecting on and learning from past experience
- professionally representing the APS to maintain public confidence.

The APS needs to be a trusted source of deep knowledge and expertise in the work of government. Stewardship of information is critical to providing the best advice to the government and the highest level of service to the Australian public.

The APS is responsible for information that affects all Australians. As stewards of the APS, all employees should make and keep records that provide a complete and accurate account of key actions and decisions.

The Australian Public Service Commissioner's Directions 2022 have been updated to set out the scope and application of the APS Value of Stewardship. This follows extensive consultation in 2023 with agencies and interested stakeholders, including employee representative groups.

In advance of the start of the new APS Value of Stewardship, the National Archives of Australia and Australian Public Service Commission worked together to produce guidance on how information management relates to APS employees' integrity obligations.

See also in this report

Fit for the future – Long-term Insights Briefings, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 176.

Stewardship in action, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 117.

Find out more

Parliament of Australia, (n.d.) *Public Service Amendment Bill 2023*, Parliament of Australia website, accessed 29 July 2024. www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bId=r7044

National Archives of Australia (n.d.) *Integrity and Information Management: guidance for Australian Government agencies*, NAA website, accessed 29 July 2024. www.naa.gov.au/information-management/information-management-policies/building-trust-public-record/integrity-and-information-management-guidance-australian-public-service

APS-wide bargaining

Service-wide bargaining concluded in March 2024, paving the way for reduced fragmentation of pay and conditions across the Australian Public Service. It resulted in 59 common conditions, wage increases over the next 3 years, and substantial improvements to parental leave entitlements and flexible working arrangements in the APS.

Bargaining by individual Commonwealth agencies since 1997 resulted in growing gaps in remuneration and differences in conditions across APS agencies. Addressing this situation better positions the APS to attract and retain the workforce it needs to deliver for the government and the community.

At 30 June 2024, 103 new APS enterprise agreements were operational, delivering improved common pay and conditions to around 185,000 APS employees. The Australian Public Service Commission supports agencies in the implementation and ongoing provision of bargained outcomes.

APS staff will receive pay increases of at least 11.2% over 3 years. The pay fragmentation mechanism will see some of the lowest-paid agencies in the APS providing pay increases of more than 20% over the same period.

Pay fragmentation has a disproportionate impact on agencies with high levels of First Nations employees. The bargained outcomes in pay and conditions will improve mobility, attraction and retention for those impacted agencies. Overall, pay fragmentation has been reduced from 25% to 13%.

Other significant improvements achieved through service-wide bargaining include:

- rights to request flexible working arrangements
- significant parental leave improvements which will see leave entitlements increased to 18 weeks of paid leave for both parents by the end of 2027
- increases to casual loading from 20% to 25% across the APS
- expanded use of personal/carer's leave, with a minimum of 18 days across the APS
- cultural leave to support and attract a culturally diverse workforce
- provisions to support First Nations employment
- a holistic approach to supporting employees facing family and domestic violence.

Service-wide bargaining attracted very high levels of engagement across the APS. The average participation rate for employees voting on their agency enterprise agreement was 85%. Of these participants, approximately 96% voted in favour of their agency enterprise agreement. This reflects the efforts of all APS agencies to engage with their employees on their new agreements.

The government's Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy 2023 outlined a framework for service-wide bargaining aimed at reducing the fragmentation of pay and conditions across the APS.

Service-wide bargaining began on 30 March 2023, coordinated by a specialised taskforce in the Australian Public Service Commission. In October 2022, Mr Peter Riordan PSM CF, was appointed as Chief Negotiator and represented the APS agencies that participated in service-wide bargaining.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *APS bargaining*, APSC website, accessed 26 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/apsbargaining

Flexible and productive work

A common clause on flexible working arrangements is now reflected in all Australian Public Service agency enterprise agreements. The implementation of these arrangements considers the demands of delivering high-quality services to the Australian Government and community, the needs of the agency and team, and the individual circumstances of the employee.

Flexibility significantly enhances the APS employee value proposition, making the APS a more competitive employer in a tight labour market. In 2024, 67% of respondents to the APS New Starter Survey said they were attracted to the APS because of the access to flexible work arrangements. Some 82% of respondents to the APS Employee Census indicated they were satisfied with their non-monetary employment conditions such as leave and flexible work arrangements.

Flexible work supports strategies to improve diversity in the APS at all levels. It supports APS capability by assisting with attracting and retaining the employees needed to deliver for the Australian community, including those located at a wider range of locations. This helps public servants to do their job better.

The Australian Public Service Commission has provided guidance to agencies on implementing the common clause for flexible working arrangements. Training for managers is being expanded so the arrangements reflect the needs of the individual, team and agency. Learning programs such as APS Leadership Edge for Executive Level 2s are designed to assist managers in developing the skills and techniques needed to build effective and productive hybrid teams.

Agencies are considering how best to implement flexibility in their own operating environments.

Home Affairs has developed a Flexible Work Playbook. This sets out ways employees and managers can work together to agree on flexible work arrangements that suit an individual’s circumstances and result in positive, productive outcomes for the employee and the team.

The playbook guides employees through where, when and how to work flexibly and ways to access flexible arrangements. It guides managers through decision-making, based on what is possible for the type of work being done. It establishes the importance of clear communication, accountability and trust.

Another advantage of the playbook is that it offers a practical discussion of management capability in the context of flexible work and hybrid teams. This includes in the areas of performance, connection, inclusivity and creating a positive workplace culture. It is an example of ways the APS can facilitate flexibility in the workplace while continuing to effectively deliver public services.

Results from the 2024 APS Employee Census indicate that 76% of APS employees access some form of flexible work arrangements. This includes working away from the office at least part of the time (61%), flexible hours of work (26%) and part-time hours (13%).

See also in this report

Working in the APS – APS-wide bargaining, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 69.

Working in the APS – APS Location Framework, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 77.

APS agency benchmarking – Working away from the office, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 273.

Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Find out more

Australian Government (2023) *Principles of Flexible Work in the APS*, APSC website, accessed 14 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/news-and-events/latest-news/principles-flexible-work-aps

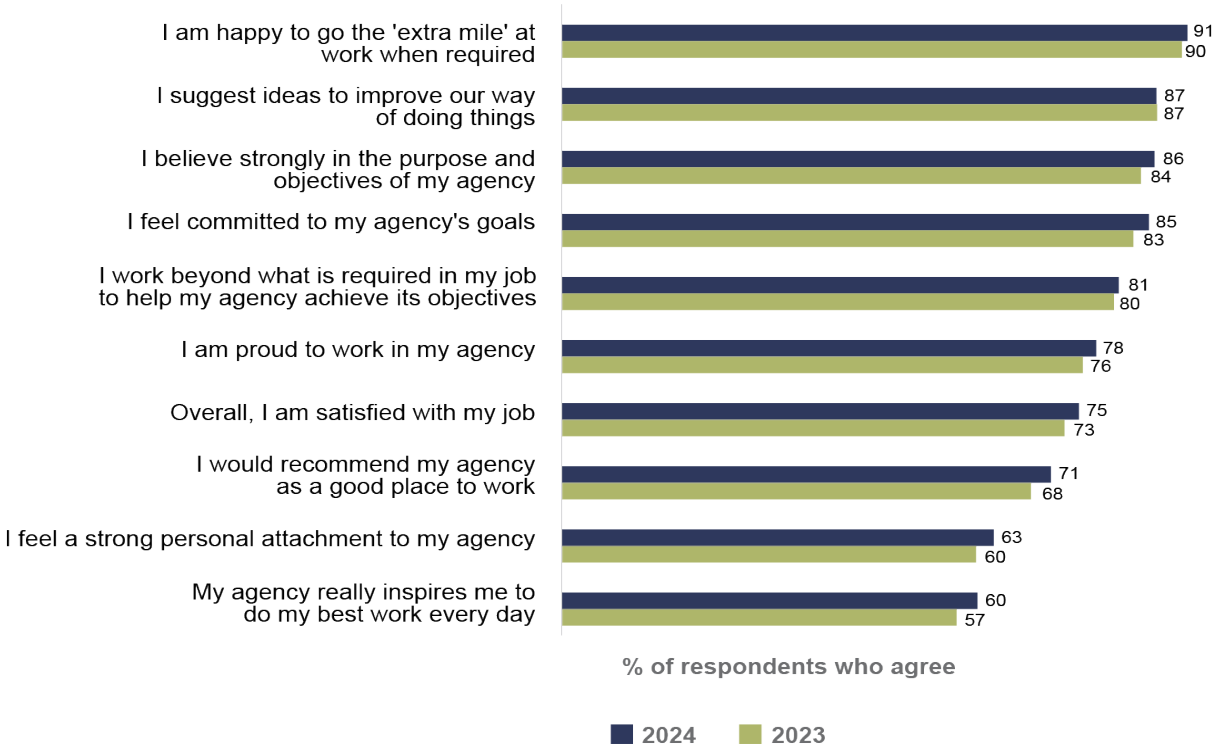
Employee engagement

The 2024 Australian Public Service Employee Census indicates that APS employees feel positively engaged in their work. The overall Employee Engagement Index score for 2024 is 74, up from 73 in 2023.

Employees who are satisfied and inspired by their work, committed to organisational goals and proud of their agency are more engaged in their work and workplaces. Engaged employees are likely to be more productive, innovative and to deliver outcomes aligned to agency objectives.

Figure 9 shows the percentage of respondents to the 2023 and 2024 APS Employee Census that provided a positive response to questions that relate to employee engagement.

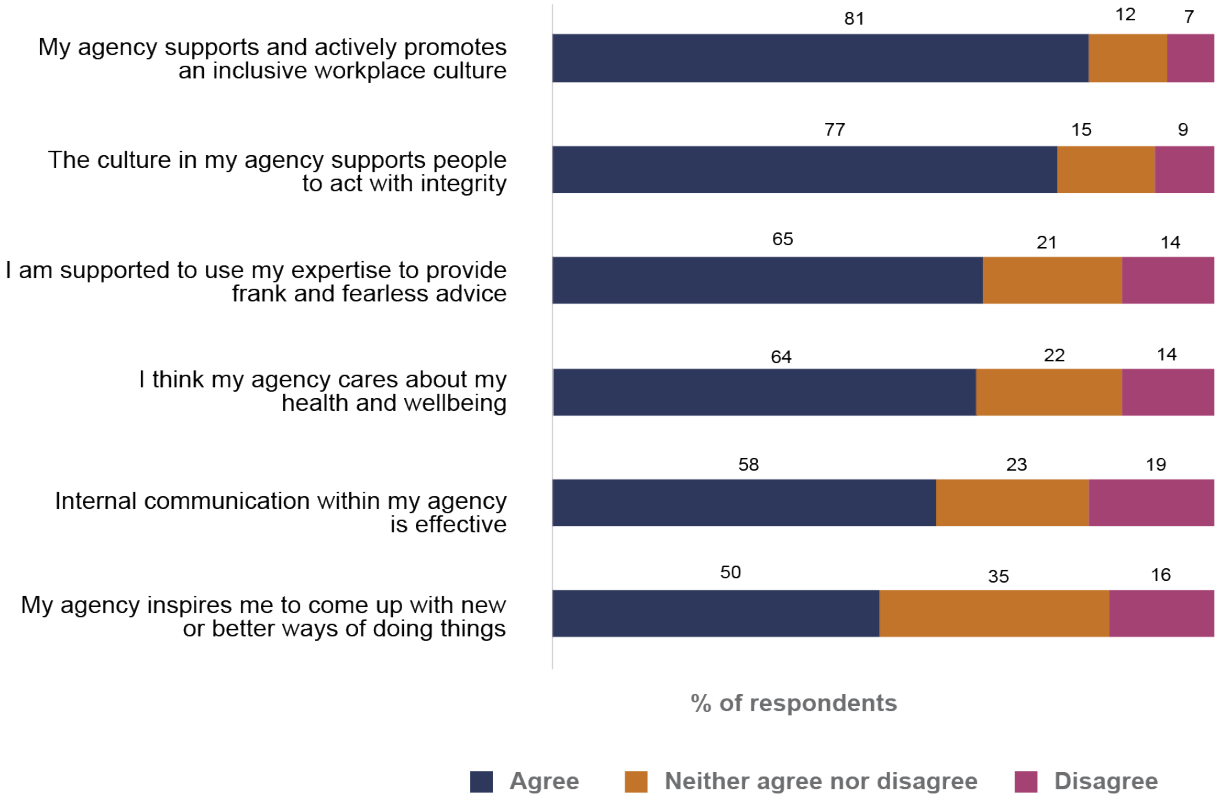
Figure 9: APS employee experiences (2023 and 2024)



Source: APS Employee Census

Employee engagement is influenced by factors in the workplace that lead to a more positive and productive workplace environment. In the 2024 APS Employee Census results, it is possible to identify the questions which show the greatest correlation with levels of employee engagement. Figure 10 shows these questions.

Figure 10: Perceptions most associated with employee engagement (2024)



Source: APS Employee Census

All measures of engagement in 2024 were higher than or equal to those from 2023. While rates are consistently high for the APS as a whole, results for employee engagement vary significantly across agencies.

Agencies with lower employee engagement levels can consider ways to improve these perceptions, with positive benefits for work performance and culture.

The Australian Public Service Commission provides agencies with reports on their APS Employee Census results, including the drivers of engagement in their particular workforce. It offers additional materials and briefings to assist agencies to understand their Census results. Guides to support action planning within teams are also offered.

See also in this report

APS agency benchmarking – Employee engagement, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, p 208.

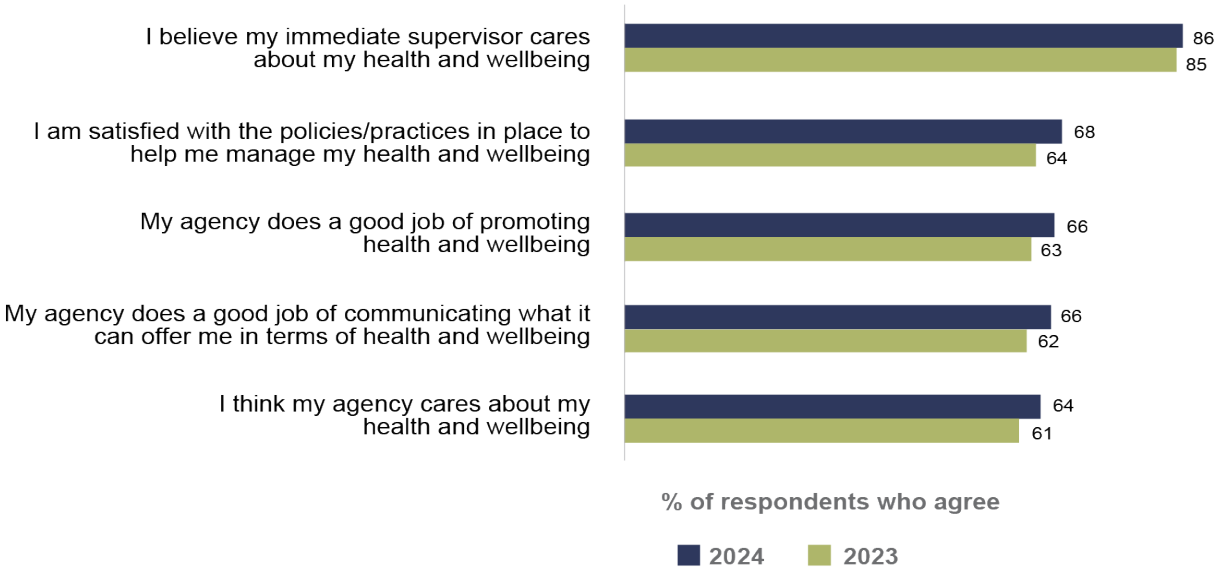
Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, p 311.

Supporting health and wellbeing

The 2024 Australian Public Service Employee Census indicates that APS employees have a positive view of the ways their health and wellbeing are considered by their managers and their agency (Figure 11). The overall Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score for 2024 is 70, compared with 68 in 2023.

People who feel their health and wellbeing is supported at work are likely to be more engaged, productive and satisfied in the workplace. They are better equipped to manage stress, make sound decisions, handle challenges and conflicts, and maintain positive relationships with colleagues.

Figure 11: Wellbeing Policies and Support (2023 and 2024)



Source: APS Employee Census

On 10 July 2024, the ADDRESS APS Psychosocial Hazard Suite was launched by the APS Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. This practical, scalable model supports agencies in managing their work health and safety responsibilities and obligations. It delivers resources specifically designed for the APS context, to support identifying and responding to psychosocial hazards in the workplace.

The Australian Public Service Commission continues to support a service-wide approach to building and sustaining a positive and healthy work environment. Resources available to employees and agencies include:

- APS health and wellbeing – resources for all APS employees and managers to support mental, physical and financial wellbeing, and provide suggestions on where to seek more information and support.
- Compassionate Foundations – a program designed to help employees build interpersonal and self-care skills and be better equipped to provide early support to people before they become distressed and/or suicidal.
- Connections – a program focused on the wellbeing aspects of workplace peer support, teaching interpersonal skills and ways to set up safe spaces where peers can connect.
- The APS Mental Health Capability Hub – a blended program for human resource practitioners providing tools, practical guidance, resources and capability programs to help them align agency practices with the APS Mental Health Capability Framework.

Working with agencies, the APS Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Unit promotes and drives the development of capability and expertise in mental health and suicide prevention. The unit aligns its work with the APS Mental Health Capability Framework.

Comcare is leading a Capability Reinvestment Fund initiative to build and strengthen integrity and psychological safety within the APS. This initiative started on 1 July 2024.

See also in this report

Integrity – Building psychological safety – whole-of-service approach, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 81.

Capability and leadership – Capability Reinvestment Fund, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 114.

APS agency benchmarking – Perceptions of wellbeing policies and support, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 262.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2021) *APS Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Unit*, APSC website, accessed 26 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/aps-mental-health-and-suicide-prevention-unit

Australian Government (n.d.) *APS Mental Health Capability Hub*, APS Academy website, accessed 28 August 2024. www.apsacademy.gov.au/aps-people/health-and-wellbeing/aps-mental-health-capability-hub

Australian Public Service Commission (2021) *ADDRESS Suite: An APS model for responding to psychosocial hazards*, APSC website, accessed 24 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aps-professional-streams/aps-human-resources-hr-profession/aps-hr-professional-news/address-suite-aps-model-responding-psychosocial-hazards

Sex Discrimination Act changes

Following the introduction of positive duty changes to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*, new compliance functions and powers came into effect on 12 December 2023. These changes give the Australian Human Rights Commission new inquiry and enforcement powers to ensure that organisations and businesses, including Australian Public Service agencies, are complying with the Act.

All APS agencies now have a positive duty to eliminate, as far as possible, these unlawful behaviours from occurring:

- discrimination on the grounds of sex in a work context
- sexual harassment in connection with work
- sex-based harassment in connection with work
- conduct creating a workplace environment that is hostile on the grounds of sex
- related acts of victimisation.

The Australian Public Service Commission is supporting APS agencies and employees to embed these changes into their workplaces. It is assisting agencies to strengthen their policies and processes. It is incorporating respectful behaviours into the Senior Executive Service (SES) performance leadership framework and in many of its learning products and resources. APS agencies can tailor resources provided by the APSC to their workforce and workplace requirements.

The APSC has developed the APS Model Policy for the Prevention of Workplace Sexual Harassment, and related unlawful conduct and risk assessment guidance. This is for use by human resource practitioners and Diversity and Inclusion and Work Health and Safety practitioners across APS agencies.

See also in this report

Integrity – Respectful and ethical workplaces, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 82.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *APS Model Policy for the Prevention of Workplace Sexual Harassment and related unlawful conduct*, APSC website, accessed 12 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/diversity-and-inclusion/resources/preventing-sexual-harassment#latest-news

Australian Government (2024) *Cross Agency Training Hub*, APS Academy website, accessed 30 September 2024. www.apsacademy.gov.au/aps-people/cross-agency-training-hub

APS Location Framework

In 2024, 88% of APS agencies have reported critical skills shortages. The top 5 areas of skills shortages for agencies are:

- Digital and information communications technology (81%)
- Data (80%)
- Portfolio, program or project management (39%)
- People management and leadership (37%)
- Legal (36%).

Employing staff in a broader range of locations is one way agencies are addressing critical skill gaps. The APS Location Framework was developed to help agencies navigate this opportunity.

The framework was released in October 2024. It encourages agencies to set an intentional posture on workforce location. It assists agencies in using workforce location as a tool to attract and retain the skills they need and supports good practices for agencies managing a distributed workforce.

The framework has 5 guiding principles:

- attract skills by accessing national talent
- consider proximity to stakeholders and partners
- leverage existing property footprint, foster collaboration and APS culture
- support flexible work wherever reasonable
- ensure workplaces strengthen diversity and inclusion.

The framework does not set target levels of dispersion or identify particular locations where agencies should be based. It provides agencies with useful guidance to inform their decisions on workforce location.

The APS Location Framework complements the APS Principles of Flexible Work and the flexible work common clause in APS enterprise agreements.

In many instances, the Commonwealth property footprint can be leveraged to help agencies employ staff in a broader range of locations. Tools such as the Property Marketplace, run by Finance, enable agencies to identify existing office space that meets their needs and consider sharing space with other agencies, where appropriate. This minimises surplus office space in line with the requirements of the Commonwealth Property Management Framework.

See also in this report

APS Profile – Workforce size and distribution, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 51.

Working in the APS – Flexible and productive work, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 70.

Appendix 1 – APS workforce trends, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 291.

Appendix 6 – APS workforce planning, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 335.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *APS Location Framework*, Australian Public Service Commission website, accessed 17 October 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/workforce-information/aps-location-framework

Australian Government (n.d.) *Principles of Flexible Work in the APS*, Australian Public Service Commission website, accessed 12 September 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/news-and-events/latest-news/principles-flexible-work-aps

Australian Government (n.d.) *Commonwealth Property Management Framework (RMG 500)*, Finance website, accessed 12 September 2024. www.finance.gov.au/government/managing-commonwealth-resources/commonwealth-property-management-framework-rmg-500

Integrity

The Australian Public Service is working hard to deeply embed and sustain integrity at all levels.

Integrity starts with supporting individuals to understand and fulfil their important responsibilities as APS officers under the *Public Service Act 1999*, including adhering to the APS Values and Code of Conduct. For individuals, this is an ongoing commitment, from integrity training when starting in the APS to implementation in the daily conduct of their work.

Senior Executive Service leaders must lead by example. When leaders model the right behaviours, it creates a pro-integrity culture where staff can speak up with questions or concerns. This promotes better decision-making and delivery and builds broader trust in government.

APS agencies are assessing and improving their integrity systems using the Commonwealth Integrity Maturity Framework and integrity metric resources. Agencies that understand their integrity risks and actively monitor their performance are better positioned to create a pro-integrity culture and mitigate integrity vulnerabilities.

The Capability Reinvestment Fund 2024–25 is supporting the development of a prototype integrity data framework to better measure and monitor integrity data and analyse the effectiveness of integrity systems.

Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan, the final report of the APS Integrity Taskforce, was endorsed by the Secretaries Board and published on 17 November 2023. It made 15 recommendations across the areas of culture, systems and accountability. Implementation is in progress across the APS.

An inquiry by Independent Reviewers, supported by the Centralised Code of Conduct Inquiry Taskforce, found that 12 current and former APS agency heads and employees breached the APS Code of Conduct on 97 occasions in matters associated with the Robodebt Scheme. The Robodebt Scheme was a failure of government in both policy design and implementation. The APS acknowledges its role, takes responsibility for its actions, and is learning from these failures.

An Integrity Strategy for the Commonwealth Public Sector is being developed to enhance coordination and information-sharing across government agencies. It will provide the public with greater insights into the work underway to strengthen integrity in the Commonwealth public sector.

The new Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework came into effect on 1 July 2024. It supports a more proactive and targeted approach to minimising the serious harms that fraud and corruption cause for the community and the public sector.

A new Commonwealth Supplier Code of Conduct came into effect on 1 July 2024. It strengthens the Australian Government's ability to identify, and respond to, supplier misconduct.

The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) started operations on 1 July 2023. This independent agency detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corrupt conduct among public officials. The NACC educates the APS and the public about corruption risks and prevention.

Legislation to establish the Administrative Review Tribunal was passed on 28 May 2024 and will start on 14 October 2024. It provides the public with an avenue to seek review of government decisions on important matters that affect them, including social security, migration and taxation decisions.

Building psychological safety – whole-of-service approach

A whole-of-service approach to building psychological safety is being developed by the Australian Public Service. This approach fosters cultures of integrity, innovation and transparency in teams.

Psychological safety is defined as 'the belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes, and the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking.' It is also called 'speak up' culture. It lays a foundation for honest communication in teams, promotes ethical decision-making and contributes to broader trust in government.

An APS-wide approach to building psychological safety sets the standard for what is expected from all leaders and employees. It is fundamental to individual, team and organisational high performance.

The Secretaries Board Capability and Workforce Committee (formerly the Future of Work Sub-committee) endorsed a project in March 2024 to develop a whole-of-service approach to building psychological safety.

The project aims to:

- establish a common understanding of what psychological safety means in the APS context
- develop practical guidance and tools to help APS senior leaders, managers and employees exhibit psychologically safe behaviours and foster psychological safety in the workplace
- explore how psychological safety can be measured, monitored and evaluated.

A discovery phase has been undertaken by the project team, including a literature review, desktop research and engagement across the APS to understand the current and desired state of psychological safety. Discovery insights and recommendations to address the issues identified were presented to the Capability and Workforce Committee in July 2024.

As this project progresses, consideration will be given to the intersections between psychological safety and other APS priorities, including work health and safety and cultural safety.

Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan, the final report of the APS Integrity Taskforce, was published on 17 November 2023. It included a recommendation that the APS focus on ethical decision-making and fostering psychological safety.

Ensuring APS workplaces are psychologically safe supports the government's APS Reform agenda, particularly that the APS embodies integrity in all it does, is a model employer and has the capability to do its job well.

See also in this report

Working in the APS – Supporting health and wellbeing, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 74.

Integrity – *Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 86.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Psychological safety in the APS*, APSC website, accessed 16 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/workforce-information/psychological-safety-aps

Respectful and ethical workplaces

Employees and leaders in the Australian Public Service are required to comply with the APS Values and Code of Conduct. In the APS workplace, this includes treating everyone with respect and courtesy, and behaving with honesty and integrity.

Senior leaders in the APS have an additional responsibility to lead by example in upholding and promoting high standards of ethical behaviour and personal conduct.

The 2024 APS Employee Census reports that the perceived rate of harassment and bullying for the APS remained stable at 10.5% (compared with 10.4% in 2023). More information on perceived rates of harassment and bullying in individual agencies is in the APS agency benchmarking section of this report.

In the 2024 APS Agency Survey, APS agencies reported formal investigations into 81 employees for conduct categorised as corrupt in 2023–24. Of these, 74 employees were found to have breached the APS Code of Conduct. More information on breaches is available in Appendix 2 of this report.

The Australian Public Service Commission promotes and upholds high standards of integrity in the APS through a broad range of programs, services and functions. This includes:

- delivering integrity training courses through the APS Academy
- providing guidance and resources for agencies and APS employees to support public servants to embody and model integrity
- providing matter-specific advice through the Ethics Advisory Service and Employment Policy Advisory Service
- exercising legislative powers to inquire into the conduct of agency heads and former agency heads, and APS employees or former employees, where referred
- participating in and/or leading communities of practice to share information and resources and to build integrity capability across the service
- strengthening integrity in recruitment practices by providing rules and guidance on applying the APS Employment Principles and providing an APS Commissioner's representative on Senior Executive Service selection panels
- providing induction and educational materials to ensure incoming secretaries and agency heads are aware of their personal integrity obligations.

Across the APS, significant initiatives are underway to strengthen integrity at all levels, implementing recommendations from *Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*.

See also in this report

Working in the APS – Sex Discrimination Act changes, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 76.

Capability and leadership – SES Performance Leadership Framework, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 106.

Integrity – *Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 86.

APS agency benchmarking – Harassment and bullying, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 251.

Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Institutional integrity within agencies

The Australian Public Service is working on ways to strengthen institutional integrity within agencies. This includes improvements to the way integrity is measured and reported, and the ongoing evaluation of integrity systems and processes to ensure they are effective.

Agencies that understand their integrity risks and actively monitor their performance are better positioned to create a pro-integrity culture and mitigate integrity vulnerabilities, ensuring better and more sustainable delivery for government and public trust in government.

Focus continues on ensuring that agency fraud and corruption risks are effectively mitigated. The Commonwealth Integrity Maturity Framework is a self-assessment guide developed by the National Anti-Corruption Commission. Agencies use it to implement integrity frameworks tailored to their risk profiles, size and contexts.

Two-thirds of departments reported to the APS Integrity Taskforce that they are undertaking, or planning, a self-assessment under the framework. Secretaries have agreed to undertake the self-assessment within their department and are expected to report to the Secretaries Board later in 2024 on plans to upscale their agency's integrity maturity.

The Australian Public Service Commission has developed an integrity metrics resource to help agencies assess their current integrity measurement capability and make decisions on where to focus efforts to lift integrity measurement, monitoring and reporting.

Using the integrity metrics resource, Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts has developed an integrity dashboard to report on its integrity performance. This includes code of conduct matters, compliance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and implementation of audit recommendations.

The dashboard is updated quarterly and presented to senior executives. Once endorsed, it is made available to all staff through the department's internal intranet Integrity Hub. The department uses quarterly trend data to inform discussion on its integrity arrangements and maturity, and to highlight areas that may require greater focus.

Over time, the department has seen an increase in the number of integrity cases, tip-offs and breaches. This highlights, among other trends, an increase in organisational integrity awareness. The department expects the data will continue to become more meaningful as trends emerge, as the maturity of integrity processes develop and as the culture around public service integrity continues to evolve.

The Capability Reinvestment Fund 2024–25 is supporting the development of a prototype integrity data framework, co-led by the Attorney-General's Department and the APSC. Its purpose is to better measure and monitor integrity data and analyse the effectiveness of integrity systems.

Louder than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan – the report of the APS Integrity Taskforce – was published on 17 November 2023. It included a recommendation that the APS upscale institutional integrity culture and compliance within agencies.

Deputy Secretary-level Integrity Champions have been appointed by secretaries to act as stewards of a pro-integrity culture and foster informal integrity conversations.

See also in this report

Integrity – *Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 86.

Capability and leadership – Capability Reinvestment Fund, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 114.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2022) *Integrity Metrics Resource*, APSC website, accessed 13 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/integrity/integrity-metrics-resource

Australian Government (n.d.) *Commonwealth Integrity Maturity Framework*, National Anti-Corruption Commission website, accessed 1 July 2024. www.nacc.gov.au/commonwealth-integrity-maturity-framework

Australian Government (n.d.) *Integrity good practice guide*, Prime Minister and Cabinet website, accessed 1 July 2024. www.pmc.gov.au/resources/integrity-good-practice-guide/integrity-evaluation-oversight

Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan

Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan, the final report of the Australian Public Service Integrity Taskforce, was endorsed by the Secretaries Board for implementation. It was published on 17 November 2023.

Established by the Secretaries Board, the taskforce identifies system-wide improvements to support a pro-integrity culture at all levels of the APS. The work of the taskforce has contributed to the implementation of the integrity pillar of the APS Reform agenda and Response to the Robodebt Royal Commission.

The Louder Than Words report makes 15 recommendations across 3 areas:

- **Culture** – with a focus on ethical leadership and rewarding the behaviours needed to serve the Australian community.
- **Systems** – with a focus on making it easier for our people to do the right thing.
- **Accountability** – with a focus on improving knowledge-sharing, strategic cooperation and coordinated approaches to implementing integrity standards.

Recommendations from Louder Than Words are being implemented across the APS.

An Integrity Good Practice Guide, available to all APS leaders and staff, presents real-world examples of ways to support an integrity-based culture.

See also in this report

Integrity – Institutional integrity within agencies, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 84.

Integrity – Integrity Strategy for the Commonwealth Public Sector, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 88.

Integrity – Strengthening of supplier conduct, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 90.

Capability and leadership – Capability Reinvestment Fund, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 114.

Find out more

Australian Government (2023) *APS Integrity Taskforce report 'Louder than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan'*, Australian Public Service Commission website, accessed 17 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/news-and-events/open-letters-australian-public-service/aps-integrity-taskforce-report-louder-words-aps-integrity-action-plan

Australian Government (n.d.) *Integrity Good Practice Guide*, Prime Minister and Cabinet website, accessed 17 July 2024. www.pmc.gov.au/resources/integrity-good-practice-guide

Centralised Code of Conduct Inquiry Taskforce

Findings from the final report of the Centralised Code of Conduct Inquiry Taskforce were released by the Australian Public Service Commissioner on 13 September 2024. The APS Commissioner established the taskforce and appointed expert Independent Reviewers to conduct the investigations.

The purpose of the taskforce was to support the reviewers to inquire into whether current and former APS agency heads and employees associated with the design and delivery of the Robodebt Scheme breached the APS Code of Conduct. The taskforce began its work in July 2023.

The taskforce found that 12 people breached the Code of Conduct on 97 occasions.
The breaches included:

- lack of care and diligence
- lack of integrity in performing duties
- instances of misleading others
- instances of failing to uphold the APS Values.

Following the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, the secretaries of Australian Government departments agreed on a centralised process to investigate possible breaches of the APS Code of Conduct.

Sixteen people were referred to the taskforce comprising:

- current public servants referred by the Royal Commission
- current and former public servants referred by their agency head
- former APS agency heads initially referred by the Minister for the Public Service, Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Statement by the Australian Public Service Commissioner on the Robodebt Centralised Code of Conduct Inquiry*, APSC website, accessed 16 September 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/integrity/robodebt-code-conduct-process/statement-commissioner-centralised-code-conduct-inquiry-final-report

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Centralised Code of Conduct Inquiry Taskforce Final Report*, APSC website, accessed 16 September 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/integrity/robodebt-code-conduct-process/inquiry-taskforce-final-report

Integrity Strategy for the Commonwealth Public Sector

An Integrity Strategy for the Commonwealth Public Sector is being developed by the Attorney-General's Department and Australian Public Service Commission, in consultation with other agencies responsible for elements of the integrity reform agenda.

The development of the strategy is a key recommendation of the Australian Public Service Integrity Taskforce's final report *Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*. The Secretaries Board established an APS Integrity Taskforce in 2023 to bring together information about integrity initiatives underway across agencies, consider how they intersect, and identify gaps and opportunities.

A key input to APS integrity reforms is the Integrity Taskforce Report. It provides recommendations to strengthen Senior Executive Service integrity leadership, reinforce the centrality of lawfulness to the APS, and strengthen integrity policy and oversight.

The Australian Government committed to develop Australia's Third National Action Plan (NAP3) under the Open Government Partnership. This partnership is a multilateral initiative that aims to secure commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. The NAP3, delivered in December 2023, includes 8 commitments across ministerial portfolios to uplift the transparency and integrity of government.

In 2024–25, the integrity strategy will be developed to:

- enhance the Australian public's visibility of work to improve public sector integrity
- strengthen coordination and information-sharing across government agencies
- harness information and data to improve reporting and measurement of integrity.

Implementation of the recommendations of the APS Integrity Taskforce report is overseen by the Secretaries Board. Secretaries are championing integrity initiatives within their departments and supporting portfolio agencies to implement integrity reforms.

See also in this report

Integrity – *Louder than words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 86.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Australia's Open Government Partnership*, Attorney General's Department website, accessed 14 August 2024. www.ag.gov.au/integrity/australias-open-government-partnership

Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework

A new Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework came into effect on 1 July 2024.

Jointly announced by the Minister for Finance and the Attorney-General in February 2024, the development of the framework follows consultation with all Australian Government entities. It creates a modern and cohesive system of accountability for protecting public resources from fraud and corruption across the government.

Fraud and corruption are risks that can undermine the objectives of every Australian Government entity in all areas of their business. This includes delivery of services and programs, policymaking, regulation, taxation, procurement, grants and internal procedures.

Fraud and corruption:

- undermine public confidence in government
- divert resources from achieving public good
- increase the costs of delivering services to Australians
- cause real and significant harm to victims, who are often the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in Australian society.

The new framework will support more proactive and targeted measures to minimise the serious harms fraud and corruption cause for the community and the public sector. It is based on best practice and has a focus on prevention.

During 2023–24, the Attorney-General's Department undertook a significant program of outreach and engagement to support Australian Government entities to understand and implement the new framework. A comprehensive suite of guidance material is also available.

The Commonwealth Fraud Prevention Centre strengthens the counter-fraud capability of Australian Government entities. The new framework, developed by the centre, supports entities' capability development and complements the government's reforms to improve the standards of integrity across the public sector.

See also in this report

Integrity – National Anti-Corruption Commission, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 92.

Find out more

Attorney-General's Department (2024) *Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework 2024*, AGD website, accessed 1 August 2024. www.counterfraud.gov.au/library/framework-2024

Attorney-General's Department (2024) *Commonwealth Fraud Prevention Centre*, AGD website, accessed 1 August 2024. www.counterfraud.gov.au

Strengthening integrity of supplier conduct

A new Commonwealth Supplier Code of Conduct came into force on 1 July 2024. It is a key measure to strengthen the Australian Government's identification of, and response to, supplier misconduct.

The government entered into procurement contracts with suppliers with a value of over $99 billion in 2023–24. The Commonwealth expects its suppliers to conduct themselves with high standards of ethics and consistently act with integrity and accountability.

Finance has taken a number of actions to strengthen supplier integrity and contract transparency. These include:

- introducing the Code of Conduct which outlines the behavioural standards expected of suppliers and their sub-contractors during procurement processes and while under contract
- introducing Notifications of Significant Events clauses into standard Government procurement contracts to further strengthen the ability of the government to cancel contracts in response to unethical behaviour
- undertaking a whole-of-government review of confidentiality provisions and conflict-of-interest disclosures
- upskilling the procurement capability of Australian Public Service officials to improve the procurement system and engagement with businesses
- improving transparency of contracts through enhanced reporting on AusTender.

These actions build upon an already strong Commonwealth Procurement Framework.

This framework requires procuring officials to take into account the past performance of suppliers, including their ethical behaviour, when undertaking a value-for-money assessment as part of the procurement process.

It requires consideration of a wide range of matters in all value-for-money assessments and allows for tenderers to be excluded on grounds such as:

- bankruptcy
- insolvency
- false declarations
- significant deficiencies in performance of any substantive requirement or obligation under a prior contract.

These initiatives form a set of measures undertaken by the Australian Government to further bolster integrity protections following the breach of confidentiality by PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia during consultations with The Treasury on the development of tax laws.

This work complements the Australian Government's APS Reform agenda, and APS Strategic Commissioning Framework, which aims to reduce the Commonwealth's reliance on contractors and consultants and rebuild capability with the APS.

See also in this report

Integrity – *Louder Than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 86.

Capability and leadership – Strategic Commissioning Framework, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 101.

Find out more

Finance (2024) *Commonwealth Supplier Code of Conduct – Overview*, Finance website, accessed 25 July 2025. www.finance.gov.au/government/procurement/commonwealth-supplier-code-conduct-overview

Finance (n.d.) *Commonwealth Procurement Framework*, Finance website, accessed 25 July 2024. www.finance.gov.au/government/procurement/commonwealth-procurement-rules/procurement-framework

National Anti-Corruption Commission

The National Anti-Corruption Commission began operations on 1 July 2023. It is an independent Australian Government agency. The NACC's mission is to enhance integrity in the Commonwealth public sector. It does so by detecting, investigating and reporting on serious or systemic corrupt conduct among public officials. The NACC educates the public service and the public about corruption risks and prevention.

Corruption has no place in the Australian Commonwealth public sector. It undermines the delivery of services and benefits to the community and leads to a loss of public trust in the way government decisions are made. Without the community's trust, the ability of the public sector to serve the government, the Parliament and the Australian public is diminished.

Deterrence activities by the NACC include detection, investigation and exposure of corruption. The NACC can receive referrals from anyone and can start investigations on its own motion.

At the close of its first year of operation on 30 June 2024, the NACC:

- had received 3,189 referrals
- was conducting 26 corruption investigations and 29 preliminary investigations
- was overseeing or monitoring 19 investigations by other agencies
- had 5 matters before the court
- had 2 matters resulting in convictions.

Corruption can be prevented through engagement and education. The NACC aims to build resistance to corrupt conduct, to encourage reporting and to cultivate a culture of integrity across the Commonwealth public sector.

In its first year, the NACC conducted 124 presentations to stakeholders, including parliamentarians, agency heads and senior public servants, departmental and agency staff, civil society organisations and professional associations.

A key feature of the NACC's prevention work is educating senior leadership in the Commonwealth public sector about the importance of organisational culture in shaping behaviours, values and decision-making. Continued themes of the NACC's work include:

- cultivating accountability
- identifying risks and vulnerabilities
- helping public officials across all levels navigate challenges with ethical decision-making will continue to be a theme of its work.

The NACC is overseen by an inspector to monitor legal compliance and a parliamentary joint committee to monitor performance.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *National Anti-Corruption Commission*, National Anti-Corruption Commission website, accessed 6 August 2024. www.nacc.gov.au

Australian Government (2024) *Weekly update: referrals, assessment and investigations*, National Anti-Corruption Commission website, accessed 6 August 2024. www.nacc.gov.au/news-and-media/weekly-update-referrals-assessment-and-investigations-3-JUL

Administrative Review Tribunal

Legislation to establish the Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) was passed on 28 May 2024 and comes into effect on 14 October 2024.

The ART will review administrative decisions under more than 400 Commonwealth Acts and legislative instruments. It provides the public with an avenue to review government decisions on important matters that affect them, including social security, migration and taxation decisions.

An independent review tribunal is essential to protecting the rights and interests of organisations and individuals, including the most vulnerable members of the community. Effective review upholds the integrity of government programs and promotes government accountability. High-quality review encourages improved decision-making across government.

The decision to abolish the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and establish the new ART includes these reforms:

- re-establishment of the Administrative Review Council, as recommended by the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, to provide education and training for Commonwealth officials and improve the quality of future administrative decision-making
- establishment of a guidance and appeals panel to consider and resolve issues of significance in administrative decision-making
- legislated focus on accessibility
- detailed merit-based appointment provisions
- code of conduct and performance standards for statutory office holders, with enforceable consequences including termination
- new powers to appoint litigation supporters that reflect the findings and recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission
- harmonisation and enhancement of tribunal powers and procedures.

These reforms are underpinned by extensive consultation with:

- the public
- all Australian Government portfolios, state and territory governments
- an Expert Advisory Group chaired by the Honourable Patrick Keane AC KC.



Attorney-General, Mark Dreyfus KC MP and Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, Katherine Jones PSM, with members of the Administrative Review Taskforce following introduction to Parliament of legislation to establish the Administrative Review Tribunal on 7 December 2023. Pictured from left to right: Kimberley Williams, Andrew Loomes, Avanthi Raju, David Haines, Sarah Charak, Lucy McAuliffe, Joanna Virtue, Katherine Jones PSM, Susan Dudley, Meretta Kristiansen, Alec Towers-Fewtrell, Matthew Traeger, Sara Samios, Patrick Gleadhill, Ruby Schutz, Hannah Moon, Lauren Gradwell, James Holley, Thomas Wynn Elaine Tse and Mark Dreyfus KC MP.

Image: Attorney-General's Department

The reform process has been led by the Attorney-General's Department. Policy design and implementation have been guided by close engagement with agencies including Home Affairs, Social Services and The Treasury.

In addition to new legislation, the reform includes:

- a sustainable, demand-driven funding arrangement
- new members to address existing backlogs
- a new case management system
- a transparent merits-based process for appointing members.

The Administrative Appeals Tribunal started in 1976, representing a world-leading advance in the provision of independent merits review. The ART represents the most significant institutional reform to the federal system of administrative review in almost 50 years.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *A new system of federal administrative review*, Attorney General's Department website, accessed 12 August 2024. www.ag.gov.au/legal-system/new-system-federal-administrative-review

Capability and leadership

The Australian Public Service is increasingly innovative in its approaches to developing capability and investing in leadership.

There are many and varied ways for talented and motivated people to join the APS and build rewarding and successful careers. Pathway programs and traineeships present options for joining the APS to serve the Australian Government and the Australian community.

Once in the APS, employees have unique opportunities to undertake important and interesting work in one or more agencies and locations, developing and sharing their knowledge, skills and experience across their career.

APS Professions continue to build the specialist capability of the APS, currently supporting over 25,000 human resources, digital and data professionals. The professions of procurement and contract management, evaluation, and complex project management are being added in 2024–25 to improve public administration.

The APS Academy promotes a continuous learning culture across the public service, using a networked model to partner with agencies, academia and non-APS partners to build capability across government. The APS Academy currently focuses on uplifting capability in leadership, integrity, partnerships and engagement, and policy design and implementation.

The APS Strategic Commissioning Framework was released in October 2023. It sets the expectation that core roles and functions will be delivered by APS employees, reducing reliance on external contractors and consultants, and building in-house capability.

The APS continues to build workforce planning capability to address skills gaps across the service. An APS Data, Digital and Cyber Workforce Plan is being developed to support the vision outlined in the Data and Digital Government Strategy and the Australian Cyber Security Strategy.

Australian Government Consulting is delivering services to APS clients across strategic policy, organisational performance, and process optimisation projects. It is strengthening APS capability to deliver projects that would otherwise be outsourced.

The Australian Centre for Evaluation began operating in July 2023. It aims to improve the volume, quality and use of evaluation evidence and embed a culture of evaluation across the Australian government.

Individual APS agencies, and multi-agency collaborations like the Digital Atlas of Australia, are building and sharing specialised data expertise with government, industry and community organisations. This supports evidence-based insights and decision-making across Australia.

Investments in leadership are having a positive impact. Assessments of almost 450 APS leaders by the Secretaries Talent Council and Deputy Secretaries Talent Council indicate that participants are becoming increasingly self-aware, collaborative and inclusive. Building on this success, there is now a strong focus on developing a pipeline of First Nations leaders for the APS.

A leader’s behaviour sets the tone and creates the psychological safety necessary for frank and fearless advice and high performance. A key feature of the new Senior Executive Service Performance Leadership Framework is the principle that behaviours are as important as outcomes.

The Capability Review Program published 5 reviews in 2023–24. These reviews give agency heads the information they need to improve their agency’s readiness. They facilitate discussions around an organisation’s desired future state, highlighting strengths and identifying organisational capability gaps.

Ten Capability Reinvestment Fund (CRF) Round 1 projects involving 14 APS agencies were completed in 2023–24, and 9 Round 2 projects involving 24 APS agencies were selected to start 2024–25. The CRF supports the development and implementation of scalable and impactful activities that help all agencies to better prepare for current and future challenges.

Developing an APS career

There are more ways than ever to join the Australian Public Service and build a rewarding and successful career.

Australian Government Career Pathways coordinates employment opportunities across agencies. This provides applicants with a streamlined and accessible process. It encourages a diverse range of candidates from across the country to identify suitable APS jobs and apply for them.

Pathways programs include 10 graduate streams. At July 2024, these programs had received almost 12,000 applications for the 2025 rounds, representing a growth of 56% from the 2024 rounds.

Six Career Pathways programs are available for non-graduates, including digital traineeships. These traineeships offer participants support, training and on-the-job experience in a government agency. Different working arrangements and locations are available to encourage a broad range of applicants, including from groups underrepresented in the digital field.

APS Academy Campuses work in partnership with James Cook University and the University of Newcastle. They encourage students in regional areas to build digital and data skills at university level, while remaining in their communities. APS Academy Campuses provide on-site support and promote student engagement with their home agencies and the APS.

APS Professions continues to build the specialist and leadership capability of the APS. They offer a broad range of targeted learning and development programs. Communities of practice and networking events provide further opportunities for peer-to-peer and practitioner-led learning.

The Professions currently support over 25,000 human resources, digital and data professionals across the public sector. The professions of procurement and contract Management, evaluation, and complex project management are being added in 2024–25.

The APS Academy promotes a continuous learning culture across the APS. It partners with agencies, academia and non-APS partners to deliver flagship programs to build the capability of APS employees across the span of their public service careers.

Employees have opportunities for career development and progression within and between APS agencies. In 2023–24, the APSJobs platform listed 15,000 vacancies and 970 mobility opportunities. It registered 1,844 employees as willing to meet surge demand in an emergency.

In the 2024 APS Employee Census, of those indicating they wished to leave their current position, 43% indicated they were pursuing another position within their agency, and 27% indicated they were pursuing a position in another agency.

At a rate of 5.3% in 2023–24, the movement of employees between agencies on a permanent basis remained consistent over the last 3 years.

Innovative entry pathways to government employment and ongoing career development and learning opportunities align with the Australian Government’s objectives for an APS that is a model employer and has the capability to do its job well.

See also in this report

Working in the APS – APS Employee Value Proposition, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 66.

Capability and leadership – APS Academy, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 99.

Appendix 1 – APS workforce trends, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 291.

Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 311.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *APSJobs – Gateway to the Australian Public Service*, APSJobs website, accessed 23 July 2024. www.apsjobs.gov.au/s

Australian Government (2024) *Digital Traineeship Program*, APSJobs website, accessed 22 July 2024. www.apsjobs.gov.au/s/career-pathways-home/career-pathways-program/digital-traineeship-program-MCBVIMKNH5LND7XF76QUK7PAQZ3Q

Australian Government (n.d.) *APS Professions*, Australian Public Service Commission website, accessed 30 September 2024.www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aps-professions

APS Academy

The Australian Public Service Academy is embedding a networked approach through partnering with agencies, academia and non-APS partners to build capability across government. It focuses on uplifting capability in leadership, integrity, partnerships and engagement, and policy design and implementation.

The integrated approach to building capability is guided by both the Delivering for Tomorrow: APS Workforce Strategy, and the Highly Capable-Future Ready: APS Learning and Development Strategy and Action Plan.

The APS Academy is an essential instrument in lifting capability across the APS and works closely with APS agencies. It is central to supporting integrity, partnerships and engagement, putting people at the centre and driving a continuous learning culture for public service.

Strengthening whole-of-government capability is achieved through:

- APS Craft, which defines the characteristics of excellence in public service across 6 domains
- practitioner-led learning, which harnesses the depth of public service expertise from across the APS
- a networked model of connections and partnerships across the APS and academia.

The APS Academy takes a One APS approach and partners with agencies to deliver flagship programs such as:

- Delivering Great Policy
- Working with Ministers and their offices
- SES Integrity
- APS Unlocked.

These programs build the knowledge and skills of APS employees across the span of their public service careers.

The APS Academy is setting the foundations for best-practice learning design by promoting a continuous learning culture and embedding the Learning Quality and Evaluation Frameworks.

To enhance public service craft capability, the APS Academy hosts events and forums on contemporary practices and emerging challenges across government. In 2023–24, 8,828 participants registered for learning events to hear from experienced practitioners within and beyond the APS.

The APS Academy was established in July 2021 with the mission to foster an APS-wide culture of learning that builds core public service capabilities and drives high performance.

See also in this report

Stewardship in action, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 117.

Find out more

APS Academy (n.d.) *APS Academy* website, accessed 11 July 2024. https://www.apsacademy.gov.au

Australian Public Service Commission (2021) *APS Workforce Strategy 2025*, APSC website, accessed 11 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aps-workforce-strategy-2025

Australian Public Service Commission (2021) *Highly Capable, Future-Ready: APS Learning and Development Strategy*, APSC website, accessed 11 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/learning-and-development/highly-capable-future-ready-aps-learning-and-development-strategy

Strategic Commissioning Framework

The Australian Public Service Commission published the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework in October 2023. It sets the expectation that core roles and functions will be delivered by APS employees, not outsourced inappropriately.

This framework supports the Australian Government's commitment to reduce reliance on external contractors and consultants and ensure the APS has the capability to do its job well. It requires agencies to deliver core work in-house using APS employees and sets limits on when core work can be outsourced.

Agencies have identified their core work and set targets to start bringing this work back in-house throughout 2024–25. Agencies are required to publish their targets as part of their corporate plans.

The APSC has worked collaboratively with agencies to develop a resources toolkit, which provides guidance to assist with implementation. Agencies continue to share their learnings as they embed changes to the way core work is delivered.

Over time, this framework will help deepen capability across the APS, improve delivery, and reduce risks to integrity, expertise and public trust posed by excessive outsourcing.

The APSC is providing support to agencies to help them make this change through information and communication activities, including agency drop-in sessions and one-on-one assistance.

The Strategic Commissioning Framework applies to all agencies that employ staff under the *Public Service Act 1999*.

See also in this report

Capability and leadership – Australian Government Consulting, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 108.

Integrity – Integrity Strategy for the Commonwealth Public Sector, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 88.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *APS Strategic Commissioning Framework*, Australian Public Service Commission website, accessed 19 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/workforce-information/aps-strategic-commissioning-framework

Strategic workforce planning

Building workforce planning capability to address capability gaps across the service remains a focus of the Australian Public Service.

The Data and Digital Government Strategy, released in December 2023, includes a commitment to develop a whole-of-APS strategic data and digital workforce plan, with a focus on future needs and capabilities. Further, the Australian Cyber Security Strategy commits to growing and professionalising the national cyber workforce.

The APS Data, Digital and Cyber Workforce Plan is being developed by the Australian Public Service Commission in partnership with the Digital Transformation Agency, Australian Bureau of Statistics and Home Affairs. It will outline a broad range of initiatives to support the vision outlined in the Data and Digital Government Strategy and Australian Cyber Security Strategy.

This plan will become the blueprint for how the APS will build the technical workforce required to deliver data and digitally enabled public services and meet future APS demands. It will provide a service-wide approach to uplifting capability so the APS has the right people, with the right skills at the right time to deliver on the government's data, digital and cyber needs.

Demand for data, digital and cyber talent remains strong across the Australian and global labour markets. Attracting, developing and retaining data and digital skills in the APS workforce has been a longstanding challenge for the APS and the Australian economy more broadly.

Most APS agencies are experiencing critical data, digital and cyber skill shortages. At the same time, demand for data, digital and cyber roles is expected to grow rapidly over the next 5 years, as highlighted in the Australian Government's vision for 1.2 million tech jobs by 2030.

Workforce planning for digital workers has usually been undertaken at an organisational or team level, rather than through a systematic program of work. The APS Data, Digital and Cyber Workforce Plan will see the APS better manage demand and supply levers using a coordinated approach.

The APS Centre of Excellence for Workforce Planning provides workforce planning capability uplift, guidance and analysis to human resources and workforce planning practitioners. This supports the development and implementation of evidence-based, aligned workforce plans. Tailored, hands-on advisory services are available to agencies on a cost-recovered basis for digital workforce planning.

To further support workforce planning capability across the APS, the Centre of Excellence has partnered with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Canberra to establish a Recognition of Prior Learning pathway between the APS Academy workforce planning courses and the UNSW Graduate Certificate in Workforce Planning.

See also in this report

Fit for the future – Data and Digital Government Strategy, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 182.

Appendix 6 – APS Workforce Planning, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 335.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Data and Digital Government Strategy*, Data and Digital website, accessed 6 August 2024. www.dataanddigital.gov.au

Australian Public Service Commission (2021) *APS Workforce Strategy 2025*, APSC website, accessed 6 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/aps-workforce-strategy-2025

Australian Government (n.d.) *Workforce planning courses*, APS Academy website, accessed 12 September 2024. www.apsacademy.gov.au/courses?keys=workforce+planning&sort_by=search_api_relevance&items_per_page=10

University of New South Wales (n.d.) *Graduate Certificate in Workforce Planning Handbook Special Admission Requirements*, UNSW website, accessed 12 September 2024. www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/postgraduate/programs/2025/7561?year=2025

Identifying and developing leadership talent

Identifying and developing talent to build stronger and more diverse leadership is an area the Australian Public Service continues to invest in. This is required to support ethical delivery and tangible results for the Australian Government and Australian community.

The Secretaries Talent Council and Deputy Secretaries Talent Council, supported by the Australian Public Service Commission, have assessed almost 450 senior APS leaders to provide insights into their skills, experience and behaviours. Benchmarking indicates that the APS leader-led approach is at the cutting edge of public sector leadership practice domestically and internationally.

Broader approaches to leadership are now being rewarded in the APS. Participants in the assessments are increasingly self-aware, collaborative and inclusive leaders. This suggests that investment in leadership over recent years is having an impact on APS culture.

Building on the success of these programs, this work expanded in 2023–24 to focus on developing a stronger pipeline of First Nations leaders who can contribute their unique perspectives to improving APS policies and services. This aligns with the APS Reform priority of ensuring the APS reflects the community it serves.



Participants, speakers and coaches at the Bulabul leadership gathering in Sydney, 18 June 2024.

Image: Thorny Vision

Thirty-two Executive Level 2 participants from 17 agencies participated in Bulabul (Coming together in Wiradjuri language) to strengthen the pool of APS candidates for future SES100 First Nations recruitment rounds.

Nineteen Senior Executive Service (SES) joined Yawarra (Taking care of in Wiradjuri language) which will support new recruits from the SES100 rounds to build the foundations of long-term

success as a senior leader. These programs represent a step change towards transforming the APS. They demonstrate the Australian Government's commitment to increasing First Nations leadership representation.

Early feedback from participants on Bulabul and Yawarra has been positive. Participants have valued the culturally safe space to connect with like-minded leaders and develop the confident and authentic leadership style required to make a difference to the community through their current and future roles.

See also in this report

APS profile – Boosting First Nations employment, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 54.

SES Performance Leadership Framework

The Senior Executive Service Performance Leadership Framework was launched in August 2023. All APS agencies must implement the required elements of the framework by 2025.

A key feature of the framework is the principle that outcomes and behaviours are both essential to doing a job well. Both must be assessed as part of an SES leader's performance. A leader's behaviour sets the tone and creates the psychological safety necessary for professional and frank advice and high performance.

The framework provides an opportunity to build consistency across the Australian Public Service while embedding a culture of transparency and accountability for SES performance.

Elements encompassing SES performance and development are in the framework. This is supported by a maturity model to guide agency implementation while providing a mechanism for reporting and evaluation.

Agencies indicated their maturity level (as at 30 June 2024) for each element of the SES Performance Leadership Framework Maturity Model. Aggregated responses from 91 APS agencies are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Maturity levels for each element of the SES Performance Leadership Framework Maturity Model

Elements	Level 1–Initial	Level 2–Defined	Level 3–Optimised
			% of agencies
Outcomes and behavioural expectations	27	47	25
Formal and informal conversations	22	43	35
Feedback from others	37	47	15
Annual performance rating	36	31	33
Consistency in assessing performance	34	48	18
Development	33	52	15
9 box grid	73	16	11
360-degree feedback	59	30	11
Unsatisfactory performance	43	36	21

Source: APS Agency Survey 2024

Note: Definitions for each level are outlined in Section 3.2 of the SES Performance Leadership Framework.

The framework supports the Australian Government's APS Reform agenda. It provides an overarching set of requirements all APS agencies must adopt to strengthen behaviour and outcomes-based performance management. It reinforces the standards of behaviour expected of APS leaders, as expressed through the APS Values and the Secretaries Charter of Leadership Behaviours.

See also in this report

APS agency benchmarking – Perceptions of SES leaders, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 230.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (2024) *Senior Executive Service performance*, APSC website, accessed 27 August 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/working-aps/aps-employees-and-managers/senior-executive-service-ses/ses-performance

Australian Public Service Commission (2022) *Secretaries Charter of Leadership Behaviours*, APSC website, accessed 21 October 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/learning-and-development/secretaries-charter-leadership-behaviours

Australian Government Consulting

Australian Government Consulting has provided consulting services to the Australian Public Service since October 2023. Bringing core work back into the APS is an important part of the government's commitment to strengthen integrity, build capability and improve outcomes, reduce reliance on external consultants, and save money.

AGC will benefit the public service by:

- delivering strategic consulting projects that would otherwise be outsourced
- strengthening APS capability and leveraging existing expertise across the APS
- supporting agencies to achieve better value when engaging external consultants.

AGC is for the APS, by the APS. It prioritises the enduring success of its clients, the wider APS, and Australians. AGC brings a structured consulting methodology and a deep appreciation and respect for the APS context, enabling it to develop workable solutions to challenging problems.

As part of its service offer, AGC delivers consulting services to APS clients across strategic policy, organisational performance, and process optimisation projects.

Australian Government Consulting, as part of the APS, is in a prime position to support clients with core work. It also supports APS clients where there is a temporary need for external support, or where the client is building capability in an area that will become an enduring function. AGC works in genuine partnership with APS clients, including by establishing integrated project teams.

AGC's Specialist Network helps the APS better leverage existing specialist expertise from within government. It comprises specialist units throughout the APS that can be engaged to support AGC projects.

AGC has developed a Consulting Playbook with guidance to help the APS achieve greater value for money when it is necessary to engage external consultants.

The Australian Government committed $10.9 million over 2 years from July 2023 to create the in-house consulting capability for the APS.

Find out more

Australian Government Consulting (n.d.) *Australian Government Consulting* website, accessed 25 June 2024. agc.gov.au

Data consulting services

Agencies in the Australian Public Service are important providers of specialised data and related consulting services.

These services support evidence-based insights and decision-making by government, industry and community organisations across Australia.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – collects and combines data from many sources about sectors including the economy, labour, industry, health, and the environment. The ABS offers data access, integration and consultancy services. The Compare Data Services tool on its website helps users discover and select the best data services tailored to their needs.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) – provides meaningful information and statistics on a wide range of health and welfare topics. It holds and arranges access to several linked data assets that are available for approved uses. Where project requirements cannot be met using existing linked data assets, the AIHW provides customised data linkage services.

Bureau of Meteorology – provides data services that give access to real-time and historical weather, climate, and ocean and water data. BOM services support emergency management, agriculture, aviation, land and marine transport, energy and resource operations, climate policy, water management, defence and foreign affairs. By enabling custom data requests, the bureau supports a wide range of applications from daily operations to long-term strategic planning.

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts – offers a curated entry point to Australian infrastructure, regional and transport data. This is essential for researchers, consultants, and industry stakeholders. Its comprehensive database, the Data Catalogue, is especially valuable for sectors such as agriculture, construction, logistics and transport.

In addition to these consulting services, other APS agencies provide web-based tools for users to identify and access data that is relevant for their purposes. These agencies include Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

The Australian Climate Service and the Digital Atlas of Australia are examples of collaborations between APS agencies to develop and connect specialised data sets for government, business and communities.

The *Data Availability and Transparency Act 2022* established the DATA Scheme for sharing Australian Government data. The National Data Commissioner is the regulator of the DATA Scheme and provides advice and guidance about its operation. The Commissioner's other functions are to deliver education and tools to support best practice data handling and sharing.

See also in this report

Serving the community – Digital Atlas of Australia, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 150.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Consultancy services*, Australian Bureau of Statistics website, accessed 16 August 2024. www.abs.gov.au/about/data-services/consultancy-services

Australian Government (n.d.) *AIHW linked data assets*, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website, accessed 16 August 2024. www.aihw.gov.au/about-our-data/linked-data-assets

Australian Government (n.d.) *Data Services*, Bureau of Meteorology website, accessed 16 August 2024. reg.bom.gov.au/reguser/index.shtml

Australian Government (n.d.) *Data Catalogue*, Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts website, accessed 16 August 2024. catalogue.data.infrastructure.gov.au

Australian Government (2023) *Australian Climate Service*, Australian Climate Service website, accessed 16 August 2024. www.acs.gov.au

Australian Government (n.d.) *Office of the National Data Commissioner*, Office of the National Data Commissioner Office of the National Data Commissioner website, accessed 22 October 2024. www.datacommissioner.gov.au

Australian Centre for Evaluation

High-quality evaluation is essential for generating actionable evidence to inform government policies and decisions, as well as promote a culture of learning, innovation, and continuous improvement. To support this, the Australian Centre for Evaluation was established in The Treasury in July 2023.

The Centre's mission is to help put evaluation evidence at the heart of policy design and decision-making. It achieves this by:

- improving the volume, quality and use of evaluation evidence
- embedding a culture of evaluation across the Australian Government.



Impact evaluation workshop on 17 June 2024, facilitated by Shantanu Sheshgir from ACE.

Image: Australian Centre for Evaluation

The Centre offers a range of services to Commonwealth entities.

It provides guidance and support to embed the Commonwealth Evaluation Policy, including through resources on the Commonwealth Evaluation Toolkit. During 2023–24, the Centre worked with the Commonwealth Evaluation Reference Group on several priorities. This included strengthening evaluation planning and use in the budget process and developing an Evaluation Maturity Model to help agencies strengthen evaluation capability.

The Centre provides technical advice and support for the design and delivery of impact evaluations using randomised controlled trials and quasi-experimental methods. Over 2023–24, the Centre has developed impact evaluation partnerships with Employment and Workplace Relations, Health and Aged Care, Education, and Social Services.

Evaluation training resources and targeted evaluation training are delivered by the Centre. A key project is the development of online training modules to be delivered through APSLearn. This includes an Introduction to Evaluation course funded by the Australian Public Service Capability Reinvestment Fund Round 1.

The Centre also supports professional networking and community of practice events that promote comprehensive evaluation and knowledge sharing.

Building APS evaluation capability helps reduce over-reliance on consultants and contractors. Data from AusTender suggests that the Australian Government spends over $50 million a year on evaluation reports from the private sector.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Australian Centre for Evaluation*, The Treasury website, accessed 19 July 2024. evaluation.treasury.gov.au

Capability reviews

The Capability Review Program published 5 reviews in 2023–24. Capability reviews are independent, forward-looking reviews assessing an agency's ability to meet future objectives and challenges.

These reviews give agency heads the information they need to improve their agency's readiness. They facilitate discussions around an organisation's desired future state, highlighting strengths and identifying capability gaps.

More broadly, capability reviews give a sense of Australian Public Service capability strengths and areas for development. Findings to date suggest that the APS benefits from a highly committed workforce. Pockets of excellent practice are found throughout the service, where work groups are clear leaders in their fields.

Findings so far also suggest there may be capability gaps in partnerships with communities, strategic thinking, and workforce planning capability in the APS. Building on these capabilities will help agencies meet future needs.

Each capability review is conducted transparently with the agency being reviewed. Each is led by a team of independent and senior APS reviewers.

Findings are set out in a report that assesses agencies against comparable standards to identify common themes and share best practice between all APS agencies. Agency heads prepare and publish action plans responding to review findings, outlining how improvements will be made.

These capability review reports were published in 2023–24:

- Australian Public Service Commission
- Health and Aged Care
- Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
- Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Home Affairs.

The *Public Service Amendment Act 2024* passed in June makes capability reviews an ongoing requirement. Reviews are to be completed every 5 years for departments of state, the Australian Public Service Commission, Services Australia and the Australian Taxation Office.

See also in this report

Capability and leadership – Strategic workforce planning, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 102.

Fit for the future – Futures and foresight capability, *State of the Service Report 2023–24*, page 174.

Find out more

Australian Public Service Commission (n.d.) *Capability Review Program*, APSC website, accessed 12 July 2024. www.apsc.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/workforce-information/research-analysis-and-publications/capability-review-program

Capability Reinvestment Fund

Capability Reinvestment Fund (CRF) Round 1 projects were completed in 2023–24. Round 2 projects were selected to start in 2024–25.

The CRF supports the Australian Public Service priority to build capability to address service-wide challenges. It supports initiatives that strengthen the APS to deliver for the Australian community, now and into the future.

Adopting a One-APS approach, the CRF delivers project outputs that can be offered to the wider APS at scale through the APS Academy. This encourages cross-agency collaboration.



APS Capability Reinvestment Fund

Image: Australian Public Service Commission

Ten projects involving 14 APS agencies shared Round 1 funding of $8.4 million.
Project deliverables include:

- producing the MOSAIC multicultural awareness digital magazine
- developing 3 microcredentials on improving gender impact analysis in policy
- developing APS capability in futures analysis
- deepening knowledge and networks in Asia and the Pacific.

Nine projects involving 24 APS agencies will share Round 2 funding of $6.5 million. Projects for 2024–25 include developing an APS integrity data framework, a greening government microcredential, and an APS-integrated unconscious bias training program.

The APS Academy supports the CRF, ensuring projects focus on service-wide capability improvement. It monitors CRF project delivery and provides updates to the Minister for the Public Service and the Secretaries Board on progress.

The CRF is an innovative approach to investing in APS organisational capability. Implementing scalable and impactful activities supports all agencies to better prepare for current and future challenges.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *APS Capability Reinvestment Fund 2023–24*, APS Reform website, accessed 18 July 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/resources/reports/aps-capability-reinvestment-fund-2023-24

Australian Government (n.d.) *APS Capability Reinvestment Fund 2024–25*, APS Reform website, accessed 18 July 2024. /www.apsreform.gov.au/resources/reports/aps-capability-reinvestment-fund-2024-25

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Stewardship in action

Over the past 18 months, important conversations have taken place in the Australian Public Service about stewardship – what it means to people and how it is, and can be, put into action.

During an APS Reform consultation held in March and April 2023, more than 1,500 participants (97.5% of whom were APS employees) agreed that stewardship is an APS value that strongly resonates with public servants.

The *Public Service Amendment Act 2024* received Royal Assent on 11 June 2024, locking in changes to the *Public Service Act 1999* including the addition of a new APS Value of Stewardship.

In the Act, the new APS Value of Stewardship is defined as:

> **The APS builds its capability and institutional knowledge, and supports the public interest now and into the future, by understanding the long-term impacts of what it does.**

In this section, insightful reflections on stewardship are contributed by individuals serving in a range of APS agencies, in a range of roles, and based in different locations around Australia.

Their responses to a common set of questions are shaped by their diverse life experience, career journeys and cultural backgrounds.

The contributors who kindly accepted an invitation to share their personal perspectives on stewardship here haven taken part in learning programs supported by the APS Academy.

The APS Academy supports APS agencies and employees to build the skills and knowledge which is unique and essential to working in the Australian public service.



Dr Alan Yusen Ley Cooper

EL 2 Leadership Program

‘I like to think of stewardship as the responsibility, management and care of something that has been entrusted to me. In my case, this is data and knowledge.

It’s the duty and obligation to act as a custodian, ensuring that this data is maintained and used sustainably and ethically.’

Role	Activity Leader, Airborne Electromagnetics
Agency	Geoscience Australia
Location	Canberra/Ngunnawal Country, Australian Capital Territory

Joining the Australian Public Service

I chose to join the APS because it allowed me to be part of a world-class team of experts at Geoscience Australia, renowned for its expertise in geoscience. This role not only fuelled my professional growth, but also provided a work-family balance that was crucial for raising my 2 young boys.

Describe your first APS role.

I first joined the APS as a Geophysicist at Geoscience Australia where I provided support to multi-disciplinary project teams. My role involved mapping and characterising groundwater systems, contributing to the department’s environmental initiatives and further developing its expertise.

I was in the early to mid-stages of my career, and had gained valuable experience in both academia and industry. I had also completed my PhD. This equipped me with a solid foundation of technical knowledge and skills, and I was ready to take on new challenges.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you?

I like to think of stewardship as the responsibility, management and care of something that has been entrusted to me, in my case data and knowledge. Stewardship comes with the duty and obligation to act as a custodian, ensuring that this data – which is public knowledge – is maintained and used sustainably and ethically.

Why do you feel stewardship is important?

In the context of data and knowledge, stewardship is crucial for public servants. This is because it ensures that information is managed responsibly and used effectively to serve the public interest.

Good stewardship protects the integrity and confidentiality of data, ensuring its legacy. It also promotes transparency and facilitates informed decision-making, which is essential for building trust

and delivering quality public services.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

Despite the clichés attached to this phrase ‘defining moment’, I genuinely believe I’ve had the privilege of standing on the shoulders of some real geophysical giants. They were trailblazers who understood the importance of preserving and making data collected by government agencies available for future generations.

Describe how you act as a steward in your current role.

My team and I are the custodians of some of the largest geophysical datasets in the world. We ensure that their acquisition has high technical standards, and that the data is curated and archived for legacy purposes.

We do this by:

- authoring scientific papers, report writing, and preparing documents for presentation at international and international conferences
- conducting internal and external peer-review, and providing recommendations
- initiating and driving ongoing collaborations between my section and other teams across the agency and externally, with industry and research partners
- liaising, engaging, and collaborating with other internal or external professionals.

In my role I also support and promote innovation across areas including computer code development, data acquisition, land access, data processing and delivery and stakeholder engagement.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

I’ve led the world’s largest airborne electromagnetic survey ever undertaken. This survey is significantly enriching our knowledge of Australia’s subsurface.

The survey is an ambitious endeavour set to canvas the entire continent by capturing high-resolution, multipurpose data, uncovering potential hidden mineral deposits and crucial groundwater resources, and revealing many other unknowns beneath our feet.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role and when you finish your career in the APS?

I would like to be remembered for enabling the acquisition of a multipurpose dataset and its corresponding models that will enable its use for a generation of mineral discoveries, environmental management and conservation purposes.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

I would suggest not taking some things personally and reassuring myself that my technical knowledge and out-of-APS experience are valuable and bring a great deal to the public service.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in, and what were your reasons for applying?

I took part in the 2023–24 cohort of the EL 2 Leadership Program, as I wanted to further develop my capacities in managing, leading and influencing a range of people and groups.

I was moving from a role where I was influencing from a technical perspective, into a role where influence is also achieved by sitting at the table and contributing to decision making.

Describe your program experience.

I personally enjoyed the leadership module, and the material and reflections around the future of APS and integrity. I really engaged with how we as human beings respond when faced with ethical issues and challenges.

I found the talks from invited speakers and the material put together for program participants to be incredibly useful.

How has this experience contributed to your current role?

It was a good ride, and I enjoyed several aspects of the program. It has made me more engaged with my work in the APS and why I do it, which is much more than just individual economic reward.



Ms Er Tian Sim

APS Graduate Development Program

‘Stewardship means reflecting upon the broader impacts of your work.

It means being hopeful and striving towards making a positive impact.’

Role	APS Graduate
Agency	Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)
Location	Canberra/Ngunnawal Country, Australian Capital Territory

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS?

In my third year of university, I wanted to gain some ‘real’ work experience. I joined Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) for a 6-month internship in the Skills Group Program and Reporting Office. The broad exposure from this experience sparked my curiosity in other opportunities and areas of work across the APS.

I started the APS Graduate Development Program at the APSC a few months after graduating with a Bachelor of Politics, Philosophy and Economics, and a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Psychology from the Australian National University. While I thought about moving home to Perth, I wanted to explore what Canberra could offer me professionally.

Describe your current role as an APS graduate.

During my first 6-month rotation, I worked across the trust and transparency, and economic analysis teams in the People Insights branch. I was involved in a range of projects including engaging agencies on how to strengthen transparency, survey design and analysis, and evaluating strategies and programs.

I’m currently completing my second 6-month rotation with the Talent Management team. My role includes supporting the establishment of a Senior Executive Service (SES) Induction Program for newly promoted SES leaders. I’m also supporting the design, implementation and evaluation of the First Nations EL 2 (Bulabul) and SES (Yawarra) leadership development pilot programs.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you, and why do you feel it's important?

For me, stewardship boils down to being thoughtful and considerate.

It means reflecting on the broader impacts of your work, such as what is happening across the system and what will this look like in future. It means being hopeful about progress and striving to make a positive impact, whether this is uplifting others or leaving things in a better state than when you found them.

I think stewardship may not appear as 'big' or 'visible' as leadership. It's often not one big action, but a series of smaller things that happen quietly in the background.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

My understanding of stewardship shifts every time it comes up in conversation or is spoken about at an event. However, one moment provided me with clarity on what stewardship looks like in practice.

In a meeting with my colleagues, they discussed how stewardship is inherent in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. It has been much easier for me to consider 'stewardship' alongside 'custodianship', and how Indigenous Australians have been looking after the land and passing down their stories for thousands of years.

Describe how you 'act as a steward' in your current role.

Given the length of my graduate rotations, I'm particularly cognisant of the temporal aspect of stewardship – how to preserve what is good, while thinking about how to make it better.

For example, in trust and transparency, my whole team constantly considered the questions we asked in the Survey of Trust in Australian public services. We grappled deeply with how certain words might be interpreted and whether the questions asked what we wanted them to ask. We debated any changes we wanted to make, as it would break trend data and render past data incomparable.

In the area of talent management, the pilot programs I'm supporting complement the SES100 initiative. Together, they strengthen the representation of First Nations leaders in the APS. Our work contributes to building a pipeline to ensure that First Nations leaders are involved in decision-making and that decision-making at the high level incorporates diverse perspectives.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

As part of the Australian National Internships Program, I conducted a literature review for ACT Health in 2022 on universal meal programs and their effects on socioeconomic disparities in nutritional intake, as well as student wellbeing and academic outcomes.

I produced a 4,000-word report to support project planning and presented my key insights to a dozen representatives across ACT Health and the ACT Education Directorate.

Recently, I was pleasantly surprised to find out that the ACT Government has rolled out a Meals in Schools pilot program across 5 schools.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role at the APSC?

The core focus of the APSC is the people who work in the public service. I think working here has emphasised the importance of placing people at the centre of what I do.

When I complete the APS Graduate Development Program, I hope I will have made a positive impact within the branches where I completed my rotations. I hope I've been able to support my team members, exchange knowledge and insights, and foster an environment that people are happy to work in.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

Two pieces of advice that have been given to me resonate:

1. Do not discount yourself because of your inexperience or your age. Your contributions are equally valuable.
2. Build upon your skills, not only through professional experiences, but by embodying confidence and owning it.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in, and why did you apply?

After my internship at DEWR, I wanted to develop a deeper and broader understanding of how the public service operates at the federal government level. I applied for the APS Graduate Development Program through the generalist stream and was lucky enough to be placed in my first preference, APSC.

Describe your program experience.

I've enjoyed completing the online learning modules component of the APS Academy Graduate Development Program. Some modules, like effective writing and using data, have been directly relevant to my day-to-day work and have provided helpful tips and tricks. Other modules have helped me learn more about the other kinds of work within the APS, such as administrative decision-making and organisational change management.

I've also liked attending the workshops, as listening to the experiences of the guest speakers contextualised different concepts and provided a practical lens to my learning.

How has this experience contributed to your professional or learning development?

As a Graduate, I've been provided with an incredible amount of support. Everyone has been very generous with their time and knowledge.

I was also able to secure an opportunity to shadow my Deputy Commissioner for a day. It was incredible to get a glimpse into the strategic thinking and collaboration at that level, and how it links to and builds upon what we do at a branch level.



Dr Lisa Conway

The Sir Roland Wilson Pat Turner Scholarship Program (PhD scholarship)

‘Stewardship is about making sure we do the right things, for the right reasons.

We are in a position of trust. Our role is to improve outcomes for the people that live in this country.’

Role	Chair of the APS Indigenous Senior Executive Service (SES) Network & Assistant Secretary, First Nations Employment Policy and Programs Branch
Agency	Employment and Workplace Relations
Location	Mount Duneed/Wadawurrung Country, Victoria

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS?

I wanted job security in a role that made a difference. I had completed a brief student social worker placement at Centrelink and thought I’d enjoy working there, so I applied for a role.

At what stage of your career journey were you?

I was a Centrelink customer who had only ever worked in retail jobs. Being a single mum, retail was not a good job as I was always asked to work on weekends and at night. I had just started studying social work also and was interested in helping people move out of generational poverty (which was my whole family at that time).

Describe your first APS role.

I joined Centrelink as an APS 3 customer service adviser. I was working on the front counter and processing income support claims. Having fled a domestic violence relationship, I was homeless for the first few weeks of the job. I was living in my car with my children and waiting for a few government payslips (and pays) so I could finally secure housing.

It was a hard time but being surrounded by supportive team mates who treated me with respect, and going into work each day felt like a break from the chaos around me outside of work.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you?

Stewardship is about making sure we do the right things, for the right reasons. As public servants, we are in a position of trust. Our role is to improve outcomes for the people who live in this country.

It's about making sure we always think about the people that are impacted by the policies and programs we design and deliver, and keep them at the centre of our thoughts in all that we do.

Why do you feel stewardship is important?

Stewardship complements First Nations values of custodianship, reciprocity and relationality. Our ancestors have cared for Country for thousands of years, caring not just for the current generation but future generations as well. This requires caring and connection to all parts that make up the ecosystem, and recognising that no single part is more important than another. We all have a role in the health of our nation. Caring for the Country that cares for us.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

I was part of the inaugural Emerging Indigenous Leadership Program where I had the opportunity for many yarns with Gunditjimara man Professor Mark Rose.

Uncle Mark helped me understand my 'ancestral mandate'. This was about using my unique and privileged position in government to create a space for First Nations peoples to be heard on the things that impact them. To act as a translator between the 2 worlds. This helped give me purpose and confidence in being my authentic self at work.

Describe how you act as a steward in your current role.

In my current role, I provide frank and fearless feedback on the impacts of policy on First Nations peoples. I provide views of how deeply Mob can be impacted, challenge the status quo, and encourage others to think outside the square and do things in more culturally responsive ways.

I also play a role in supporting and developing other First Nations staff, knowing my ancestors want me to always reach back and bring them along with me. I only ever ask of those I mentor to do the same for others behind them.

I nominated to be Chair of the Indigenous SES Network because I could see that by harnessing the power of a united First Nations leadership network, there is opportunity to drive and influence real transformational change.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

I designed and delivered the cultural responsiveness training for social work practice that has become mandatory for all social workers at Human Services (now Services Australia).

It truly drove my passion to think bigger about how I could have a broader influence on improving outcomes for Mob, instead of working one on one with First Nations service-users.

This led to me completing a PhD exploring how to uplift the cultural capability of the APS.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role, and when you finish your career in the APS?

I hope to achieve safer workplace environments for First Nations peoples, wherever in Australia they may work.

I also want to play my role in developing the talents of emerging First Nations leaders, so that we can continue to broaden our influence over policy design and implementation.

My role is never to create big shoes to fill, but to clear a path making it easier for other Mob to follow.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

Life's a marathon, not a sprint. There's a lot of work to do in the First Nations space, but it can't all be done in a day, and you may get more knockdowns than wins.

The important thing is to take care of yourself and just keep moving forward, just like our Old People have done before us.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in, and why did you apply?

I participated in the Sir Roland Wilson Pat Turner (PhD) Scholarship Program from 2020 to 2023.

I could often see with my Blak lens the institutional whiteness within the APS that impeded our ability to be culturally responsive. It was hard, though, to have this knowledge and view validated.

I sought to complete a PhD so I could provide evidence of this in a way that would be valued by our dominant cultural group.

I was feeling stagnant in my role. I was often acting as an EL 2, but when permanent positions became available, they were only ever listed in Canberra. I knew to succeed I needed to remain in my regional community. Being there keeps me grounded, and my responsibilities there are important to me.

Describe your program experience.

My experience as a Pat Turner Scholar was incredible. I was suddenly exposed to a broad range of senior public servant leaders and academics, and quality coaching and training.

A highlight was travelling to Canada for 7 weeks, staying with a Gitxsan Chief, and working with Employment Services Canada. While there, I even got to meet Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

I found it challenging to study initially, as I was used to the fast pace of my public service roles where I juggled many balls in the air at once and worked to tight deadlines. Suddenly, I had a deadline that was 3 years away and only myself to hold me accountable. But over time I grew to truly appreciate the importance of allowing yourself to pause, take a breath, and reflect deeply on some wicked policy problems.

Doing my PhD taught me how to think and to realise the importance of spending the time upfront to define the problem we're trying to solve. I find I'm now more reflective and strategic than I ever was. I have also grown immensely and have more confidence than I had before taking on the program.

How has this experience contributed to your current role?

I was promoted to the Senior Executive Service halfway through my PhD. I now have a broad network of fellow Sir Roland Wilson Scholars and Pat Turner Scholars (who I affectionately call TeamPat).

I use this network for support, as a sounding board, and for smashing down silos across the APS.



Mr Sean Fitzpatrick

Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1
Leadership Program

‘Stewardship is important for setting the standard regarding culture.

When new recruits to the APS see others displaying stewardship, they will be more likely to adopt this value for themselves.’

Role	Branch Manager, Scheme Payments Transformation
Agency	National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
Location	Adelaide/Tandanya, South Australia

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS?

After a long career in commercial roles and some experience in state government, I was looking for an opportunity to provide service towards a broader purpose, or mission, rather than just delivering shareholder value.

An opportunity came up at the NDIA in a finance role in 2018. It was a young, growing agency with a mission of improving the lives of people with disability, and it was just what I was looking for.

I have been in the NDIA finance division ever since, seeing the combined NDIA and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) grow from a $6 billion program in 2017–18 to a $44 billion program in 2023–24.

At what stage of your career journey were you?

I was mid-journey in my career, with 23 years’ experience since starting as an audit graduate at Deloitte Australia in 1996 and having been in executive roles in the commercial sector for some time.

I had significant experience in accounting, procurement, and project and general management at that point, and was looking for an opportunity to put those skills to good use in a role with a broader purpose.

Describe your first APS role.

My first role was Branch Manager Finance Business Partnering, at the NDIA, which also had responsibility for internal budgets. It was a new role, established to help the business within a new agency to make strategic use of its fast-growing budget. It was a great role to start off in as it not only enabled me to make use of my finance skills, but also to develop my stakeholder engagement skills to get to know people across the business.

This role was soon absorbed into a broader role as Branch Manager Finance, where I had responsibility for all aspects of finance. This role was both very challenging due to its breadth of responsibility but it was also very rewarding. In particular, the engagement with other APS agencies outside of the NDIA, enabled me to gain an understanding of, and establish relationships within, the broader public sector.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you?

To me, stewardship is helping to safeguard and enhance the Australian economy and society, while looking after the people doing that work and growing the capability to deliver strategic reform.

Day-to-day, this is about keeping what's working well and challenging and refining what's not working as well. It's also about building and maintaining high-performing teams and establishing and delivering programs, projects and initiatives that improve the way the public service works.

Stewardship is also about embedding, upholding and promoting the APS Values of impartiality, commitment to service, accountability, respect and ethical conduct. In addition, our values at the NDIA also include valuing People, growing together, aiming higher and taking care.

Why do you feel stewardship is important?

Stewardship is important as it provides a guiding principle that helps guide decisions when those decisions are not obvious or clear cut. This can be when a decision involves a trade-off between doing something that might be expedient in the short term versus something that has greater integrity or long-term value. Without this guiding principle, the expedient option may be more likely to take precedence.

It's also important for setting the standard regarding culture. When new recruits to the APS see other public servants displaying stewardship, they will be more likely to adopt this value themselves, further embedding the culture of stewardship in the APS as a whole.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

Not particularly. It was clear when I first joined the APS that the culture was different from the corporate world. The guiding principle of shareholder value had been replaced by the mission of improving the lives of people with disability and supported by the NDIA and APS Values. I had seen this mission-based approach in stints in state government, but at the NDIA it was particularly strong due to our clear mission, which was a powerful cultural alignment mechanism.

Describe how you act as a steward in your current role.

My stewardship roles include:

- sharing my knowledge from nearly 30 years of experience, with my team and my colleagues
- supporting my team to grow capability to meet new challenges, encouraging professional development and on-the-job training opportunities
- enabling my team to execute projects to uplift systems and deliver a great payment experience for NDIA staff and NDIS providers and participants.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

Delivering 3 annual cycles of financial statements and budgets at the NDIA while we grew from an $11 billion program in 2018–19 to a $30 billion program in 2021–22, was a rewarding experience.

It was also a ‘baptism by fire’ with APS finance processes. This set me up to be able to handle any challenge that APS Reform throws at me. Delivering several recent payment system uplift projects has also been very rewarding and this challenge continues.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role, and when you finish your career in the APS?

The legacy I hope to leave in my current role is an NDIS payments ecosystem that:

- is easy and intuitive to use for all who interact with it (participants, providers and staff)
- pays for valid supports quickly and seamlessly
- provides real time visibility and data on all transactions for those who need it, to help better deliver the NDIS.

By the end of my career in the APS I hope to achieve similar transformations of other systems, processes or policy areas that deliver value to the public service, the Australian people and to Australia’s economy.

I’m always looking forward to the next challenge that will enable me to put my skills to use in advancing our national interest.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

Think about making the jump into the public service earlier. I don’t regret my time in the commercial sector, but I could have potentially delivered more value in the public service for a longer period. Do more self-development earlier. I’m enjoying doing a Master of Economics at present, but I could have looked at doing this earlier to gain more value out of it.

Push personal growth boundaries more. I have often jumped into new roles that I didn’t know much about, but that’s where I have learned the most. I could have done more of this to expand my learning opportunities.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in, and why did you apply?

I took part in the SES Band 1 Leadership Program over the course of 6 months from November 2023 to February 2024.

I was just over 5 years into my APS career and, as an experienced leader, I jumped at the chance to learn some new leadership material, and test and refine some of my existing approaches and those I’d previously encountered.

I was grateful to take part in the first cohort since the COVID pandemic, to participate in person and meet 14 other SES colleagues and 2 great instructors. Spending 6 intense days together enabled us to form strong bonds that continue to serve us well to this day. I built a new network of SES colleagues who I can now call on for advice beyond my usual networks within the NDIA.

Describe your program experience.

My program experience was a good one. Key challenges included going deep into our ‘discomfort zones’ in examining the types of leaders we are, and how to make the transition to the leaders we want to be, and applying techniques around having challenging leadership conversations through structured conversations with our peers.

We also had the opportunity to work in smaller groups of 5 people on a project that helped us consolidate our learnings. My group chose ‘Closing the Gap’ as our topic and it turned out to be a rich area of learning, where there is much to be done within the APS, and it enabled us to form further bonds with our project team mates.

How has this experience contributed to your current role?

The experience has helped me clarify my role. I’ll be able to have more impact through being a good leader to my team, and providing them with opportunities to grow as leaders themselves.

I’ve come away with a renewed understanding of my purpose in the APS. My responsibility as a leader is not necessarily about delivering specific outcomes myself (for example, payment systems uplifts) but creating opportunities for my team to do work that inspires them, deliver what they’re capable of and create the right conditions for them to thrive in doing so.

This requires a slightly different mindset, and it benefits from applying some of the leadership practices I learned (or re-learned) on the course.

I’m always in need of continuous improvement, but it was great to have this opportunity at a time when both the APS and the NDIA are undergoing significant reform and when good leadership is critical to success.



Ms Jade Carson

Women in Executive Mentoring Program (WiTEM)

‘Stewardship to me is being responsible for preserving what came before us.

By upholding values, ethics and equity, cultivating for the next generation and pushing for a positive future direction.’

Role	Chief Information Officer
Agency	National Gallery of Australia
Location	Canberra/Ngunnawal Country, Australian Capital Territory

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS?

I joined the public service as a fresh-faced 21 year old at the beginning of my career journey, as I wanted a job in which I could contribute positively to my community.

Describe your first APS role.

I started my career in 1999 as a trainee in the Australian Customs Service, just before the 2000 Sydney Olympics. My first role was as a frontline officer in South Australia, and it involved a year’s worth of training and rotations. I found myself at the airport, on the wharf and on ships inspecting cargo containers, processing passengers, export processing, conducting investigations and doing administration, all to find out what I was best suited to.

In this first year I discovered I love understanding the flow of logistics, exports, legislation, and seeing where I could make things better by fixing business processes and digital systems.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you, and why do you feel it's important?

Stewardship to me is being responsible for preserving what came before us, by upholding values, ethics and equity, cultivating for the next generation and pushing for a positive future direction, even if it's uncomfortable or challenging.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

There have been many people in the APS who have influenced my thinking and experience of stewardship. From the departmental secretary who started at 14 years old and their commitment to the service took them all the way to being the leader of the organisation, to another departmental secretary who took the bus to work every day with the rest of us. These leaders taught me about individual commitment, inclusion and following through on your beliefs.

Most importantly, early in my public service career, many of my trainers, managers and colleagues who worked on the front line - in legislation, policy and technology – taught me that stewardship is not an individual sport, it's a shared commitment to a shared vision, and it is embodied by people at every level of an organisation and throughout the community.

Describe how you act as a steward in your current role.

In my current role at the National Gallery of Australia, I am charged with building a better and lasting digital ecosystem and lifting the digital records, information and data capability to preserve one of the nation's key cultural institution's information for future generations. And also, to ensure that it becomes more and more accessible and enduring for all Australians to appreciate.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

I'm most proud of my contribution to *Learning from Failure: Why large government policy initiatives have gone so badly wrong in the past and how the chances of success in the future can be improved*. This review was led by Peter Shergold AC, and was commissioned after the Royal Commission into the Home Insulation Program.

It gave me an opportunity to look at the fundamental cultural and governance patterns of the public sector and see where systematic and cultural improvements could make initiatives work better for Australians. In many ways, it was exactly the type of work that inspired me when I was climbing into cargo boxes as a fresh-faced trainee and thinking about how processes at the border could work better – just with a much bigger scope.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role and when you finish your career in the APS?

I'm a firm believer that we are responsible for leaving things better than when we found them, and I hope to leave things better than I found them.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

I would tell my younger self to listen more and believe in myself.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in?

I've participated in WiTEM as both a mentee back in 2018, and now more recently as a mentor.

Why did you decide to participate in the program?

I was given the opportunity to participate in WiTEM as a mentee by my Chief Information Officer who saw potential in me. I had undertaken a career change from public sector programs and delivery into a technology career, and I wanted to increase the number of women working in technical data teams.

As a mentor in WiTEM, my passion is to continue supporting women to achieve their career goals in digital and technology. It's about giving back as a senior public servant and helping other women on their technology leadership journey. Equitable female representation in STEM is such an important ingredient to creating equitable and reflective digital tools in the public sector, and the community more broadly.

Describe your program experience.

The program highlights for me are the people I have met – both mentors and mentees – and the ongoing relationships and learnings we get from others.

WiTEM has become an enduring program that has gone from strength to strength under the guidance of dedicated leaders. It's a stand-out example of stewardship, and I'm very grateful and proud to have had the opportunity to participate as a mentor and mentee.

I'm extremely happy to see that the program has grown its female mentor cohort with 70% of mentors being women. I'm energised to continue my ongoing support and participation in the program to keep up this positive momentum, as it directly contributes to my aspiration to get more women into technology and data roles in the public service.

How has this experience contributed to your current role?

Stewarding our cultural heritage and shining a light on diversity and inclusion are core values at the National Gallery of Australia. This aligns with my personal values and allows me to bring my flavour to demonstrating how equity is also important at the intersection of technology and art.



Dr Sandra Cuthbert

Senior Executive Stewardship Program

‘Stewardship means understanding the impacts of your decisions, the policies being developed, and how they will affect Australians now and into the future.

This involves looking at the problem, and various potential solutions, from numerous viewpoints.’

Role	Chief Executive Officer
Agency	Food Standards Australia New Zealand
Location	Canberra/Ngunnawal Country, Australian Capital Territory

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS and at what stage of your career journey were you?

The impact of a career in the APS is far-reaching and impactful, and I wanted to be part of contributing to improving the everyday lives of Australians.

I had been working as a veterinarian and loved helping animals each day. A few years into practice, I realised I could use my skills to instead contribute to policies that benefit the country.

Describe your first APS role.

I joined Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as a Senior Veterinarian.

In response to the 2007 equine influenza outbreak, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry engaged more veterinarians to tackle the problem and minimise the likelihood of it happening again. My role was to manage biosecurity risks associated with various imported animals and animal products.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you?

Stewardship means understanding the impacts of your decisions, the policies being developed, and how they will affect Australians now and into the future. This involves looking at the problem, and potential solutions from numerous viewpoints – especially ensuring that viewpoints from other portfolios are considered and understood.

Why do you feel stewardship is important?

Thinking through problems from different vantage points helps ensure solutions are robust. Diversity of views supports the development of sound advice, and implementing well-considered solutions builds trust.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

I gained insights into stewardship during a crisis where numerous people were in hospitals across the country, and case numbers were increasing.

Different stakeholders wanted to tackle the problem in vastly different ways, each to serve a purpose from their perspective. Industry had different views to those working in enforcement agencies, who had different views to health officers.

Working together to understand the challenges and benefits of each approach, for each group, was vital in finding a solution that resolved the core issue while minimising negative repercussions.

Within days of this collaborative approach, new cases ceased and the issue was resolved. Thankfully everyone fully recovered, and the insights of early collaboration have stayed with me.

Describe how you act as a steward in your current role.

My current role relates to food. The APS is involved in numerous food-related activities including developing food standards, importing and exporting food, developing nutrition guidelines, tackling food waste, supporting infrastructure to deliver food to remote communities, and managing pesticides and chemical use.

To act out stewardship, I keep connected to colleagues across the public service and share information with those colleagues.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

Helping others realise they can achieve more than they thought possible by believing in themselves and by thinking through problems differently.

Building up others to lead and contribute in bigger ways than they thought was possible is something I hope to leave from my time working in the APS.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

Understand your core values. If you know yourself deeply, when a person or group frustrates you, you're able to identify which of your core values is being challenged by that engagement.

Once you understand that, you realise that the frustration has nothing to do with the other person and everything to do with your worldview. This is powerful in helping you step back and recalibrate to see the issue from a broader, more diverse perspective. This, in turn, supports you to find a better outcome.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in, and why did you apply?

I participated in the Senior Executive Stewardship Program from 2022 to 2023.

I had only recently been appointed as an agency head when this Band 3 Stewardship Program was announced. I saw it as a great opportunity to continue to make new connections and get to know my colleagues better. It was a great opportunity to learn what they were focusing on and work together to benefit the public service.

Describe your program experience.

A highlight of the program for me is the realisation that even if you're in a different portfolio from others in the APS, we're all working through very similar challenges.

Coming together can save a lot of time and produce better outcomes. The constant challenge is to find the time to participate in these important courses. There is always a concern that work is piling up, but stepping outside of the day-to-day to gain a fresh perspective and find colleagues going through similar challenges, makes it worthwhile.

How has this experience contributed to your current role?

I'm more aware of other work across the APS. I'm more connected and confident in knowing who to reach out to when working through issues.



Darryl Rae

APS Graduate Development Program

‘Stewardship is the careful management of our services and how we deliver them to the Australian people. It should be at the fundamental core of everything that we do as proud public sector professionals.

It is important as it outlines our integrity and holds us accountable for our actions.’

Role	Acting Assistant Director, Employment, Projects and Governance, Transition Branch
Agency	Veterans’ Affairs
Location	Brisbane/Mianjin, Queensland

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS and at what stage of your career journey were you?

I rejoined the APS as a mature graduate in 2023, having left my previous role in government to return home to Queensland in 2018 for cultural reasons. During that time, I worked on a contract basis with the Queensland Government in Premier and Cabinet while completing a double master’s degree and a graduate certificate.

I met several APS employees during my university studies who influenced my decision to rejoin the APS. As a mature graduate, I also wanted the opportunity to combine the knowledge and skills I had obtained previously in my career with the new skills I was learning and apply them in new challenges serving the Australian community.

Describe your first APS role.

I first joined the APS working as an Advisor at Prime Minister and Cabinet. During my time there, I undertook several roles within the Indigenous Affairs Group. I worked across community engagement and the development of policies and programs to improve quality-of-life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

My in-depth knowledge around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander epistemologies, cultures and practices was fundamental in successfully developing and implementing these policies and programs. I also established and maintained effective working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, which at the time was an area within the APS that needed a lot of work and care.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you, and why do you feel it's important?

To me, stewardship is the careful management of public services and how we deliver them to the Australian people. This includes the way we act and how we present ourselves professionally and, in turn, how this impacts on the way the Australian people perceive us in the work we do to deliver quality outcomes.

I feel stewardship is important as it outlines our integrity and holds us, as public servants, accountable for our actions. This is reflected in our APS Values and Code of Conduct. These should be at the fundamental core of everything we do as proud public sector professionals.

I find applying these principles of stewardship in my daily duties helps me deliver better outcomes for both internal and external clients.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

During the APS Graduate Program, I was asked to represent my agency in an advisory committee run by the APS Commissioner Dr Gordon de Brouwer.

I felt the Commissioner heard the collective voice of committee participants, and this cemented my already strong belief that we in the public sector can make real change and achieve excellence in everything that we do.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

Being awarded the National Emergency Medal in 2014 for assisting people who were impacted by natural disasters.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role and when you finish your career in the APS?

I hope to leave an in-depth understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and how this knowledge can be incorporated into the work that my department and the broader APS deliver to positively impact the Australian community in the future.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

That learning is an ongoing journey and one that is never finished.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in, and why did you apply?

Working in the Queensland Government and with Premier and Cabinet provided me with great community and industry connections. However, after working on a contract basis while completing my studies, I was looking to move into a permanent position and decided to apply for the APS Graduate Program.

I started the program in 2023, working at the Australian Digital Health Agency, and then moved Veterans' Affairs in early 2024.

Describe your program experience and how it has contributed to your current role.

The APS Graduate Program prepares participants for a successful career in the APS. It provides the foundational skills and knowledge required, along with support to further build on the learnings and experiences provided throughout the program.

It's also a great opportunity to develop meaningful connections with others in the program cohort. This can enhance and help you grow in your APS career. I continue to connect with other participants regularly, which gives me an understanding of the work being carried out service-wide, particularly around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.

I was surprised to connect with several other mature graduates in the APS Graduate Program. Like myself, these people bring with them different lived experiences and skills, as well as a large professional network.

Mature graduates also contribute to the diversity of the APS and the program. Sharing their unique perspectives and experiences is an attribute that is widely valued across the public sector.



Ms Reita Holmes

Delivering Great Policy (DGP)

*'*Servant leadership speaks to me, and stewardship is a key element of it.

Personally, the term "stewardship" is a way of approaching work that also reflects my own values of empathy, understanding, empowerment and putting others first.'

Role	Assistant Director, Adult and Family Support Programs
Agency	Social Services
Location	Canberra/Ngunnawal Country, Australian Capital Territory

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS, and what was your first role?

Joining the APS was not my deliberate plan. However, I found work that looked interesting and allowed me to use my diverse experiences and skills in one place.

In my first role at the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), I coordinated the Active After-school Communities program at a regional level. The program was delivered through a cluster of local primary schools, Out of School Hours Care Services and local community organisations.

The day-to-day duties of the role included grant management, coach education and community outreach. Stakeholder engagement was a key component, and I established and maintained relationships with federal parliamentarians, local government bodies, state and local sporting bodies, community organisations, and local media.

At what stage of your career journey were you?

Technically, I was mid-career and had recently returned from the United States, where alongside completing my Masters I worked in the university's Collegiate Athletics field hockey program.

I had worked in a number of positions across the education and sport sectors (as a teacher, university lecturer and in sport development), and I had taught for 3 years at an independent school before moving to the United States.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you?

I support a systems approach to stewardship, in particular for public policy outcomes. This involves information sharing and cooperation across multiple levels and jurisdictions to achieve desired outcomes.

Servant leadership speaks to me, and stewardship is a key element of it. Personally, the term ‘stewardship’ is a way of approaching work that also reflects my values of empathy, understanding, empowerment and putting others first.

Stewardship also means sustainability and it is as important as viability, where our purpose is focused on continuous improvement so we leave things better, or better placed, than we found them.

Why do you feel stewardship is important?

Stewardship is not just a role or position of responsibility for an individual. It is also a collective call to action which involves going beyond the status quo and building on what is already happening.

Stewardship seems more meaningful when I see collaborative work being done across the APS, sectors and systems. This work is collectively building growth, removing barriers by empowering others, and developing sustainable solutions.

I think it is important to have stewardship front of mind in the public service, as we provide the safety net so others can take a leap forward and make things happen that improve the lives of Australians.

Describe how you ‘act as a steward’ in your current role.

I try to act as a steward through my behaviours and approach to work. I do this by engaging in frank and fearless discussion, collaborating to reach solutions, sharing lessons learned, exchanging innovative ideas, and creating avenues for emergence.

I support APS Craft by taking a proactive role in building capabilities to achieve better outcomes through policy development and program delivery.

This includes respectfully challenging the status quo and placing a strategic lens around who we are designing programs and policies for, and the outcomes they hope to achieve.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

During my time with the ASC, I had an amazing opportunity to participate as part of the Pacific Junior Sport Program in Fiji.

I facilitated workshops for teachers and teacher’s aides from special schools across Fiji, based on the Play for Life kit from the Active After-school Communities program. I also mentored local and in-country development staff from the Fijian Paralympic Committee (FPC).

As a result of our work, the FPC and special schools in Fiji adopted the Play for Life kit as their curriculum for delivering sport and physical education in special schools. This contributed to the inclusion of students and special schools in mainstream school activities, and broader acceptance in the wider community.

It was also meaningful on a personal level because it was a way of connecting with my Pacific Islander heritage and learning more about Pasifika cultures.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role?

I hope that my legacy is based on the values I demonstrate through my ways of working. When we aim to bring our best selves to each day, we also bring out the best in others.

All contributions, big or small, can lead to positive change and impact. This could be for one person, process or place, or at a program level. It helps to leave things better than how you found them.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

I would tell my younger self to take advantage of every opportunity that is offered to you and seek out opportunities to do work you are passionate about.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in?

As a Policy Master, I present or guest speak at the APS Academy DGP training courses. The training relies heavily on the practitioner or policy experts (Policy Masters) sharing their policy stories and real-world examples to frame the training.

Due to my experience and skills in design and implementation, I often deliver the course modules aligned with design thinking, systems thinking and business analysis, including many of the concepts and tools I frequently use in my work.

While Policy Masters typically present at training courses for their home agency, I have found it invaluable to attend courses for other agencies or those delivered in a multi-agency format. Each time I've had the opportunity to present for other APS agencies, I've learned something new about the public service and the important stewardship role we play.

What were the reasons you chose to contribute to the program?

Initially, I chose to contribute because the program aligned so closely with my role in policy design and program development, our team values and what we were delivering at the time.

After completing the Policy Master training, I discovered the value of the program in building capacity across the APS in person-centred, outcomes-focused and systems-oriented design in the early stages of policy or program development.

Describe your program experience and how it has contributed to your professional development.

I have really enjoyed the opportunities that DGP has given me to learn about the work and individual approaches other APS agencies take in delivering policy advice, program development and implementation.

My Policy Master experience has been symbiotic of my APS roles, with each contributing to the policy stories and examples I share with course participants.

One of the biggest challenges highlighted through the DGP courses is balancing time pressures with prioritising space to think through and document how something is supposed to work, why it will work and who will benefit from it. It is important to determine the conditions required for success before providing advice or starting implementation. Many of my stories as a Policy Master share this common experience and aim to help other APS staff develop skills and 'hacks' to navigate these challenges.

DGP is a now a core element of foundational learning for the APS and provides a framework that helps address the specific pressures and challenges of working in the sector. It provides guidance on ways of working, collaboration and engagement.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my managers and colleagues for supporting my involvement in DGP as a Policy Master and helping to build staff capability within the APS.



Ms Tanya Martin

APS Graduate Development Program

‘Stewardship is critical in the public service. Our resources come from public funding, and our services are provided for the public.

We have a responsibility to appropriately manage our resources and ensure our services meet the public’s needs, both now and into the future.’

Role	APS Graduate
Agency	Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA)
Location	Wodonga/Dhudhuroa Country, Victoria

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS?

I’m at the beginning of a new career with the APS and am currently participating in the 2024 APS Graduate Development Program. This is a career change for me. My previous career was in a different field in the state-based public service for almost 20 years. I hope to have just as long a career with the APS.

I wanted to see if I could gain a higher sense of achievement as part of an APS agency with a genuine interest and ability to effect positive changes in environmental management. Despite the complexity and competing priorities the MDBA faces, the expertise and leadership I’ve observed in my short time here have been encouraging and inspiring.

Describe your APS role.

I’m employed as a Graduate with the MDBA, and have completed 2 of the 3 graduate placements so far, gaining exposure to the MDBA’s management of the River Murray and regulatory design in the Basin Plan Review. At the end of 2024, I’ll be placed in a position within the MDBA.

I joined the MDBA at an exciting and pivotal time, with work underway to review the first Basin Plan to conclude in 2026. Joining the Australian Public Service as a graduate allows me to contribute to teams with suitable projects, while gaining a broad understanding of the agency’s work.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you, and why is it important?

This simplified definition of stewardship is one that really resonates with me: ‘*Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care’.* Stewardship is all-encompassing; from the broad set of goals of the organisation that you work for, to the narrower focus of your individual actions and how you use the resources allocated to you.

This definition can also be applied to many other aspects, from material components such as funding, through to abstract concepts such as public trust.

I also think this definition is very fitting for the MDBA, as we've been entrusted with the management of the Basin's water resources. It's critical that we manage these resources carefully and responsibly.

Why do you feel stewardship is important?

Stewardship is critical in the public service. Our resources come from public funding, and our services are provided for the public. If we fail, there's no alternative service or business that can step in.

We have a responsibility to appropriately manage our resources and ensure our services meet the public's needs, both now and into the future. Our resources are finite so we must use them efficiently, and always with a view towards the future impacts of our present decisions.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

I've always believed that as a public servant I should hold my responsibilities in high regard. Since joining the MDBA, the idea of maintaining stewardship into the future has been even further impressed upon me because of our core business: managing the water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Our current Chief Executive, Andrew McConville, promotes this through the MDBA's statement of purpose: '*Rivers, for generations'*. Mr McConville is passionate about encouraging staff to tap into their purpose in their work, and then use this motivation to achieve successful outcomes for the MDBA.

Describe how you act as a steward in your current role.

While I'm new to my current role as a graduate with the APS, I bring prior career experience from a state-based public service that I can still apply.

I hope that as my knowledge and experience grows, I can contribute in more meaningful ways to ensure the water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin continue to be managed in a sustainable way for generations to come.

In my brief time with the MDBA, I've observed my colleagues rising to the challenge of ensuring the Basin Plan remains fit-for-purpose into the future, particularly in a changing climate.

Understanding how these changes will impact on our management of the Basin over the longer term, and adapting our approach, is crucial. The MDBA is also committed to being more transparent and sharing knowledge with the public as the Basin Plan Review progresses.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

I'm proud of the time I spent as a manager of a program in my previous career. The program was for some time plagued with issues due to inadequate staffing. I worked hard to address the deficits and grow it into a functional program that produced significant outcomes for clients.

I'm most proud of my recent career move, where I walked away from a career of almost 20 years after identifying it wasn't what I was passionate about anymore. I worked hard to retrain so I could find a new career in environmental management. I'm also proud to have gained a position in the MDBA with the 2024 Graduate Development Program.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role, and when you finish your career in the APS?

When I finish my placements with the Graduate Program in the MDBA, I hope the legacy I leave is of someone who is committed to learning and becoming a valuable employee. In turn, I hope this opens up more learning and development opportunities for me within the MDBA, and beyond.

When I finish my career in the APS, I hope to retire with a sense of accomplishment; that I made a valuable contribution to environmental management and ensured the ongoing sustainable management of water resources for future generations.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

Stay true to your values and learn from all experiences, whether they're good or bad. Everything you experience is a foundation upon which you will build further knowledge. You'll also be valued for your hard work and integrity.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in, and why did you apply?

When I graduated in 2023 with a Bachelor of Environmental Science, I was entering a new career with no prior work experience. When I saw the advertisement for the APS Graduate Development Program with the MDBA, I thought it would be a great opportunity to gain meaningful experience in the field with a distinguished natural resources management agency, while being paid a reasonable salary.

Describe your program experience.

I've had a great experience with the APS Graduate Development Program to date. I've gained a holistic exposure to the APS, including in areas I wouldn't experience in my current agency.

It can be challenging to complete tasks that are outside my area of knowledge, but I consider it a valuable learning experience. I also gain foundational learning in key areas that are vital to the work of my agency, but not easily quantifiable. This includes in areas such as brief writing, decision making and understanding how the APS must lead change.

Most importantly, I've been able to learn from other APS employees whom I would never normally meet within my own agency. The opportunity to engage in career coaching sessions as part of the program is also excellent.

The key takeaway I've gained from the program is that we are indeed One APS. I've been able to see in my own agency how collaboration and sharing expertise with other government agencies can be valuable in solving problems.

How has this experience contributed to your current role?

Participating in the program has been invaluable in helping to orientate myself as a new employee within the APS. At times, I've even been able to provide insights to my work colleagues about current best practice recommendations and APS resources.



Mr Zack Burton

Developing capability through microcredentials

‘Stewardship is important because it ensures the long-term sustainability of the APS.

It safeguards against short-term thinking and prioritises the welfare of the public we serve.’

Role	Senior Policy Adviser
Agency	Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)
Location	Esperance/Kepa Kurl, Western Australia

Joining the Australian Public Service

Why did you decide to join the APS?

I joined the service because I want to contribute to, and learn from, Australia’s most important public asset: the APS. I believe the APS is our greatest tool for improving the lives of Australians and ensuring our country’s ongoing prosperity.

I’m at the beginning of my APS career, which I hope is a journeyed story filled with happiness, contribution, achievement and knowledge. I hope to continue making a significant impact and using my skills to strengthen our public sector and assist everyday Australians.

Describe your first APS role.

My first role in the APS was as an Adviser in the APS Reform Office within Prime Minister and Cabinet. I was part of a team that worked on improving methods of engagement between Australian businesses and the APS.

Stewardship

What does stewardship mean to you, and why do you feel it’s important?

For me, stewardship is about embodying responsibility, integrity and care when performing my role. It’s also about recognising that the work I do is not just for today, but for future generations.

Stewardship fosters accountability and transparency. It’s about making decisions that reflect the highest standards of ethics and public interest. It demands the responsible use of public resources for the collective good.

Stewardship is important because it ensures the long-term sustainability of the APS. It safeguards against short-term thinking and prioritises the welfare of the public we serve.

Was there a defining moment or person who influenced your thinking on this?

There have been several people that have influenced my understanding around stewardship.

My late father, whom I miss dearly, was a passionate news photographer who believed his role went beyond capturing images. Dad's commitment, accountability and high-quality work reflected his belief in transparency. Dad saw his work as a way to create visibility in areas of public affairs that may have otherwise been missed.

My mother is a long-serving public servant who is passionate about Indigenous Affairs. Her passion has always been about improving outcomes of First Nations Australians, and all Australians, both now and for generations to come.

My manager has an unwavering commitment to stewardship and good governance. This is born from their integrity and understanding of the devastating, real-world effects of poor public administration.

Together, these influences have shaped my understanding of stewardship as both a concept and a practice, rooted in personal responsibility and caring for others.

What professional experiences or achievements are you most proud of?

I'm very proud to have worked in the APS Reform Office, where I spent each day striving to improve and optimise our public services. I'm also proud to now work with a group of passionate, like-minded individuals at the APS Academy. The Academy's learning and development offering supports the APS workforce to build capability and performance.

What is a legacy you hope to leave in your current role and when you finish your career in the APS?

From my current role, I hope to be remembered as someone who effectively contributed to the maturity of the APS Academy by completing their work to a high standard and by being a helpful colleague to engage with.

When I finish my career, I hope my legacy is of an effective, passionate and high-calibre public servant who put in their best shift and positioned the APS to prosper for the future.

What professional advice would you give your younger self?

I would tell my younger self to continue learning from those around you, and be excited and willing to participate. A good public servant is a curious public servant.

APS Academy program participation

Which program have you participated in?

I came over to the APS Academy to work as a project manager on the APS Capability Reinvestment Fund Round 1 project: Developing capability through microcredentials.

My role has been to establish good working relationships with our partners and ensure project goals, milestones and Fund responsibilities are met and delivered in a timely manner.

What were the reasons you chose to join the program?

I chose to join the program as I wanted to continue working towards the development of the APS. I was excited by the prospect of improving industry partnerships with universities and effectively contributing to high-priority capability uplift in the APS.

Describe your program experience.

Throughout our program pilot, I have grown to further appreciate the experience, knowledge and passion it takes to be an expert within a certain field. I've also found that it takes a high level of skill to effectively exercise this expertise.

I've found it highly gratifying to see the genuine capability uplift and learning transfer that has occurred for participants of the program.

I've discovered there are many individuals in the APS who are willing and able to improve its capability across critical areas. However, people need to be offered assured learning opportunities to achieve this.

How has this experience contributed to your current role?

The program has enabled me to strengthen my stakeholder relationship skills through high level engagement with internal and external partners.

Administering the program has made me a stronger public servant who better appreciates the effort, skill and systemic knowledge required to excel in the APS.

Serving the community

The stories in this section have been contributed by Australian Public Service agencies. These agencies responded to an APS-wide callout, held by the Australian Public Service Commission during June and July 2024.

Each story demonstrates the diversity and impact of work being delivered by APS teams.

This year's featured teams are working in sectors including health, energy, infrastructure, sport, regional and community development, and tourism. They are delivering powerful and efficient ways of sharing place-based information, new and improved vital services, projects of national importance and encouraging knowledge-sharing and social inclusion.

APS teams work extensively with non-government organisations, industry groups and research partners to identify and respond to the needs of individuals, communities and businesses. The APS works all over Australia, and across much of the world.

At 30 June 2024, the APS comprised 101 agencies which employ staff under the *Public Service Act 1999*. These agencies undertake policy, operational, regulatory and specialist work.

Agencies range in size from Services Australia with more than 33,000 staff to specialist organisations with less than 10 staff. A full list of APS agencies is available at Appendix 3.

Digital Atlas of Australia

The Digital Atlas of Australia is a ground-breaking geospatial platform that is transforming the way essential data is accessed and used. It is being developed and delivered by Geoscience Australia on behalf of the Australian Government.

By bringing together hundreds of curated, trusted national datasets in a single location, the Digital Atlas provides access to data on Australia's geography, people, economy and the environment. Users can explore, analyse and visualise data by location using interactive maps and tools.

The Digital Atlas is more than just a mapping interface. It is Australia's first Integrated Geospatial Infrastructure that connects data across borders, systems and technologies. The platform also provides a separate, secure environment for authenticated government users, enabling:

- near real-time, cross-agency collaboration for information to be used and shared efficiently
- co-design of geospatial applications using a suite of readily accessible tools and advanced analytical capabilities.



The Digital Atlas of Australia brings together trusted national data in a central platform.

Image: Geosciences Australia

Working together

One collaborative partnership enhancing the Digital Atlas is between Geoscience Australia, Social Services and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This partnership is improving the availability, transparency and use of socio-economic data to inform tailored place-based policies.

This partnership is leveraging the advanced geospatial capabilities in the Digital Atlas. It is helping to inform place-based policy, program and service delivery by improving the availability, transparency and use of socio-economic data.

The expertise and experiences of national geospatial and statistical institutions are being leveraged with the policy responsibilities of the Social Services Portfolio. The partnership has made income support recipient data available in the Digital Atlas, integrating it with demographic and socio-economic information in interactive applications.

Dashboards and interactive maps enable users to explore and analyse income support data at the local level. By integrating data on disability, education, employment, and family support, these tools provide policymakers and stakeholders with crucial insights to inform targeted policy interventions.

Benefits for the community

Data and applications delivered through the Digital Atlas offer benefits for user groups:

- **Policymakers and analysts** can use data and applications to inform and assess policies tailored to the needs and opportunities of specific communities and regions.
- **Researchers and academics** can leverage the latest data and applications for studies on socio-economic and demographic trends.
- **Community groups, media and the general public** can engage with the applications to understand Australia's diverse population and participate in public discussions.

The Digital Atlas has attracted significant attention and has been widely used since its beta release in June 2023 (following its official launch in May 2024).

As of 31 August 2024, more than 170 datasets were available and approximately 59,000 unique users had accessed the platform. More than 700 registered users from 52 Australian Government, and state and territory government, entities were using the secure government environment.

Geoscience Australia continues to work closely with its government partners to connect more data and create interactive maps and tools. This is putting location-based insights at your fingertips.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Welcome to the Digital Atlas of Australia*, Digital Atlas of Australia website, accessed 4 September 2024. digital.atlas.gov.au

Gender Equality Symposium at the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

The Australian Government's Gender Equality Symposium took place in Brisbane in July 2023, on the sidelines of the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023™.

The two-day symposium was co-hosted by Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Women, and the Hon Anika Wells MP, Minister for Sport. The purpose was to demonstrate to the world, Australia's commitment to gender equality, inclusive of women's participation and leadership.

Events included a panel discussion, reverse mentoring workshop, and a 'kick around' with the former Afghan Women's National team. For this, Foreign Minister Penny Wong joined other international leaders to send a strong message about the power of sport to bring people and countries closer together.



Foreign Minister Penny Wong greets the Afghan women's football team.

Image: Foreign Affairs and Trade

Working together

The Symposium was an Australian Government-led program involving political leaders and athletes, as well as industry, academic, cultural and community representatives.

International representatives gathered from across the world, including from the United States, Fiji,

Jamaica, Japan, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, United Kingdom and Vanuatu. FIFA also provided invaluable support.

A Foreign Affairs and Trade Taskforce collaborated with multiple government agencies to plan and deliver the symposium. This included the Office for Sport within Health and Aged Care, Office for Women within Prime Minister and Cabinet, Australian Border Force, Defence, and the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

In addition to the traditional owners of the land on which the symposium was held, the Turrbal and the Yugara people, Australian sporting and community representatives included Football Australia, Swimming Australia, Cricket Australia, United Nations Women Australia, Health and Wellbeing Queensland, and Griffith University.

Benefits for the community

The symposium promoted the national and global importance of gender equality, for both individual and collective wellbeing. This message was amplified through Australia's overseas diplomatic network through traditional and social media.

A reverse mentoring workshop was delivered in partnership with the Sports Diplomacy Alliance. Senior leaders joined the diverse group of athletes and para-athletes from Australia and the Pacific region, to hear their ideas on how to address the challenges women and girls face in sport.

Participants from different sectors shared insightful contributions on the relevance of gender equality, diversity and inclusion to sport, to communities and broader national interests linked to peace and prosperity.

Find out more

Minister for Foreign Affairs (2023) *Global leaders unite for Gender Equality*, Foreign Minister's website, accessed 6 September 2024. www.foreignminister.gov.au/minister/penny-wong/media-release/global-leaders-unite-gender-equality

Sports Diplomacy Alliance (2023) *FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 – Reverse Mentoring Workshop & Gender Equality Symposium*, Sports Diplomacy Alliance website, accessed 6 September 2024. www.sportsdiplomacy.com/works/fifa-womens-world-cup-2023-reverse-mentoring-workshop-gender-equality-symposium

Snowy 2.0 – delivering next generation renewable energy

Snowy 2.0 is the largest committed renewable energy project in Australia. It will underpin the nation's secure and stable transition to a low-carbon emissions future by providing on-demand energy and large-scale renewable energy storage.

The pumped-hydro project is a major expansion of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, linking 2 existing reservoirs (Tantangara and Talbingo) with 27 km of tunnels and a new pumped-hydro power station to be located 800 metres underground.

Located in the heart of Kosciuszko National Park, water will be recycled between the upper reservoir (Tantangara) and lower reservoir (Talbingo) by the same turbines that can pump the water in the opposite direction.

This means the same water can be used to generate power more than once. It also means that flexible, on-demand power can be provided while reusing or recycling the water in a closed loop.

The first power is expected to be generated from Snowy 2.0 in 2027, with commercial operation expected to be achieved by 2028.



The Finance Snowy Hydro Shareholder team inspecting a tunnel for the Snowy 2.0 project.

Image: Finance

Working together

Finance supports the Australian Government's renewable energy commitments and targets by ensuring that government investments are effectively managed and delivered. This supports Australia's successful transition to renewable and green sources of electricity.

Finance oversees the Snowy 2.0 project in collaboration with colleagues at the Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water which leads the environment, water and energy policy aspects.

A fully Australian-owned company, Snowy Hydro Limited is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001*. It operates and maintains the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme. Snowy Hydro started the Snowy 2.0 project in 2019.

Snowy Hydro manages 6,400 hectares of Kosciuszko National Park and around 24,000 hectares of freehold land. In addition to its energy operations, Snowy Hydro provides critical water services to capture, store and divert water for downstream users, including irrigators and towns in New South Wales and Victoria.

A project of this scale poses significant challenges and opportunities, requiring continued focus.

The project has a team of approximately 2,700 Australians dedicated to its safe and efficient delivery. The team made solid progress in 2023–24 towards the long-term goal of delivering a secure and stable transition to a low-carbon emissions future.

Benefits for the community

The low cost and zero emission advantages of renewable energy such as wind and solar can only be realised if a sufficient amount of energy from these intermittent sources can be stored for later use.

Snowy 2.0 will work alongside intermittent renewables and help fill the generation gaps in wind and solar. Its fast-start, clean hydropower and large-scale energy storage will mean energy is available when customers need it.

Snowy 2.0 is expected to increase the Snowy Scheme's generation capacity by approximately 50%. This will provide the National Electricity Market with an additional 2,000 megawatts of power and approximately 350,000 megawatt hours, or 175 hours of energy storage: enough capacity to power 500,000 homes simultaneously.

Snowy Hydro is committed to investing and supporting the local environment, community and infrastructure in which it operates. It is supporting local business, regional growth, tourism and the people of Cooma and surrounding areas through partnerships, sponsorships, community grants and other programs.

Find out more

Snowy Hydro (n.d.) *Snowy Hydro – About*, Snowy Hydro website, accessed 13 September 2024. www.snowyhydro.com.au/snowy-20/about

Empowering positive change through community immersion

The Jawun Australian Public Service Secondment Program is a strategic partnership between Jawun and the APS.

Jawun is a non-profit organisation that facilitates long-term engagement through partnerships with corporate, government and Indigenous Australia, to achieve locally driven aspirations.

For 13 years, the APS and Jawun have partnered to effectively match high-performing APS program secondees with Indigenous Regional Organisations across 12 Indigenous communities, nationwide.

Participants from over 70 agencies with broad-ranging capabilities work with Indigenous Regional Organisations to build capacity, foster strong connections, and contribute new skills to in support of Indigenous-led reform priorities.

The program expanded in 2023 to include APS 6 staff and, as well as Executive Leaders. This year the significant milestone of 1,000 Jawun APS secondments was reached.



Jawun Burnie Beans painted by Kuku Yalanji Artist, Ivy Minniecon. The artwork represents a meeting place and represents the Jawun Logo, affectionately referred to as the Burnie Bean symbol.

Image: Jawun organisation

Working together

Jawun, means ‘friend’ or ‘family’ in Kuku Yalanji language of Cape York, Far North Queensland.

Secondments offered are a 2-way skills share. Participants have the opportunity to contribute to place-based capacity-building initiatives that drive Indigenous-led change.

The APS Academy works closely with Jawun to facilitate up to 120 interviews for potential APS secondees every year.

The APS Academy regularly corresponds with agencies, applicants and Jawun Regional Directors, reviewing applicants' skills alongside the needs of the Indigenous Regional Organisations and Indigenous communities, in preparation for best placement.

The APS Academy supports induction for secondees and care while in-place along with Alumni Connect sessions. The sessions are a safe space for new secondees to ask questions, share experiences and reflect with program alumni from the same Jawun region.

The Jawun APS Secondment Program is made possible by the underpinning partnership with the National Indigenous Australians Agency. It is funded through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

Benefits for the community

The APS Jawun Secondment Program and secondees are furthering the Closing the Gap priorities of:

- Priority Reform 1 – Formal partnerships and shared decision-making
- Priority Reform 2 – Building the community-controlled sector
- Priority Reform 3 – Transforming government organisations.

On return, secondees draw on the learnings and experience from the Program to enhance awareness, knowledge and cultural capability within their respective APS agency.

On an individual level, those supported to participate in the program increase their cultural awareness, develop new personal skills, confidence and resilience.

In turn, this builds cultural competence and the APS leadership capability service-wide. It also contributes to practical reconciliation and achieving better outcomes for all Australians.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Jawun APS Secondment Program*, APS Academy website, accessed 19 September 2024. www.apsacademy.gov.au/aps-craft/leadership-management/jawun-aps-secondment-program

Commemorating the service of Australian veterans

The Commemorations Branch in Veterans' Affairs delivers a wide range of activities in Australia and overseas. The aim is to ensure that the service and sacrifice of those who have served Australia in wars, conflicts and peace operations are acknowledged, honoured, and better understood.

Each year, on Vietnam Veterans' Day (18 August), organisations across Australia pay tribute to some 60,000 Australian personnel who served in Vietnam.

In 2023, Veterans' Affairs held the National Commemorative Service at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra, marking the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

To further mark this significant anniversary, the branch produced a Commemorative Medallion and Certificate of Commemoration. These were made available to every Australian veteran, or their widow or other family member, who served in the war.

The medallion and certificate were a meaningful way to honour the service of Australian veterans and recognise the sacrifice of those who never returned home.



Veterans' Affairs Rory Walker and Elspeth Forster at the start of the Vietnam War 50th anniversary commemorative service.
Image: Veterans' Affairs

Working together

The branch developed the National Commemorative Service and other supporting activities in conjunction with a consultative committee established for this anniversary, comprising representatives of key ex-service organisations.

Preparations for major commemorative events, like international Anzac Day Dawn Services, usually start about 6 months in advance. However, planning for the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War service began in 2021.

A major challenge of delivering appropriate commemorations is ensuring the correct narrative is conveyed, and acknowledgment is given to the service and sacrifice of all veterans, regardless of

their role or duration of service. This also extends to civilians, such as Qantas staff who crewed, maintained, serviced and coordinated Skippy Squadron flights.

To do this effectively, the branch met with the consultative committee regularly during the 2 years of planning, asking members to share views on each activity. This ensured that key stakeholders were continuously engaged, that information was filtered through to members and that their views and expectations were heard.

Veterans' families act as a critical link for sharing the stories of those involved in the Vietnam War. The branch ensured that descendants, widows and other relatives of some of the 523 personnel killed were directly involved in the planning for the Service.

The Commemorative Branch also worked closely with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. This was on both the live broadcast of the service and the production of a 3-episode documentary miniseries *Our Vietnam War*. This series tells the broader story of Australians' experience of the Vietnam War.

Benefits to the community

Commemorations raise community awareness and understanding of the service and sacrifice of military personnel and families. They also promote improved veteran wellbeing outcomes through recognition and respect. These activities, resources and events help to acknowledge, honour and remember those who served Australia in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

In addition to commemorative services and events, the branch uses their diverse skills, knowledge and experience to plan and deliver products, programs and educational resources.

The international reach of the Commemorations Branch also extends to the:

- delivery of the annual Anzac Day Dawn Services at Gallipoli in Türkiye, near Villers-Bretonneux in France
- support for the services at Hellfire Pass in Thailand
- support for the services at Sandakan in Malaysia.

The Commemorative Branch manages memorials across the world. It also manages interpretive centres near Villers-Bretonneux in France, Hellfire Pass in Thailand and Sandakan in Malaysia. The branch is developing an interpretive trail on the island of Lemnos in Greece.

Within Australia, the branch manages and monitors the use of the word 'Anzac' and develops historically accurate resources for educators, community members and the wider public. These resources are online on the Anzac Portal. The branch also provides information in the lead-up to Anzac Day and Remembrance Day to help groups and organisations tailor activities to suit attendees.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War*, Veterans' Affairs website, accessed 18 September 2024. www.dva.gov.au/recognition/commemorations/commemorative-services/commemorative-services-australia/50th-anniversary-end-australias-involvement-vietnam-war

Australian Government (n.d.) *Anzac Portal*, Veterans' Affairs website, accessed 18 September 2024. anzacportal.dva.gov.au

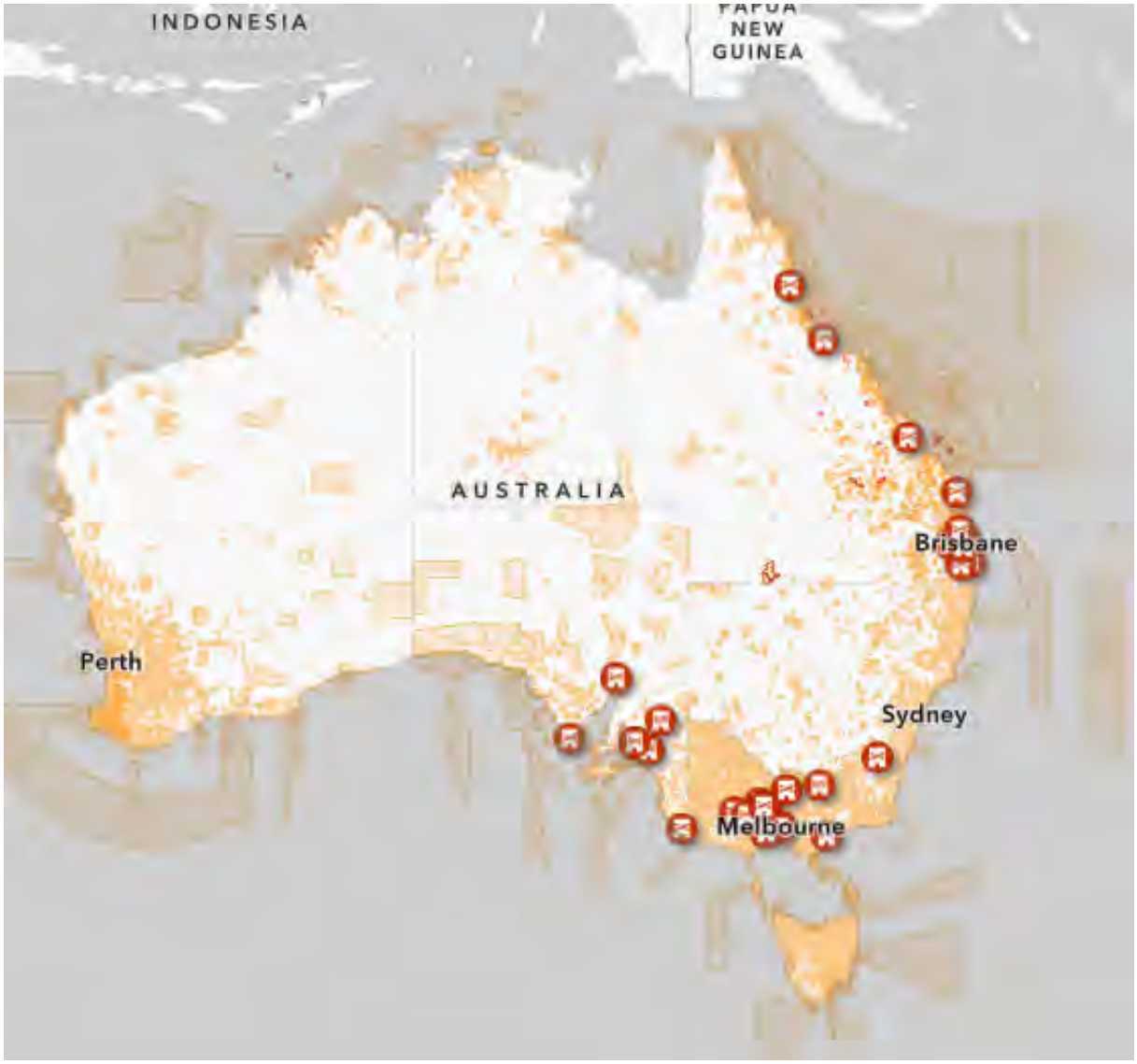
Putting drone rules on the map

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA) launched a new Local Drone Rules Map in February 2024.

The map shows 7,610 areas where local or non-safety laws apply for drone use. This provides recreational and commercial drone users with free, open and easy access to information all in one place to support awareness of local drone rules.

The project is recognised in the Australian Government's Data and Digital Government Strategy, as part of moving towards simple, secure and connected services.

This first release map shows laws in place for parks and correctional facilities across Australia. Future updates are planned to include more local laws and improved functionality for drone users, the community, and software integration.



Areas where local drone rules apply for parks and corrections institutions across Australia.

Image: Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Working together

The Local Drone Rules Map is a product of the collaborative partnership between the Emerging Aviation Technology Policy and Geospatial Services teams at DITRDCA.

For more than 18 months, the Emerging Aviation Technology Policy team worked diligently to collect and consolidate geospatial drone rules data from 46 responsible authorities across Commonwealth, state and territory agencies.

The Geospatial Services team quickly designed and implemented an interactive map prototype using the data collected by the Emerging Aviation Technologies Policy team.

This prototype was further refined as more stakeholders were engaged, and additional data collected. The 2 teams also came together to develop a sustainable methodology for the future capture and dissemination of drone rules.

Benefits for the community

The Local Drone Map's open, iterative and digital-first approach is reducing barriers, and driving greater awareness of environmental and security-related laws in the rapidly growing digital drone sector.

Drone rule digitisation helps reduce complexity of drone laws across jurisdictions. It also encourages digital governance that is fit-for-purpose and able to adapt to the rapid growth of the sector.

Before the map's creation, a drone operator was required to check a wide range of government websites to identify what rules might affect their intended operation.

Improved digitisation and consistency make it easier for digital drone systems to ingest information on laws that impact drone users and help operators plan flights that comply with these laws.

Feedback has shown this reduces practical obstacles drone users face in collating or accessing such information in any given area: One user has written:

> Just wanted to say a huge thank you for compiling this information into a single source. I have been training Remote Pilot Aircraft for both an RTO [registered training organisation] and the CASA RePL [Civil Aviation Safety Authority remote pilot licence] for several years and this has always been a very difficult topic to answer and find all the different rules for each area. I am also loving the map!

A key principle behind the project is making drone laws easier to find, access and understand. This in turn supports user compliance and flight planning. It also improves community and environmental outcomes.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Drone Rule Digitisation*, Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts website, accessed 5 September 2024. www.drones.gov.au/policies-and-programs/initiatives/drone-rule-digitisation

Australian Government (n.d.) *Journey so far*, Data and Digital Government Strategy website, accessed 5 September 2024. www.dataanddigital.gov.au/plan/journey

Supporting First Nations families through family law courts

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA) is the largest family law court in Australia. It has taken significant strides toward improving the level of support provided to First Nations families, with a focus on keeping children and families safe.

The Court has delivered key initiatives including the development of the Indigenous Family Liaison Officer (IFLO) role and its expansion to a team of 16 members across Australia. It has also developed a national program of Specialist Indigenous Lists.

The primary role of a liaison officer is to assist First Nations families to understand and engage with court processes, orders and other events. These officers also help those involved in family law disputes to engage with culturally appropriate legal, health and other support services.

The Court has developed Specialist Indigenous Lists to provide tailored, culturally responsive support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and those seeking court orders for care and living arrangements. This may include non-Indigenous parents or caregivers.

This year, the Court also appointed its first Director of National Indigenous Operations, Policy & Support. To recognise the importance of Indigenous-led decision-making and leadership, this role is responsible for the management of Indigenous Family Liaison Officers. The role is integral to the development and implementation of First Nations-related policies and initiatives.



Brisbane-based Indigenous Family Liaison Officer Frank Watson-Brown, her Honour Judge Willis of the FCFCOA (Division 2), Chair of the Courts' Access to Justice Committee, and local cultural performer Jahmarley Dawson.

Image: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia

Working together

Approximately one in every 14 applications for parenting or property orders involve an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander party or child.

Consultation with relevant community members and organisations has been crucial. It ensures a national family court system that is accessible to all families, and attuned to the needs of the communities it serves.

The Court has engaged with Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations (ACCOs), legal organisations (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services and Legal Aid bodies), Court users and the Attorney General's Department.

On 1 August 2024, the Court hosted an inaugural First Nations Forum to hear the collective voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Over 80 key stakeholders attended the forum, including researchers, advocates, practice experts, community members and representatives from First Nations-led Commissions. Stakeholders from the legal and social services sector, as well as Judges, Registrars, Court Child Experts and Indigenous Family Liaison Officers attended.

The IFLO team regularly engages in community consultation as a key component of its role. Attendance at conferences, roadshows and other events nationally, gives visibility to the IFLO role. This also helps build meaningful relationships with stakeholders from relevant bodies and organisations across the legal profession, ACCOs, and other community members and service providers.

Their work also enables ongoing dialogue between the Court and wider community, which supports early intervention and culturally appropriate referrals in family law matters.

Benefits to the community

The knowledge and insights gained through the work of the liaison officers and feedback from the First Nations Forum has been invaluable in enabling the Court to improve the policies and procedures that directly impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

The FCFCOA is committed to progressing the priority reforms in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which focus on changing the way government works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As part of this commitment, the Court is establishing a First Nations advisory group to facilitate ongoing discussion between the courts, stakeholders and communities nationally.

A comprehensive review and upgrade of the Court's existing reconciliation action plan is due to be launched in late 2024, to further common goals and aspirations in working towards reconciliation. It will build on the foundations of previous reconciliation action plans by focusing on strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, stakeholders, legal services, and other agencies.

The FCFCOA is also continuing to improve Indigenous data governance practices at all stages of the data lifecycle, to support and promote Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

Find out more

The Council of Australian Governments (n.d.) *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, Closing the Gap website, accessed 9 September 2024. www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement

Improving insurance affordability outcomes in the visitor economy

Austrade, with support from The Treasury, convened a series of workshops in 2023 to bring together stakeholders from state and territory tourism and their insurance counterparts. The aim was to collaborate and share information to improve insurance affordability outcomes.

The workshops were delivered as part of the Australian Government's THRIVE 2030 national strategy supporting long-term sustainable growth of the visitor economy.

Globally, the cost of re-insurance has been rising and several international insurance firms have left the Australian market in recent years. Businesses in the visitor economy have reported difficulty in obtaining affordable insurance policies, which are critical to underpin their operations.

Working together

The Visitor Economy and Client Programs Division in the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) has worked closely with other Australian Government agencies to address rising public liability insurance premiums in the visitor economy. This includes the:

- insurance policy unit at The Treasury
- insurance and economic policy team at the National Emergency Management Agency Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority and
- Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman.

Stakeholders were brought together from the visitor economy, insurance industries, tourism policy agencies and treasuries from the Australian Government and state and territory governments. Their focus was to share ideas and address insurance affordability challenges.

At one of the Austrade workshops, the Australian Outdoor Industry and Outdoors NSW & ACT shared lessons learned with other sector participants, helping inform best practice going forward.

Benefits for the community

The workshops enabled stakeholders to build a better understanding of the factors influencing insurance premiums and the practical steps that can be taken to access cheaper insurance products.

Tourism industry associations have responded to this increased understanding of challenges facing tourism businesses. They have done so by developing resources to help improve insurance affordability outcomes including:

- The Caravan Industry Association of Australia teamed with the Insurance Council of Australia to create the Insuring Caravan Parks roadmap to encourage industry-wide engagement and action for industry members. The roadmap helps users focus on data collection, accreditation programs, technology development, risk profiling, and insurance sector education.
- Outdoors NSW & ACT collaborated with Affinity Insurance Brokers to create activity-safe guidelines. These assist adventurous activity providers to reduce risk and find more effective insurance solutions.

Stuart Lamont, Chief Executive Officer of the Caravan Industry Association of Australia, acknowledged Austrade's efforts to bring industry stakeholders together, saying:

> It has been instrumental in facilitating collaboration and sending a message to the insurance industry that we are doing what it takes to reduce risk, and we have already seen some insurance premium relief and increased access for businesses.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *THRIVE 2030 strategy*, Australian Trade and Investment Commission website, accessed 30 August 2024. www.austrade.gov.au/en/how-we-can-help-you/programs-and-services/thrive-2030-strategy

Better matching for people on the organ transplant waitlist

Saving and improving the lives of more Australians waiting for an organ transplant is the ultimate goal of Organ Match. This Australian state-of-the-art organ donor and recipient matching system was first launched in 2019 by the Organ and Tissue Authority.

For the 1,800 Australians currently on the transplant waitlist, and another 14,000 on dialysis who have kidney failure, an organ transplant is a life-changing and often lifesaving treatment.

OrganMatch has modernised and streamlined the process for organ waitlisting, matching and offering, better outcomes for patients. It uses world-class technology, enabling clinicians to share time-critical information.

The system supports prioritising difficult-to-match patients, young people and those who are critically unwell and urgently need a lifesaving transplant. Continued improvements mean the system can now facilitate the best organ matches for patients across Australia.



A DonateLife staff member prepares an organ for transplantation.

Image: The Organ and Tissue Authority

Working together

The Organ and Tissue Authority works in partnership with Australian Red Cross Lifeblood which delivers and manages OrganMatch.

Lifeblood engages information technology service provider Datacom for OrganMatch. Datacom developed the secure system that supports best practice processes and outcomes for clinicians and patients.

The OrganMatch system is a valuable example of collaboration. In this case collaboration occurred between state and territory governments, the DonateLife network, transplant units and hospitals, all working with commercial entities to deliver a world-class system for Australians.

Benefits for the community

For those seriously ill with organ failure, receiving an organ transplant may mean the difference between life and death.

The time required to match donors and recipients has significantly decreased since the recent improvements to the kidney allocation algorithm in OrganMatch have been implemented.

Saving more lives through OrganMatch would not be possible without the generosity of organ donors and their families.

For organ recipients such as Kristy, receiving a kidney transplant has been transformative:

> Organ donation is truly life-changing. I've been able to travel overseas, as well as spend time with my partner, my mum and my 2 sisters – and I have 2 beautiful children. I think about my donor and their family every day and I want to say thank you.



Kristy received a life-saving kidney transplant.

Image: The Organ and Tissue Authority

Find out more

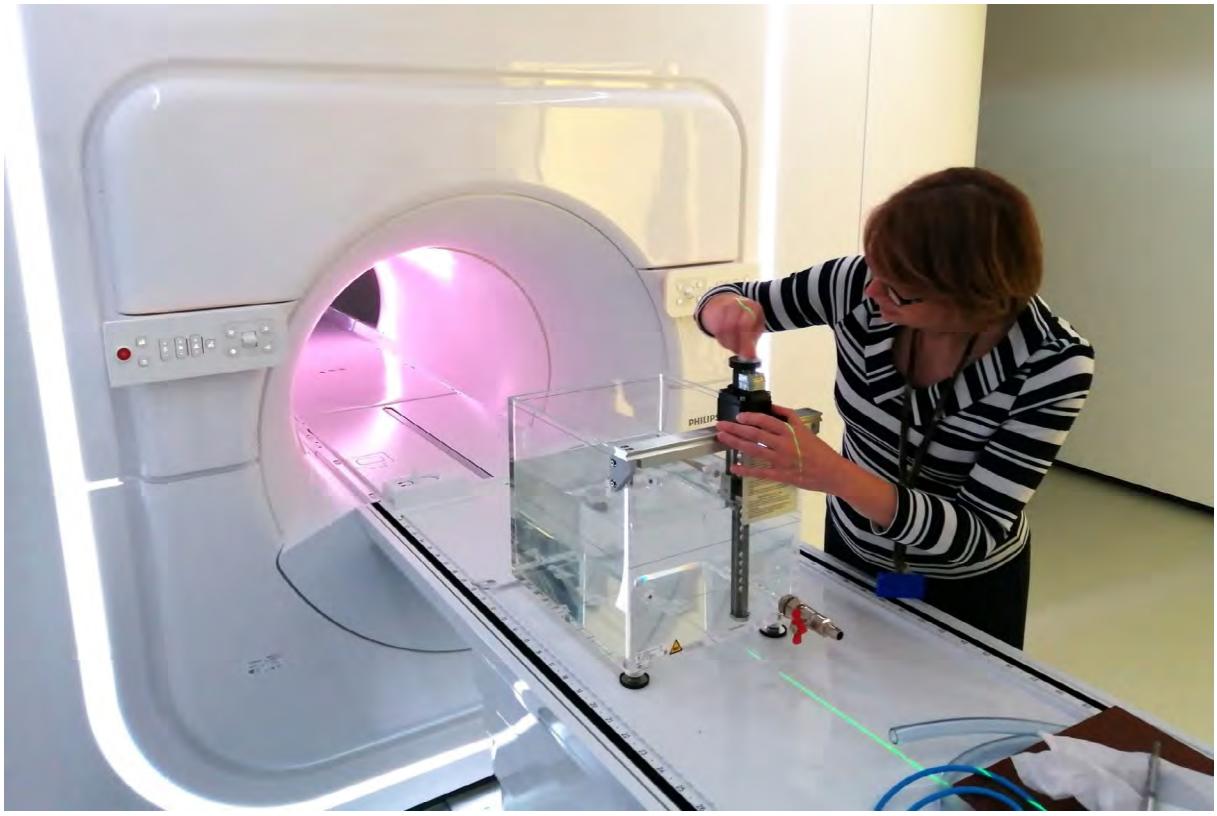
Australian Government (n.d.) *OrganMatch*, DonateLife website, accessed 12 September 2024. www.donatelife.gov.au/for-healthcare-workers/organmatch

Delivering confidence in radiotherapy treatment and patient safety

The Australian Clinical Dosimetry Service (ACDS) is provided by the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA). The ACDS delivers a world-class radiotherapy dosimetry audit program, working with radiotherapy providers across Australia and New Zealand.

ACDS audits provide a high standard of assurance and confidence in radiotherapy treatment quality and patient safety. The ongoing participation of radiotherapy facilities in these audits plays a critical role in ensuring that cancer patients receive accurate doses of radiation.

In 2023–24, the ACDS delivered a program of 99 dosimetry audits. This included 46 remote audits and 53 onside audits covering the full range of radiotherapy treatment units and techniques.



ACDS Director Rhonda Brown setting up for a dosimetry measurement in a magnetic resonance-guided linear accelerator.

Image: ARPANSA

Working together

The original audit program was designed by ARPANSA and Health and Aged Care, to detect and correct radiation incidents before significant patient impact could occur. An independent review of the ACDS concluded that the audit program was effective in reducing incidents in the Australian radiation oncology community.

The program has expanded to include a comprehensive suite of modern radiotherapy techniques and treatment platforms. The program has a 3-level audit structure of increasing complexity and aligns with international best practice.

Stakeholder feedback is essential to the cycle of ACDS audit development and review. This ensures audits continue to meet the needs of radiation therapy departments and contribute to patient safety.

A continuing professional development activity for the medical community, the program is endorsed by peak industry bodies. This includes the Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy and the Australasian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine.

The ACDS is the only audit program nationally recognised by the Trans-Tasman Radiation Oncology Group for radiotherapy clinical trials. It is the only provider recognised by the Ionizing Radiation Oncology Core in Houston, United States.

Benefits for the community

Approximately 80,000 Australians received radiotherapy treatment in the last year, with numbers continuing to increase.

ACDS audits are sensitive to errors and can diagnose root causes throughout the treatment pathway. Auditing helps identify issues in radiotherapy systems that, if unidentified, can significantly impact patient treatment.

Reviews of suboptimal audit results have resulted in significant changes to clinical practice that have reduced actual and potential clinical hazards.

Outside of its auditing program, ACDS contributes to research in the radiation dosimetry field to further support patient safety, clinical trial development and the accuracy of treatment delivery.

This is achieved by sharing their research and findings with the radiation oncology community, including universities and peak professional bodies, through peer-reviewed publications and presentations at conferences, meetings and training courses.

The ACDS continues its work in developing audits for emerging radiotherapy techniques such as online adaptive radiotherapy and motion adaptive radiotherapy.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *ACDS audit program*, Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency website, accessed 10 September 2024. www.arpansa.gov.au/our-services/testing-and-calibration/australian-clinical-dosimetry-service/acds-audit-program

New digital capability for Commonwealth statutory declarations

A statutory declaration is a statement of facts a person declares to be true and accurate. Historically, statutory declarations have been paper-based, requiring wet-ink signatures and executed in front of an approved witness.

The digital Commonwealth statutory declaration combines the digital capability of myGov and Digital ID to deliver an end-to-end digital process that is simple, accessible and secure.

The delivery of the new digital capability follows changes to statutory declarations legislation that came into effect on 1 January 2024. Australians can now complete Commonwealth statutory declarations online for things like visa applications, superannuation claims, employment and leave without requiring a witness.

Completed statutory declarations can be downloaded to a phone or computer for printing or sharing as a Portable Document Format (PDF) file to verify the:

- user's identity through their Digital ID
- statutory declaration being executed in myGov on a specific date and time.

Requestors of Commonwealth statutory declarations can also verify the authenticity of the completed declaration by scanning the QR code embedded in the document using the myGov app.

This is a significant step forward in tackling fraud and enables statutory declarations to be quickly shared digitally, if required.

Working together

Finance, Attorney-General's Department and Services Australia worked in partnership to jointly design and deliver the digital Commonwealth statutory declaration capability.

A team of experienced policy, financial and legal experts, designers and technical developers across all 3 agencies worked collaboratively during 2023–24. The team successfully delivered the first-of-its-kind digital solution.

Finance led a user-centred design process, underpinned by research and economic modelling, to understand user pain points and identify reform opportunities and potential benefits for Australians.

Services Australia managed the design, build and delivery of the digital Commonwealth statutory declaration capability in myGov, using a Digital ID.

Attorney General's Department managed legislative reforms to the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* to enable digital Commonwealth statutory declarations while ensuring compliance with personal information safeguards and relevant privacy laws.

The case for change was informed by extensive stakeholder engagement with a diverse cross-section of approximately 100 stakeholders. This helped develop the problem identification, solution co-design, technology design and development, and legislative design phases of the project.

Benefits for the community

Australian businesses and consumers spend an estimated 9 million hours each year on creating and processing more than 3.8 million Commonwealth statutory declarations.

Digital execution of statutory declarations is expected to save Australians $156 million in time and costs each year and deliver a productivity bonus to the national economy.

As at 31 August 2024, more than 34,000 Commonwealth statutory declarations were completed online, with an average completion time of 4 minutes.

Early indications show the service has been positively received with some feedback highlighting the need to give more attention to customers with diverse needs. Options to improve user experience and accessibility, and to promote wider adoption of the service, are being explored.

Australians can continue to execute statutory declarations through the traditional, paper-based method with a witness should they wish to do so.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Digital Commonwealth statutory declaration*, myGov website, accessed 17 September 2024. my.gov.au/en/about/help/digital-identity/digital-commonwealth-statutory-declaration

Fit for the future

Improving policy and service delivery approaches for the Australian people and preparing for current and future challenges, are Australian Government priorities.

To support this, the Australian Public Service is investing in APS futures and foresight capabilities. This will mean APS agencies are better able to explore long-term issues and plausible future scenarios to improve policy, strategy, planning and decision-making.

The first Long-term Insights Briefing exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) might affect the trustworthiness of public service delivery was published in October 2023. A second Long-term Insights Briefing started in February 2024 to explore the future of human services, with particular emphasis on how the Australian Government works with communities.

A new Charter of Partnerships and Engagement sets out 6 aspirational principles for the APS to prioritise to achieve quality engagement and partnerships with external stakeholders. The charter aims to improve the way the APS puts people and business at the centre of policy, implementation and delivery.

Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality was released in March 2024. It provides a framework to drive gender equality through government policies and programs. It supports a vision for an Australia where people are safe, treated with respect, have choices and have access to resources and equal outcomes no matter their gender.

Development of Measuring What Matters, Australia's first national wellbeing framework continues. Changes to the frequency of data, and larger sample sizes, will increase the value of the framework for policy development. They will also ensure the framework is represents all segments of the Australian population.

The Data and Digital Government Strategy was released in December 2023. It outlines the Australian Government's vision to deliver simple, secure and connected public services through world-class data and digital capabilities by 2030. The government is committed to a modern public service. This is a public service that will make effective use of data and digital technologies so everyone's experience with the Australian Government is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to their needs.

Extensive work has taken place over the last year to consult widely and prepare for the safe and responsible adoption of AI in Australia. The government is taking a coordinated approach with 5 pillars of action: delivering regulatory clarity and certainty; supporting and promoting best practice; supporting AI capability, government as an exemplar; and engaging internationally.

Responsible choices: a new policy for using AI in the Australian Government came into effect on 1 September 2024.

The Australian Government is lifting the capability of the APS to build climate considerations into business-as-usual practices. This is so the policies, programs and services provided to Australian communities are resilient and adaptable. A new Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program is helping APS agencies understand and treat climate-related risks.

Futures an foresight capability

Building awareness of Futures methods, lifting the uptake of Futures within Australian Public Service agencies, and demonstrating how these approaches can be embedded into the policy cycle is a focus of the Australian Government.

To help achieve this, the Policy Fit for the Future: Building APS Futures and Foresight Capability project was funded through the Capability Reinvestment Fund in 2023–24.

The Australian Government needs to manage, shape and adapt to change to improve the lives of Australians, including those of future generations. This requires a future-literate APS, able to provide creative, informed policy advice about future possibilities, including risks to avoid and opportunities to seize. Futures methodologies can enhance policy advice and support the government to act now to shape and influence future events.

Futures – also known as strategic foresight – is a collection of structured and participatory approaches for exploring long-term issues and plausible scenarios to improve policy, strategy, planning, and decision-making. It uses tools such as horizon scanning, visioning and scenario planning to create more resilient and flexible policies that can succeed in multiple possible futures.

Deliverables from the project included:

- a whole-of-government futures scenario and horizon scanning exercise to identify and prioritise emerging challenges for the Australian Government over the next decade, drawing on insights from across the APS Senior Executive Service
- the delivery of over 40 Futures training, pilot and consultation exercises for policy agencies to directly build capability and awareness of Futures methodologies
- an APS Futures Primer offering advice on how to embed Futures into policy development, including tools, methodologies and templates tailored for an APS policy context
- a final report outlining further opportunities for lifting APS futures capability, including recommendations for agencies interested in resourcing an internal Futures function.



Exploring possible futures using Futures methodologies.

Image: Prime Minister and Cabinet

This project was led by the Policy Projects and Taskforce Office in Prime Minister and Cabinet. Partners included Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Futures Hub at the National Security College, Australian National University.

A Futures project to develop Asia and the Pacific expertise in the APS has been funded by the Capability Reinvestment Fund for 2024–25.

Find out more

Australian Government (2024) *Priming the APS for the future*, Australian Public Service Reform website, accessed 28 August 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/news/priming-aps-future

Australian Government (n.d.) *APS Capability Reinvestment Fund 2023–24*, Australian Public Service Reform website accessed 21 June 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/resources/reports/aps-capability-reinvestment-fund-2023-24

Australian Government (n.d.) *APS Capability Reinvestment Fund 2024–25*, Australian Public Service Reform website accessed 21 June 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/resources/reports/aps-capability-reinvestment-fund-2024-25

Long-term Insights Briefings

The passing of the *Public Service Amendment Act 2024* established Long-term Insights Briefings as an enduring function for government. The Secretaries Board will commission at least one Long-term Insights Briefing each financial year. Completed reports will be provided to the Public Service Minister and tabled in both houses of Parliament.

Long-term Insights Briefings are an opportunity for the government to listen to and work with Australians on specific policy challenges that may affect Australia in the medium and long term.

These briefings make information and analysis about trends, risks, and opportunities that may affect Australia widely available. They strengthen planning and policy development by helping the Australian Public Service understand community views, evidence and the implications of long-term challenges.

Briefings are developed using a combination of tools. This includes research and consultation with experts from the APS, academia, industry and peak bodies, and genuine engagement with the Australian community and their representatives.

A Long-term Insights Briefing started in February 2024 to explore the future of human services, with particular emphasis on how the Australian Government works with communities.

The first briefing pilot, published in October 2023, explored how artificial intelligence might affect the trustworthiness of public service delivery. It also considered how AI could transform public service delivery and the potential impacts of these changes on the trustworthiness of public service delivery.

Long-term Insights Briefings contribute to the stewardship of the APS by building the capability and institutional knowledge of the public service for long-term thinking. They position the APS to support the public interest now and into the future, by understanding the long-term impacts of what the APS does.

Find out more

Australian Government (2023) *Long-term Insights Briefings*, Prime Minister and Cabinet website, accessed 24 July 2024. www.pmc.gov.au/government/long-term-insights-briefings

Partnerships and engagement

The Charter of Partnerships and Engagement was agreed by Secretaries Board and published by the Australian Public Service Commission in December 2023.

The charter sets out 6 aspirational principles for the Australian Public Service to prioritise to achieve quality engagement and partnerships with external stakeholders. It aims to improve the way the APS puts people and business at the centre of policy, implementation and delivery.

High-quality relationships with stakeholders will promote a more open public service, strengthen public trust in the Australian Government and achieve better outcomes for the Australian public.

The Charter of Partnerships and Engagement supports agencies to build their capability to genuinely partner and engage to develop more fit-for-purpose policies and service. This includes partnering and engaging with people and communities, non-government sectors, academia and industries.

Listening to a range of perspectives and experience gives the APS a better understanding of the impact of its policies and programs. This is key to developing approaches and services that better reflect the needs and aspirations of Australians. It ensures that the APS works in genuine partnership with the community to solve problems and co-design solutions to improve lives in Australian communities.

To support the charter, the APSC has developed good practice guidance to support staff engaging and partnering. It has also developed an APS Agency Engagement Maturity Assessment tool, to support agencies to build the required mindsets and capabilities.

Other initiatives that support the Charter of Partnerships and Engagement include:

- developing an approach to better integrate business perspectives into the working of government
- strengthening partnerships with the Australian research system
- piloting a market stewardship approach that provides a practical demonstration of stewardship in action by encouraging long-term, purposeful, proactive and strategic engagement and collaboration with stakeholders
- defining the role of government when partnering and engaging with First Nations communities
    - including identifying barriers that inhibit shared decision-making and ways to establish the trust and relationships required to work in genuine partnership.

The APS Academy is developing offerings related to uplifting APS capability in undertaking place-based partnerships.

The charter is one way the APS is working to instil public trust and transparency in government institutions and processes, and embed integrity in public service culture and behaviour.

Find out more

Australian Government (2023) *The Charter of Partnerships and Engagement*, Australian Public Service Reform website, accessed 29 July 2024. www.apsreform.gov.au/news/charter-partnerships-and-engagement

A Strategy for Gender Equality

Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality was released by the Australian Government on 7 March 2024. It is the first national strategy for gender equality and provides a framework to drive gender equality through government policies and programs across 5 priority areas.

The strategy outlines where the government will focus its efforts over the next decade to achieve its vision for gender equality. This vision is for an Australia where people are safe, treated with respect, have choices and have access to resources and equal outcomes no matter their gender.

Working for Women sets out a path for gender equality over the next 10 years, with a focus on:

- gender-based violence
- unpaid and paid care
- economic equality and security
- health
- leadership, representation and decision-making.

While Australia has made significant gains towards gender equality, inequality still exists in a range of areas across people's lives. Working for Women is a decision-making tool for prioritising the government's investment across future Budget cycles.

Working for Women builds on the government's significant investments already made across the strategy's 5 priority areas, including the $3.4 billion investment in women's safety since 2022.

A key mechanism for implementing Working for Women is through gender responsive budgeting. This places gender analysis at the centre of government policy-making, decision-making and investment decisions.

The Office for Women in Prime Minister and Cabinet is responsible for supporting the capability of the Australian Public Service to embed gender analysis in its work. All APS departments are responsible for leadership on gender equality within their policy areas and ensuring staff have the skills, information and resources to deliver high-quality gender analysis.

The Australian Government has an important role to play in modelling how employers can best support gender equality. All APS departments and agencies are responsible for:

- delivering on Working for Women's outcomes, ambition and vision
- achieving gender equality as part of core business for the public service
- demonstrating leadership on gender equality within their policy areas
- investing in the uplift required to ensure staff have the skills, information and resources to deliver high-quality gender analysis.

Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality is informed by the lived experience, knowledge and expertise of thousands of individuals and groups from across Australia. This includes women's advocacy groups, businesses, unions and civil society.

Public consultations took place in March and April 2023, through which the community was invited to share experiences and priorities for gender equality in Australia. This built on 14 roundtable discussions held in November and December 2022.

Find out more

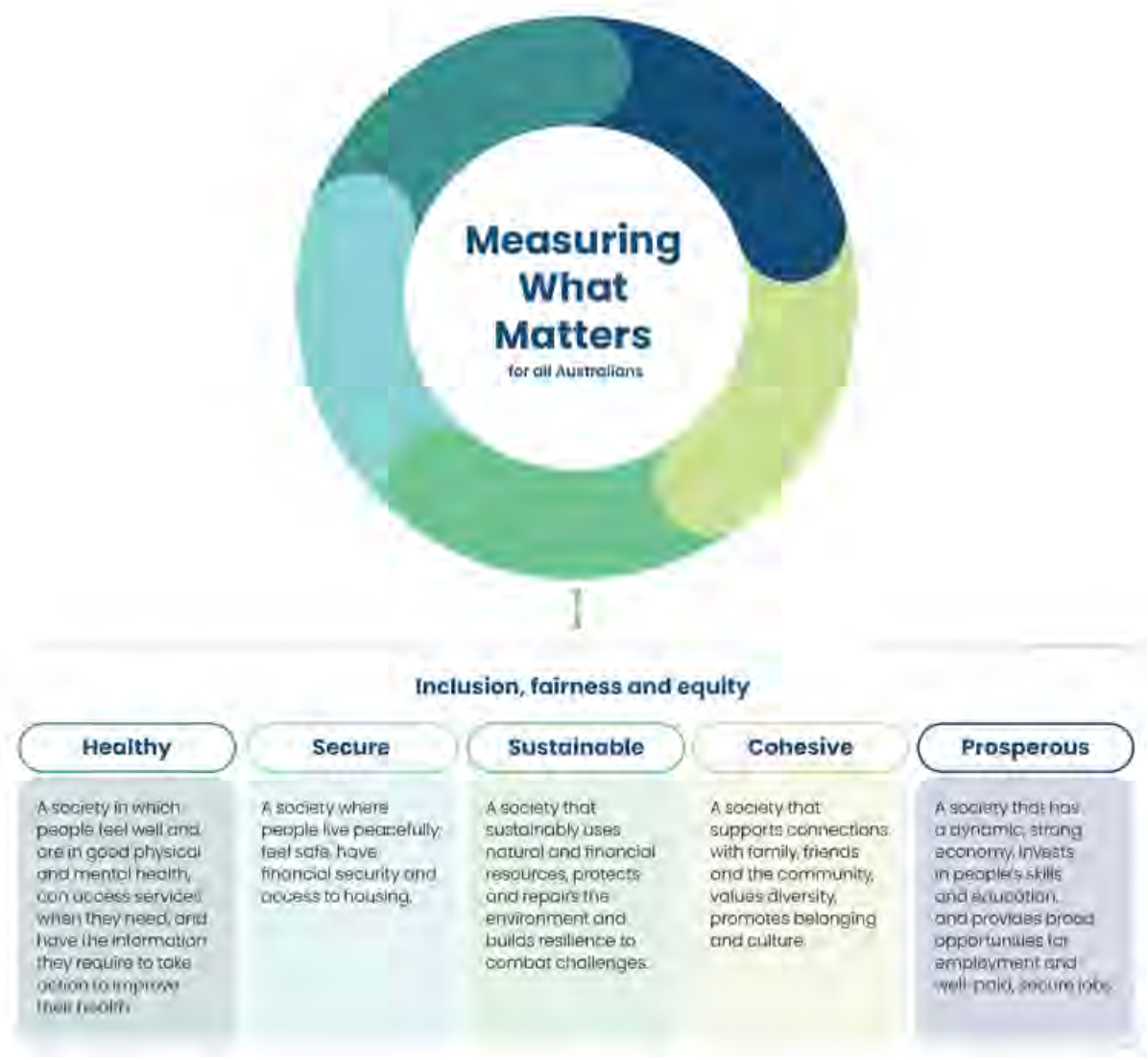
Australian Government (n.d.) *Working for Women – A Strategy for Gender Equality*, Prime Minister and Cabinet website, accessed 19 July 2024. genderequality.gov.au

Measuring what matters

Measuring What Matters is Australia's first national wellbeing framework, released in July 2023. The framework consists of a statement and dashboard of 50 indicators to measure progress towards a more healthy, secure, sustainable, cohesive and prosperous Australia (Figure 12).

The Measuring What Matters indicators complement traditional economic measures such as gross domestic product, employment, inflation and wages. They contribute broader information about how Australians are faring over time.

Figure 12: Measuring What Matters wellbeing framework



Source: The Commonwealth of Australia

The Australian Bureau of Statistics released an update to the Measuring What Matters dashboard in August 2024. Insights from the data displayed on this dashboard will be used to inform and support government policymaking, ensuring better alignment with national economic and social goals.

To improve the timeliness of Measuring What Matters data, the 2024–25 Budget committed $14.8 million in funding over 5 years for the Australian Bureau of Statistics to deliver the General Social Survey annually.

More frequent data will strengthen the capacity of the Measuring What Matters framework to identify opportunities to improve wellbeing and inform policy change. A greater sample size will allow for further disaggregation of data by cohorts, ensuring overarching wellbeing is representative for all segments of the Australian population.

A Measuring What Matters Statement will be released every 3 years. The next one is due in 2026, timed to align with the first results from the new annual General Social Survey.

Find out more

Australian Government (2023) *Measuring What Matters*, The Treasury website, accessed 3 September 2024. treasury.gov.au/policy-topics/measuring-what-matters

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) *Measuring What Matters*, ABS website, accessed 3 September 2024. www.abs.gov.au/statistics/measuring-what-matters

Data and Digital Government Strategy

The Australian Government released its final Data and Digital Government Strategy on 15 December 2023. This Strategy outlines the Australian Government's vision to deliver simple, secure and connected public services through world-class data and digital capabilities by 2030.

The Australian Government is committed to a modern public service that will make effective use of data and digital technologies so everyone's experience with the Australian Government is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to their needs.

The strategy will support the Australian Government to build and maintain public trust in its use of data and digital technologies, including emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. It is accompanied by an implementation plan outlining key actions the Australian Government is taking to achieve the strategy's 2030 vision. Finance and the Digital Transformation Agency are co-leading strategy implementation, and Australian Public Service agencies are aligning their own enterprise data and digital strategies with it.

Since the release of the initial strategy in May 2023, achievements include:

- publication of the Charter of Partnerships and Engagement in November 2023
- launch of a new Digital Service Standard in December 2023
- roll out of the APS Data Maturity Assessment Tool in May 2024
- release of the Framework for the Governance of Indigenous Data in May 2024
- passage of the Digital ID Bill through Parliament in May 2024 (with commencement of the legislation on 1 December 2024)
- release of the Digital Experience Policy in July 2024.

Other significant milestones have also been met since the strategy's release. In January 2024, Australia was ranked fifth in the 2023 Digital Government Index by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Further, the National framework for the assurance of artificial intelligence in government was agreed to at the Data and Digital Ministers Meeting, and released in June 2024. It establishes cornerstones and principles that demonstrate how governments can practically apply Australia's AI Ethics Principles to their assurance of AI.

The implementation plan will be updated yearly to:

- highlight new data and digital initiatives across government
- identify emerging trends and technologies in the data and digital environment
- report on the government's progress in achieving the strategy and outline the focus and objectives for the next year.

The Data and Digital Government Strategy is an initiative under the APS Reform program.

Stakeholder feedback received through public consultations in June and July 2023 was used to inform the development of the strategy and implementation plan.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Data and Digital Government Strategy* website, accessed 3 July 2024. https://www.dataanddigital.gov.au

Supporting safe and responsible use of artificial intelligence

The potential for artificial intelligence (AI) to improve social and economic wellbeing is immense. AI development and deployment is accelerating and is already permeating institutions, infrastructure, products and services. This often occurs undetected by those engaging with it.

Internationally, governments are introducing new regulations to address the risks of AI. The focus is on creating preventative, risk-based guardrails that apply across the AI supply chain, and throughout the AI lifecycle.

The Australian Government's consultations on safe and responsible AI have shown that Australia's current regulatory system is not fit for purpose to respond to the distinct risks that AI poses.

On 5 September 2024, the government opened consultation on proposed mandatory guardrails to shape the use of AI in high-risk settings. These guardrails focus on ensuring that AI systems being developed and used by organisations are tested, transparent and supported by clear accountability if things go wrong.

A principles-based definition of high risk has been proposed by the Australian Government. This involves considering, for example, whether an AI use poses risk to people's physical or mental safety, or to their human rights – and how severe the impacts of this might be.

The government is advocating a risk-based approach to AI regulation, acknowledging that a vast number of uses of AI are considered low risk and should be enabled to flourish unimpeded.

To support the overall objective of developing community trust and promoting AI adoption, the government is taking a coordinated approach with 5 pillars of action:

- delivering regulatory clarity and certainty
- supporting and promoting best practice
- supporting AI capability
- Government as an exemplar
- engaging internationally

From July 2023 to June 2024, the AI in Government Taskforce facilitated guidance and engagement on AI across government, and delivered a range of initiatives to help government harness the opportunities of AI technologies in a safe and responsible way. Building on this work, the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) is continuing to develop and implement policies to position the government as an exemplar in the use of AI.

On 15 August 2024, the DTA released the policy for the responsible use of AI in government. The DTA will pilot a draft Commonwealth AI Assurance Framework to support a more consistent approach by agencies to assessing and mitigating the risks of AI use.

AI is a shared challenge and nations are responding collectively. Given that the technology is developed in other countries and crosses borders, the Australian Government is engaging internationally to shape global and regional approaches to safe and responsible AI. The Australian Government is supporting a domestic framework that is interoperable with the approaches of other countries.

Find out more

Industry, Science and Resources (n.d.) *Supporting responsible AI: discussion paper*, DISR website, accessed 26 July 2024. consult.industry.gov.au/supporting-responsible-ai

Australian Government (n.d.) *Policy for the responsible use of AI in government*, digital.gov.au website, accessed 26 September 2024. www.digital.gov.au/policy/ai/policy

Climate risk and opportunity management

The Australian Government is lifting the capability of the Australian Public Service to build climate considerations into business-as-usual practices to ensure the policies, programs and services provided to communities are resilient and adaptable.

Readiness to prepare for, and respond to, the impact of the changing climate is critical to the APS continuing to achieve its objectives.

Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is enabling the APS to identify, assess and manage climate risks and opportunities through the Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program.

The program is designed to build climate risk knowledge across the Australian Government and embed consideration of climate risk into project and policy design. It promotes leadership in public sector climate risk management and better decision-making by training departments and agencies to understand and treat physical and transitional risks.

DCCEEW is delivering the program through:

- APS Academy online learning modules to increase climate risk knowledge
- guidance documentation and a support service to provide expert advice on undertaking climate risk assessments
- workshops across the APS to help staff understand how to manage their climate risks
- an interactive online climate risk assessment tool to streamline the assessment process.

The Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program supports the introduction of climate disclosure by building climate risk capability in the APS. Management and disclosure of climate risks across Commonwealth entities will help to spend public funding efficiently and effectively.

A total of $9.3 million has been committed by the Australian Government to facilitate the delivery of the Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program.

Find out more

Australian Government (n.d.) *Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program*, Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water website, accessed 31 July 2024. www.dcceew.gov.au/climate-change/policy/adaptation/climate-risk-opportunity-management-program

APS agency benchmarking

This section draws on research and data from the Australian Public Service Employment Database (APSED) and the Australian Public Service Employee Census.

It shows how APS agencies are performing in these areas:

- employment of First Nations people – in the context of the Australian Government's commitment to increase First Nations employment in the APS to 5% by 2030
- employment of people with disability – in the context of the Australian Government's commitment to increase the employment of people with disability across the APS to 7% by 2025
- employment of culturally and linguistically diverse Senior Executive Service (SES) employees – in the context of the Australian Government's introduction of a reportable benchmark of 24% for CALD representation in the SES
- employee perceptions of communication – agencies are shown with other APS agencies of like size
- employee engagement – agencies are shown with other APS agencies of like size
- employee perceptions of the enabling of innovation – agencies are shown with other APS agencies of like size
- employee perceptions of SES leaders – agencies are shown with other APS agencies of like size
- employee perceptions of immediate supervisors - agencies are shown with other APS agencies of like size
- employee perceptions of harassment and bullying – agencies are shown with other APS agencies of like size
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First Nations employment

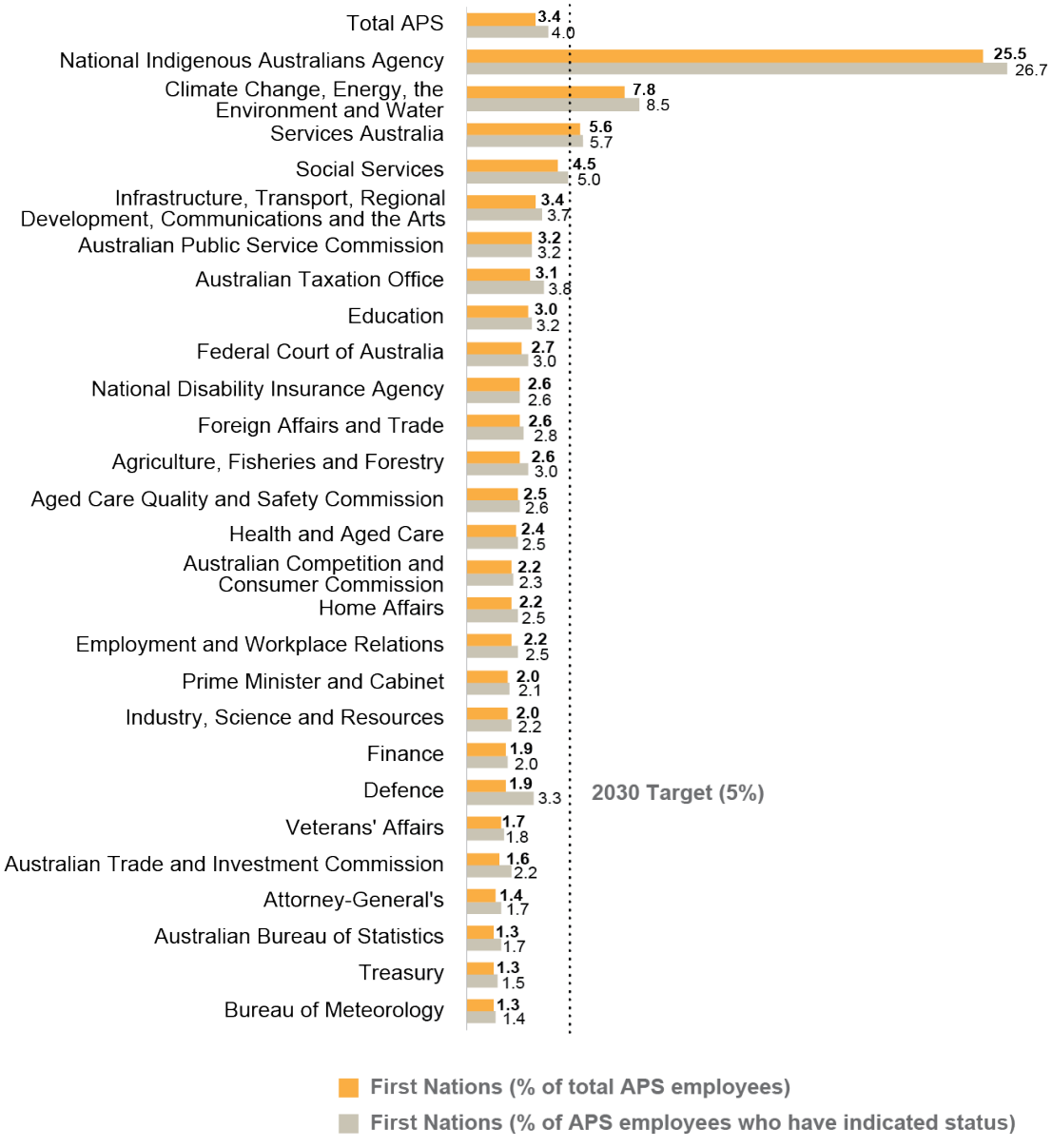
The Boosting First Nations employment measure outlines the Australian Government's commitment to increase First Nations employment in the Australian Public Service to 5% by 2030.

APS agencies collect information on 'Indigenous status' from employees in their human resources information systems. They then report the information to the Australian Public Service Commission's central APS Employment Database (APSED).

Figure AB 1 and Table AB 1 show First Nations employees in selected agencies as at 30 June 2024.

Proportions of First Nations people are reported in 2 ways. First, as a percentage of the total number of APS employees in an agency. Second, as a percentage of APS employees who have provided their status as Indigenous or Non-Indigenous (as opposed to 'choose not to give' or missing data). This latter method can be useful in determining an estimate of First Nations APS employment that is not influenced by missing data.

Figure AB 1: First Nations employees by agency (at 30 June 2024)



Source: APSED

Table AB 1: First Nations employees by agency (at 30 June 2024)

Agency	First Nations	
	% of total APS employees	% of APS employees who have indicated status
Total APS	**3.4**	**4.0**
National Indigenous Australians Agency	25.5	26.7
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	7.8	8.5
Services Australia	5.6	5.7
Social Services	4.5	5.0
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	3.4	3.7
Australian Public Service Commission	3.2	3.2
Australian Taxation Office	3.1	3.8
Education	3.0	3.2
Federal Court of Australia	2.7	3.0
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	2.6	3.0
Foreign Affairs and Trade	2.6	2.8
National Disability Insurance Agency	2.6	2.6
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	2.5	2.6
Health and Aged Care	2.4	2.5
Employment and Workplace Relations	2.2	2.5
Home Affairs	2.2	2.5
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	2.2	2.3
Industry, Science and Resources	2.0	2.2
Prime Minister and Cabinet	2.0	2.1
Defence	1.9	3.3
Finance	1.9	2.0
Veterans' Affairs	1.7	1.8
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	1.6	2.2
Attorney-General's	1.4	1.7
Australian Bureau of Statistics	1.3	1.7
Treasury	1.3	1.5
Bureau of Meteorology	1.3	1.4

Source: APS Employment Database

Employment of people with disability

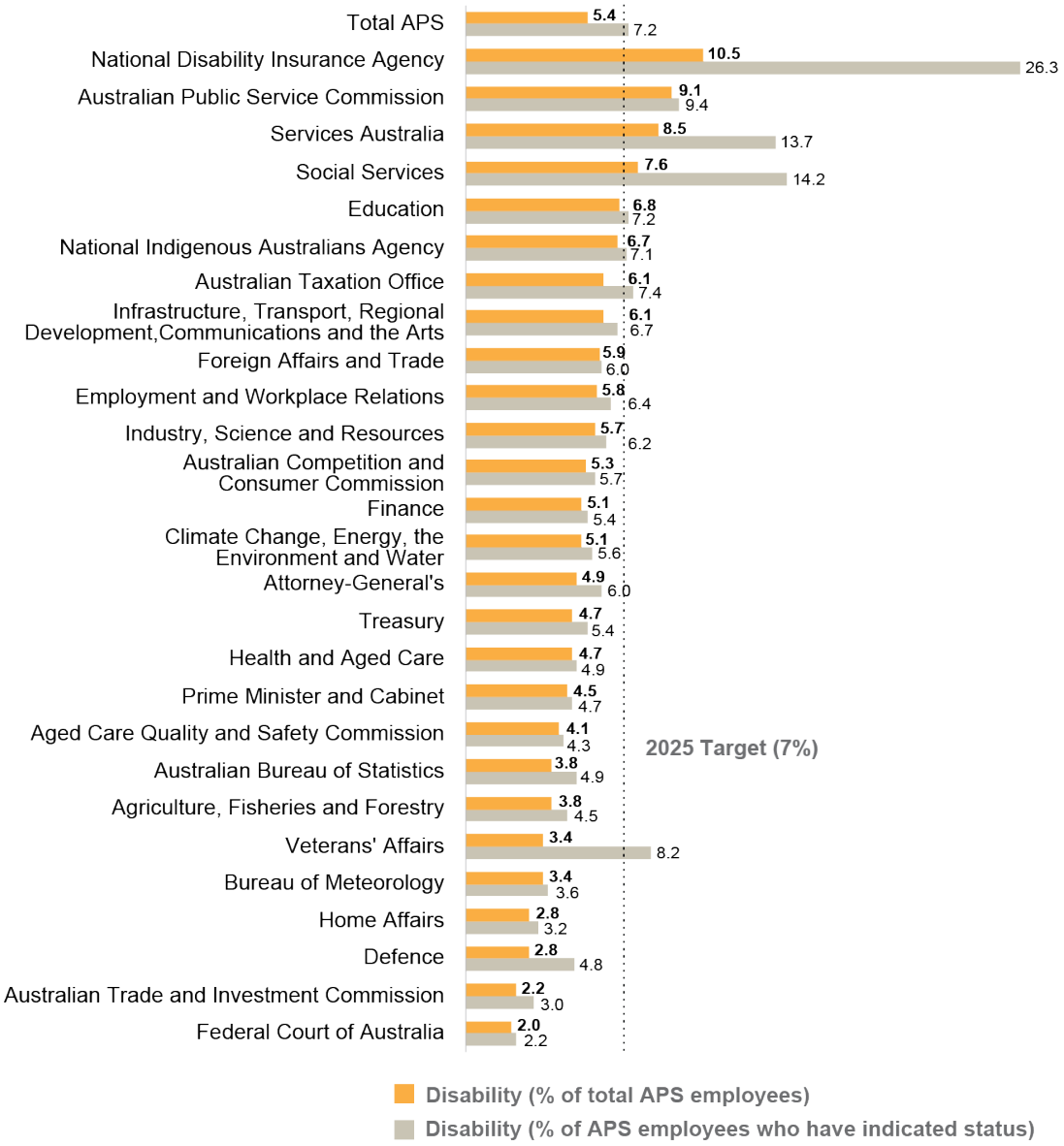
The Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25 aims to increase the employment of people with disability to 7% by 2025.

APS agencies collect information on disability from employees in their human resources information systems, which they then report to the Australian Public Service Commission's central APS Employment Database (APSED).

Figure AB 2 and Table AB 2 show APS employees with disability in selected agencies as at 30 June 2024.

Proportions of people with disability are reported in 2 ways. First, as a percentage of the total number of APS employees in an agency. Second, as a percentage of APS employees who have provided their status as having disability or not having disability (as opposed to 'choose not to give' or missing data). This latter method can be useful in determining an estimate of people with disability that is not influenced by missing data.

Figure AB 2: Employees with disability by agency (at 30 June 2024)



Source: APSED

Table AB 2: Employees with disability by agency (at 30 June 2024)

Agency	Disability	
	% of total APS employees	% of APS employees who have indicated status
Total APS	**5.4**	**7.2**
National Disability Insurance Agency	10.5	26.3
Australian Public Service Commission	9.1	9.4
Services Australia	8.5	13.7
Social Services	7.6	14.2
Education	6.8	7.2
National Indigenous Australians Agency	6.7	7.1
Australian Taxation Office	6.1	7.4
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	6.1	6.7
Foreign Affairs and Trade	5.9	6.0
Employment and Workplace Relations	5.8	6.4
Industry, Science and Resources	5.7	6.2
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	5.3	5.7
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	5.1	5.6
Finance	5.1	5.4
Attorney-General's	4.9	6.0
Treasury	4.7	5.4
Health and Aged Care	4.7	4.9
Prime Minister and Cabinet	4.5	4.7
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	4.1	4.3
Australian Bureau of Statistics	3.8	4.9
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	3.8	4.5
Veterans' Affairs	3.4	8.2
Bureau of Meteorology	3.4	3.6
Defence	2.8	4.8
Home Affairs	2.8	3.2
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	2.2	3.0
Federal Court of Australia	2.0	2.2

Source: APSED

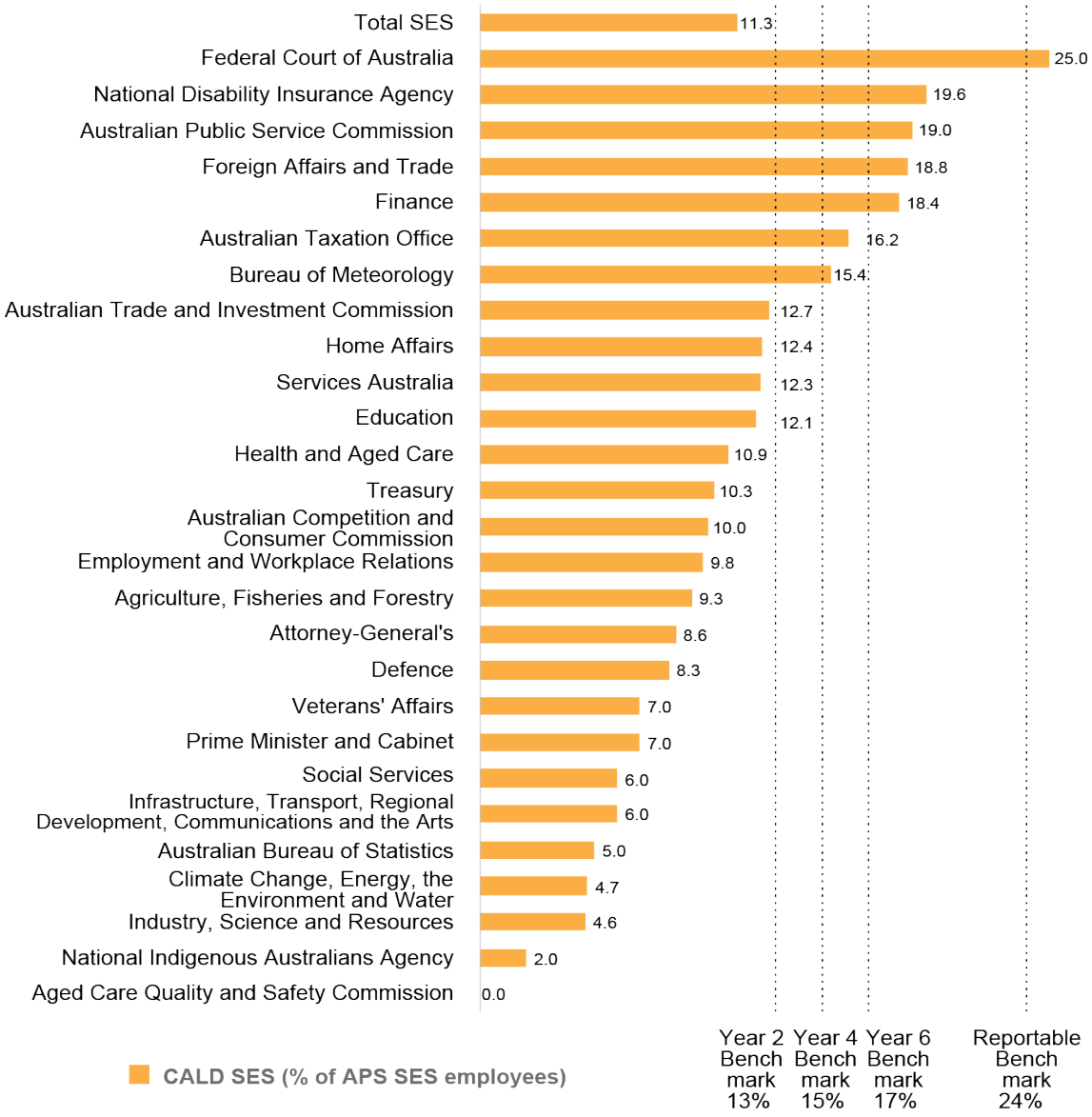
Senior Executive Service cultural and linguistic diversity

The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employment (CALD) Strategy and Action Plan introduced a reportable benchmark of 24% for CALD representation in the Senior Executive Service (SES). This will lead to an Australian Public Service leadership cohort that reflects the Australian population and wider APS. While the strategy acknowledges that CALD is multi-dimensional in nature, the single metric of 'First language not exclusively English' has been selected for tracking against the reportable benchmark.

APS agencies collect information on first language from SES employees in their human resources information systems, which they then report to the Australian Public Service Commission's centralised APS Employment Database (APSED).

Figure AB 3 and Table AB 3 show members of the SES with a first language not exclusively English in selected agencies as at 30 June 2024.

Figure AB 3: CALD SES employees by agency (at 30 June 2024)



Source: APSED

Table AB 3: CALD SES employees by agency (at 30 June 2024)

Agency	CALD SES
	% of APS SES employees
Total SES	**11.3**
Federal Court of Australia	25.0
National Disability Insurance Agency	19.6
Australian Public Service Commission	19.0
Foreign Affairs and Trade	18.8
Finance	18.4
Australian Taxation Office	16.2
Bureau of Meteorology	15.4
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	12.7
Home Affairs	12.4
Services Australia	12.3
Education	12.1
Health and Aged Care	10.9
Treasury	10.3
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	10.0
Employment and Workplace Relations	9.8
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	9.3
Attorney-General's	8.6
Defence	8.3
Veterans' Affairs	7.0
Prime Minister and Cabinet	7.0
Social Services	6.0
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	6.0
Australian Bureau of Statistics	5.0
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	4.7
Industry, Science and Resources	4.6
National Indigenous Australians Agency	2.0
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	0.0

Source: APSED

CALD proportions are calculated as a percentage of employees who have provided their first language. Calculations are based on headcount totals that exclude missing data and choose not to give values.

Communication

Effective communication is vital for a positive workplace. It fosters collaboration, networking and diverse thinking while improving outcomes. Effective communication can also prevent and buffer issues in the workplace.

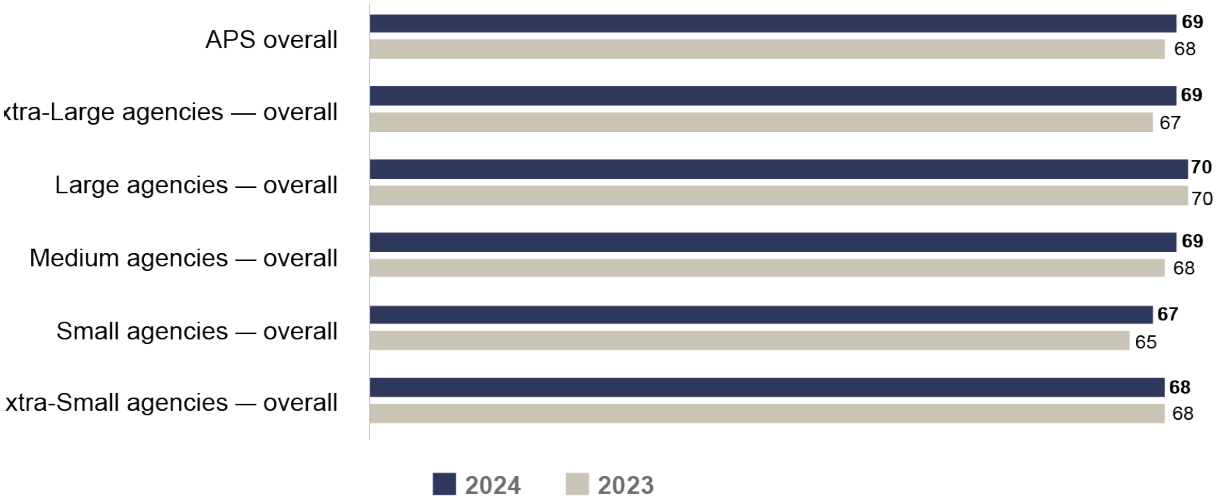
The Australian Public Service Employee Census Communication Index measures communication at individual, group and agency levels. APS Employee Census questions that contribute to the Communication Index are:

- My supervisor communicates effectively.
- My SES manager communicates effectively.
- Internal communication within my agency is effective.

Figures AB 4 to AB 9 and tables AB 4 to AB 9 report on the index scores for agencies, by agency size, for APS respondents.

Note: Only index scores for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity's website.

Figure AB 4: Communication Index, by agency size



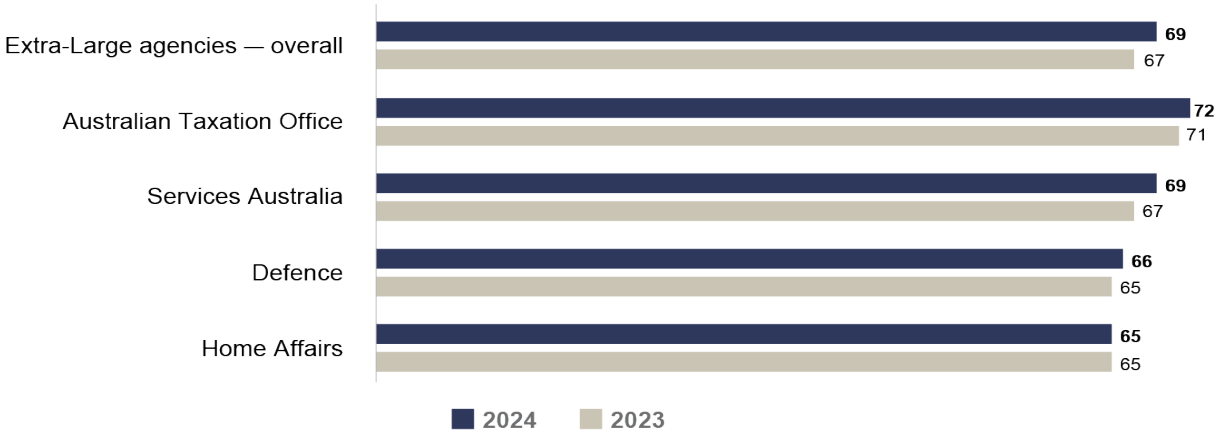
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 4: Communication Index, by agency size

Agency size	Communication Index score	
	2023	2024
Overall APS	68	69
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	67	69
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	70	70
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	68	69
Small (101 to 250 employees)	65	67
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	68	68

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 5: Communication Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)



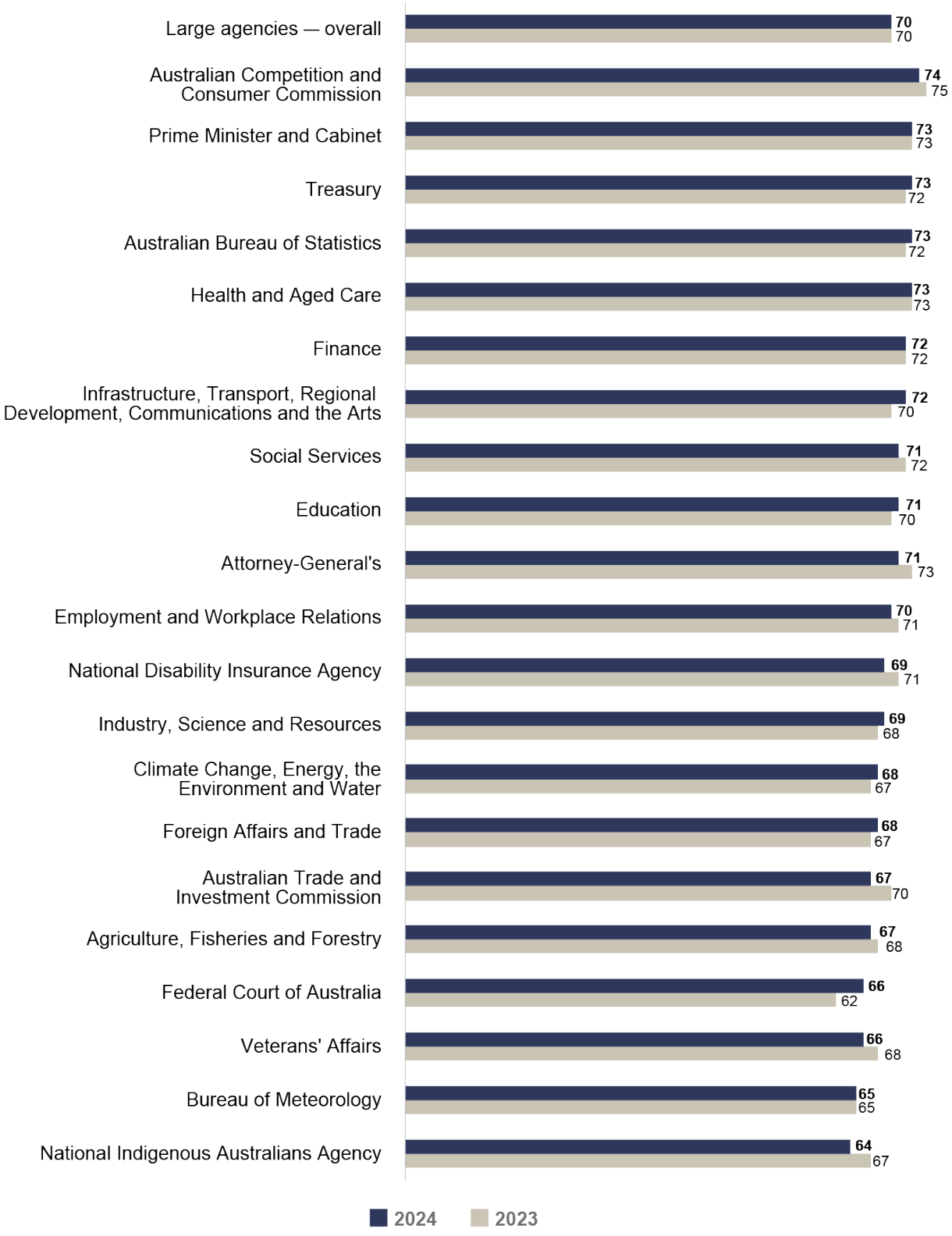
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 5: Communication Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)

Agency	Communication Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-large agencies – overall	67	69
Australian Taxation Office	71	72
Services Australia	67	69
Defence	65	66
Home Affairs	65	65

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 6: Communication Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



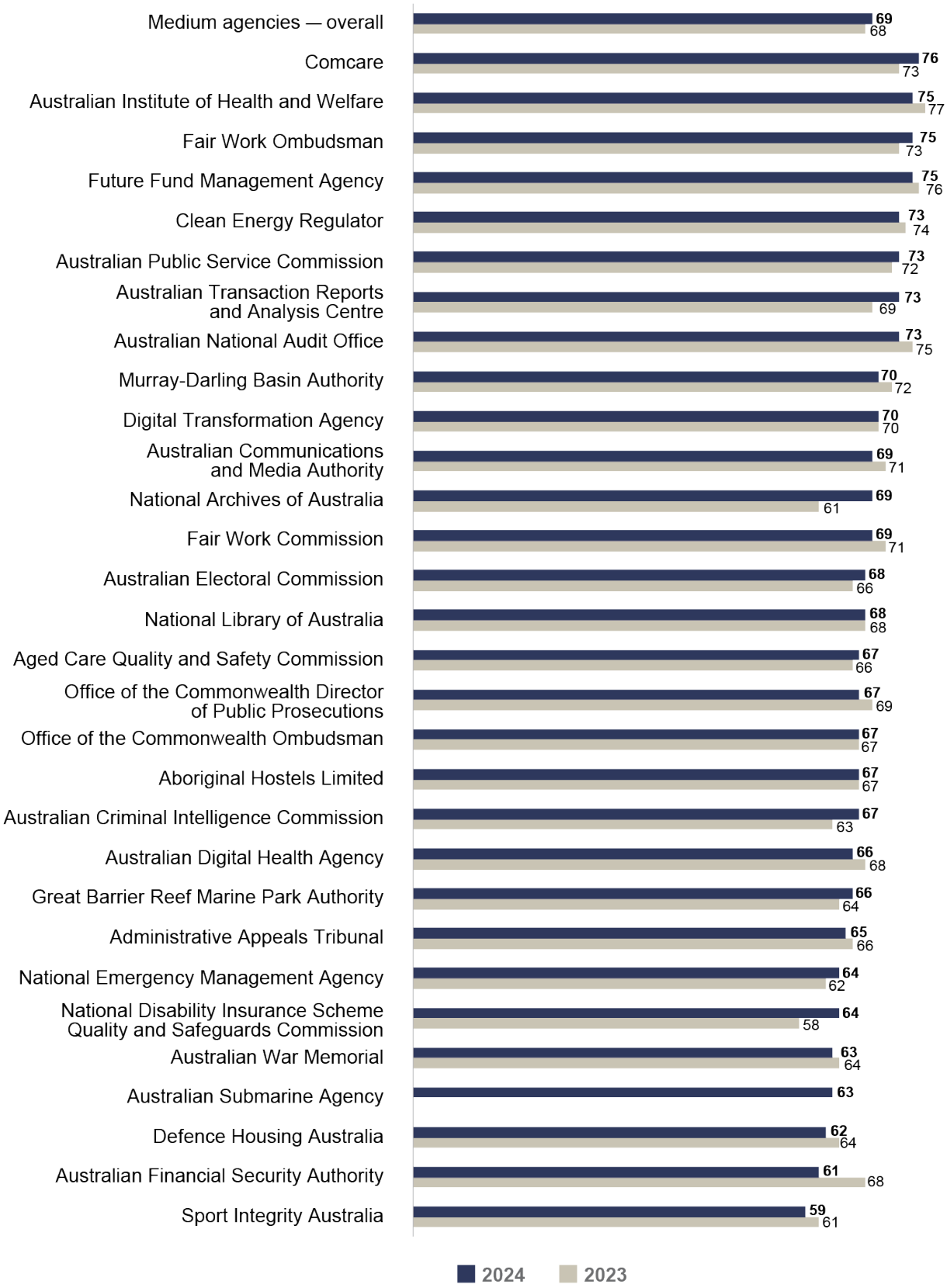
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 6: Communication Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	Communication Index score	
	2023	2024
Large agencies – overall	70	70
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	75	74
Prime Minister and Cabinet	73	73
Treasury	72	73
Australian Bureau of Statistics	72	73
Health and Aged Care	73	73
Finance	72	72
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	70	72
Social Services	72	71
Education	70	71
Attorney-General's	73	71
Employment and Workplace Relations	71	70
National Disability Insurance Agency	71	69
Industry, Science and Resources	68	69
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	67	68
Foreign Affairs and Trade	67	68
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	70	67
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	68	67
Federal Court of Australia	62	66
Veterans' Affairs	68	66
Bureau of Meteorology	65	65
National Indigenous Australians Agency	67	64

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 7: Communication Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

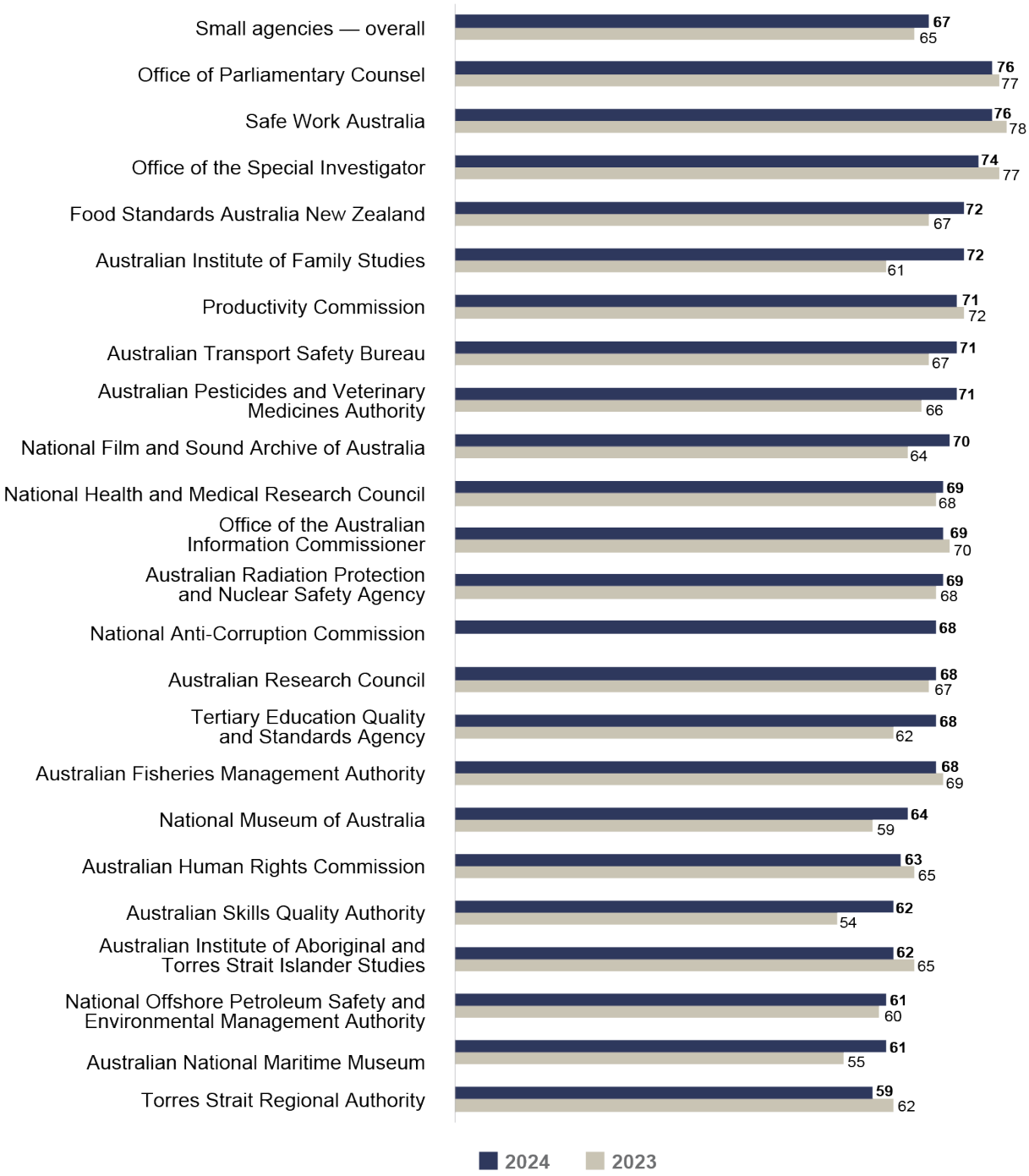
Table AB 7: Communication Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	Communication Index score	
	2023	2024
Medium agencies – overall	68	69
Comcare	73	76
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	77	75
Fair Work Ombudsman	73	75
Future Fund Management Agency	76	75
Clean Energy Regulator	74	73
Australian Public Service Commission	72	73
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	69	73
Australian National Audit Office	75	73
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	72	70
Digital Transformation Agency	70	70
Australian Communications and Media Authority	71	69
National Archives of Australia	61	69
Fair Work Commission	71	69
Australian Electoral Commission	66	68
National Library of Australia	68	68
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	66	67
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	69	67
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	67	67
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	67	67
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	63	67
Australian Digital Health Agency	68	66
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	64	66
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	66	65
National Emergency Management Agency	62	64
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	58	64
Australian War Memorial	64	63
Australian Submarine Agency		63
Defence Housing Australia	64	62
Australian Financial Security Authority	68	61
Sport Integrity Australia	61	59

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Figure AB 8: Communication Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

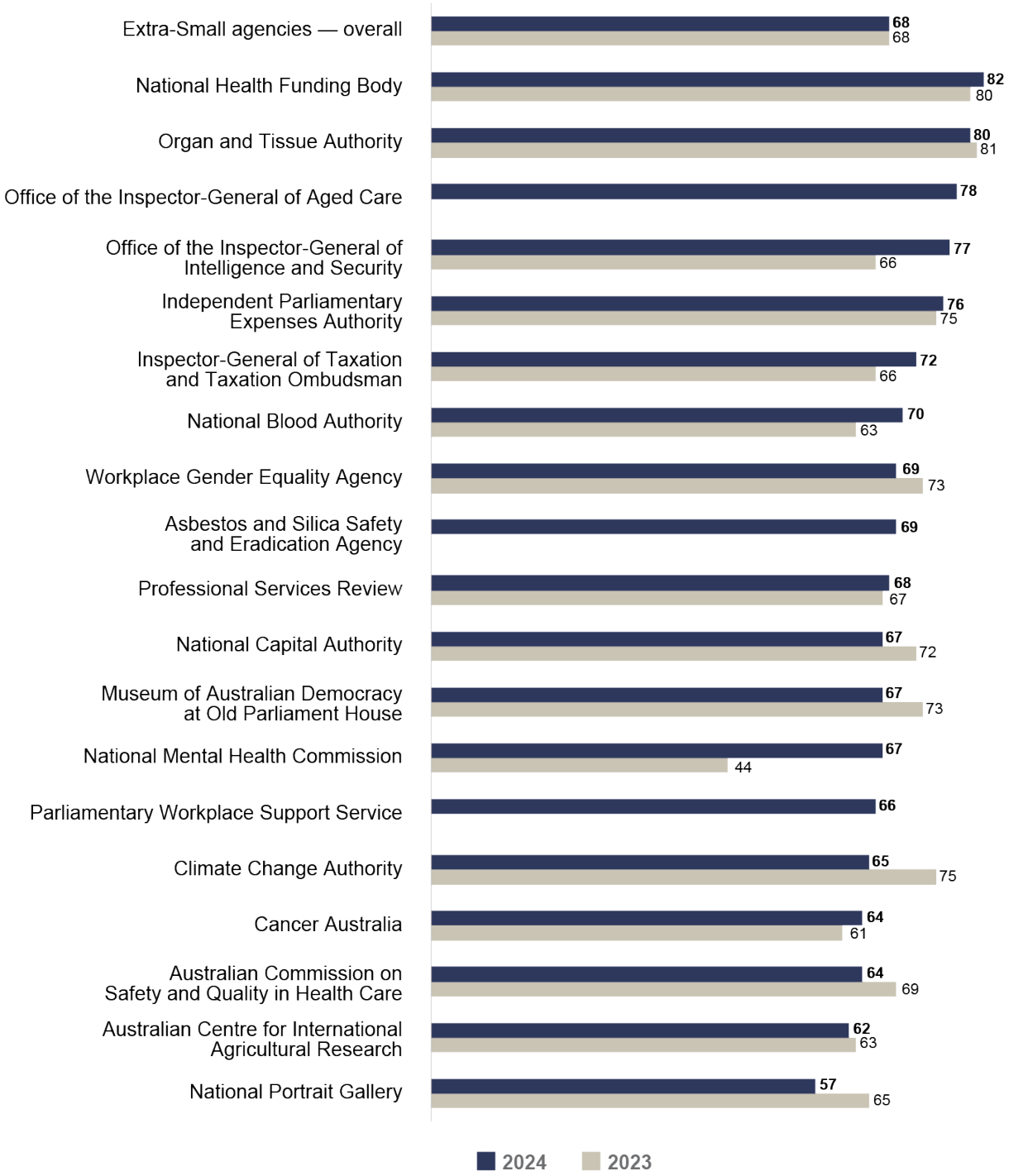
Table AB 8: Communication Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	Communication Index score	
	2023	2024
Small agencies – overall	65	67
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	77	76
Safe Work Australia	78	76
Office of the Special Investigator	77	74
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	67	72
Australian Institute of Family Studies	61	72
Productivity Commission	72	71
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	67	71
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	66	71
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	64	70
National Health and Medical Research Council	68	69
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	70	69
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	68	69
National Anti-Corruption Commission		68
Australian Research Council	67	68
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	62	68
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	69	68
National Museum of Australia	59	64
Australian Human Rights Commission	65	63
Australian Skills Quality Authority	54	62
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	65	62
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	60	61
Australian National Maritime Museum	55	61
Torres Strait Regional Authority	62	59

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

Figure AB 9: Communication Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Table AB 9: Communication Index for extra-small agencies

Agency	Communication Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-small agencies – overall	68	68
National Health Funding Body	80	82
Organ and Tissue Authority	81	80
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care		78
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	66	77
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	75	76
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	66	72
National Blood Authority	63	70
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	73	69
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency		69
Professional Services Review	67	68
National Capital Authority	72	67
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	73	67
National Mental Health Commission	44	67
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service		66
Climate Change Authority	75	65
Cancer Australia	61	64
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	69	64
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	63	62
National Portrait Gallery	65	57

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023

Employee engagement

Employee engagement is vital to the working of government. The Australian Public Service Commission's model of employee engagement measures the emotional connection and commitment employees have to working for their organisation. In this model, an engaged employee will 'say', 'stay' and 'strive':

- Say – the employee is a positive advocate of the organisation.
- Stay – the employee is committed to the organisation and wants to stay as an employee.
- Strive – the employee is willing to put in discretionary effort to excel in their job and help their organisation succeed.

The Australian Public Service Employee Census questions that contribute to the Employee Engagement Index are:

Say

- I am proud to work in my agency.
- I would recommend my agency as a good place to work.
- Overall, I am satisfied with my job.
- I believe strongly in the purpose and objectives of my agency.

Stay

- I feel a strong personal attachment to my agency.
- I feel committed to my agency's goals.

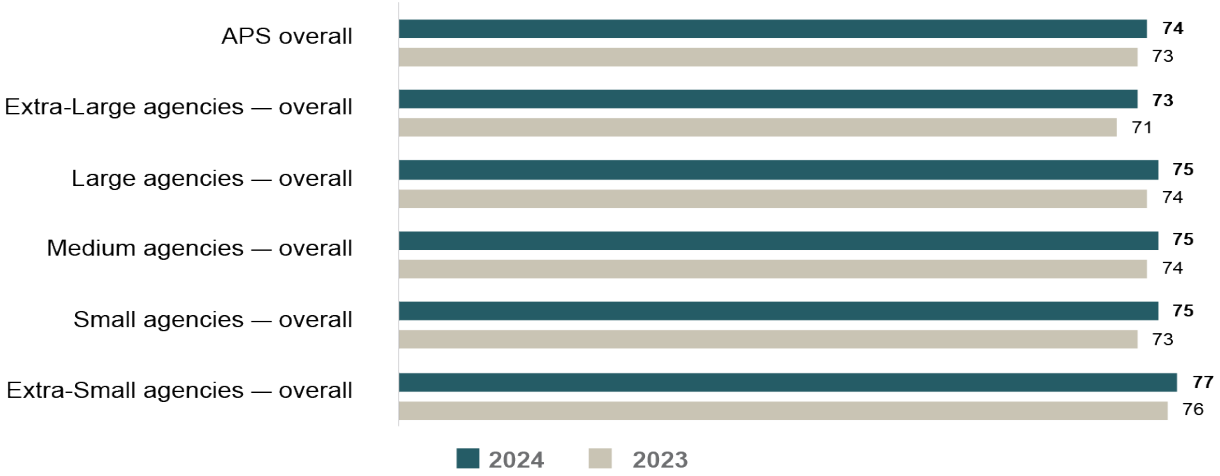
Strive

- I suggest ideas to improve our way of doing things.
- I am happy to go the 'extra mile' at work when required.
- I work beyond what is required in my job to help my agency achieve its objectives.
- My agency really inspires me to do my best work every day.

Figures AB 10 to AB 15 and tables AB 10 to AB 15 report on the index scores for agencies, by agency size, for APS respondents.

Note: Only index scores for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity's website.

Figure AB 10: Employee Engagement Index by agency size



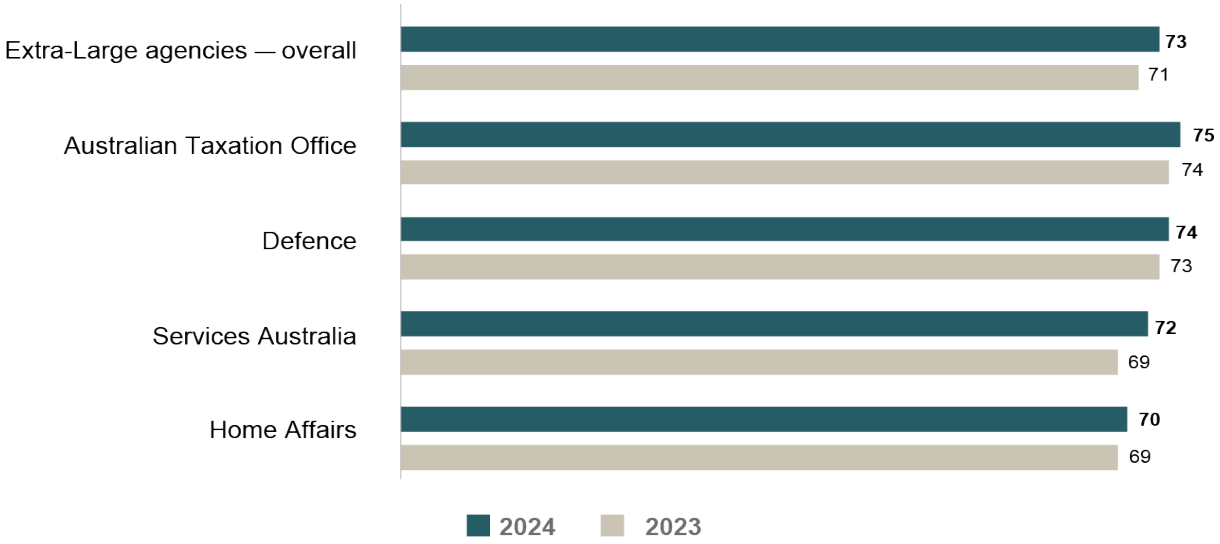
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 10: Engagement Index by agency size

Agency size	Employee Engagement Index score	
	2023	2024
Overall APS	73	74
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	71	73
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	74	75
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	74	75
Small (101 to 250 employees)	73	75
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	76	77

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 11: Employee Engagement Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)



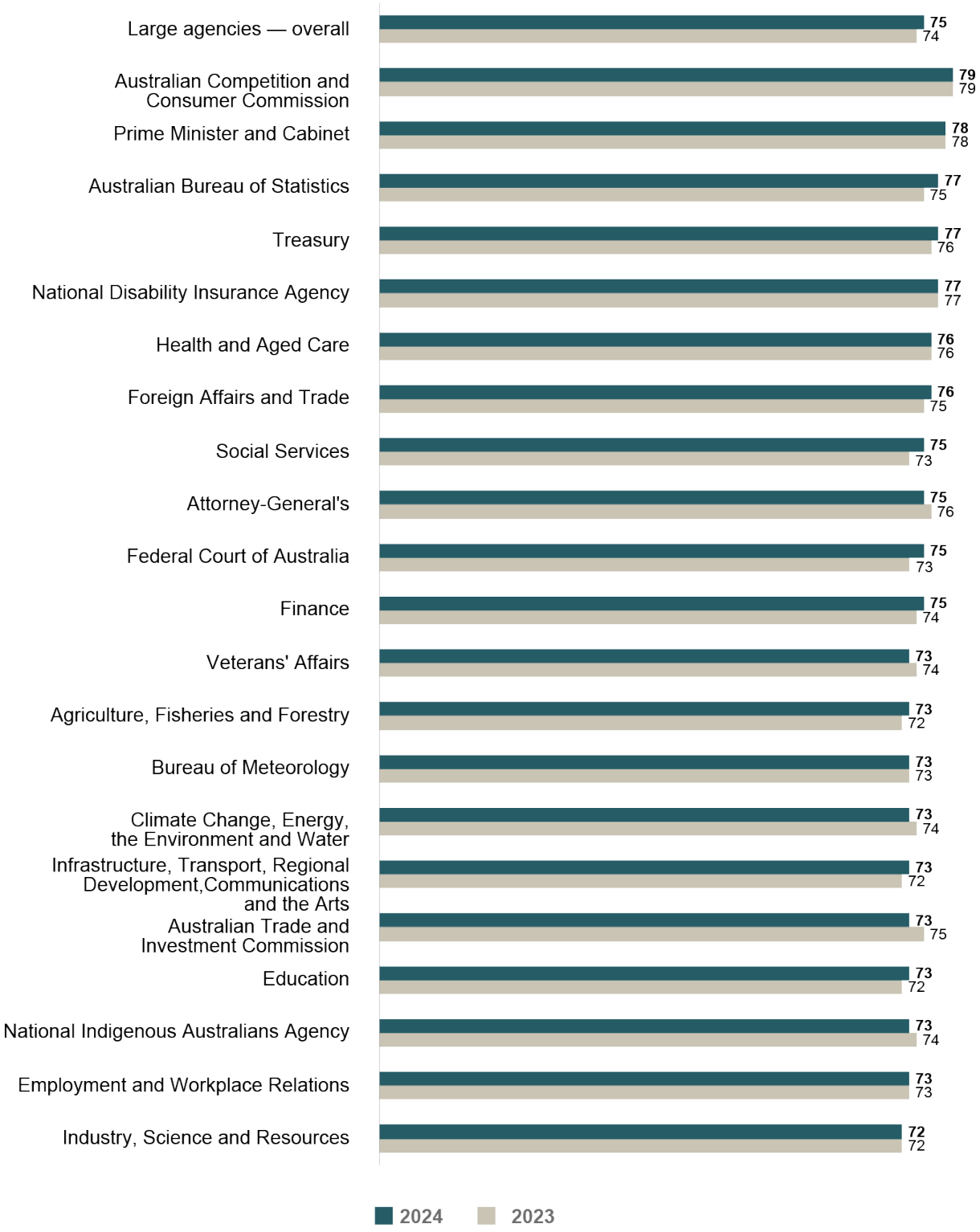
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 11: Employee Engagement Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)

Agency	Employee Engagement Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-large agencies – overall	71	73
Australian Taxation Office	74	75
Defence	73	74
Services Australia	69	72
Home Affairs	69	70

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 12: Employee Engagement Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 12: Employee Engagement Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	Employee Engagement Index score	
	2023	2024
Large agencies – overall	74	75
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	79	79
Prime Minister and Cabinet	78	78
Australian Bureau of Statistics	75	77
Treasury	76	77
National Disability Insurance Agency	77	77
Health and Aged Care	76	76
Foreign Affairs and Trade	75	76
Social Services	73	75
Attorney-General's	76	75
Federal Court of Australia	73	75
Finance	74	75
Veterans' Affairs	74	73
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	72	73
Bureau of Meteorology	73	73
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	74	73
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	72	73
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	75	73
Education	72	73
National Indigenous Australians Agency	74	73
Employment and Workplace Relations	73	73
Industry, Science and Resources	72	72

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 13: Employee Engagement Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

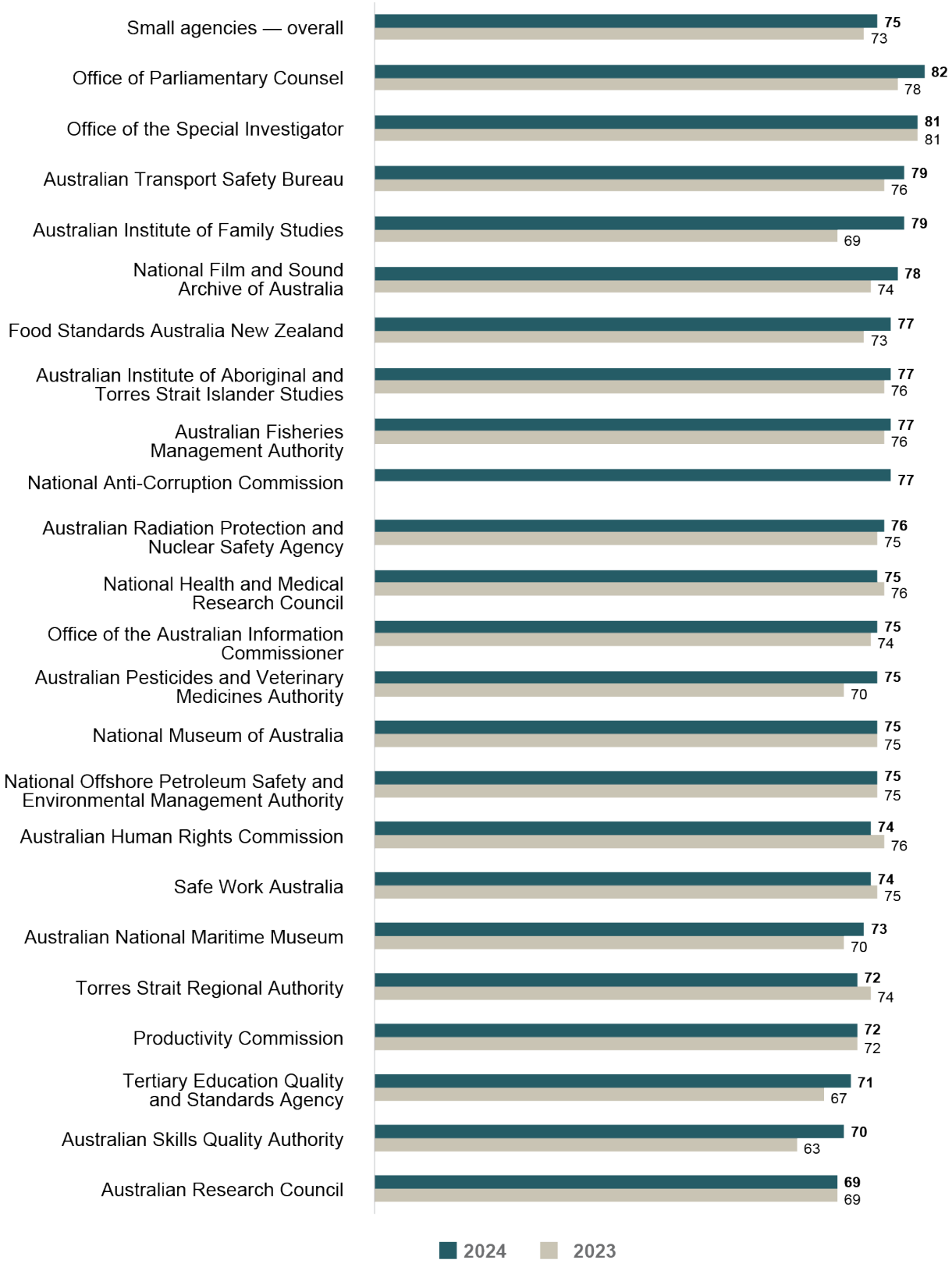
Table AB 13: Employee Engagement Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	Employee Engagement Index score	
	2023	2024
Medium agencies – overall	74	75
Future Fund Management Agency	83	82
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	81	81
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	77	80
National Library of Australia	76	78
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	77	77
Clean Energy Regulator	76	77
Fair Work Ombudsman	75	77
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	77	77
Australian Electoral Commission	75	77
Comcare	76	76
Australian Public Service Commission	72	76
National Archives of Australia	72	76
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	73	75
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	72	75
Australian National Audit Office	75	75
Digital Transformation Agency	70	75
Australian Submarine Agency		75
Fair Work Commission	75	74
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	73	74
Sport Integrity Australia	73	74
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	70	74
Australian War Memorial	73	74
Australian Communications and Media Authority	71	73
Australian Digital Health Agency	73	73
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	73	73
National Emergency Management Agency	72	72
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	71	72
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	71	72
Defence Housing Australia	72	71
Australian Financial Security Authority	73	68

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Figure AB 14: Employee Engagement Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

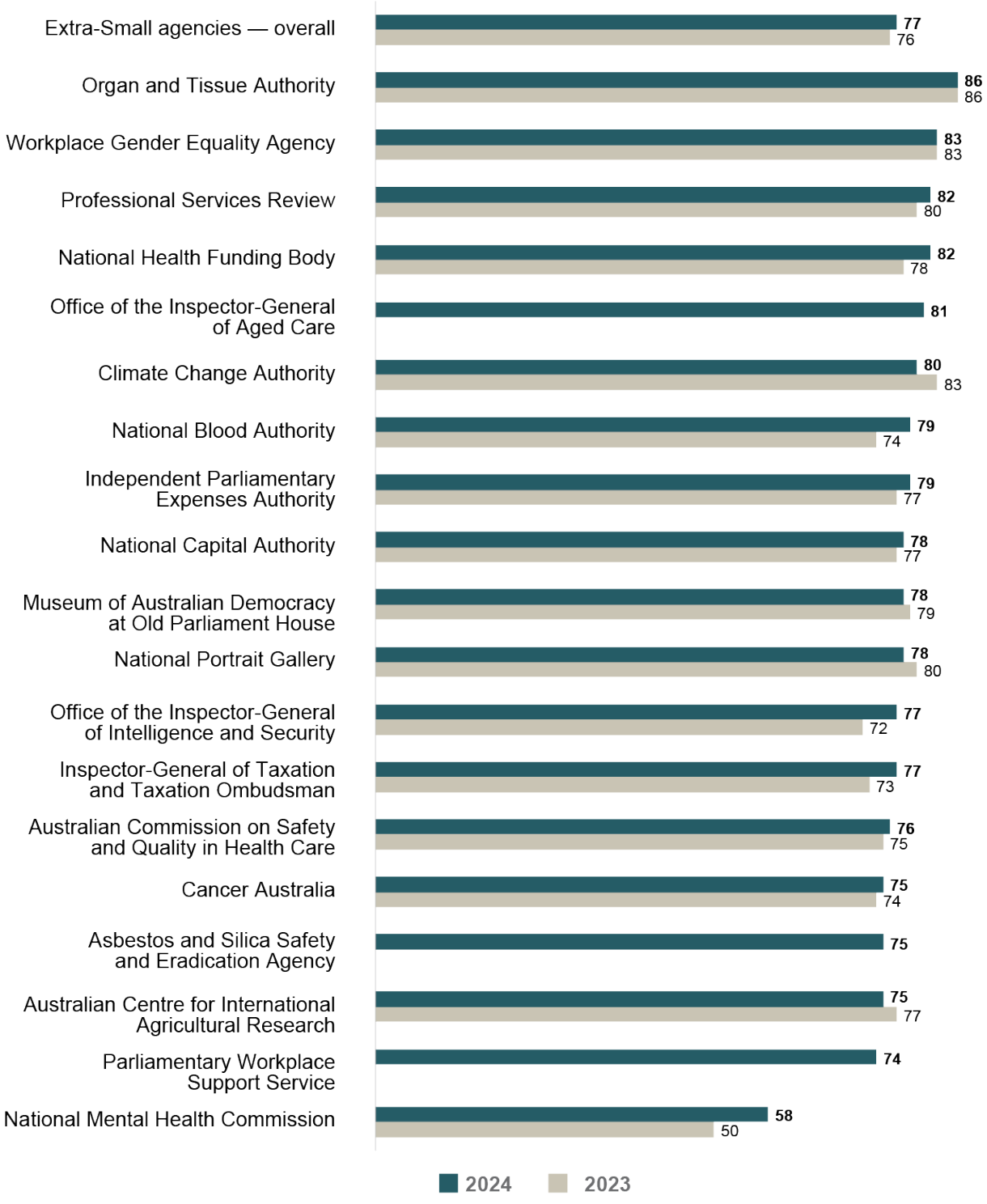
Table AB 14: Employee Engagement Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	Employee Engagement Index score	
	2023	2024
Small agencies – overall	73	75
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	78	82
Office of the Special Investigator	81	81
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	76	79
Australian Institute of Family Studies	69	79
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	74	78
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	73	77
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	76	77
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	76	77
National Anti-Corruption Commission		77
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	75	76
National Health and Medical Research Council	76	75
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	74	75
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	70	75
National Museum of Australia	75	75
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	75	75
Australian Human Rights Commission	76	74
Safe Work Australia	75	74
Australian National Maritime Museum	70	73
Torres Strait Regional Authority	74	72
Productivity Commission	72	72
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	67	71
Australian Skills Quality Authority	63	70
Australian Research Council	69	69

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

Figure AB 15: Employee Engagement Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Table AB 15: Employee Engagement Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)

Agency	Employee Engagement Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-small agencies – overall	76	77
Organ and Tissue Authority	86	86
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	83	83
Professional Services Review	80	82
National Health Funding Body	78	82
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care		81
Climate Change Authority	83	80
National Blood Authority	74	79
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	77	79
National Capital Authority	77	78
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	79	78
National Portrait Gallery	80	78
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	72	77
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	73	77
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	75	76
Cancer Australia	74	75
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency		75
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	77	75
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service		74
National Mental Health Commission	50	58

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Enabling innovation

Innovation drives performance, productivity and work outcomes. The Australian Public Service Employee Census Enabling Innovation Index measures both whether employees feel willing and able to be innovative, and whether their agency has a culture which enables them to be so.

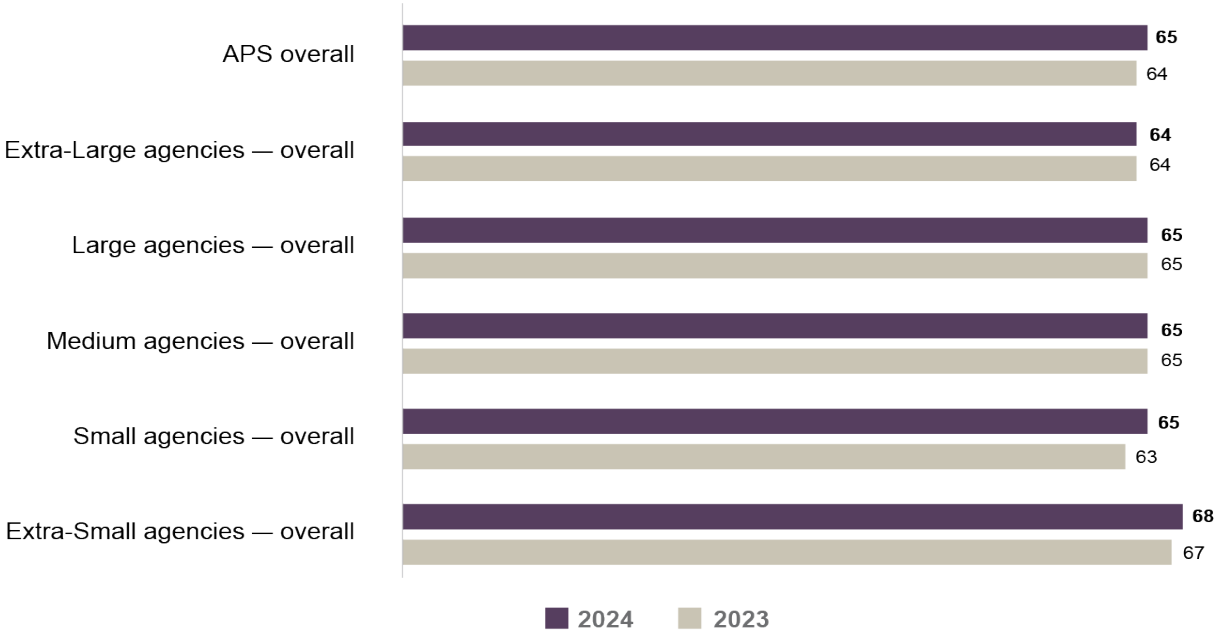
APS Employee Census questions that contribute to the Enabling Innovation Index are:

- I believe that one of my responsibilities is to continually look for new ways to improve the way we work.
- My immediate supervisor encourages me to come up with new or better ways of doing things.
- People are recognised for coming up with new and innovative ways of working.
- My agency inspires me to come up with new or better ways of doing things.
- My agency recognises and supports the notion that failure is a part of innovation.

Figures AB 16 to AB 21 and tables AB 16 to AB 21 report on the index scores for agencies, by agency size, for APS respondents.

Note: Only index scores for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity's website.

Figure AB 16: Enabling Innovation Index by agency size



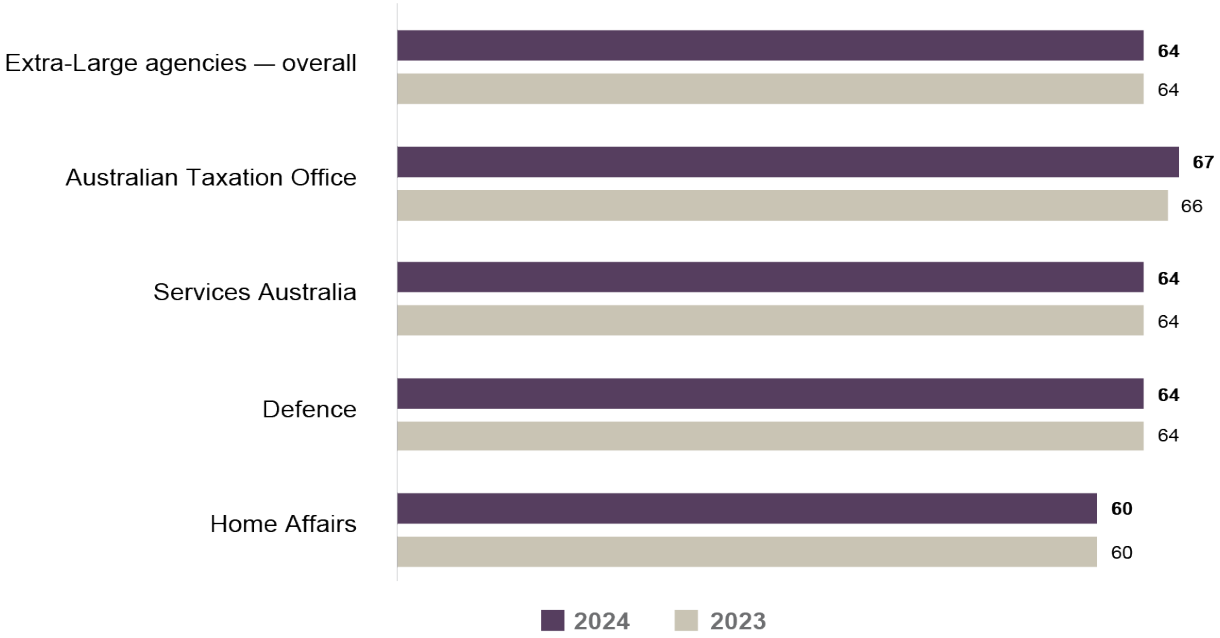
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 16: Enabling Innovation Index by agency size

Agency size	Enabling Innovation Index score	
	2023	2024
Overall APS	64	65
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	64	64
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	65	65
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	65	65
Small (101 to 250 employees)	63	65
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	67	68

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 17: Enabling Innovation Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)



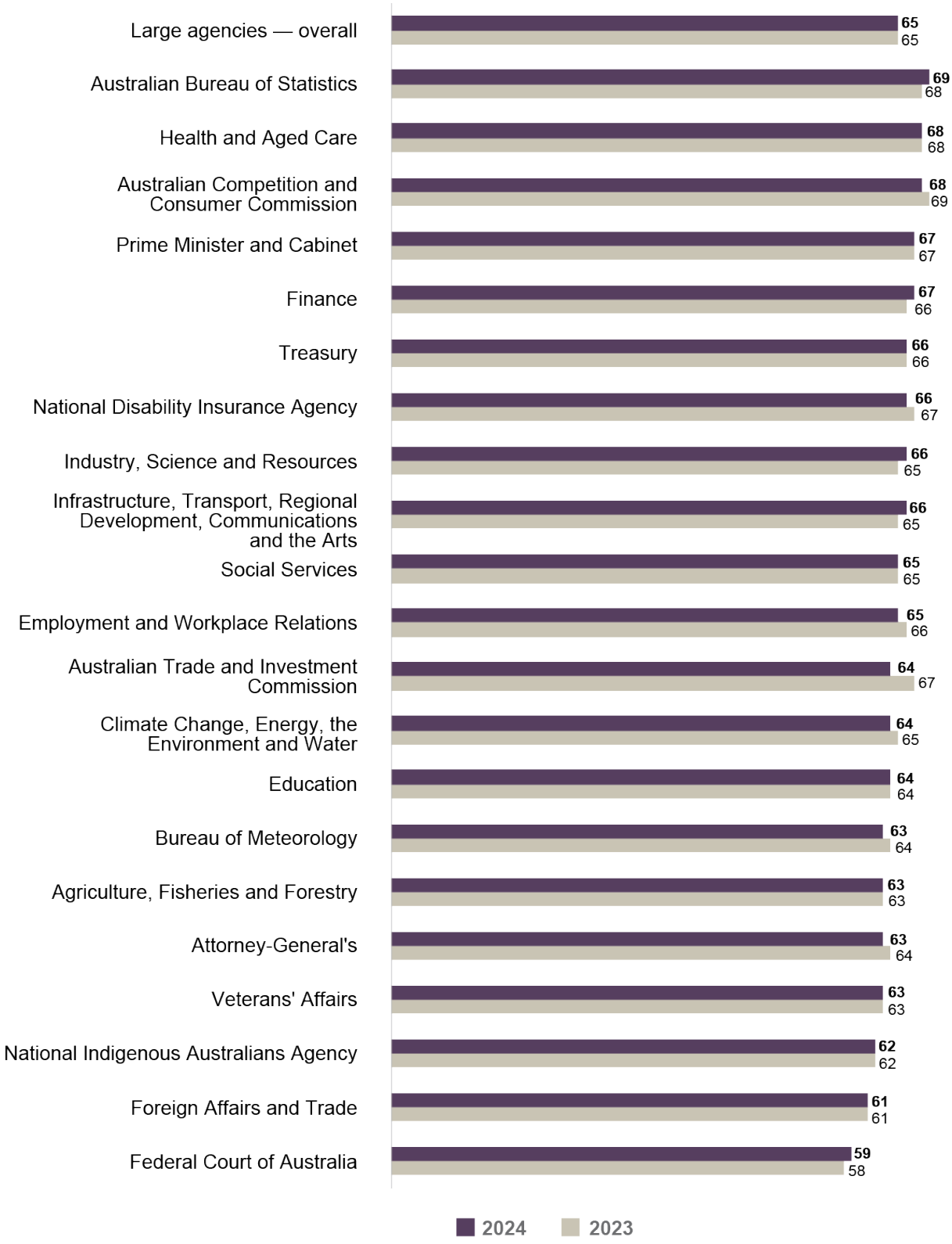
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 17: Enabling Innovation Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)

Agency	Enabling Innovation Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-large agencies – overall	64	64
Australian Taxation Office	66	67
Services Australia	64	64
Defence	64	64
Home Affairs	60	60

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 18: Enabling Innovation Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



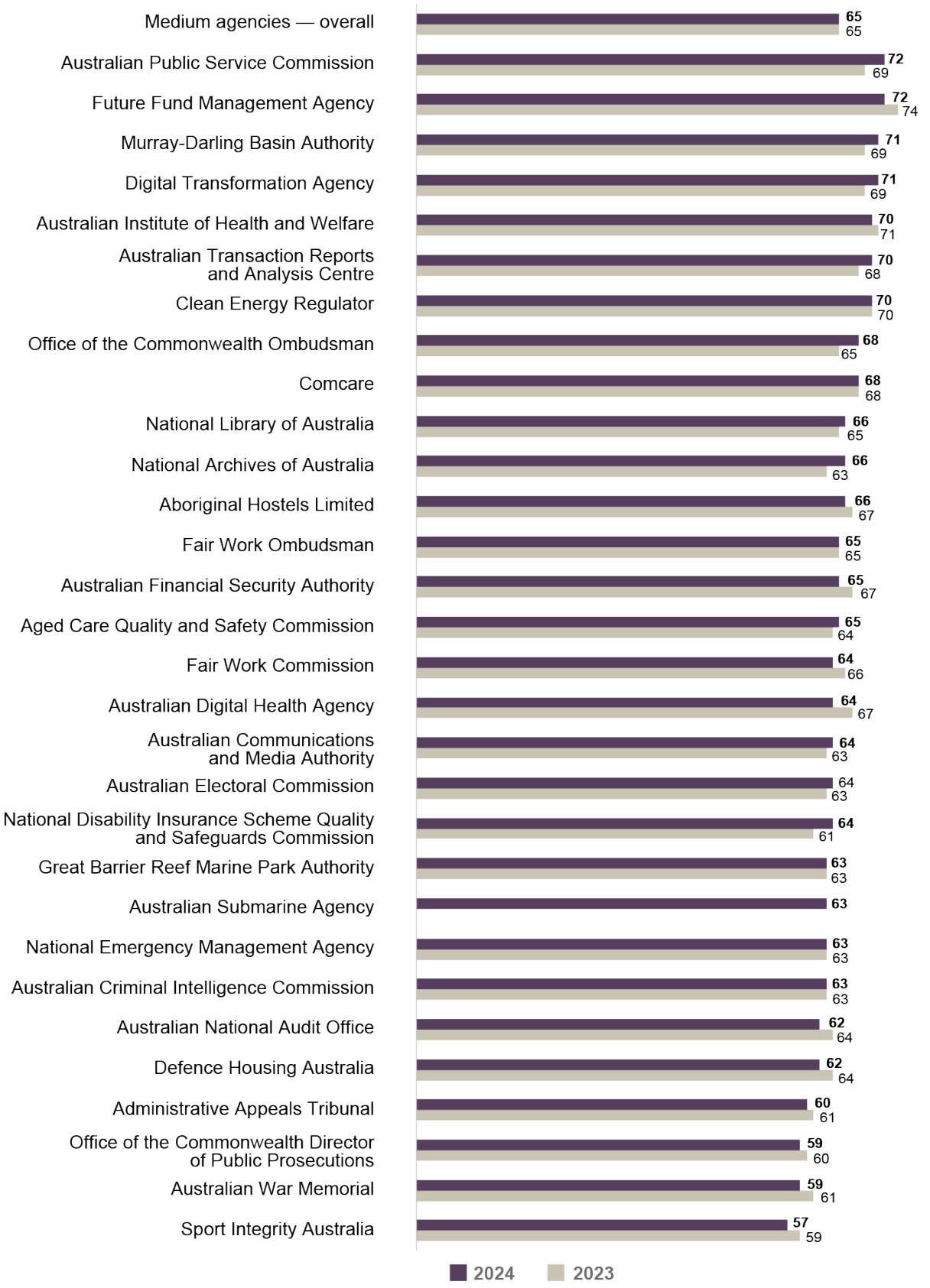
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 18: Enabling Innovation Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	Enabling Innovation Index score	
	2023	2024
Large agencies – overall	65	65
Australian Bureau of Statistics	68	69
Health and Aged Care	68	68
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	69	68
Prime Minister and Cabinet	67	67
Finance	66	67
Treasury	66	66
National Disability Insurance Agency	67	66
Industry, Science and Resources	65	66
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	65	66
Social Services	65	65
Employment and Workplace Relations	66	65
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	67	64
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	65	64
Education	64	64
Bureau of Meteorology	64	63
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	63	63
Attorney-General's	64	63
Veterans' Affairs	63	63
National Indigenous Australians Agency	62	62
Foreign Affairs and Trade	61	61
Federal Court of Australia	58	59

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 19: Enabling Innovation Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Table AB 19: Enabling Innovation Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	Enabling Innovation Index score	
	2023	2024
Medium agencies – overall	65	65
Australian Public Service Commission	69	72
Future Fund Management Agency	74	72
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	69	71
Digital Transformation Agency	69	71
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	71	70
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	68	70
Clean Energy Regulator	70	70
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	65	68
Comcare	68	68
National Library of Australia	65	66
National Archives of Australia	63	66
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	67	66
Fair Work Ombudsman	65	65
Australian Financial Security Authority	67	65
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	64	65
Fair Work Commission	66	64
Australian Digital Health Agency	67	64
Australian Communications and Media Authority	63	64
Australian Electoral Commission	63	64
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	61	64
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	63	63
Australian Submarine Agency		63
National Emergency Management Agency	63	63
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	63	63
Australian National Audit Office	64	62
Defence Housing Australia	64	62
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	61	60
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	60	59
Australian War Memorial	61	59
Sport Integrity Australia	59	57

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Figure AB 20: Enabling Innovation Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

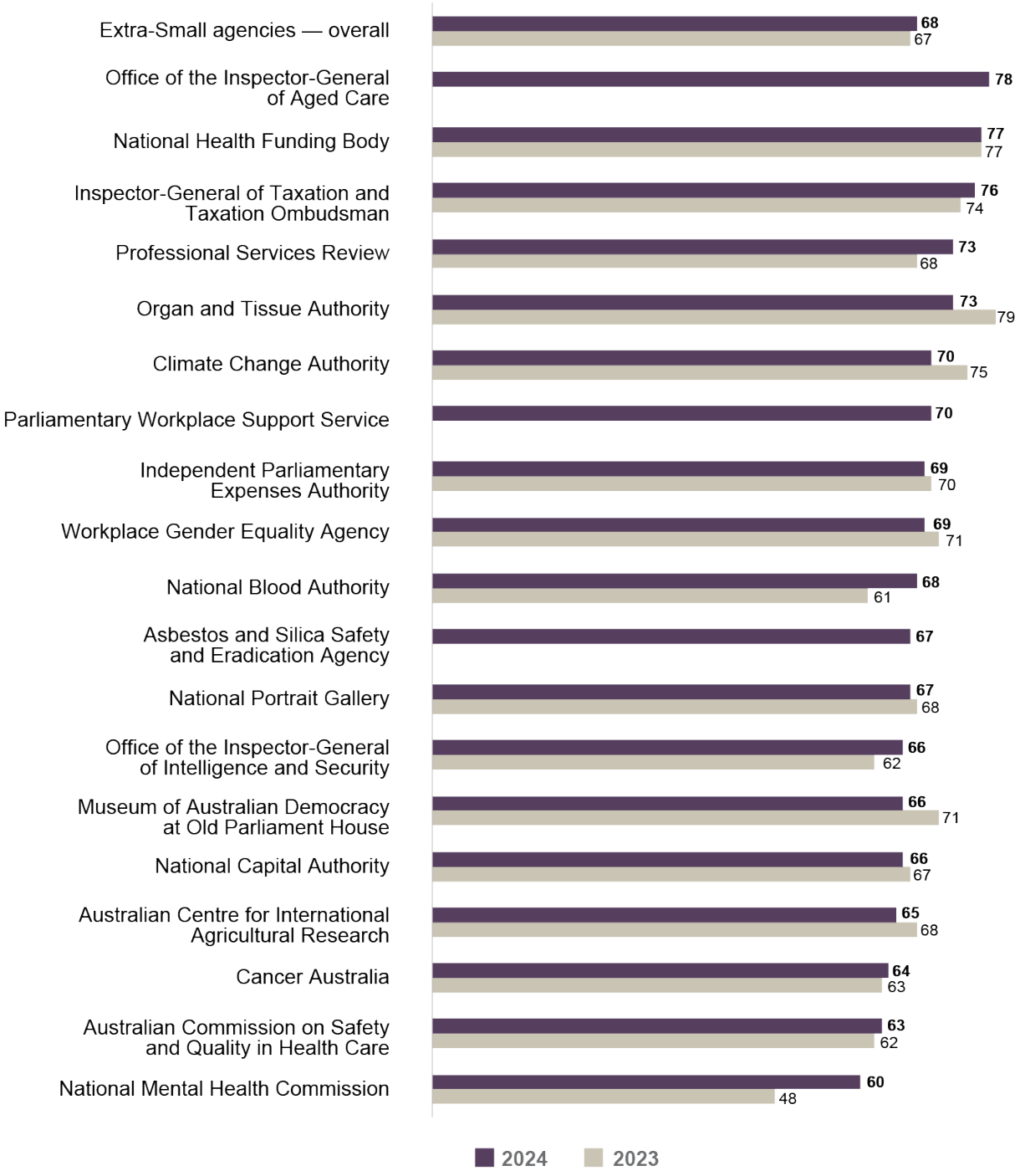
Table AB 20: Enabling Innovation Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	Enabling Innovation Index score	
	2023	2024
Small agencies – overall	63	65
Office of the Special Investigator	73	79
Safe Work Australia	69	69
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	64	68
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	68	68
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	64	68
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	63	68
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	61	67
Australian Institute of Family Studies	62	67
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	67	66
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	61	66
National Health and Medical Research Council	65	66
National Anti-Corruption Commission		65
Australian National Maritime Museum	60	64
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	66	64
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	67	64
Australian Research Council	64	63
National Museum of Australia	63	63
Australian Skills Quality Authority	60	63
Productivity Commission	64	62
Torres Strait Regional Authority	63	61
Australian Human Rights Commission	63	61
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	59	61
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	60	60

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

Figure AB 21: Enabling Innovation Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Table AB 21: Enabling Innovation Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)

Agency	Enabling Innovation Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-small agencies – overall	67	68
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care		78
National Health Funding Body	77	77
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	74	76
Professional Services Review	68	73
Organ and Tissue Authority	79	73
Climate Change Authority	75	70
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service		70
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	70	69
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	71	69
National Blood Authority	61	68
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency		67
National Portrait Gallery	68	67
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	62	66
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	71	66
National Capital Authority	67	66
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	68	65
Cancer Australia	63	64
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	62	63
National Mental Health Commission	48	60

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Perceptions of SES leaders

The Australian Public Service Employee Census Senior Executive Service (SES) Manager Leadership Index measures how employees view the leadership behaviours of their immediate SES manager.

APS Employee Census questions that contribute to the SES Manager Leadership Index are:

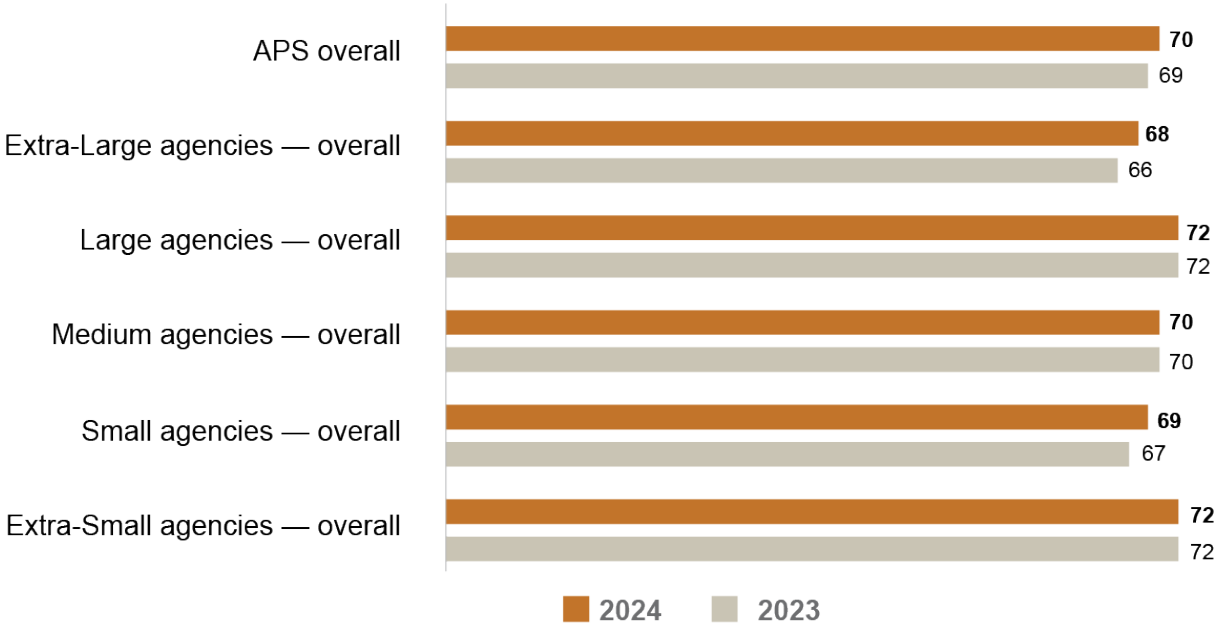
- My SES manager clearly articulates the direction and priorities for our area.
- My SES manager presents convincing arguments and persuades others towards an outcome.
- My SES manager promotes cooperation within and between agencies.
- My SES manager encourages innovation and creativity.
- My SES manager creates an environment that enables us to deliver our best.
- My SES manager ensures that work effort contributes to the strategic direction of the agency and the APS.

Figures AB 22 to AB 27 and tables AB 22 to AB 27 report on SES Manager Leadership Index scores for agencies, by agency size, for APS respondents.

SES Manager Leadership Index scores are not presented for agencies with fewer than 2 SES officers as at 30 June 2023 or 30 June 2024.

Note: Only index scores for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity's website.

Figure AB 22: SES Manager Leadership Index by agency size



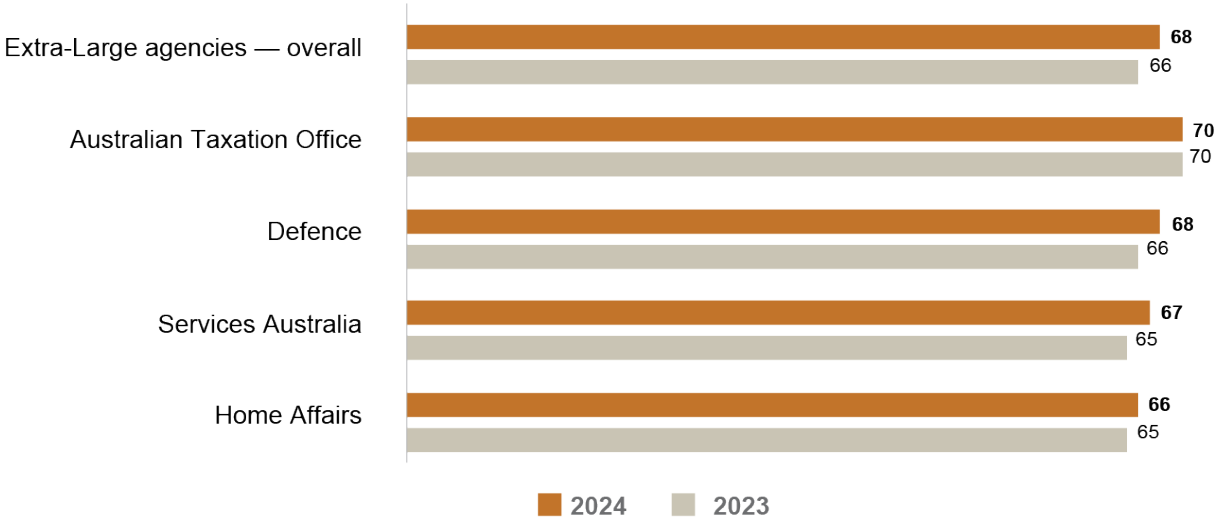
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 22: SES Manager Leadership Index by agency size

Agency size	SES Manager Leadership Index score	
	2023	2024
Overall APS	69	70
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	66	68
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	72	72
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	70	70
Small (101 to 250 employees)	67	69
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	72	72

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 23: SES Manager Leadership Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)



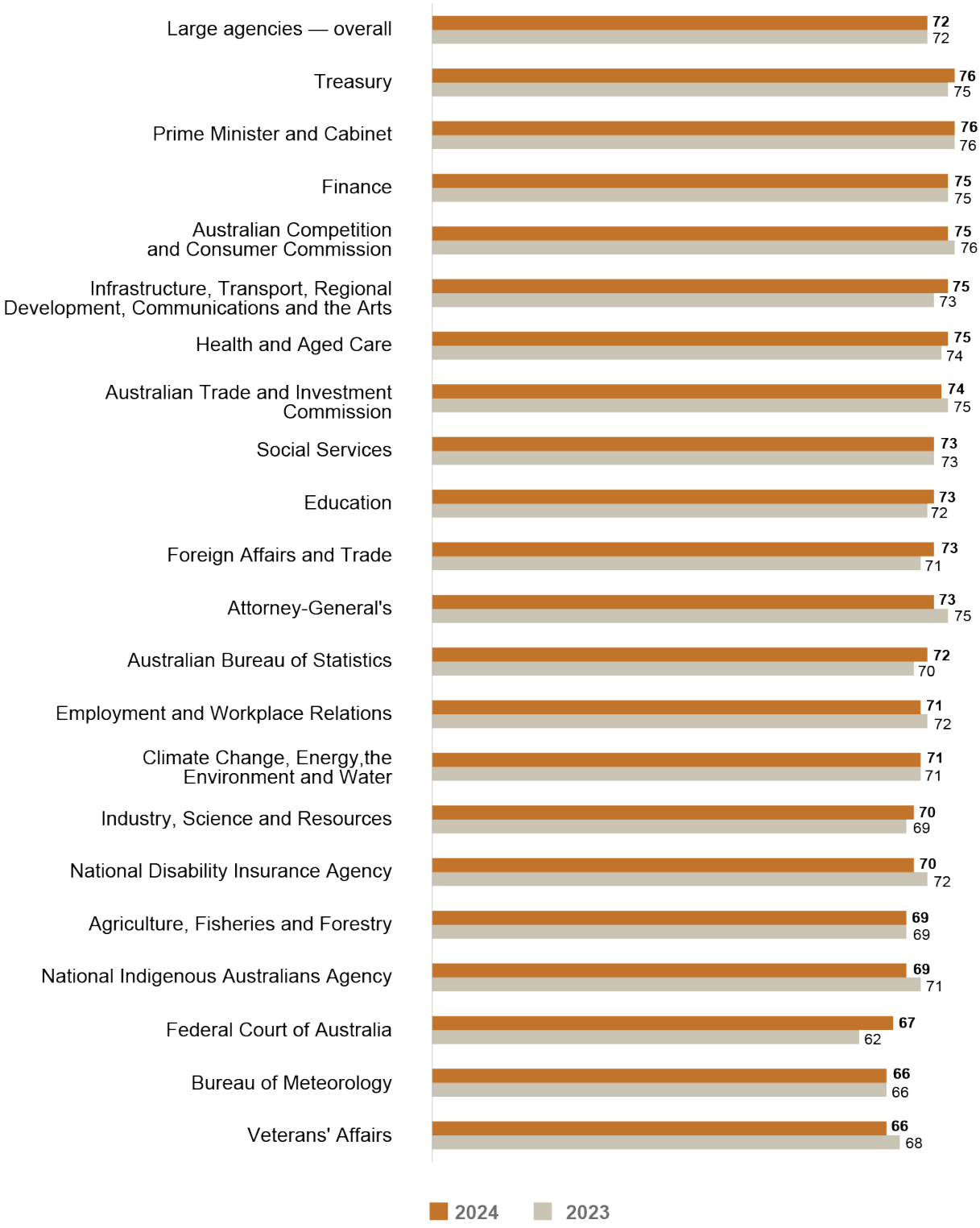
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 23: SES Manager Leadership Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)

Agency	SES Manager Leadership Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-large agencies – overall	66	68
Australian Taxation Office	70	70
Defence	66	68
Services Australia	65	67
Home Affairs	65	66

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 24: SES Manager Leadership Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



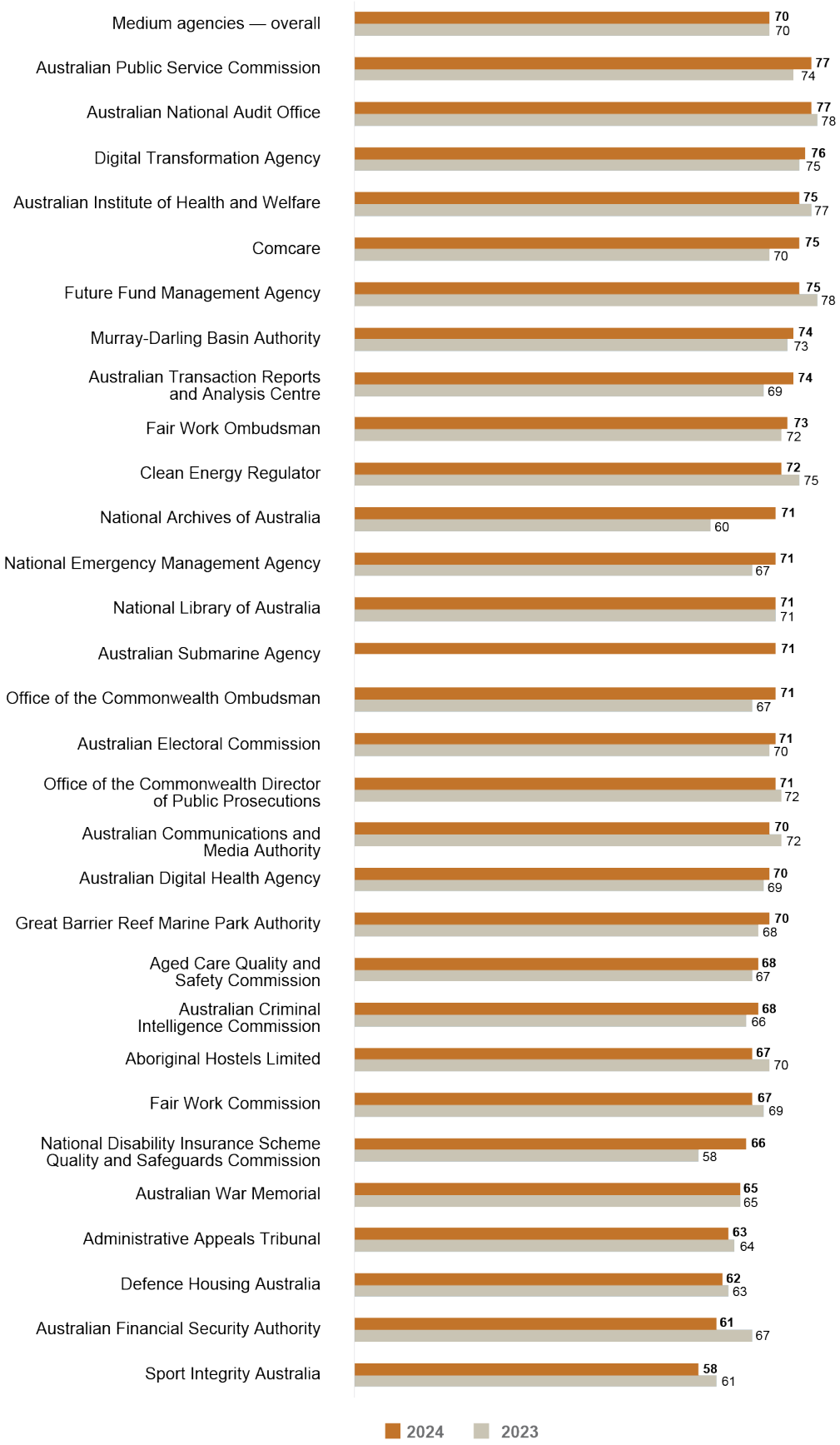
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 24: SES Manager Leadership Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	SES Manager Leadership Index score	
	2023	2024
Large agencies – overall	72	72
Treasury	75	76
Prime Minister and Cabinet	76	76
Finance	75	75
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	76	75
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	73	75
Health and Aged Care	74	75
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	75	74
Social Services	73	73
Education	72	73
Foreign Affairs and Trade	71	73
Attorney-General's	75	73
Australian Bureau of Statistics	70	72
Employment and Workplace Relations	72	71
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	71	71
Industry, Science and Resources	69	70
National Disability Insurance Agency	72	70
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	69	69
National Indigenous Australians Agency	71	69
Federal Court of Australia	62	67
Bureau of Meteorology	66	66
Veterans' Affairs	68	66

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 25: SES Manager Leadership Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

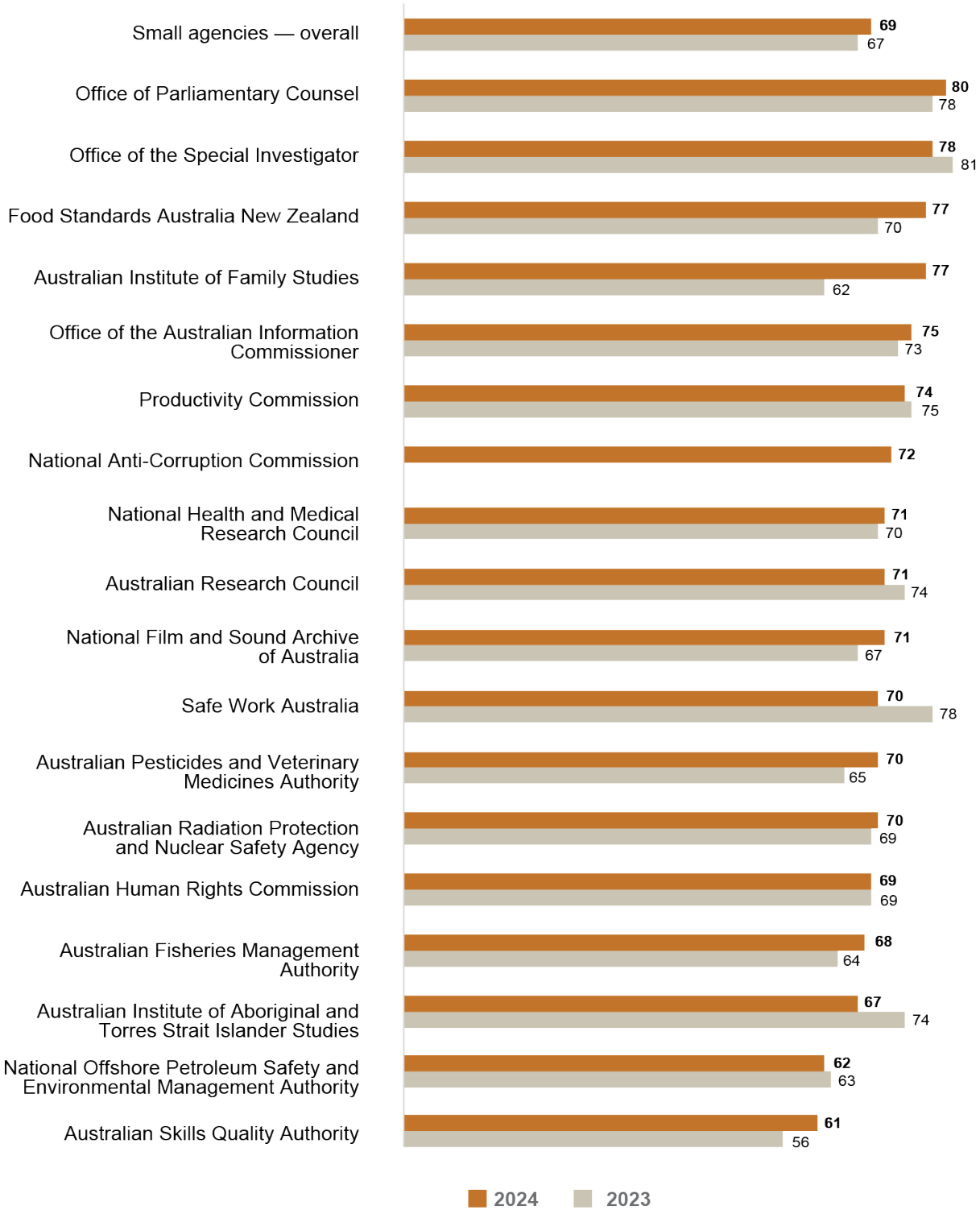
Table AB 25: SES Manager Leadership Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	SES Manager Leadership Index score	
	2023	2024
Medium agencies – overall	70	70
Australian Public Service Commission	74	77
Australian National Audit Office	78	77
Digital Transformation Agency	75	76
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	77	75
Comcare	70	75
Future Fund Management Agency	78	75
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	73	74
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	69	74
Fair Work Ombudsman	72	73
Clean Energy Regulator	75	72
National Archives of Australia	60	71
National Emergency Management Agency	67	71
National Library of Australia	71	71
Australian Submarine Agency		71
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	67	71
Australian Electoral Commission	70	71
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	72	71
Australian Communications and Media Authority	72	70
Australian Digital Health Agency	69	70
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	68	70
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	67	68
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	66	68
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	70	67
Fair Work Commission	69	67
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	58	66
Australian War Memorial	65	65
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	64	63
Defence Housing Australia	63	62
Australian Financial Security Authority	67	61
Sport Integrity Australia	61	58

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Figure AB 26: SES Manager Leadership Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

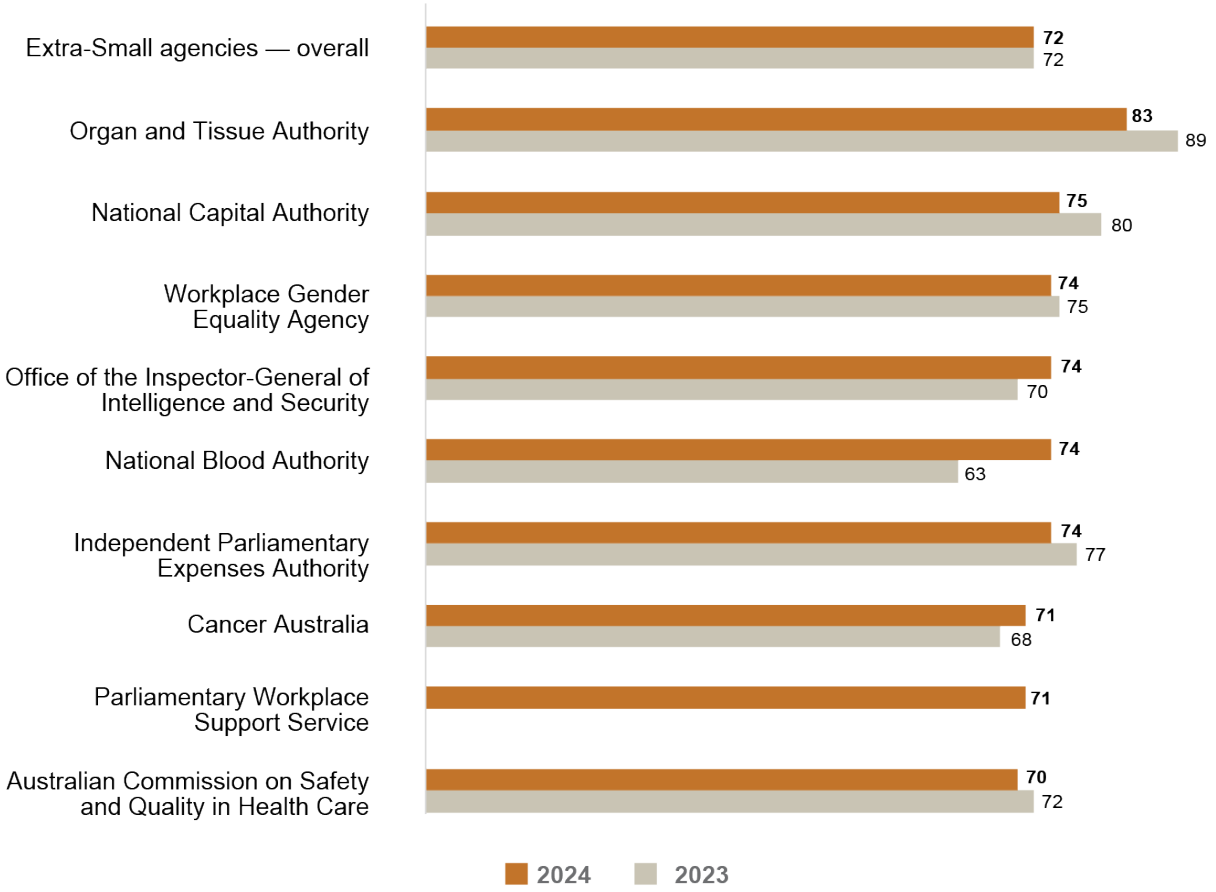
Table AB 26: SES Manager Leadership Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	SES Manager Leadership Index score	
	2023	2024
Small agencies – overall	67	69
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	78	80
Office of the Special Investigator	81	78
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	70	77
Australian Institute of Family Studies	62	77
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	73	75
Productivity Commission	75	74
National Anti-Corruption Commission		72
National Health and Medical Research Council	70	71
Australian Research Council	74	71
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	67	71
Safe Work Australia	78	70
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	65	70
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	69	70
Australian Human Rights Commission	69	69
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	64	68
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	74	67
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	63	62
Australian Skills Quality Authority	56	61

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

Figure AB 27: SES Manager Leadership Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service was not an APS agency in 2023.

Table AB 27: SES Manager Leadership Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)

Agency	SES Manager Leadership Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-small agencies – overall	72	72
Organ and Tissue Authority	89	83
National Capital Authority	80	75
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	75	74
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	70	74
National Blood Authority	63	74
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	77	74
Cancer Australia	68	71
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service		71
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	72	70

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service was not an APS agency in 2023.

Perceptions of immediate supervisors

The Australian Public Service Employee Census Immediate Supervisor Index measures how employees view the leadership behaviours of their immediate supervisor.

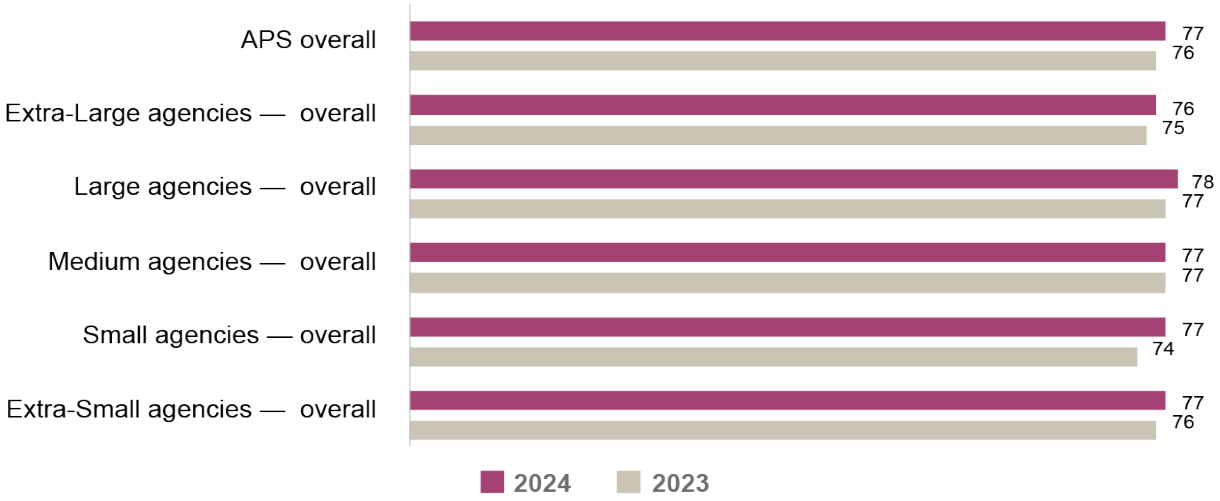
APS Employee Census questions that contribute to the Immediate Supervisor Index are:

- My supervisor engages with staff on how to respond to future challenges.
- My supervisor can deliver difficult advice whilst maintaining relationships.
- My supervisor invites a range of views, including those different to their own.
- My supervisor encourages my team to regularly review and improve our work.
- My supervisor is invested in my development.
- My supervisor ensures that my workgroup delivers on what we are responsible for.

Figures AB 28 to AB 33 and tables AB 28 to AB 33 report on Immediate Supervisor Index scores for agencies, by agency size, for APS respondents.

Note: Only index scores for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity's website.

Figure AB 28: Immediate Supervisor Index by agency size



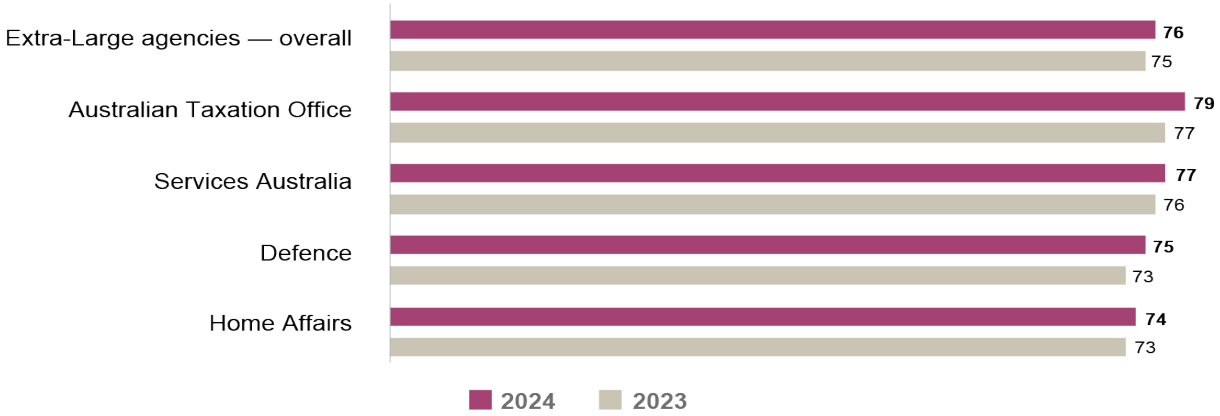
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 28: Immediate Supervisor Index by agency size

Agency size	Immediate Supervisor Index score	
	2023	2024
Overall APS	76	77
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	75	76
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	77	78
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	77	77
Small (101 to 250 employees)	74	77
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	76	77

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 29: Immediate Supervisor Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)



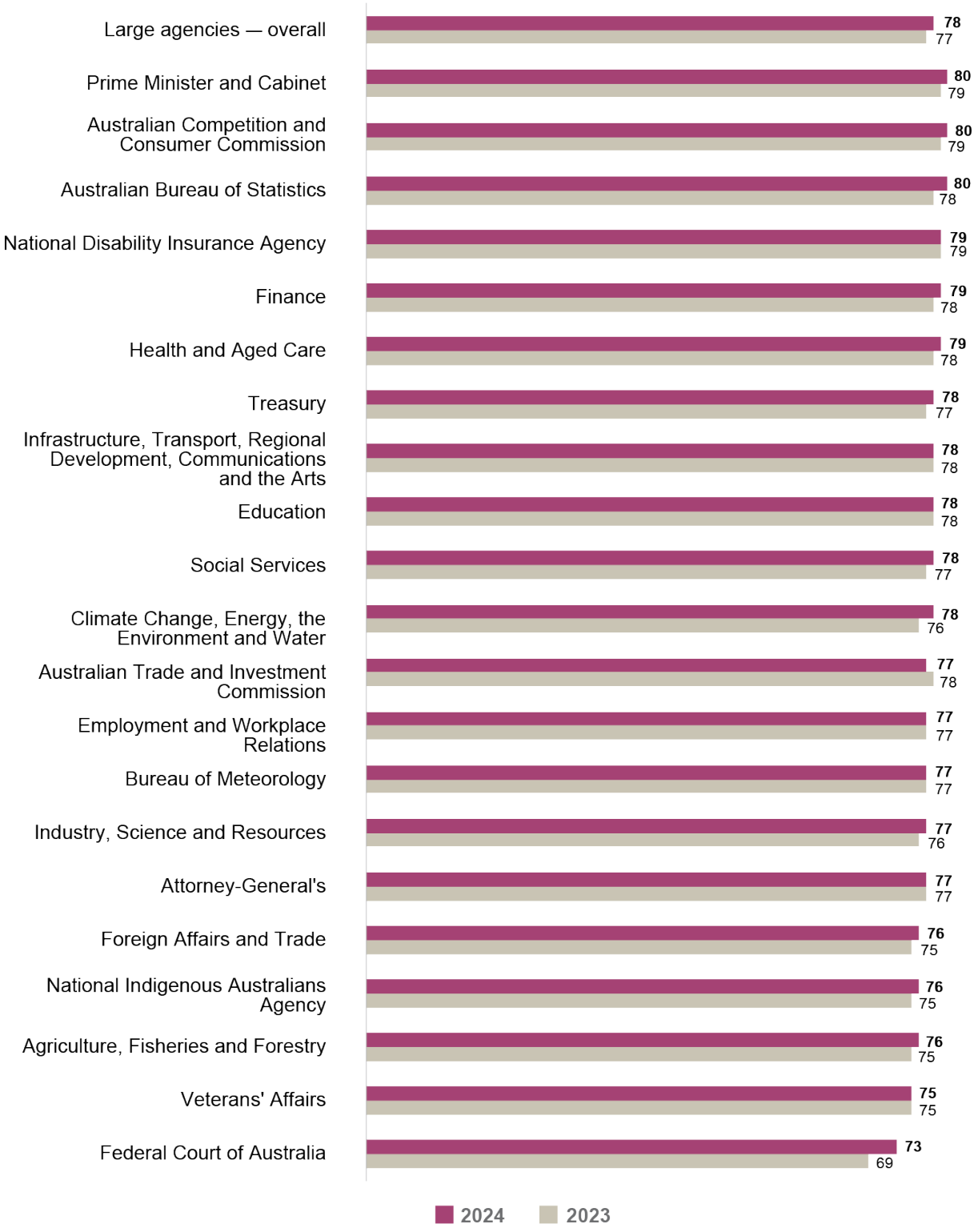
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 29: Immediate Supervisor Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)

Agency	Immediate Supervisor Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-large agencies – overall	75	76
Australian Taxation Office	77	79
Services Australia	76	77
Defence	73	75
Home Affairs	73	74

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 30: Immediate Supervisor Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



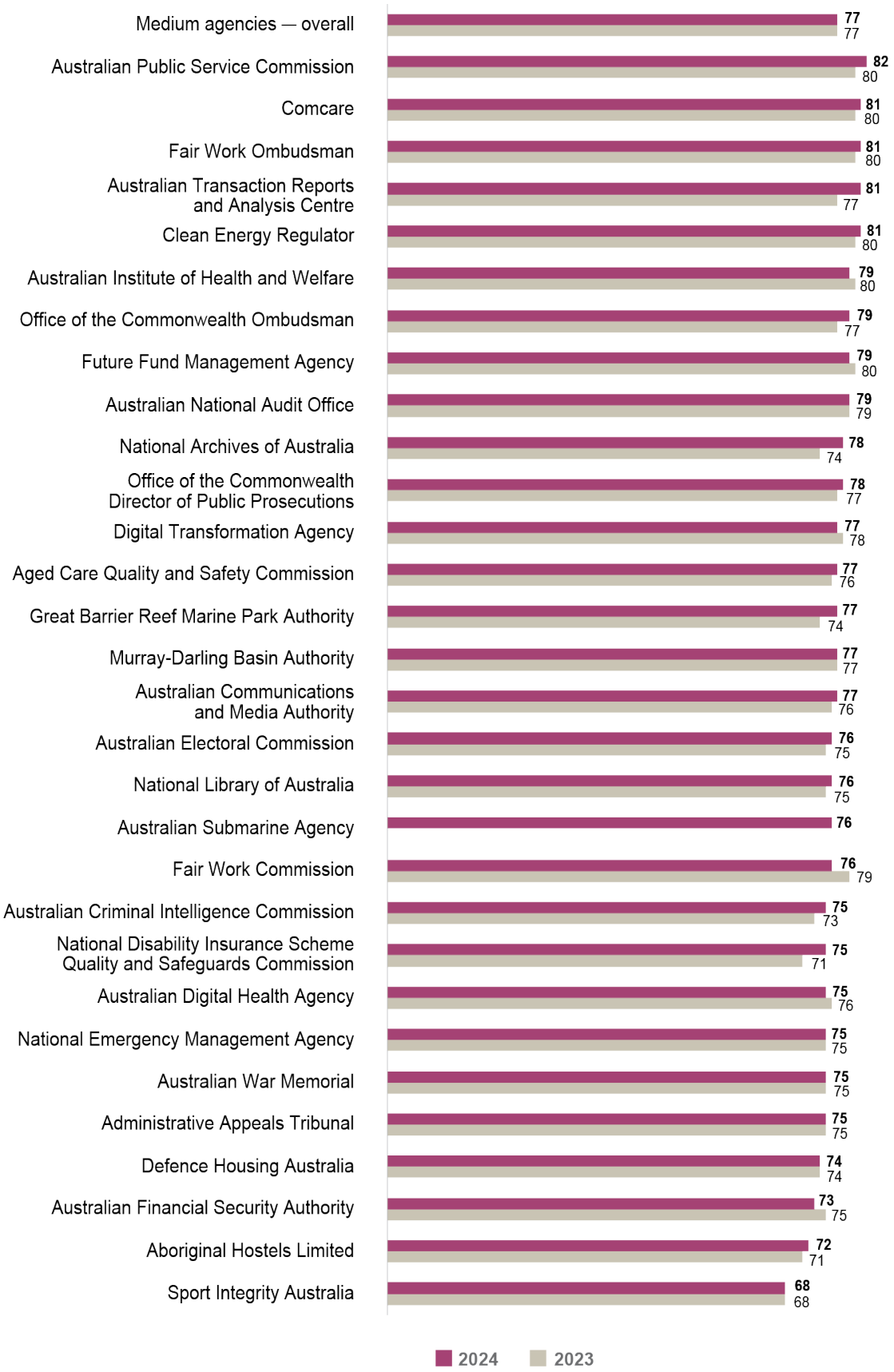
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 30: Immediate Supervisor Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	Immediate Supervisor Index score	
	2023	2024
Large agencies – overall	77	78
Prime Minister and Cabinet	79	80
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	79	80
Australian Bureau of Statistics	78	80
National Disability Insurance Agency	79	79
Finance	78	79
Health and Aged Care	78	79
Treasury	77	78
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	78	78
Education	78	78
Social Services	77	78
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	76	78
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	78	77
Employment and Workplace Relations	77	77
Bureau of Meteorology	77	77
Industry, Science and Resources	76	77
Attorney-General's	77	77
Foreign Affairs and Trade	75	76
National Indigenous Australians Agency	75	76
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	75	76
Veterans' Affairs	75	75
Federal Court of Australia	69	73

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 31: Immediate Supervisor Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

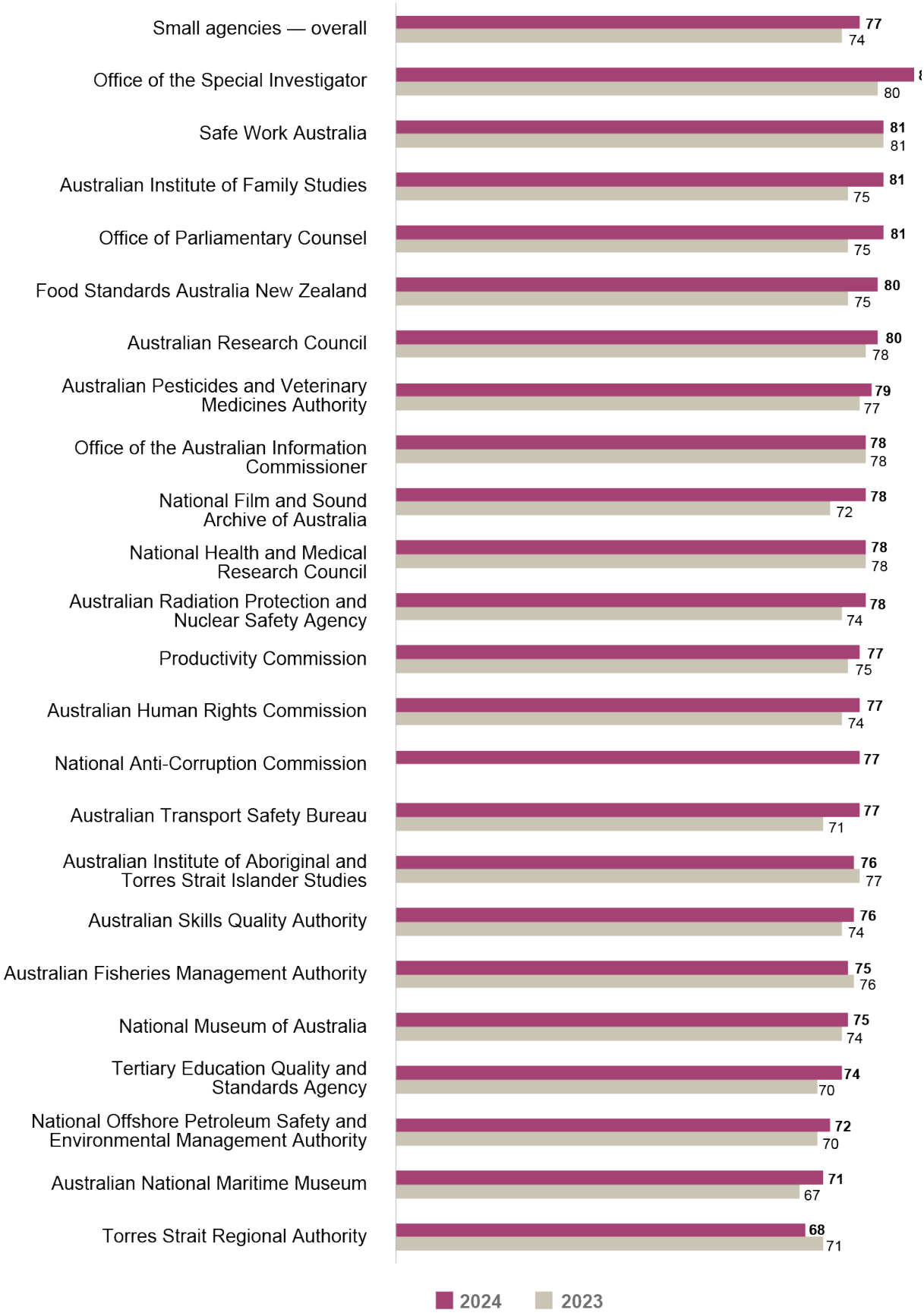
Table AB 31: Immediate Supervisor Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	Immediate Supervisor Index score	
	2023	2024
Medium agencies – overall	77	77
Australian Public Service Commission	80	82
Comcare	80	81
Fair Work Ombudsman	80	81
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	77	81
Clean Energy Regulator	80	81
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	80	79
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	77	79
Future Fund Management Agency	80	79
Australian National Audit Office	79	79
National Archives of Australia	74	78
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	77	78
Digital Transformation Agency	78	77
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	76	77
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	74	77
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	77	77
Australian Communications and Media Authority	76	77
Australian Electoral Commission	75	76
National Library of Australia	75	76
Australian Submarine Agency		76
Fair Work Commission	79	76
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	73	75
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	71	75
Australian Digital Health Agency	76	75
National Emergency Management Agency	75	75
Australian War Memorial	75	75
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	75	75
Defence Housing Australia	74	74
Australian Financial Security Authority	75	73
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	71	72
Sport Integrity Australia	68	68

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Figure AB 32: Immediate Supervisor Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

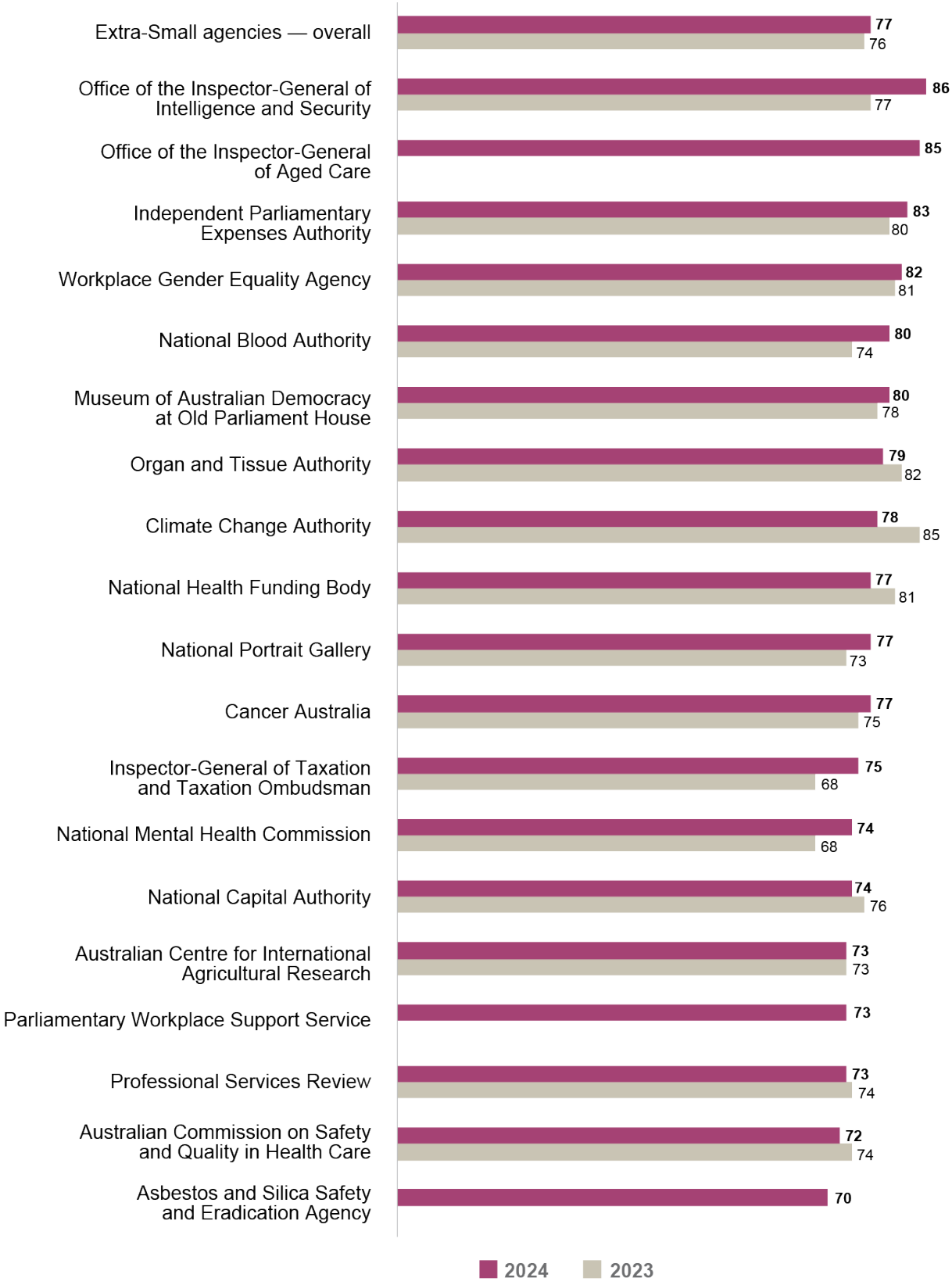
Table AB 32: Immediate Supervisor Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	Immediate Supervisor Index score	
	2023	2024
Small agencies – overall	74	77
Office of the Special Investigator	80	86
Safe Work Australia	81	81
Australian Institute of Family Studies	75	81
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	75	81
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	75	80
Australian Research Council	78	80
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	77	79
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	78	78
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	72	78
National Health and Medical Research Council	78	78
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	74	78
Productivity Commission	75	77
Australian Human Rights Commission	74	77
National Anti-Corruption Commission		77
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	71	77
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	77	76
Australian Skills Quality Authority	74	76
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	76	75
National Museum of Australia	74	75
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	70	74
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	70	72
Australian National Maritime Museum	67	71
Torres Strait Regional Authority	71	68

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

Figure AB 33: Immediate Supervisor Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Table AB 33: Immediate Supervisor Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)

Agency	Immediate Supervisor Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-small agencies – overall	76	77
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	77	86
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care		85
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	80	83
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	81	82
National Blood Authority	74	80
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	78	80
Organ and Tissue Authority	82	79
Climate Change Authority	85	78
National Health Funding Body	81	77
National Portrait Gallery	73	77
Cancer Australia	75	77
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	68	75
National Mental Health Commission	68	74
National Capital Authority	76	74
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	73	73
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service		73
Professional Services Review	74	73
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	74	72
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency		70

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Harassment and bullying

The Australian Public Service Employee Census measures employee perceptions of harassment and bullying. Responses to the question ‘During the last 12 months, have you been subjected to harassment or bullying in your current workplace?’ are summarised here.

For the purposes of the APS Employee Census, these definitions were used:

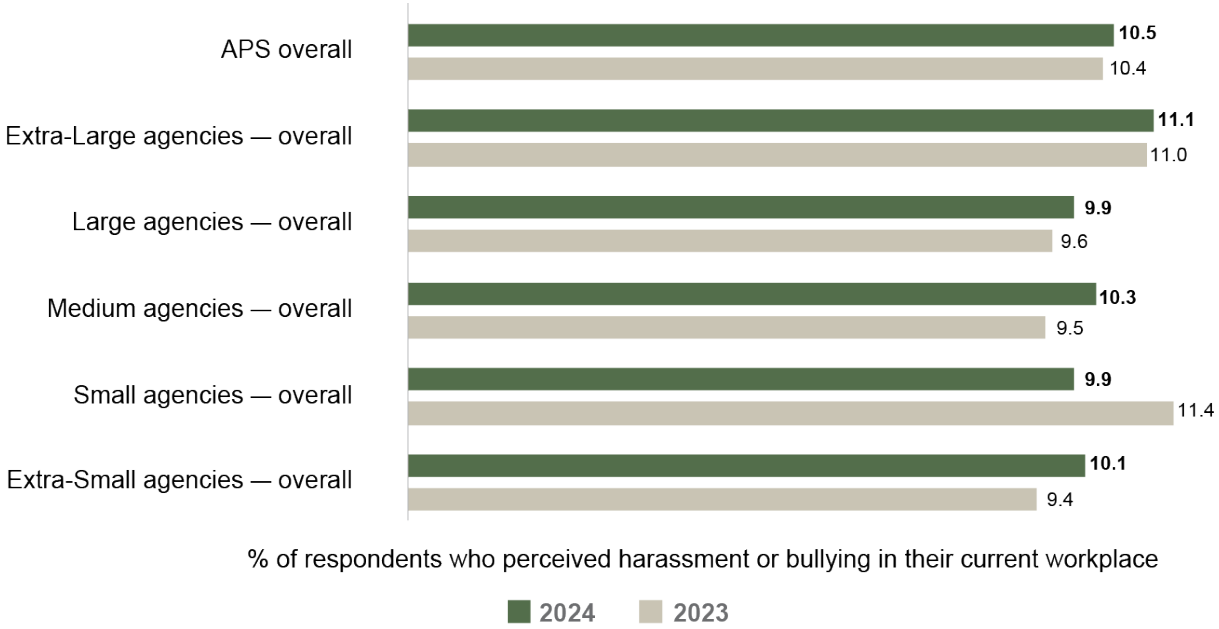
- Harassment – Workplace harassment entails offensive, belittling or threatening behaviour directed at an individual or group. The behaviour is unwelcome, unsolicited, usually unreciprocated and usually, but not always, repeated. Reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable way is not workplace harassment.
- Bullying – A worker is bullied at work if, while at work, an individual or group of individuals repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards the worker, or group of workers of which the worker is a member, and that behaviour creates a risk to health and safety. To avoid doubt, this does not apply to reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable way.

Figures AB 34 to AB 39 and tables AB 34 to AB 39 present Census results, broken down by agency size, for APS respondents.

This data represents the percentage of respondents who perceived harassment or bullying in their current workplace.

Note: Only results for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity’s website.

Figure AB 34: Perceptions of harassment and bullying by agency size



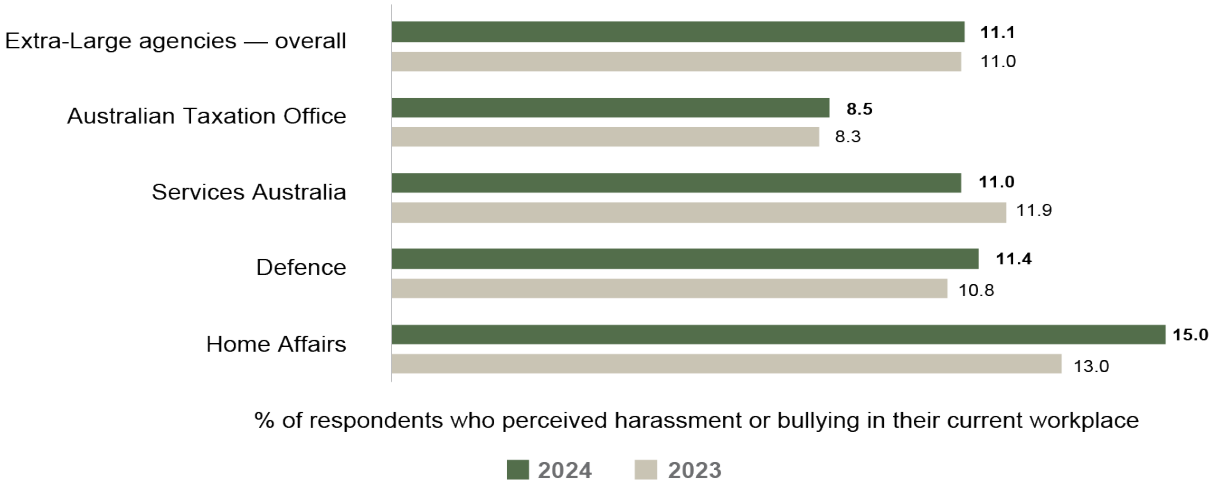
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 34: Perceptions of harassment and bullying by agency size

Agency size	% of respondents who perceived harassment or bullying in their current workplace	
	2023	2024
Overall APS	10.4	10.5
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	11.0	11.1
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	9.6	9.9
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	9.5	10.3
Small (101 to 250 employees)	11.4	9.9
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	9.4	10.1

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 35: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)



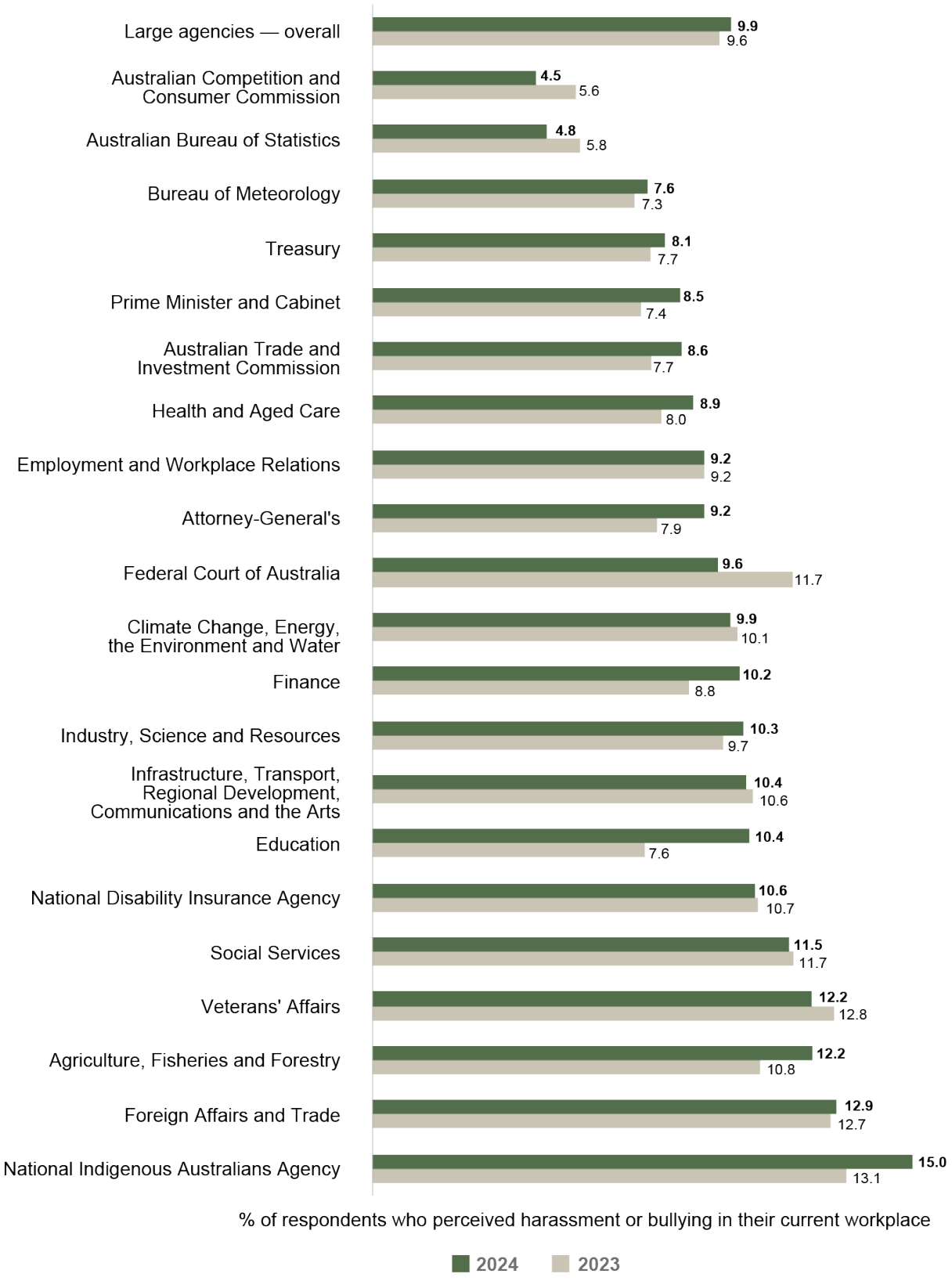
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 35: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)

Agency	% of respondents who perceived harassment or bullying in their current workplace	
	2023	2024
Extra-large agencies – overall	11.0	11.1
Australian Taxation Office	8.3	8.5
Services Australia	11.9	11.0
Defence	10.8	11.4
Home Affairs	13.0	15.0

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 36: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



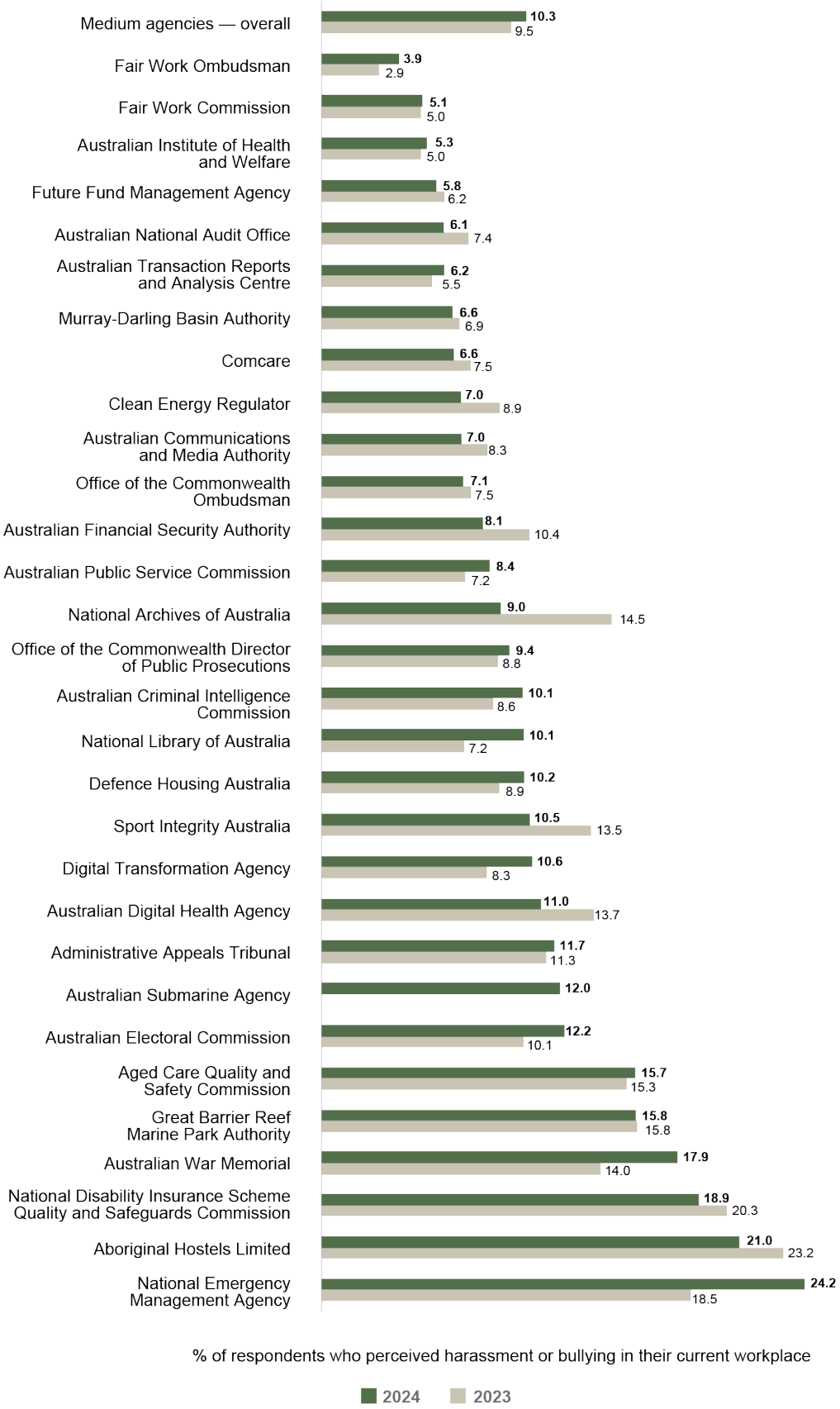
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 36: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	% of respondents who perceived harassment or bullying in their current workplace	
	2023	2024
Large agencies – overall	9.6	9.9
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	5.6	4.5
Australian Bureau of Statistics	5.8	4.8
Bureau of Meteorology	7.3	7.6
Treasury	7.7	8.1
Prime Minister and Cabinet	7.4	8.5
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	7.7	8.6
Health and Aged Care	8.0	8.9
Employment and Workplace Relations	9.2	9.2
Attorney-General's	7.9	9.2
Federal Court of Australia	11.7	9.6
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	10.1	9.9
Finance	8.8	10.2
Industry, Science and Resources	9.7	10.3
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	10.6	10.4
Education	7.6	10.4
National Disability Insurance Agency	10.7	10.6
Social Services	11.7	11.5
Veterans' Affairs	12.8	12.2
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	10.8	12.2
Foreign Affairs and Trade	12.7	12.9
National Indigenous Australians Agency	13.1	15.0

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 37: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

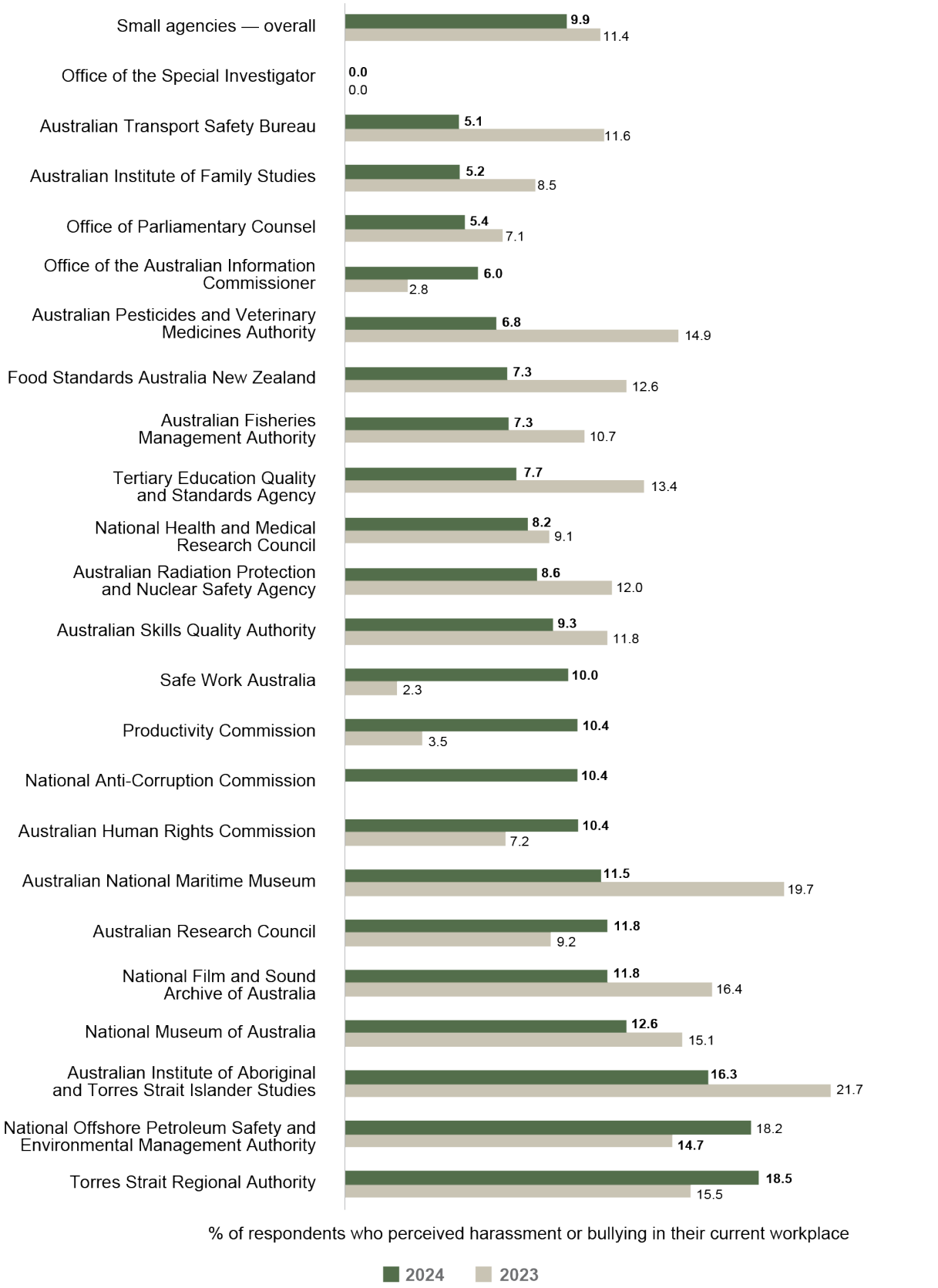
Table AB 37: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	% of respondents who perceived harassment or bullying in their current workplace	
	2023	2024
Medium agencies – overall	9.5	10.3
Fair Work Ombudsman	2.9	3.9
Fair Work Commission	5.0	5.1
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	5.0	5.3
Future Fund Management Agency	6.2	5.8
Australian National Audit Office	7.4	6.1
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	5.5	6.2
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	6.9	6.6
Comcare	7.5	6.6
Clean Energy Regulator	8.9	7.0
Australian Communications and Media Authority	8.3	7.0
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	7.5	7.1
Australian Financial Security Authority	10.4	8.1
Australian Public Service Commission	7.2	8.4
National Archives of Australia	14.5	9.0
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	8.8	9.4
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	8.6	10.1
National Library of Australia	7.2	10.1
Defence Housing Australia	8.9	10.2
Sport Integrity Australia	13.5	10.5
Digital Transformation Agency	8.3	10.6
Australian Digital Health Agency	13.7	11.0
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	11.3	11.7
Australian Submarine Agency		12.0
Australian Electoral Commission	10.1	12.2
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	15.3	15.7
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	15.8	15.8
Australian War Memorial	14.0	17.9
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	20.3	18.9
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	23.2	21.0
National Emergency Management Agency	18.5	24.2

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Figure AB 38: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

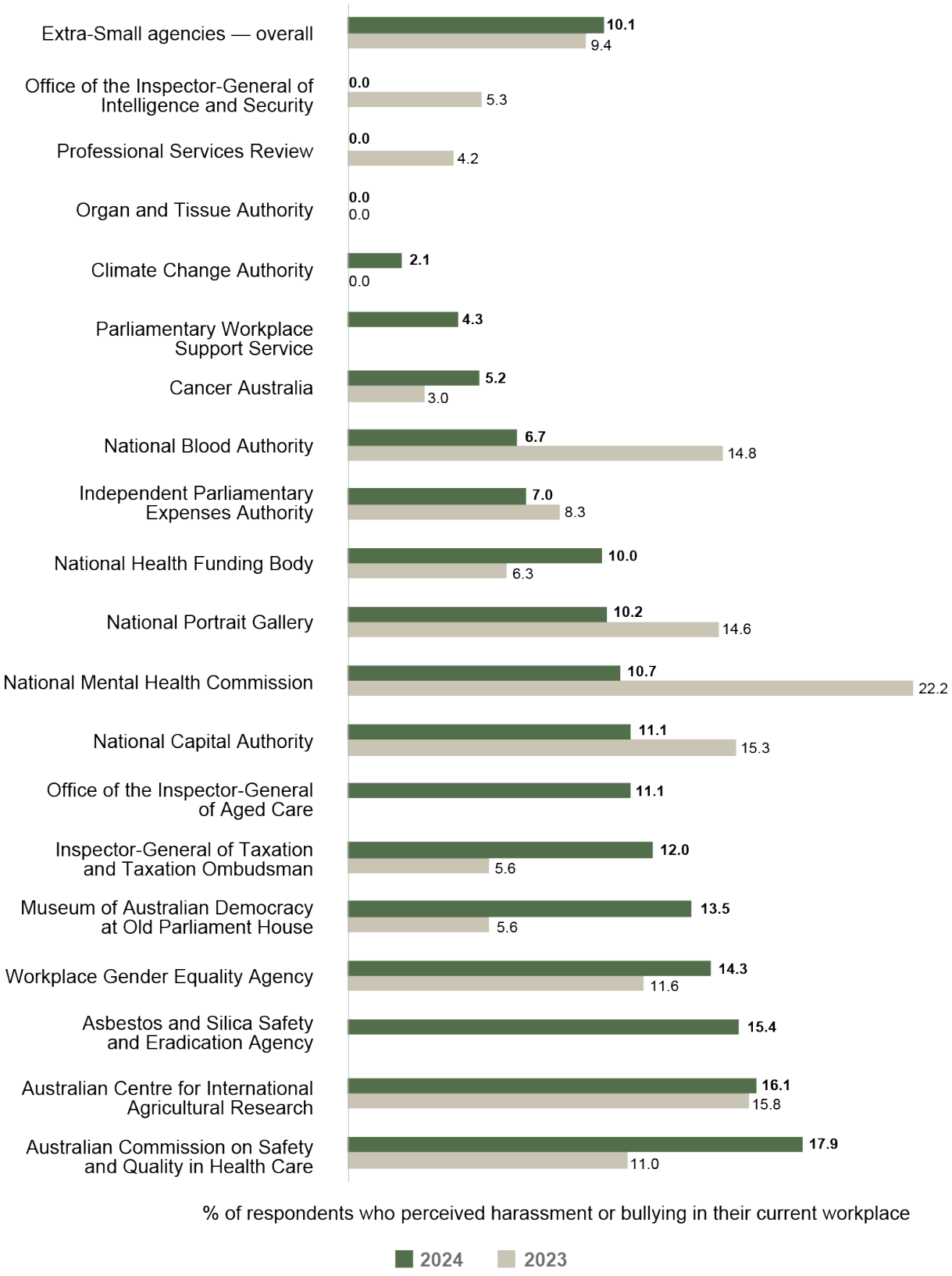
Table AB 38: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	% of respondents who perceived harassment or bullying in their current workplace	
	2023	2024
Small agencies – overall	11.4	9.9
Office of the Special Investigator	0.0	0.0
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	11.6	5.1
Australian Institute of Family Studies	8.5	5.2
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	7.1	5.4
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	2.8	6.0
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	14.9	6.8
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	12.6	7.3
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	10.7	7.3
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	13.4	7.7
National Health and Medical Research Council	9.1	8.2
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	12.0	8.6
Australian Skills Quality Authority	11.8	9.3
Safe Work Australia	2.3	10.0
National Anti-Corruption Commission		10.4
Productivity Commission	3.5	10.4
Australian Human Rights Commission	7.2	10.4
Australian National Maritime Museum	19.7	11.5
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	16.4	11.8
Australian Research Council	9.2	11.8
National Museum of Australia	15.1	12.6
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	21.7	16.3
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	14.7	18.2
Torres Strait Regional Authority	15.5	18.5

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

Figure AB 39: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Table AB 39: Perceptions of harassment and bullying for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)

Agency	% of respondents who perceived harassment or bullying in their current workplace	
	2023	2024
Extra-small agencies – overall	9.4	10.1
Organ and Tissue Authority	0.0	0.0
Professional Services Review	4.2	0.0
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	5.3	0.0
Climate Change Authority	0.0	2.1
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service		4.3
Cancer Australia	3.0	5.2
National Blood Authority	14.8	6.7
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	8.3	7.0
National Health Funding Body	6.3	10.0
National Portrait Gallery	14.6	10.2
National Mental Health Commission	22.2	10.7
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care		11.1
National Capital Authority	15.3	11.1
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	5.6	12.0
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	5.6	13.5
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	11.6	14.3
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency		15.4
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	15.8	16.1
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	11.0	17.9

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Perceptions of wellbeing policies and support

Wellbeing of employees has long been a focus of the Australian Public Service. As employers, APS agencies have obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. Together with these obligations is an acknowledgement that high performance of employees and organisations cannot be sustained without adequate levels of employee wellbeing.

The APS Employee Census Wellbeing Policies and Support Index measures both the practical and cultural elements that support a sustainable and healthy working environment.

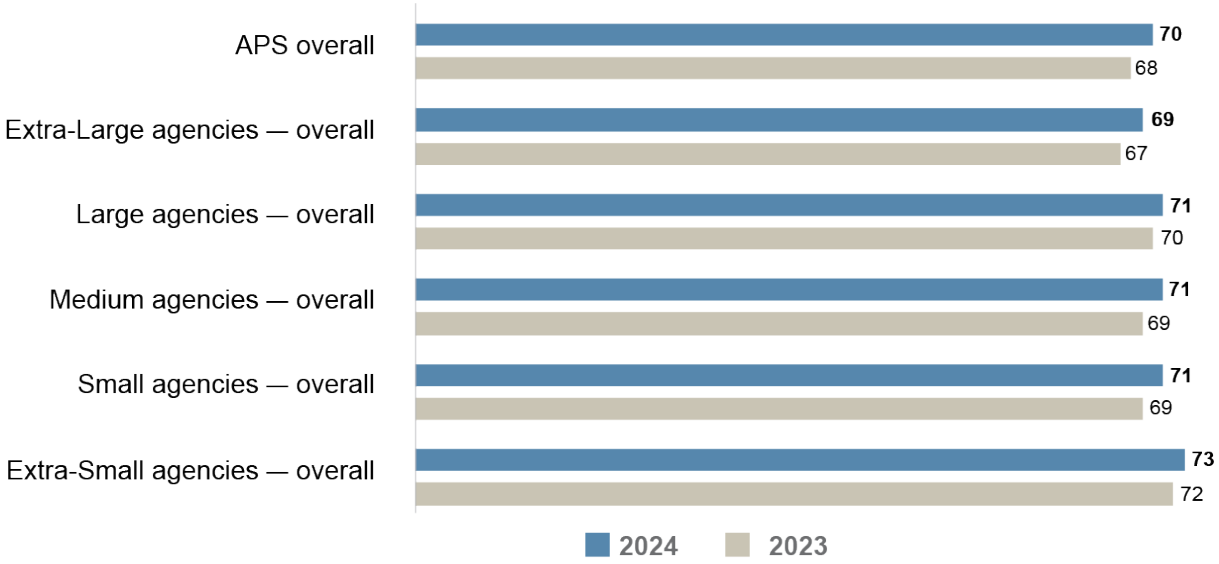
APS Employee Census questions that contribute to the Wellbeing Policies and Support Index are:

- I am satisfied with the policies/practices in place to help me manage my health and wellbeing.
- My agency does a good job of communicating what it can offer me in terms of health and wellbeing.
- My agency does a good job of promoting health and wellbeing.
- I think my agency cares about my health and wellbeing.
- I believe my immediate supervisor cares about my health and wellbeing.

Figures AB 40 to AB 45 and tables AB 40 to AB 45 report on Wellbeing Policies and Support Index scores for agencies, by agency size, for APS respondents.

Note: Only index scores for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity's website.

Figure AB 40: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index by agency size



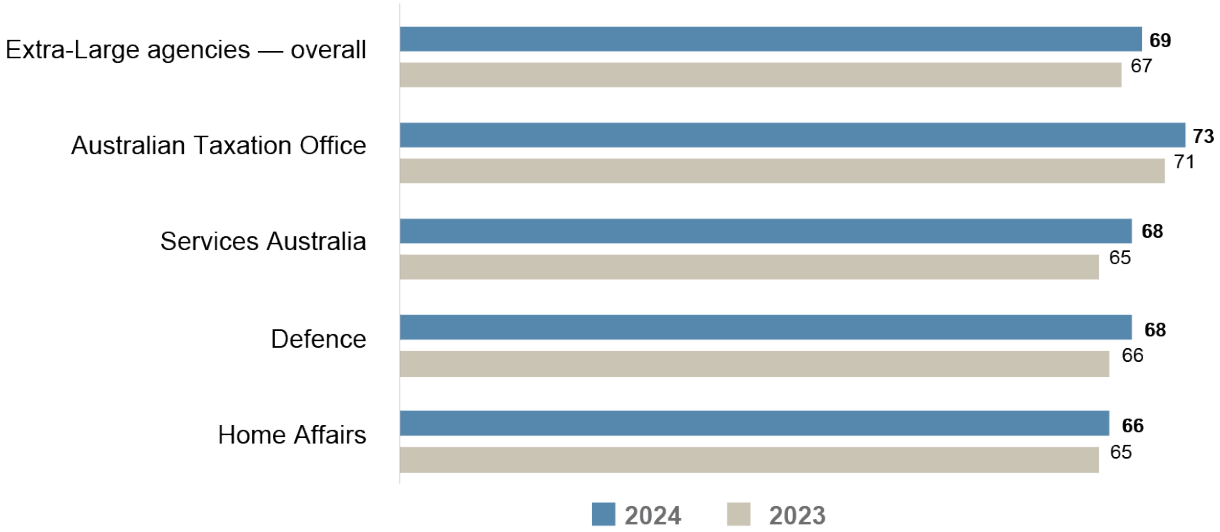
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 40: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index by agency size

Agency size	Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score	
	2023	2024
Overall APS	68	70
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	67	69
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	70	71
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	69	71
Small (101 to 250 employees)	69	71
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	72	73

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 41: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)



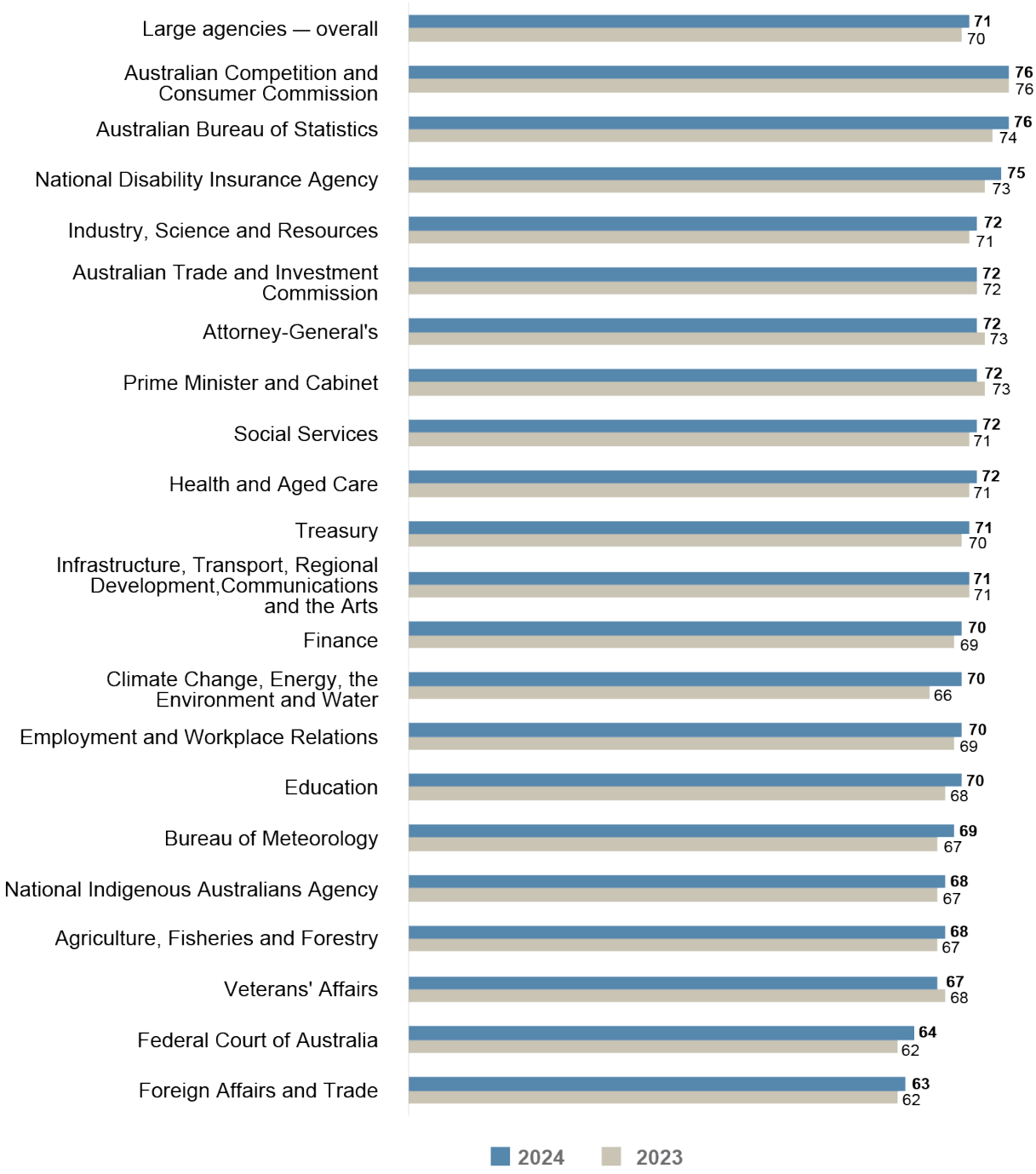
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 41: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for extra-large agencies (10,000+ employees)

Agency	Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-large agencies – overall	67	69
Australian Taxation Office	71	73
Defence	66	68
Services Australia	65	68
Home Affairs	65	66

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 42: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



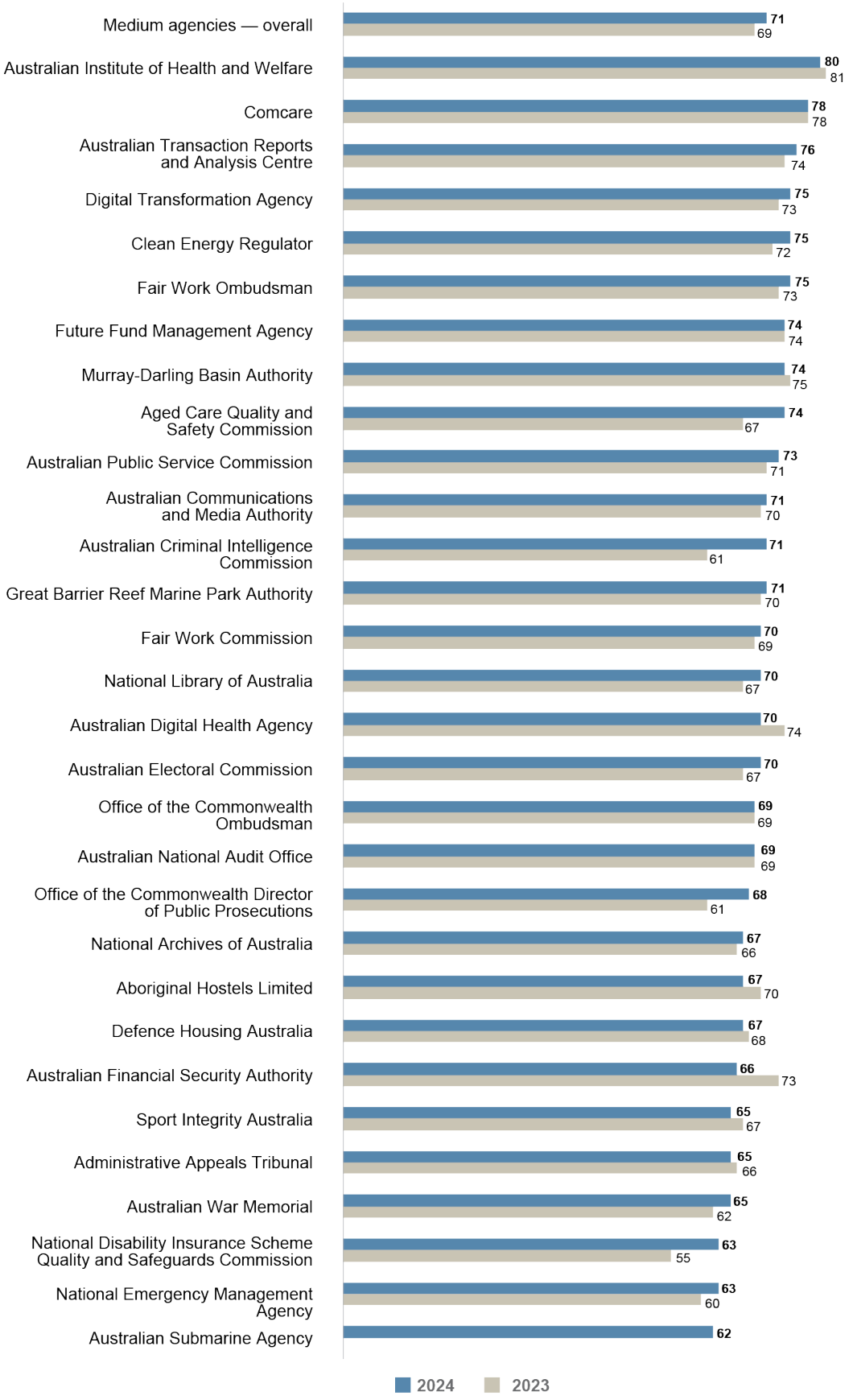
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 42: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for large agencies (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score	
	2023	2024
Large agencies – overall	70	71
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	76	76
Australian Bureau of Statistics	74	76
National Disability Insurance Agency	73	75
Industry, Science and Resources	71	72
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	72	72
Attorney-General's	73	72
Prime Minister and Cabinet	73	72
Social Services	71	72
Health and Aged Care	71	72
Treasury	70	71
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	71	71
Finance	69	70
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	66	70
Employment and Workplace Relations	69	70
Education	68	70
Bureau of Meteorology	67	69
National Indigenous Australians Agency	67	68
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	67	68
Veterans' Affairs	68	67
Federal Court of Australia	62	64
Foreign Affairs and Trade	62	63

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 43: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for medium agencies (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

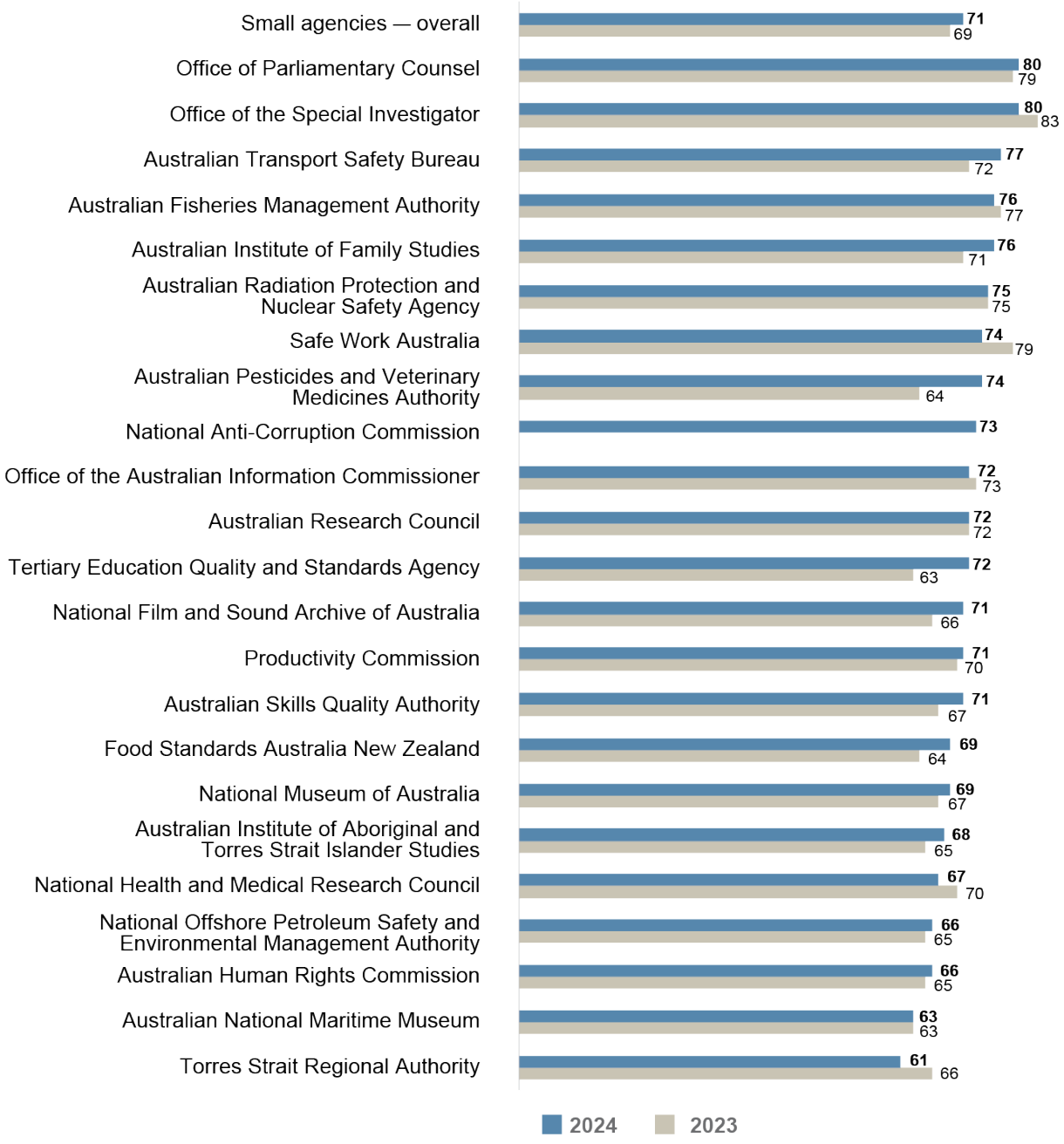
Table AB 43: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for medium (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score	
	2023	2024
Medium agencies – overall	69	71
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	81	80
Comcare	78	78
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	74	76
Digital Transformation Agency	73	75
Clean Energy Regulator	72	75
Fair Work Ombudsman	73	75
Future Fund Management Agency	74	74
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	75	74
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	67	74
Australian Public Service Commission	71	73
Australian Communications and Media Authority	70	71
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	61	71
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	70	71
Fair Work Commission	69	70
National Library of Australia	67	70
Australian Digital Health Agency	74	70
Australian Electoral Commission	67	70
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	69	69
Australian National Audit Office	69	69
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	61	68
National Archives of Australia	66	67
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	70	67
Defence Housing Australia	68	67
Australian Financial Security Authority	73	66
Sport Integrity Australia	67	65
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	66	65
Australian War Memorial	62	65
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	55	63
National Emergency Management Agency	60	63
Australian Submarine Agency		62

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Australian Submarine Agency was not an APS agency in 2023. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Sport Integrity Australia were small agencies in 2023.

Figure AB 44: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

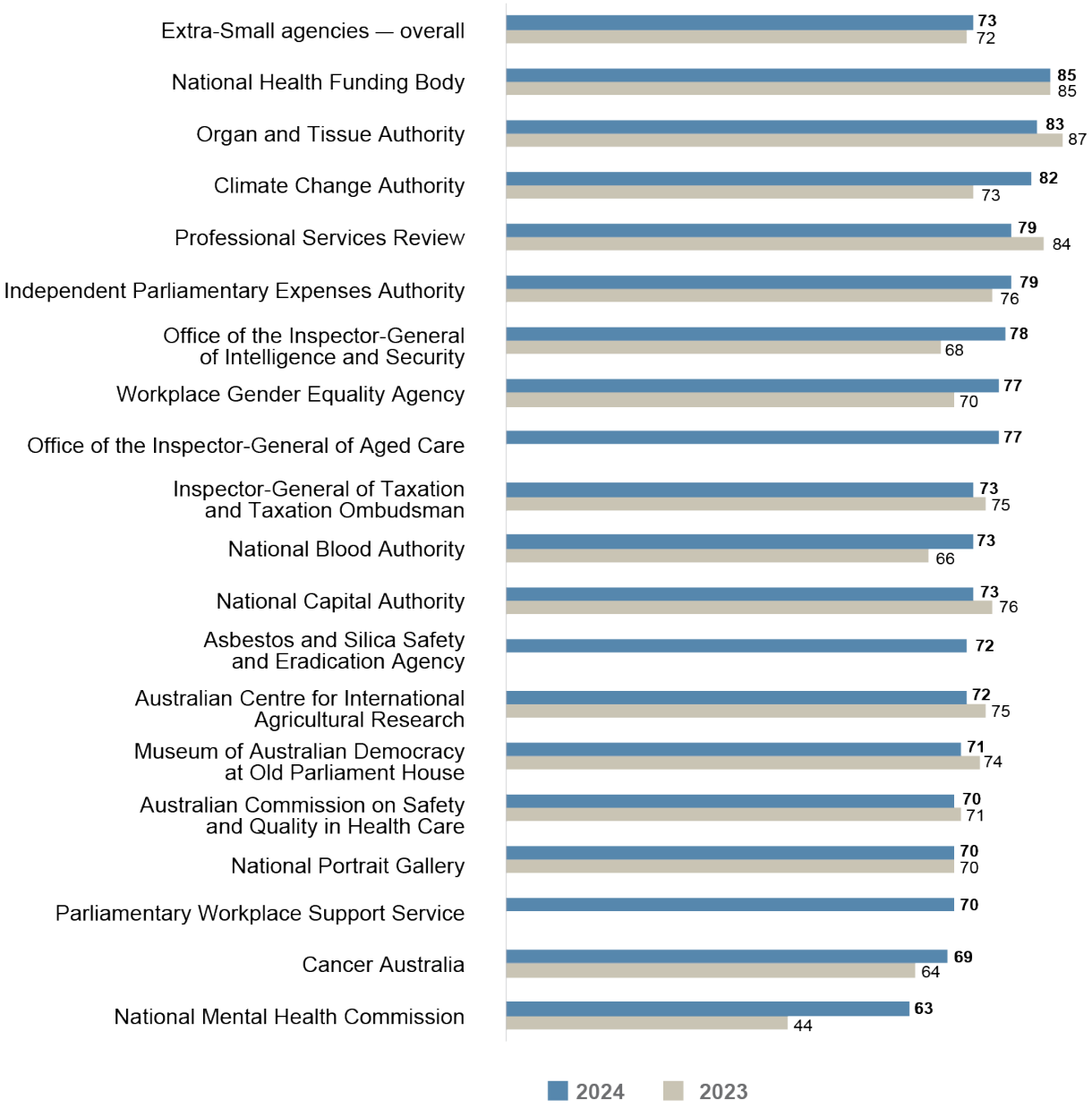
Table AB 44: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for small agencies (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score	
	2023	2024
Small agencies – overall	69	71
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	79	80
Office of the Special Investigator	83	80
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	72	77
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	77	76
Australian Institute of Family Studies	71	76
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	75	75
Safe Work Australia	79	74
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	64	74
National Anti-Corruption Commission		73
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	73	72
Australian Research Council	72	72
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	63	72
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	66	71
Productivity Commission	70	71
Australian Skills Quality Authority	67	71
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	64	69
National Museum of Australia	67	69
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	65	68
National Health and Medical Research Council	70	67
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	65	66
Australian Human Rights Commission	65	66
Australian National Maritime Museum	63	63
Torres Strait Regional Authority	66	61

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The National Anti-Corruption Commission was not an APS agency in 2023. The Australian Institute of Family Studies was an extra-small agency in 2023.

Figure AB 45: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Table AB 45: Wellbeing Policies and Support Index for extra-small agencies (20 to 100 employees)

Agency	Wellbeing Policies and Support Index score	
	2023	2024
Extra-small agencies – overall	72	73
National Health Funding Body	85	85
Organ and Tissue Authority	87	83
Climate Change Authority	73	82
Professional Services Review	84	79
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	76	79
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	68	78
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	70	77
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care		77
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	75	73
National Blood Authority	66	73
National Capital Authority	76	73
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency		72
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	75	72
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	74	71
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	71	70
National Portrait Gallery	70	70
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service		70
Cancer Australia	64	69
National Mental Health Commission	44	63

Source: APS Employee Census

Note: The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care and the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service were not APS agencies in 2023. The Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency did not have reportable results in 2023.

Working away from the office

In 2024, the Australian Public Service Employee Census included the question ‘Do you currently access any of the following flexible working arrangements?’

Respondents who indicated they accessed working away from the office/working from home were asked the supplementary question ‘During your usual working week, how often do you work away from the office/work from home?’

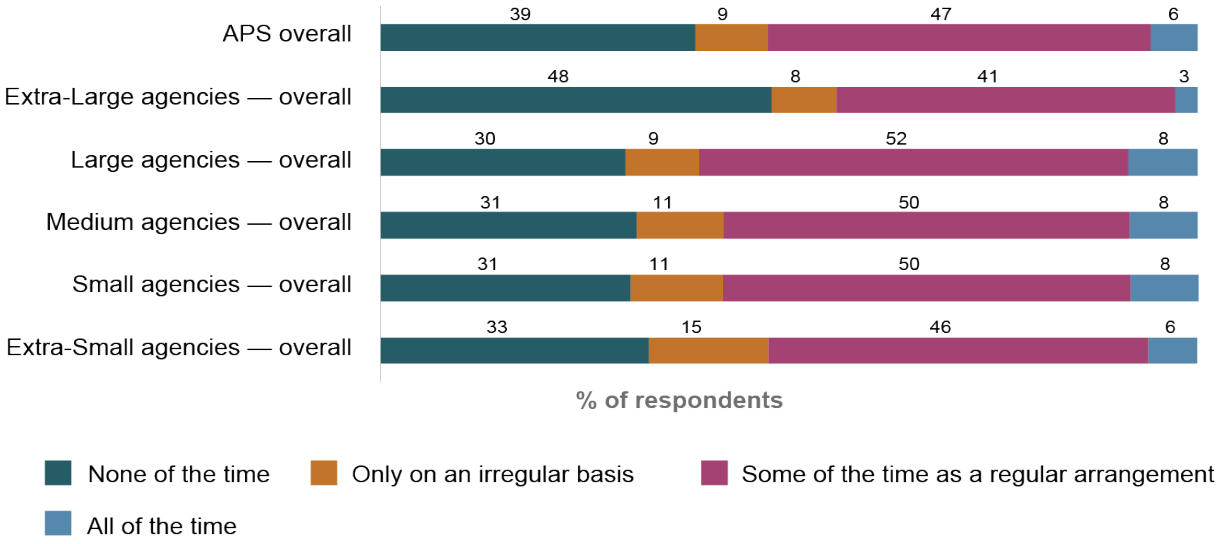
Data from these questions provides information about the proportions of employees who engage in ‘Working away from the office’.

Figures AB 46 to AB 51 and tables AB 46 to AB 51 report on the proportions of employees who engage in ‘Working away from the office’ for agencies, by agency size, for APS respondents.

Respondents had 5 options to choose from for this question. Figures AB 46 to AB 51 show 4 of the options, excluding ‘Did not disclose their arrangement’. The proportions for this category were mostly below half a percentage point, and are included in tables AB 46 to 51.

Note: Only results for APS agencies are presented. APS Employee Census results for entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999* but are not APS agencies under the Act are available on the entity’s website.

Figure AB 46: Percentage of employees working away from the office, by agency size



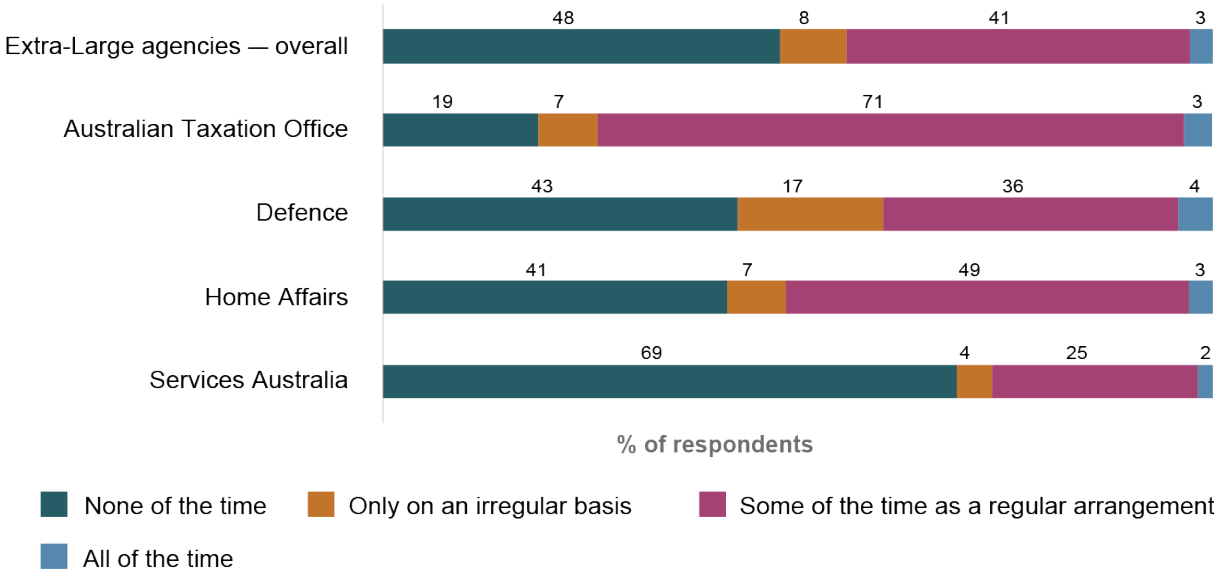
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 46: Percentage of employees working away from the office, by agency size

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Overall APS	39	9	47	6	< 0.5
Extra-large (10,000+ employees)	48	8	41	3	< 0.5
Large (1,001 to 10,000 employees)	30	9	52	8	< 0.5
Medium (251 to 1,000 employees)	31	11	50	8	< 0.5
Small (101 to 250 employees)	31	11	50	8	< 0.5
Extra-small (20 to 100 employees)	33	15	46	6	< 0.5

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 47: Extra-large agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (10,000+ employees)



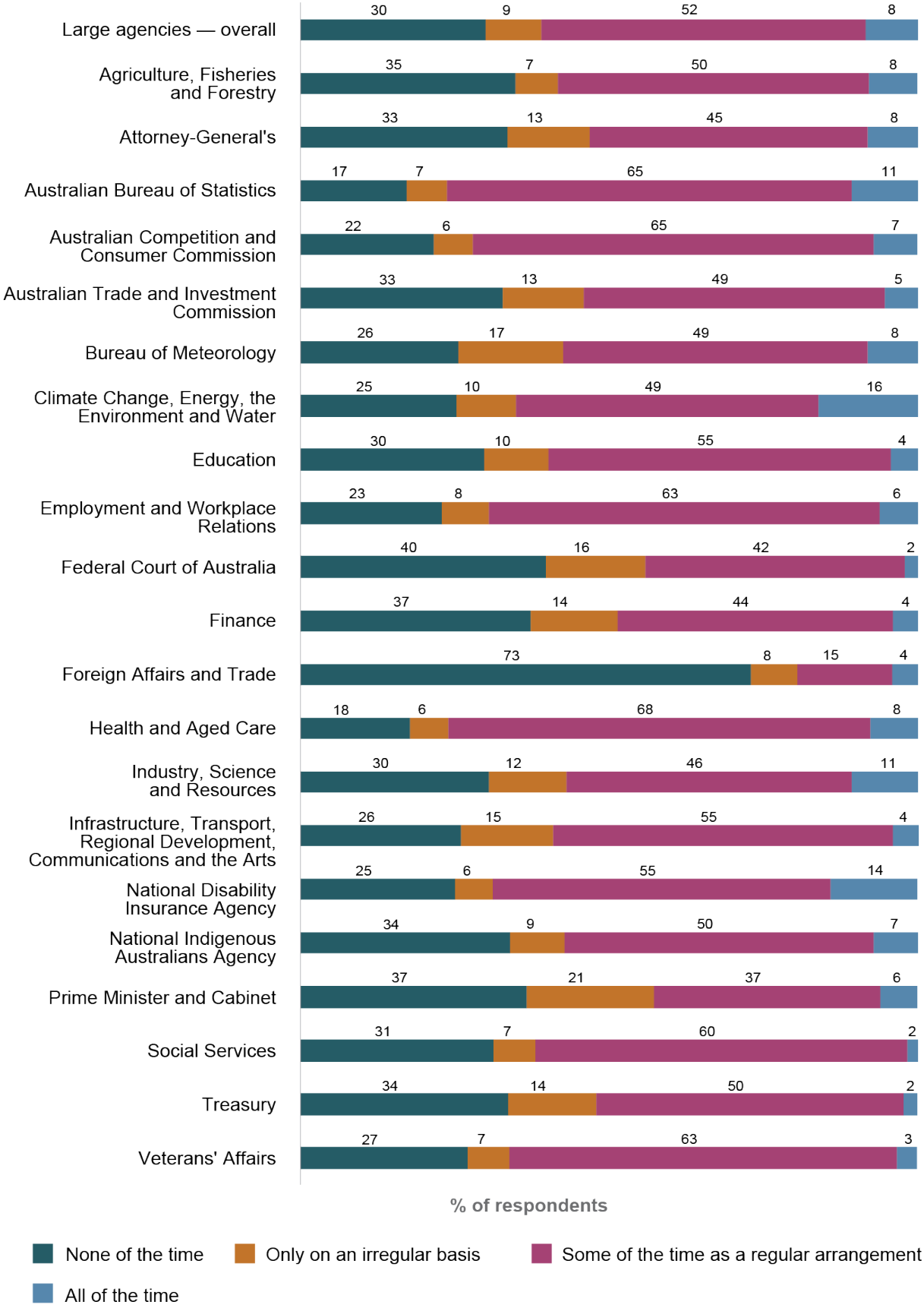
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 47: Extra-large agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (10,000+ employees)

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Extra-large agencies – overall	48	8	41	3	< 0.5
Australian Taxation Office	19	7	71	3	< 0.5
Defence	43	17	36	4	< 0.5
Home Affairs	41	7	49	3	< 0.5
Services Australia	69	4	25	2	< 0.5

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 48: Large agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (1,001 to 10,000 employees)



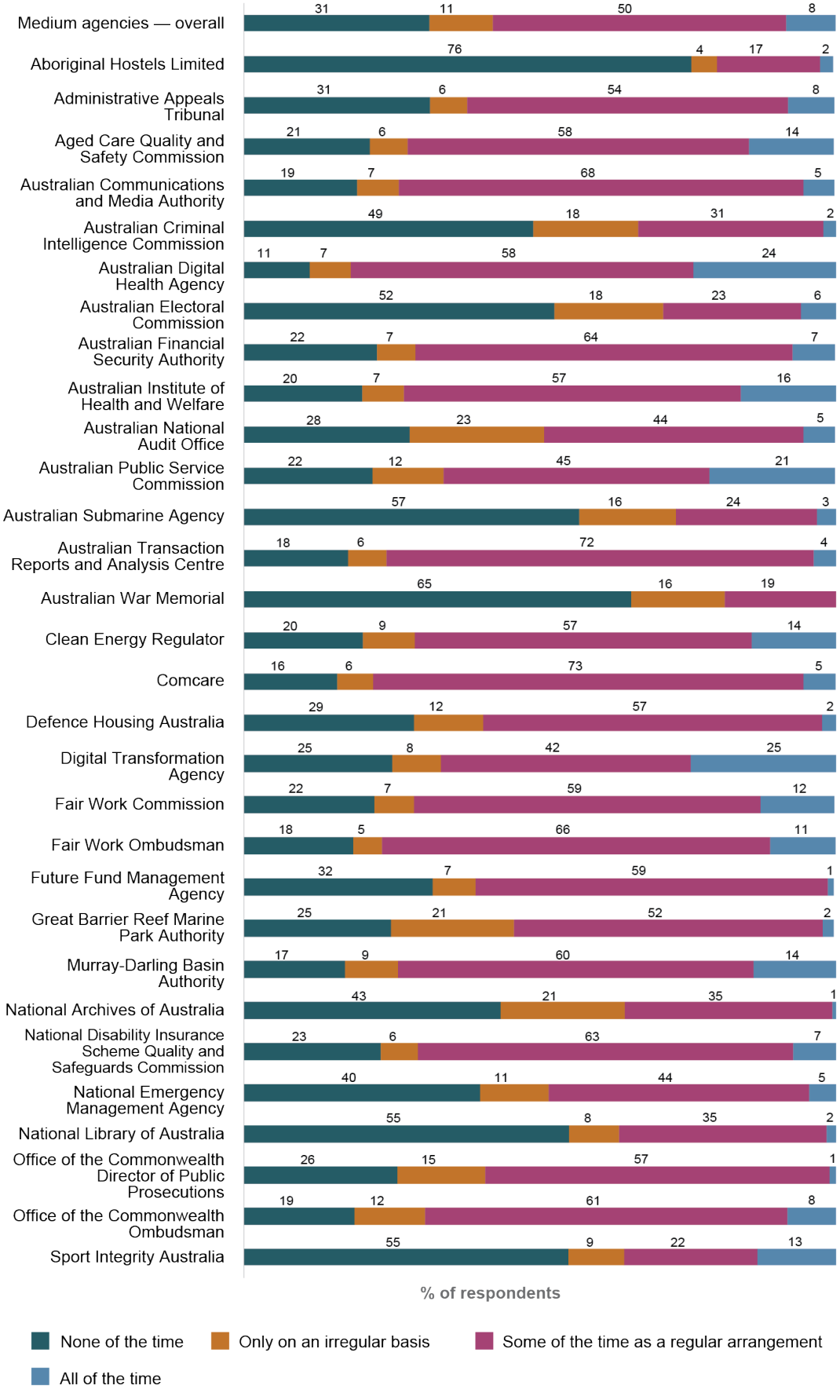
Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 48: Large agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (1,001 to 10,000 employees)

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Large agencies – overall	30	9	52	8	< 0.5
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	35	7	50	8	< 0.5
Attorney-General's	33	13	45	8	< 0.5
Australian Bureau of Statistics	17	7	65	11	< 0.5
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	22	6	65	7	< 0.5
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	33	13	49	5	< 0.5
Bureau of Meteorology	26	17	49	8	< 0.5
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	25	10	49	16	< 0.5
Education	30	10	55	4	< 0.5
Employment and Workplace Relations	23	8	63	6	< 0.5
Federal Court of Australia	40	16	42	2	< 0.5
Finance	37	14	44	4	< 0.5
Foreign Affairs and Trade	73	8	15	4	< 0.5
Health and Aged Care	18	6	68	8	< 0.5
Industry, Science and Resources	30	12	46	11	< 0.5
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	26	15	55	4	< 0.5
National Disability Insurance Agency	25	6	55	14	< 0.5
National Indigenous Australians Agency	34	9	50	7	< 0.5
Prime Minister and Cabinet	37	21	37	6	< 0.5
Social Services	31	7	60	2	< 0.5
Treasury	34	14	50	2	< 0.5
Veterans' Affairs	27	7	63	3	< 0.5

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 49: Medium agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (251 to 1,000 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

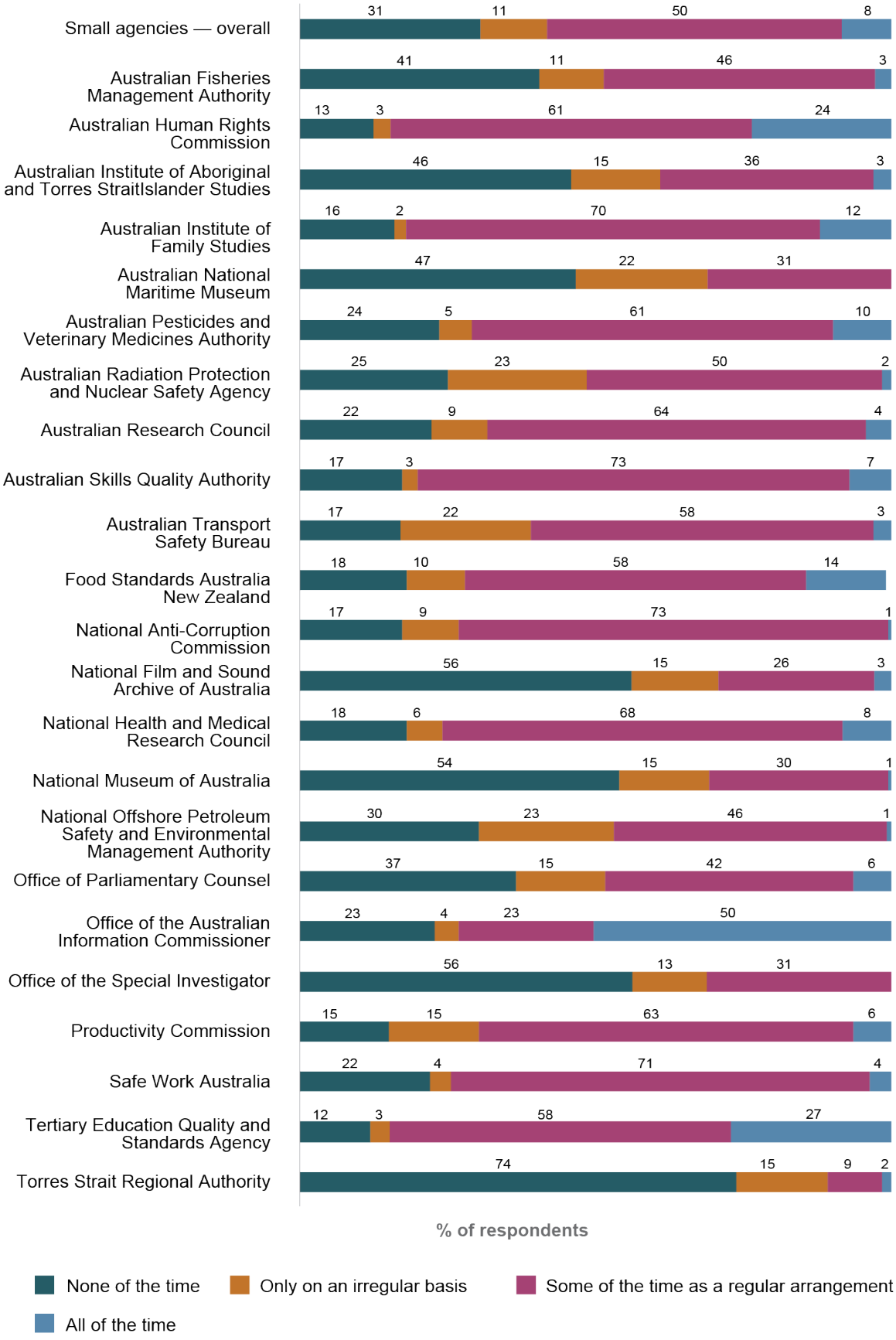
Table AB 49: Medium agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (251 to 1,000 employees)

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Medium agencies – overall	31	11	50	8	< 0.5
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	76	4	17	2	1
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	31	6	54	8	< 0.5
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	21	6	58	14	< 0.5
Australian Communications and Media Authority	19	7	68	5	< 0.5
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	49	18	31	2	0
Australian Digital Health Agency	11	7	58	24	0
Australian Electoral Commission	52	18	23	6	0
Australian Financial Security Authority	22	7	64	7	< 0.5
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	20	7	57	16	0
Australian National Audit Office	28	23	44	5	< 0.5
Australian Public Service Commission	22	12	45	21	< 0.5
Australian Submarine Agency	57	16	24	3	0
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	18	6	72	4	0
Australian War Memorial	65	16	19	0	0
Clean Energy Regulator	20	9	57	14	0
Comcare	16	6	73	5	< 0.5
Defence Housing Australia	29	12	57	2	0
Digital Transformation Agency	25	8	42	25	0

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Fair Work Commission	22	7	59	12	< 0.5
Fair Work Ombudsman	18	5	66	11	< 0.5
Future Fund Management Agency	32	7	59	1	< 0.5
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	25	21	52	2	< 0.5
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	17	9	60	14	0
National Archives of Australia	43	21	35	1	0
National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission	23	6	63	7	0
National Emergency Management Agency	40	11	44	5	0
National Library of Australia	55	8	35	2	0
Office of the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	26	15	57	1	1
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	19	12	61	8	< 0.5
Sport Integrity Australia	55	9	22	13	0

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 50: Small agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (101 to 250 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

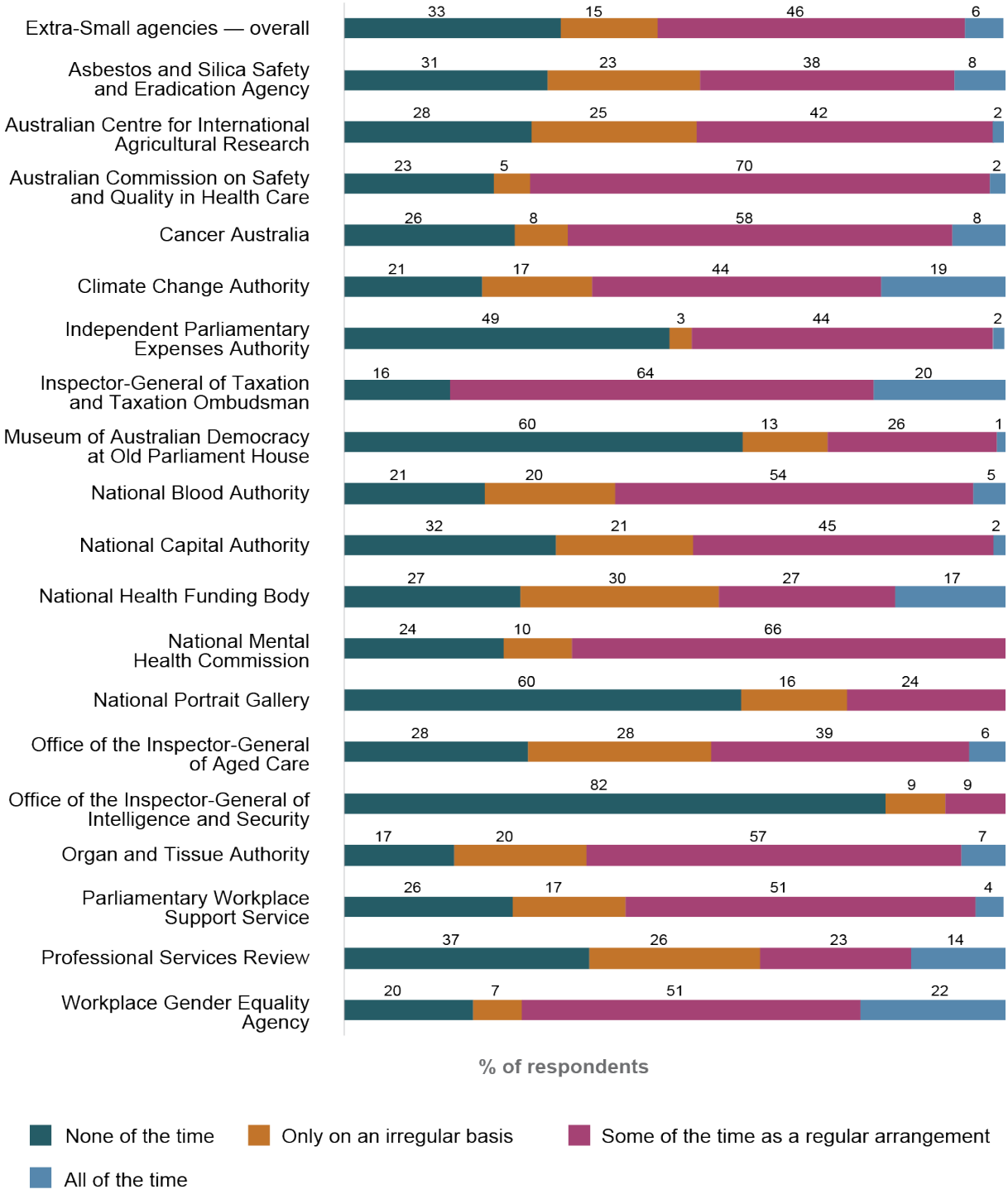
Table AB 50: Small agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (101 to 250 employees)

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Small agencies – overall	31	11	50	8	< 0.5
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	41	11	46	3	0
Australian Human Rights Commission	13	3	61	24	0
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	46	15	36	3	0
Australian Institute of Family Studies	16	2	70	12	0
Australian National Maritime Museum	47	22	31	0	0
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	24	5	61	10	0
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	25	23	50	2	0
Australian Research Council	22	9	64	4	0
Australian Skills Quality Authority	17	3	73	7	0
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	17	22	58	3	0
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	18	10	58	14	1
National Anti-Corruption Commission	17	9	73	1	0
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	56	15	26	3	0
National Health and Medical Research Council	18	6	68	8	0
National Museum of Australia	54	15	30	1	0

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	30	23	46	1	0
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	37	15	42	6	0
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	23	4	23	50	0
Office of the Special Investigator	56	13	31	0	0
Productivity Commission	15	15	63	6	0
Safe Work Australia	22	4	71	4	0
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	12	3	58	27	0
Torres Strait Regional Authority	74	15	9	2	0

Source: APS Employee Census

Figure AB 51: Extra-small agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (20 to 100 employees)



Source: APS Employee Census

Table AB 51: Extra-small agencies percentage of employees working away from the office (20 to 100 employees)

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Extra-small agencies – overall	33	15	46	6	< 0.5
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency	31	23	38	8	0
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	28	25	42	2	3
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	23	5	70	2	0
Cancer Australia	26	8	58	8	0
Climate Change Authority	21	17	44	19	0
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	49	3	44	2	2
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	16	0	64	20	0
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	60	13	26	1	0
National Blood Authority	21	20	54	5	0
National Capital Authority	32	21	45	2	0
National Health Funding Body	27	30	27	17	0
National Mental Health Commission	24	10	66	0	0
National Portrait Gallery	60	16	24	0	0
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care	28	28	39	6	0

Agency	% of respondents working away from the office				
	None of the time	Only on an irregular basis	Some of the time as a regular arrangement	All of the time	Did not disclose their arrangement
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	82	9	9	0	0
Organ and Tissue Authority	17	20	57	7	0
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service	26	17	51	4	2
Professional Services Review	37	26	23	14	0
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	20	7	51	22	0

Source: APS Employee Census

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Appendix 1 – APS workforce trends

This appendix summarises Australian Public Service overall workforce trends for 2023–24. Where relevant, data is included from previous years. The primary source of data is the Australian Public Service Employment Database (APSED).

The APS is a diverse workforce spanning 583 locations across Australia in 101 agencies. As at 30 June 2024, the APS had increased to 185,343 employees, working across 234 job roles in fields such as service delivery, research, regulation, project management and policy development. This growth reflects an additional 15,214 employees joining the APS during 2023–24, an overall increase in size of 8.9%.

APS employment trends

As at 30 June 2024, there were 185,343 employees in the APS, comprising:

- 170,186 ongoing employees, up by 12.7% from 151,058 ongoing employees in June 2023
- 15,157 non-ongoing employees, down by 20.5% from 19,071 non-ongoing employees in June 2023.

Table A 1 shows how this distribution has changed from 2019 to 2024. Non-ongoing employees in the APS are employed for a specific term, or for the duration of a specified task, or to perform duties that are irregular or intermittent (casual). Of all non-ongoing employees at 30 June 2024:

- 8,568 (56.5%) were employed for a specified term or the duration of a specified task
- 6,589 (43.5%) were employed on a casual basis.

The decrease in non-ongoing employees was due to a decrease in both specified term (2,987) and irregular or intermittent (casual) non-ongoing employees (1,024) during 2023–24. Specified task employees increased by 97 during the same period.

During 2023–24:

- 30,540 ongoing employees were engaged by the APS, up by 38.5% from 22,056 ongoing engagements in 2022–23
- 11,280 ongoing employees separated from the APS, down by 4.9% from 11,856 separations of ongoing employees in 2022–23.

Table A 1: Ongoing and non-ongoing APS employees (2019 to 2024)

Year	Ongoing APS employees	Non-ongoing APS employees
June 2024	170,186 (91.8%)	15,157 (8.2%)
June 2023	151,058 (88.8%)	19,071 (11.2%)
June 2022	140,850 (88.5%)	18,340 (11.5%)
June 2021	133,976 (87.2%)	19,601 (12.8%)
June 2020	132,257 (88.0%)	18,103 (12.0%)
June 2019	132,240 (90.1%)	14,517 (9.9%)

Source: APSED

Tables A 2 and A 3 show the agencies with the largest increases and reductions in employees.

Table A 2: Agencies with the largest increases of employees (2023–24)

Agency	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Total	
National Disability Insurance Agency	+2,214	(+41.6%)	-21	(-6.5%)	+2,193	(+38.8%)
Defence	+1,403	(+7.8%)	+22	(+6.5%)	+1,425	(+7.8%)
Health and Aged Care	+1,135	(+20.6%)	+38	(+7.9%)	+1,173	(+19.6%)
Services Australia	+4,892	(+17.6%)	-3,743	(-82.1%)	+1,149	(+3.5%)
Australian Taxation Office	+836	(+4.4%)	+155	(+10.3%)	+991	(+4.8%)

Note: Figures represent the net change and the percentage change from 30 June 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Source: APSED

Table A 3: Agencies with the largest reductions of employees (2023–24)

Agency	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Total	
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	-103	(-14.7%)	-53	(-41.7%)	-156	(-18.9%)
Attorney-General's	+53	(+2.5%)	-105	(-34.0%)	-52	(-2.1%)
Australian Research Council	-29	(-17.6%)	-5	(-55.6%)	-34	(-19.5%)
Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman	+38	(+4.2%)	-52	(-51.0%)	-14	(-1.4%)
Home Affairs	+281	(+2.0%)	-295	(-28.7%)	-14	(-0.1%)

Note: Figures represent the net change and the percentage change from 30 June 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Source: APSED

APS employment and the Australian population and labour force

While the size of the APS has grown, its size relative to the population it serves, and to the wider labour force, has changed over time. Table A 4 shows APS headcount in the context of the Australian population size, and the Australian labour force, over time.

Table A 4: APS headcount as a proportion of Australian population and Australian labour force, over time

	June 2008	June 2012	June 2016	June 2020	June 2024
APS employees	159,299	167,343	155,607	150,360	185,343
Australian population	21,249,200	22,733,500	24,190,900	25,649,200	27,095,255
APS employees as % of population	0.75%	0.74%	0.64%	0.59%	0.68%
Employed persons	10,487,557	10,958,923	11,507,887	11,733,447	13,647,452
APS employees as % of employed persons	1.52%	1.53%	1.35%	1.28%	1.36%

Sources:

1. APSED
2. Estimated Residential Population (Australian Bureau of Statistics), National, state and territory population, Series: A2133251W, Population and components of change - national. The June 2024 estimate is a population projection figure: 'High Series' (Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022-base---2071), Population Projections, Australia
3. Labour Force, Australia, (Australian Bureau of Statistics), Labour Force, Australia, Series: A84425129C (Labour force status for 15-64 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted).

Location

At 30 June 2024, the largest number of APS employees were located in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) (68,435), which represented 36.9% of the APS, followed by Victoria (Vic) (32,002 or 17.3%) and New South Wales (NSW) (30,712 or 16.6%).

At 30 June 2024, the proportion of APS employees located in the ACT, NSW, Northern Territory (NT) and Tasmania (Tas) was lower than a decade earlier, while the proportion located in all other states was higher. Over the same period, the proportion of APS employees based in regional Australia dropped from 13.7% in 2015 to 12.3% in 2024. Table A 5 shows these changes.

Over 2023–24, the proportion of APS employees located in the ACT decreased from 38.1% to 36.9%. The proportion based in the states increased, with the exception of NSW and Tas which both decreased by only 0.1%. The proportion in the NT remained steady. The proportion of APS employees based in regional Australia decreased slightly from 12.9% in 2023 to 12.3% in 2024. Table A 5 shows these changes.

Table A 5: Location of APS employees at 30 June (2015, 2023 and 2024)

Location	2015		2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
ACT	**58,079**	**38.1**	**64,815**	**38.1**	**68,435**	**36.9**
Vic	**24,465**	**16.1**	**28,471**	**16.7**	**32,002**	**17.3**
Melbourne	20,947	13.8	23,744	14.0	27,080	14.6
Regional Vic	3,518	2.3	4,727	2.8	4,922	2.7

Location	2015		2023		2024	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
NSW	**29,323**	**19.3**	**28,382**	**16.7**	**30,712**	**16.6**
Sydney	19,855	13.0	19,504	11.5	21,634	11.7
Regional NSW	9,468	6.2	8,878	5.2	9,078	4.9
Qld	**16,646**	**10.9**	**21,540**	**12.7**	**24,180**	**13.0**
Brisbane	11,332	7.4	15,550	9.1	17,755	9.6
Regional Qld	5,314	3.5	5,990	3.5	6,425	3.5
SA	**9,302**	**6.1**	**11,245**	**6.6**	**12,907**	**7.0**
Adelaide	8,925	5.9	10,884	6.4	12,506	6.7
Regional SA	377	0.2	361	0.2	401	0.2
WA	**7,030**	**4.6**	**8,118**	**4.8**	**9,001**	**4.9**
Perth	5,980	3.9	7,429	4.4	8,274	4.5
Regional WA	1,050	0.7	689	0.4	727	0.4
Tas	**3,819**	**2.5**	**4,184**	**2.5**	**4,428**	**2.4**
Hobart	3,318	2.2	3,559	2.1	3,790	2.0
Regional Tas	501	0.3	625	0.4	638	0.3
NT	**2,192**	**1.4**	**1,968**	**1.2**	**2,158**	**1.2**
Darwin	1,631	1.1	1,349	0.8	1,468	0.8
Regional NT	561	0.4	619	0.4	690	0.4
Overseas	**1,385**	**0.9**	**1,406**	**0.8**	**1,520**	**0.8**
Total Capital Cities	**130,067**	**85.4**	**146,834**	**86.3**	**160,942**	**86.8**
Total Regional	**20,789**	**13.7**	**21,889**	**12.9**	**22,881**	**12.3**
All	**152,241**	**100.0**	**170,129**	**100.0**	**185,343**	**100.0**

Source: APSED

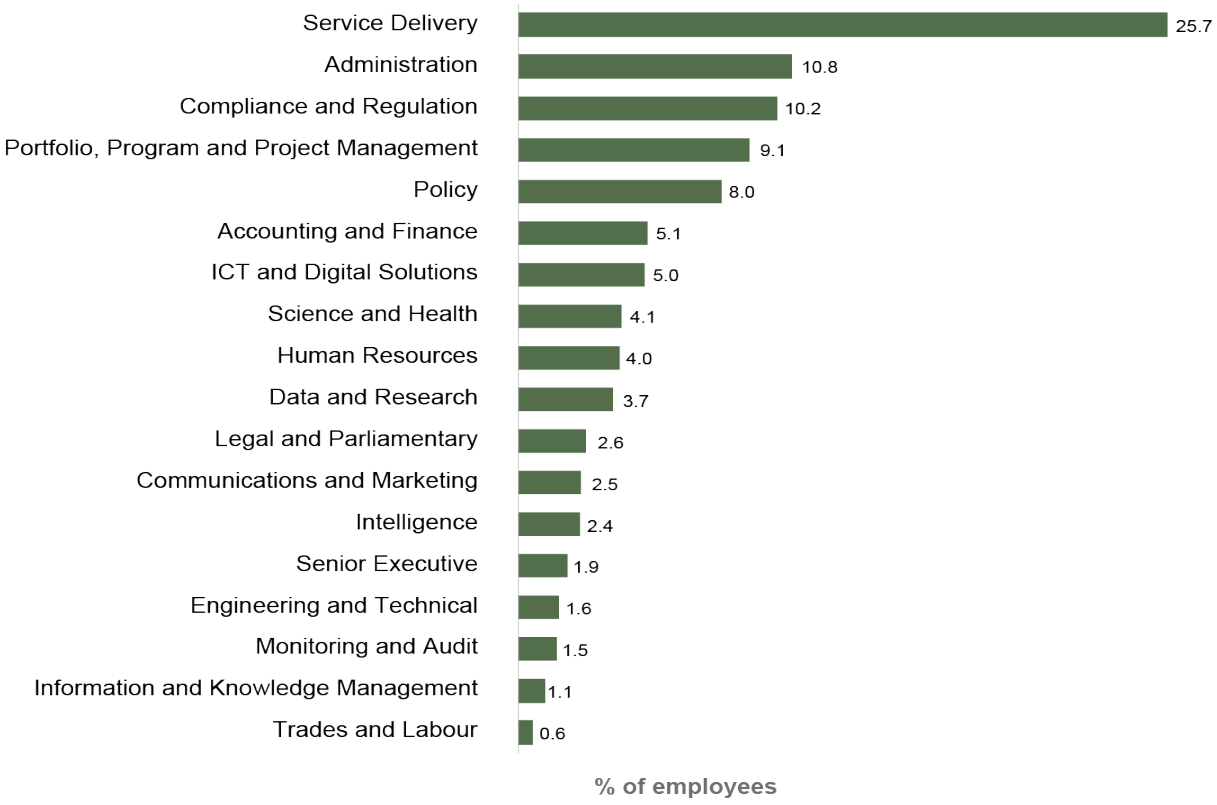
Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Job families

The APS Job Family Framework groups roles that require the performance of similar or identical sets of tasks. The framework classifies jobs at 3 levels – family, function and role. The 18 job families are broken into clusters of job functions and further into job roles.

As at 30 June 2024, 50 agencies supplied job family data relating to 158,577 APS employees (85.6%).

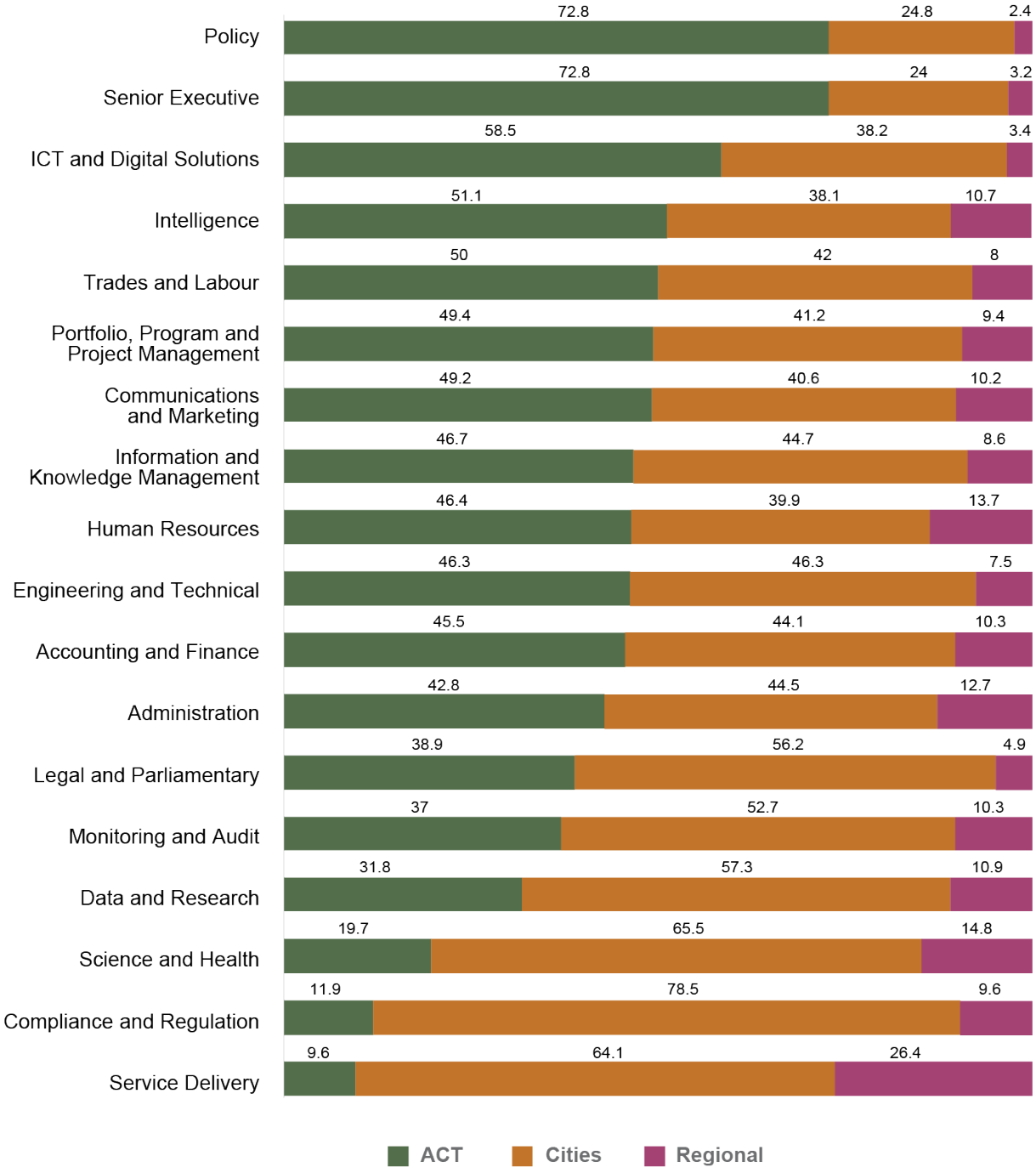
Figure A 1: Proportion of job families in the APS, by headcount (at 30 June 2024)



Source: APSED

Figure A 2 presents the location of APS job families across Canberra, other cities and regions across Australia.

Figure A 2: APS job families, by location (at 30 June 2024)



Source: APSED

Engagements and separations

Engagement numbers of ongoing employees in the APS have fluctuated over the last 10 years. This ranges from 2,367 in 2014–15 during the APS-wide recruitment freeze, up to 30,540 in 2023–24.

Tables A 6 and A 7 cover ongoing APS engagements by classification and by age group respectively.

Table A 6: Ongoing APS engagements by classification (2014–15 to 2023–24)

Classification	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Trainee	130	584	558	641	443	505	572	918	865	635
Graduate	1037	1436	1484	1247	1205	1392	1381	1793	1895	1863
APS 1	36	48	57	44	46	62	80	117	112	188
APS 2	151	485	456	172	165	194	389	394	549	468
APS 3	247	2493	1632	2086	773	1560	1261	2662	4743	6697
APS 4	142	2023	1547	1521	1566	1660	1585	3687	4583	9104
APS 5	157	1316	1067	1072	1528	1389	1655	2916	3584	4128
APS 6	241	1321	1305	1213	1634	1795	1797	3129	3352	4305
EL 1	140	788	686	673	797	851	1008	1748	1792	2357
EL 2	58	360	292	268	323	342	389	565	479	652
SES 1	17	158	47	47	57	47	66	64	71	96
SES 2	9	31	17	26	14	24	19	19	20	37
SES 3	2	9	6	5	11	2	2	3	11	10
Total	**2367**	**11052**	**9154**	**9015**	**8562**	**9823**	**10204**	**18015**	**22056**	**30540**

Source: APSED

Table A 7: Ongoing APS engagements by age group (2014–15 to 2023–24)

Age group (years)	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Under 20	75	157	169	127	149	143	160	306	443	651
20–24	701	2022	1813	1749	1478	1785	1962	3053	3569	4203
25–29	633	2533	2101	1938	1835	2126	2144	3577	3908	4845
30–34	317	1795	1362	1429	1288	1467	1549	2689	3106	4233
35–39	166	1299	1001	1095	1046	1240	1281	2380	3010	4345
40–44	163	1062	874	880	861	953	967	1907	2614	4040
45–49	130	894	719	747	773	854	861	1556	2053	3067
50–54	102	685	592	534	560	638	638	1298	1633	2439
55–59	55	425	379	342	373	428	426	802	1044	1525
60 and over	25	180	144	174	199	189	216	447	676	1192
Total	**2367**	**11052**	**9154**	**9015**	**8562**	**9823**	**10204**	**18015**	**22056**	**30540**

Source: APSED

Table A 8 covers ongoing APS separations by classification. In 2023–24, there were 11,280 separations of ongoing APS employees. The number decreased from 11,856 in 2022–23. Unlike engagements, separations have remained relatively steady since 2014–15.

Table A 8: Ongoing APS separations by classification (2014–15 to 2023–24)

Classification	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Trainee	38	59	61	75	120	80	70	93	167	152
Graduate	38	42	60	59	91	114	59	96	115	107
APS 1	85	59	61	69	51	49	24	26	26	34
APS 2	331	279	241	306	246	249	213	240	213	172
APS 3	1139	991	1190	1219	1048	911	821	1076	1372	1640
APS 4	1748	1554	1689	1886	2225	1573	1511	1944	2226	2493
APS 5	1391	1285	1434	1478	1785	1292	1233	1750	1791	1461
APS 6	2302	1910	2122	2319	2886	2248	2058	2644	2618	2320
EL 1	2191	2275	1757	1734	2225	1850	1490	2082	2117	1811
EL 2	1148	1082	882	920	1175	1249	780	949	965	842
SES 1	170	177	174	160	178	148	177	172	164	158
SES 2	72	70	65	65	64	71	59	49	64	74
SES 3	13	14	20	18	15	13	14	21	18	16
Total	**10666**	**9797**	**9756**	**10308**	**12109**	**9847**	**8509**	**11142**	**11856**	**11280**

Source: APSED

Classification structures

At 30 June 2024, the most common classification in the APS was APS 6. This continued the trend of the last decade, during which this level has consistently been the most common classification (Table A 9).

Table A 9: Number of APS employees by base classification at 30 June (2015 to 2024)

Classification	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Trainee	221	581	618	764	565	615	639	986	950	668
Graduate	1196	1571	1686	1487	1452	1601	1563	1960	2029	2015
APS 1	4351	3901	2903	2676	2840	2203	1554	2936	2668	2714
APS 2	4674	5003	4605	4701	4415	6233	4675	4090	4169	4548
APS 3	19397	20763	18419	17208	15320	15717	16812	14743	15984	13866
APS 4	30638	30579	29492	29482	28093	27315	28289	27387	28434	33588
APS 5	20671	20930	21236	20854	20593	21150	21704	22366	24284	27011
APS 6	31248	32669	33124	32973	32972	33980	34323	36134	39002	43264
EL 1	25852	25483	25542	25656	26013	26942	28495	31616	34329	37923
EL 2	11525	11492	11666	11755	11728	11817	12677	13945	15086	16318

Classification	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
SES 1	1822	1966	1978	2023	2048	2059	2086	2229	2357	2541
SES 2	530	543	558	553	579	595	624	657	679	726
SES 3	116	126	121	125	139	133	136	141	158	161
Total	**152241**	**155607**	**151948**	**150257**	**146757**	**150360**	**153577**	**159190**	**170129**	**185343**

Source: APSED

Age profile

At 30 June 2024, the average age of APS employees was 43.0, down from 43.1 at 30 June 2023. The proportion of APS employees under 30 years of age continued a slow upwards trend to 15.8%, up from 15.3% in June 2023 (Table A 10).

Table A 10: Number of APS employees by age group at 30 June (2015 to 2024)

Age group (years)	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Under 20	458	577	406	456	430	570	580	670	841	892
20–24	5237	5885	5508	5526	5314	6293	6734	7380	8560	9604
25–29	14393	14321	13650	12946	12584	13125	13685	14699	16638	18790
30–34	20148	20259	19175	18431	17213	17048	17114	17657	18966	20876
35–39	20588	21307	21260	21126	20679	20984	21364	21483	22596	24383
40–44	22087	21982	21283	20853	20751	20965	21577	22456	24094	26490
45–49	21058	21706	21788	21905	21709	22010	21885	22046	22958	24934
50–54	22354	22174	21261	20634	19976	20148	20818	21884	23127	24585
55–59	15409	16169	16361	16698	16403	16759	16812	16980	17420	18541
60 and over	10509	11227	11256	11682	11698	12458	13008	13935	14929	16248
Total	**152241**	**155607**	**151948**	**150257**	**146757**	**150360**	**153577**	**159190**	**170129**	**185343**

Source: APSED

Gender

The proportion of women in the APS has increased over the past decade. During the 2023–24 year, the proportion of women has remained stable at 60.4% (Table A 11).

Table A 11: Gender representation in the APS at 30 June (2015 to 2024)

Gender	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Men	63204	63678	62264	61467	59137	60078	60968	62678	66789	72488
Women	88957	91843	89590	88675	87482	90121	92359	96144	102747	111972
X	.	.	94	115	138	161	250	368	593	883
Total	**152241**	**155607**	**151948**	**150257**	**146757**	**150360**	**153577**	**159190**	**170129**	**185343**

Source: APSED

The proportion of women is higher than that of men from the APS 1 classification up to and including Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 2. A slightly lower proportion of women remains at the SES Band 3 level, although their number continues to rise (Table A 12).

Table A 12: Gender representation by classification at 30 June (2015 to 2024)

Classification	Gender	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Trainee	Men	112	274	319	405	252	295	297	484	548	333
	Women	109	306	297	357	312	319	336	493	398	319
Graduate	Men	626	791	832	753	743	810	770	1004	1111	1154
	Women	569	779	849	730	699	784	785	944	904	844
APS 1	Men	1451	1219	969	898	908	716	519	868	773	803
	Women	2899	2680	1934	1778	1931	1482	1027	2056	1884	1895
APS 2	Men	1803	1975	1833	1866	1747	2415	1781	1676	1794	1956
	Women	2870	3027	2770	2831	2661	3808	2885	2395	2362	2562
APS 3	Men	6506	7001	6238	5821	5250	5297	5771	5178	5640	5156
	Women	12884	13754	12176	11373	10049	10408	10995	9487	10132	8536
APS 4	Men	9574	9384	9053	9180	8726	8503	8866	8469	9143	11015
	Women	21045	21175	20419	20274	19342	18777	19373	18844	19168	22295
APS 5	Men	8319	8339	8379	8171	7909	7977	8152	8193	8855	9873
	Women	12342	12582	12846	12671	12670	13150	13517	14128	15368	17032
APS 6	Men	13813	14253	14230	14078	13695	14098	14163	14642	15433	16841
	Women	17413	18394	18869	18869	19246	19845	20110	21430	23485	26286
EL 1	Men	12899	12513	12465	12425	12280	12478	12908	13916	14841	16188
	Women	12941	12957	13063	13216	13716	14445	15564	17663	19442	21662
EL 2	Men	6637	6419	6433	6377	6144	6040	6323	6805	7170	7615
	Women	4882	5065	5224	5369	5575	5767	6344	7128	7898	8677
SES 1	Men	1054	1091	1102	1080	1054	1031	999	1022	1063	1127
	Women	767	874	875	942	992	1026	1083	1201	1289	1405

Classification	Gender	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
SES 2	Men	336	338	340	340	351	345	343	346	335	345
	Women	194	205	218	213	228	250	280	309	342	380
SES 3	Men	74	81	71	73	78	73	76	75	83	82
	Women	42	45	50	52	61	60	60	66	75	79

Source: APSED

Diversity

Table A 13 presents the proportion of APS employees identifying in each diversity group within their agency's human resources system.

Table A 13: Proportion of APS employees by diversity group at 30 June (2015 to 2024)

Diversity group	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2020 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	2024 (%)
Women	58.4	59.0	59.0	59.0	59.6	59.9	60.1	60.4	60.4	60.4
First Nations	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.4
People with disability	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.7	5.0	5.2	5.3	5.4
Born outside of Australia	22.3	22.3	22.4	22.4	22.4	22.4	22.8	23.1	24.0	24.8
First language spoken not exclusively English	21.0	21.3	21.7	22.0	22.2	22.4	22.9	23.5	24.6	25.7

Source: APSED

Government Employment Statistics

In addition to employment data published by the APSC via APSED, Finance and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publish figures relating to the number of staff employed by the Commonwealth Government.

Finance publishes Average Staffing Level (ASL) estimates for each financial year through the federal Budget process of allocating resources for the General Government Sector (GGS), which includes both APS and non-APS entities.

The ABS publishes government employee estimates via the Public Sector Employment and Earnings (PSEE) labour force data.

Table A 14 shows headcount published via APSED as at the end of each financial year (30 June) aligned with the PSEE estimates where available, and the historical ASL estimates for the respective financial year.

Table A 14: APS employee headcount by employment category, GGS historical estimates of ASL, and Commonwealth Public Sector employment estimates by financial year

Measure		2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Employee headcount (APSED) as at 30 June	Ongoing	136,538	137,894	137,288	136,210	132,240	132,257	133,976	140,850	151,058	170,186
	Non-ongoing	15,703	17,713	14,660	14,047	14,517	18,103	19,601	18,340	19,071	15,157
	Total	152,241	155,607	151,948	150,257	146,757	150,360	153,577	159,190	170,129	185,343
Average Staffing Level, (Finance), Financial Year	Total (exc. ADF)	166,261	165,648	166,181	165,276	165,491	166,762	168,912	173,142	181,122	191,861
	Total (inc. ADF)	243,135	243,047	244,495	243,773	244,306	247,302	250,583	253,777	264,825	272,924
Employment and Earnings (Commonwealth) - ABS	Public Sector Employment and Earnings									350,300	Not yet available
	Survey of Employment and Earning	235,300	243,300	239,800	240,700	242,100	246,000	247,600	254,000		

Sources:

1. APSED
2. Federal Budget 2024–25 Budget Paper No. 4, Historical Estimates of Average Staffing Levels of Agencies in the Australian General Government Sector. Page 181, Staffing of Agencies, Budget Paper 4, Budget 2024–25
3. ABS Public sector employment and earnings, Commonwealth Government measure. Figures up to and including 2021–22 were collected via the Survey of Employment and Earnings (SEE), which used a different collection methodology (sample survey) to the current Public Sector Employment and Earnings (Single Touch Payroll). June 2024 PSEE figures not available at time of print.

APS headcount, Average Staffing Level, and ABS Public Sector Employment and Earnings are related, though not directly comparable due to 3 important distinctions:

- employee population inclusions
- adjustment for work hours
- time period measured.

Employee population inclusions

APSED headcount only includes staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act). ASL in the federal Budget covers the wider General Government Sector (GGS). The Public Sector Employment and Earnings (PSEE) figures published by the ABS have a span beyond the GGS, covering public financial corporations and public non-financial corporations.

The GGS includes both APS and non-APS agencies. Examples of non-APS agencies within the GGS include Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and the Australian Federal Police. Non-APS agencies are not included in APSED reporting.

Population inclusions can differ within an agency. For some agencies it is possible to employ staff under both the PS Act and other enabling legislation. For example, the Australian Digital Health Agency may employ staff under the PS Act, or under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Establishing the Australian Digital Health Agency) Rule 16, section 64. In this case, ASL will cover staff covered by both Acts, while APSED headcount will only cover staff employed under the PS Act.

Examples of public financial corporations include the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Australia Reinsurance Pool Corporation, and Housing Australia. Public non-financial corporations include entities such as Australia Post, Snowy Hydro Limited, Airservices Australia, and NBN Co Limited. These are not included in APSED reporting, nor are they included in federal Budget staffing estimates.

A full list of agencies and their enabling legislation is published by the Department of Finance at List of Commonwealth entities and companies.

This list provides the Economic Sector of government entities (e.g. General Government, Public Financial and Non-Financial Corporations).

Adjustment for work hours

APSED figures are based on headcount, which is a count of the number of employees, with no adjustment for the hours worked. Each part-time and casual employee is counted as one employee, irrespective of the number of hours they work. ABS PSEE estimates count the number of employees without adjusting for work hours.

In contrast, Finance's ASL measure does adjust for hours worked, with part-time and casual employees counted using their working hours as a proportion of a standard work week. For example, 2 part-time employees who work half a week each would be counted as 0.5 ASL each and would total 1 ASL. This is in contrast to headcount which would count each of these employees, totalling 2.

Time period measured

Headcount is a point in time count of the number of employees, whereas ASL takes into account the staffing across the year.

For example, an organisation that had changing staff numbers over the year as per Table A 15 would have an ASL of 100 (average staffing level over the 12 months).

However, the headcount (as at 30 June) would be zero, because the headcount only measures a point in time.

Table A 15: Example staffing profile

Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
100	200	0	100	200	0	100	200	0	100	200	0

Table A 16 provides an outline of the count method and included population of these statistics.

Table A 16: Summary of government employment measures – count method and population inclusions

Measure and Source	Count method	Population Inclusions		
		General Government Sector (GGS)		PFC and NFC
		APS GGS	Non-APS GGS	
APSED – APSC	Headcount	Yes	No	No
Average Staffing Level estimates – DoF	ASL	Yes	Yes	No
Public Sector Employment Earnings – ABS	Headcount	Yes	Yes	Yes

Count methods:

- **Headcount:** staff count not adjusted for work hours per person (2 x 0.5 part-time employees = 2). Count as at a point in time.
- **ASL:** staff count adjusted for part-time/casual work hours (2 x 0.5 part-time employees = 1). Average over reporting period.

Population inclusion abbreviations:

- **GGS:** General Government Sector (e.g. APS: Australian Taxation Office, Services Australia, Home Affairs and non-APS: Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australian Federal Police)
- **PFC:** Public Financial Corporations (e.g. Reserve Bank of Australia, Australian Reinsurance Pool Corporation, Housing Australia)
- **PNFC:** Public Non-Financial Corporations (e.g. Australia Post, Australian Rail Track Corporation Limited, Snowy Hydro Limited, Australian Naval Infrastructure Pty Ltd, Airservices Australia, NBN Co Limited).

Personal and miscellaneous leave

APS agencies provide aggregated figures on personal leave (that is, sick and carer's leave) and miscellaneous leave (that is, bereavement, compassionate and emergency leave). These figures include instances of leave with or without a supporting medical certificate, whether paid or unpaid. Prior to 2023 this form of leave was reported in the State of the Service Report as unscheduled absences. As some of this leave may be scheduled, a more accurate term is personal and miscellaneous leave.

The personal and miscellaneous leave measure incorporates the staffing size of agencies when calculating the absence rate. In practice, every agency's personal and miscellaneous leave days and full-time equivalent (FTE) are summed, and the personal and miscellaneous leave rate is calculated by dividing the total number of personal and miscellaneous leave days by the total FTE of the APS.

$$\text{APS personal \& miscellaneous leave rate} = \frac{\text{Total days of personal \& miscellaneous leave across the APS}}{\text{Total FTE of the APS}}$$

Table A 17 compares the personal and miscellaneous leave rate since 2017–18 across the whole-of-APS and broken down by agency size. During 2023–24, personal and miscellaneous leave rates slightly decreased across the APS and across small and medium agency size groups, with the rate remaining the same as last year across large agencies.

Table A 17: Personal and miscellaneous leave rates (2017–18 to 2023–24) by agency size (expressed as an average number of days)

Year	APS	Small	Medium	Large
2017–18	13.3	11.0	11.9	13.5
2018–19	13.4	11.0	11.7	13.7
2019–20	13.1	11.2	11.4	13.3
2020–21	12.2	9.8	10.5	12.5
2021–22	12.8	10.1	11.1	13.1
2022–23	13.2	11.3	11.9	13.4
2023–24	13.1	11.1	11.4	13.4

Table A 18 provides personal and miscellaneous leave use and rates by agency for 2022–23 and 2023–24 (expressed as an average number of days). Note that for small agencies, a small number of individuals with a large amount of leave taken can influence the personal and miscellaneous leave rate substantially.

Table A 18: Sick, carer's leave, miscellaneous and total personal and miscellaneous leave rate by agency (2022–23 and 2023–24) (expressed as an average number of days)

Agency name	Sick leave 2023–24	Carer's leave 2023–24	Miscellaneous leave 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2022–23
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	12.3	1.4	0.1	13.8	16.3
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	9.4	1.3	0.3	11.0	11.6
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	11.5	1.5	0.4	13.4	11.8
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	10.2	2.3	0.4	12.9	13.3
Attorney-General's	9.0	1.5	0.3	10.8	10.6
Australian Bureau of Statistics	9.3	1.9	0.6	11.7	12.4
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	10.3	4.4	2.5	17.2	12.4
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	7.2	0.9	0.5	8.6	11.6
Australian Communications and Media Authority	9.3	2.1	0.6	12.0	12.6
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	7.0	1.2	0.4	8.6	11.8
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	6.2	1.3	1.8	9.3	11.5
Australian Digital Health Agency	8.0	1.0	0.2	9.3	12.2
Australian Electoral Commission	8.1	1.1	0.3	9.4	12.0
Australian Financial Security Authority	8.8	2.1	0.4	11.3	11.2
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	6.2	1.4	0.1	7.7	8.8
Australian Human Rights Commission	6.8	1.7	0.6	9.0	6.0
Australian Information Commissioner	11.7	0.0	0.8	12.5	9.0
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	11.5	1.9	0.8	14.2	14.1
Australian Institute of Family Studies	4.4	1.0	0.9	6.2	9.3

Agency name	Sick leave 2023–24	Carer's leave 2023–24	Miscellaneous leave 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2022–23
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	9.0	1.8	0.3	11.1	9.5
Australian National Audit Office	8.8	1.9	0.5	11.1	13.1
Australian National Maritime Museum	6.2	1.1	0.6	7.8	8.1
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	8.1	2.5	0.5	11.1	9.3
Australian Public Service Commission	7.1	1.7	0.3	9.0	10.1
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	6.3	1.9	1.0	9.2	9.5
Australian Research Council	8.7	2.1	2.7	13.5	11.9
Australian Skills Quality Authority	10.5	1.6	0.4	12.5	12.8
Australian Submarine Agency*	5.1	1.1	0.2	6.4	
Australian Taxation Office	9.4	1.8	0.4	11.6	12.0
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	8.8	2.2	0.8	11.8	5.8
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	7.5	2.1	1.8	11.5	9.5
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	8.1	1.4	0.2	9.7	11.8
Australian War Memorial	8.1	2.3	0.2	10.5	12.4
Bureau of Meteorology	5.8	2.1	0.2	8.1	9.2
Cancer Australia	8.4	1.5	4.4	14.2	15.2
Clean Energy Regulator	9.3	2.6	6.9	18.9	13.8
Climate Change Authority	6.7	0.9	1.0	8.6	8.7
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	7.1	0.3	0.5	8.0	5.4
Comcare	9.2	1.1	0.7	11.0	13.1
Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions	6.8	1.3	0.4	8.6	8.8
Commonwealth Ombudsman	14.4	2.1	0.8	17.3	14.7
Defence	9.8	1.8	0.4	11.9	12.4

Agency name	Sick leave 2023–24	Carer's leave 2023–24	Miscellaneous leave 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2022–23
Defence Housing Australia	8.9	2.6	0.3	11.8	11.8
Digital Transformation Agency	6.7	1.6	0.3	8.6	11.1
Education	8.6	2.2	0.4	11.1	10.0
Employment and Workplace Relations	9.5	2.0	0.5	11.9	11.1
Fair Work Commission	9.3	1.6	0.7	11.6	11.1
Fair Work Ombudsman	9.5	2.2	0.5	12.2	11.3
Federal Court of Australia	6.9	0.0	0.3	7.2	12.0
Finance	8.5	1.7	0.3	10.5	10.9
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	6.6	1.3	0.6	8.5	11.4
Foreign Affairs and Trade	8.1	2.6	0.2	10.9	10.7
Future Fund Management Agency	2.7	1.0	0.4	4.0	4.9
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	12.9	2.2	1.7	16.8	13.9
Health	9.7	1.5	0.4	11.6	12.0
Home Affairs	11.8	3.0	0.4	15.2	15.4
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	7.6	1.7	0.2	9.6	16.0
Industry, Science and Resources	9.9	1.3	0.3	11.5	9.1
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	8.8	1.6	0.4	10.7	12.4
Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	8.1	1.5	1.6	11.2	16.5
Inspector-General of Taxation and Taxation Ombudsman	5.2	4.0	0.6	9.8	7.2
Murray–Darling Basin Authority	7.8	3.3	3.7	14.8	13.2
Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House	8.4	1.2	0.3	9.9	11.3
National Anti-Corruption Commission*	3.7	0.5	0.1	4.3	
National Archives of Australia	13.2	1.3	0.4	14.9	16.0

Agency name	Sick leave 2023–24	Carer's leave 2023–24	Miscellaneous leave 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2022–23
National Blood Authority	9.6	2.4	0.2	12.2	13.7
National Capital Authority**					5.0
National Disability Insurance Agency	12.2	2.0	1.2	15.4	14.6
National Emergency Management Agency	10.3	2.0	0.4	12.8	10.6
National Film and Sound Archive	8.8	1.5	5.6	15.9	11.0
National Health and Medical Research Council	9.5	1.7	0.3	11.5	11.6
National Health Funding Body	7.6	1.6	0.1	9.3	7.0
National Indigenous Australians Agency	13.1	2.5	0.7	16.3	15.6
National Library of Australia	11.9	2.0	0.6	14.5	14.7
National Mental Health Commission	7.9	1.6	3.6	13.1	13.0
National Museum of Australia	10.5	1.9	0.3	12.7	14.1
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	6.6	1.0	0.1	7.7	10.4
National Portrait Gallery	10.9	1.4	0.3	12.6	13.1
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	7.8	1.6	0.7	10.1	12.2
Office of National Intelligence	8.6	3.4	0.3	12.2	11.2
Organ and Tissue Authority	10.0	1.7	0.4	12.2	11.5
Parliamentary Counsel	10.1	2.7	0.6	13.4	13.6
Prime Minister and Cabinet	8.6	1.6	0.4	10.6	9.7
Productivity Commission	6.2	2.1	0.2	8.6	9.0
Professional Services Review	7.9	1.1	1.5	10.5	9.2
Safe Work Australia	12.6	2.5	0.3	15.4	15.8
Services Australia	14.8	2.5	0.7	18.0	17.6
Social Services	11.4	1.9	0.4	13.7	15.0
Sport Integrity Australia	6.9	0.9	0.5	8.3	9.5

Agency name	Sick leave 2023–24	Carer's leave 2023–24	Miscellaneous leave 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2023–24	Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate 2022–23
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	11.0	2.2	0.3	13.5	10.3
Torres Strait Regional Authority	13.2	2.7	1.4	17.3	25.2
Treasury	9.4	1.7	0.4	11.5	10.8
Veterans' Affairs	12.8	1.9	0.4	15.1	13.7
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	6.4	1.3	0.2	7.9	9.8
APS	10.6	2.0	0.5	13.1	13.2

*Total personal and miscellaneous leave rate for 2022–23 was not available as agency was not established until 1 July 2023.

** Data was not provided by agency.

Appendix 2 – State of the Service additional data

This appendix presents additional data to support content in this report.

Code of Conduct

In the 2024 Australian Public Service Agency Survey, agencies reported that 647 employees were the subject of an investigation into a suspected breach of the APS Code of Conduct that was finalised in 2023–24. Of these, 555 employees were found to have breached the APS Code of Conduct.

Table A 19 presents the number of investigations conducted by agencies into suspected breaches of individual elements of the APS Code of Conduct and the number of breach findings in 2023–24. One employee can be investigated for multiple elements of the APS Code of Conduct.

Table A 19: Number of investigations into and breaches against individual elements of the APS Code of Conduct (2023–24)

Element of Code of Conduct	Investigations	Breaches
Behave honestly and with integrity in connection with APS employment, s 13(1)	343	297
Act with care and diligence in connection with APS employment, s 13(2)	96	69
When acting in connection with APS employment, treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment, s 13(3)	96	66
When acting in connection with APS employment comply with all applicable Australian laws, s 13(4)	27	16
Comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the employee's Agency who has authority to give the direction, s 13(5)	84	65
Maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings that the employee has with any Minister or Minister's member of staff, s 13(6)	0	0
Take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest (real or apparent), and disclose details of any material personal interest of the employee, in connection with the employee's APS employment, s 13(7)	36	29
Use Commonwealth resources in a proper manner and for a proper purpose, s 13(8)	65	50
Not provide false or misleading information in response to a request for information that is made for official purposes in connection with the employee's APS employment, s 13(9)	44	38
Not make improper use of: inside information, or the employee's duties, status, power or authority, in order to: a) gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for the employee or any other person; or b) cause, or seek to cause, a detriment to the employee's Agency, the Commonwealth or any other person, s 13(10)	35	21
At all times behave in a way that upholds the APS Values and APS Employment Principles, and the integrity and good reputation of the employee's Agency and the APS, s 13(11)	535	472
While on duty overseas, at all times behave in a way that upholds the good reputation of Australia, s 13(12)	2	1
Comply with any other conduct requirement that is prescribed by the regulations, s 13(13)	6	3

Element of Code of Conduct	Investigations	Breaches
Total number of elements of the APS Code of Conduct that were investigated and breached	1,369	1,127

Source: 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: As individual employees can be investigated and found in breach of multiple elements of the APS Code of Conduct, the reported totals exceed the total number of individual employees investigated (647 employees) and found in breach (555 employees).

Table A 20 presents the types of reports which led to finalised APS Code of Conduct investigations (2023–24).

Table A 20: Reports leading to finalised APS Code of Conduct investigations (2023–24)

Type of report	Number of reports
A report generated by a compliance/monitoring system (e.g. audit)	378
A report made to a central conduct or ethics unit or nominated person in a human resources area	195
A report made to an email reporting address	33
A report made to a fraud prevention and control unit or hotline	19
A Public Interest Disclosure	16
A report made to an employee advice or counselling unit	2
A report made to another hotline	0
Other	21
Total number of reports leading to finalised APS Code of Conduct investigations	664

Source: 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: As individual employees may have been reported through multiple avenues, the reported total exceeds the total number of individual employees investigated (647 employees).

Table A 21 presents the outcomes for the 647 APS employees who were investigated for suspected breaches of the APS Code of Conduct during 2023–24.

Table A 21: Outcome of investigations into suspected breaches of the APS Code of Conduct (2023–24)

Outcome	Number of employees
Breach found and sanction applied	356
Breach found but no sanction applied - other reason	109
Breach found but no sanction applied - employee resigned prior to sanction decision	90
No breach found (for any element of the Code)	68
Investigation discontinued - employee resigned	13
Investigation discontinued - other reason	11
Total number of outcomes of finalised APS Code of Conduct investigations	647

Source: 2024 APS Agency Survey

Table A 22 presents the sanctions applied to 356 APS employees found to have breached the APS Code of Conduct during 2023–24.

Table A 22: Sanctions imposed for breaches of the APS Code of Conduct (2023–24)

Sanction	Number of sanctions
Reprimand	264
Deductions from salary by way of a fine	167
Reduction in salary	70
Termination of employment	61
Re-assignment of duties	10
Reduction in classification	9
Total sanctions imposed	581

Source: 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: As individual employees may have received more than one sanction, the reported total exceeds the total number of employees who received sanctions (356 employees).

In the 2024 APS Employee Census, 10.5% of respondents indicated they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their workplace in the 12 months preceding the APS Employee Census.

Table A 23 presents the types of behaviour perceived by respondents.

Table A 23: Type of harassment or bullying perceived by respondents

Type of behaviour	% of those who indicated they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their workplace in the previous 12 months preceding the 2024 APS Employee Census
Interference with work tasks (e.g. withholding needed information, undermining or sabotage)	44.2
Verbal abuse (e.g. offensive language, derogatory remarks, shouting or screaming)	41.7
Inappropriate and unfair application of work policies or rules (e.g. performance management, access to leave, access to learning and development)	29.2
Deliberate exclusion from work-related activities	27.7
Cyberbullying (e.g. harassment via IT, or the spreading of gossip/materials intended to defame or humiliate)	8.8
Sexual harassment	4.1
Interference with your personal property or work equipment	4.0
Physical behaviour	3.9
‘Initiations’ or pranks	2.6
Other	17.5

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who said they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace. As respondents could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

Table A 24 presents the perceived source of the harassment or bullying indicated by respondents in 2024.

Table A 24: Perceived source of harassment or bullying

Perceived source	% of those who indicated they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their workplace in the previous 12 months preceding the 2024 APS Employee Census
Co-worker	39.6
Someone more senior (other than your supervisor)	31.0
A previous supervisor	24.7
Your current supervisor	17.5
Someone more junior than you	9.4
Client, customer or stakeholder	4.7
Contractor	2.3
Representative of another APS agency	0.9
Consultant / service provider	0.9
Minister or ministerial adviser	0.3
Unknown	1.7

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who said they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace. As respondents could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

Table A 25 presents the reporting behaviour of respondents who had perceived harassment or bullying in their workplace in the 12 months preceding the APS Employee Census.

Table A 25: Reporting behaviour of harassment or bullying

Reporting behaviour	% who perceived harassment or bullying in their workplace during the previous 12 months preceding the 2024 APS Employee Census
I reported the behaviour in accordance with my agency's policies and procedures	36.0
It was reported by someone else	7.3
I did not report the behaviour	56.7

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who said they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace.

Table A 26 presents the reasons for not reporting harassment or bullying given by respondents who had perceived harassment or bullying in their workplace in the 12 months preceding the APS Employee Census and who did not report the behaviour.

Table A 26: Reasons for not reporting harassment or bullying

Reason	% who perceived harassment or bullying in their workplace during the 12 months preceding the 2024 APS Employee Census and did not report the behaviour
I feared possible retaliation or reprisals	47.1
I did not think action would be taken	45.8
I did not want to upset relationships in the workplace	40.5
It could affect my career	36.7
I did not think it was worth the hassle of going through the reporting process	33.4
Managers accepted the behaviour	29.4
I did not think the harassment or bullying was serious enough	16.7
I did not have enough evidence	15.8
The matter was resolved informally	9.0
I did not know how to report it	5.5
Other	10.2

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who said they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace and did not report the behaviour. As respondents could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

Table A 27 presents the number of recorded complaints against each type of harassment and bullying behaviour made by APS employees within APS agencies during 2023–24.

Table A 27: Complaints against each type of harassment and bullying behaviour made to agencies (2023–24)

Type of behaviour	Number
Verbal abuse (e.g. offensive language, derogatory remarks, shouting or screaming)	582
Inappropriate and unfair application of work policies or rules (e.g. performance management, access to leave, access to learning and development)	305
Sexual harassment	157
Interference with work tasks (i.e. withholding needed information, undermining or sabotage)	96
Cyberbullying (e.g. harassment via IT, or the spreading of gossip/materials intended to defame/humiliate)	71
Physical behaviour	47
Interference with personal property or work equipment	9
Initiations or pranks	2
Other	749
Total number of individual harassment and bullying behaviours that were reported	2018

Source: 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: Individual employees may have reported a complaint about multiple types of harassment and bullying behaviour.

Table A 28 presents the proportion of respondents who, during the previous 12 months, reported they had witnessed another APS employee within their agency engaging in behaviour they considered may be serious enough to be viewed as corruption.

Table A 28: APS employee perceptions of corruption

Potential corruption witnessed	%
Yes	3.1
No	90.8
Not sure	3.8
Would prefer not to answer	2.3

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Of those who reported witnessing potential corruption, the types of corruption are presented in Table A 29.

Table A 29: Type of potential corruption witnessed

Type of potential corruption witnessed	% who had witnessed potential corruption
Cronyism-preferential treatment of friends, such as appointing them to positions without proper regard to merit	61.0
Nepotism-preferential treatment of family members, such as appointing them to positions without proper regard to merit	23.6
Acting (or failing to act) in the presence of an undisclosed conflict of interest	20.2
Green-lighting	11.9
Fraud, forgery or embezzlement	11.7
Theft or misappropriation of official assets	6.6
Unlawful disclosure of government information	4.5
Perverting the course of justice	3.1
Bribery, domestic and foreign—obtaining, offering or soliciting secret commissions, kickbacks or gratuities	1.9
Blackmail	1.4
Insider trading	1.3
Colluding, conspiring with, or harbouring criminals	1.0
Other	12.8

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who said they witnessed potential corruption. As respondents could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

In the 2024 APS Employee Census, 10.0% of respondents indicated they had been subjected to discrimination during the 12 months preceding the APS Employee Census and in the course of their employment. Table A 30 presents the types of discrimination perceived by respondents.

Table A 30: Type of discrimination perceived by respondents

Category	% of those who indicated they had been subjected to discrimination during the 12 months preceding the 2024 APS Employee Census and in the course of their employment
Gender	29.8
Age	25.8
Race	23.2
Caring responsibilities	18.3
Disability (e.g. loss of hearing or sight, incomplete use of limbs, or mental health issues)	14.3
Religion	5.9
LGBTIQA+	4.9
Identification as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person	3.6
Other	20.6

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: Percentages are based on respondents who said they had perceived discrimination during the 12 months preceding the APS Employee Census and in the course of their employment. As respondents could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

Ethics Advisory Service

The APSC Ethics Advisory Service provides information, policy advice and guidance to APS employees and leaders on the application of the APS Values and the Code of Conduct, promoting ethical decision-making across the public service. In 2023–24, the Ethics Advisory Service received 491 enquiries – 207 from individual APS employees and 188 from agency human resources areas and managers. The remaining 96 enquiries were from former employees, were anonymous or out of scope.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Employees

Table A 31 presents the proportion of respondents identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse.

Table A 31: Proportion of employees who identified as culturally and linguistically diverse

Do you identify as culturally and linguistically diverse?	%
Yes	25.7
No	74.3

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Table A 32 presents the proportion of respondents who identify with a specific cultural background

Table A 32: Proportion of employees who identified with a specific cultural background

How would you describe your cultural background?	%
Australian (excluding Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander)	67.0
Anglo-European	12.4
South-East Asian	11.2
Southern and Eastern European	5.3
Southern and Central Asian	4.1
Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	3.4
North-East Asian	2.9
North-West European (excluding Anglo-European)	2.3
North African and Middle Eastern	1.4
New Zealander (excluding Maori)	1.2
Maori, Melanesian, Papuan, Micronesian, and Polynesian	1.1
Sub-Saharan African	1.1
South and Central American and Caribbean Islander	1.0
North American	0.7

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: Respondents could select more than one cultural background.

APS employees with disability

Table A 33 presents the proportion of respondents with an ongoing disability.

Table A 33: Proportion of respondents with an ongoing disability

Do you have an ongoing disability?	%
Yes	11.7
No	88.3

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Table A 34 presents the proportion of respondents with an ongoing disability who have shared that information to their agency's human resource information system.

Table A 34: Respondents with an ongoing disability who have shared that information to their agency's human resources information system

Have you shared your ongoing disability to your agency's human resources information system?	% of those with an ongoing disability
Yes	45.7
No	34.5
Not sure	19.9

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Table A 35 presents the factors that contribute to those with an ongoing disability not sharing that they have an ongoing disability to their agency's human resource information system.

Table A 35: Factors that contribute to respondents with an ongoing disability not sharing that they have an ongoing disability to their agency's human resources information system

Have any of the following contributed to your decision to not share this information?	% of those with an ongoing disability who have not shared their ongoing disability to their agency's human resources information system
I do not see any reason for or benefit in sharing this information with my agency	39.2
I do not require any adjustments to be made to perform my role	37.4
I am concerned about being discriminated against	34.7
It is private information I do not wish to share	28.0
I have never been asked for this information	23.5
My disability is not relevant to my employment	23.3
I am unsure how to update this information	12.4
Other reason	8.5

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: As respondents could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

Understanding neurodiversity in the APS

Table A 36 presents the proportion of respondents who considered themselves to be neurodivergent.

Table A 36: Proportion of employees who considered themselves to be neurodivergent

Do you consider yourself to be neurodivergent?	%
Yes	8.8
No	72.4
Maybe	9.3
I am unsure what neurodivergent means	9.5

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Supporting health and wellbeing

Table A 37 presents perceptions held by APS Employee Census respondents in 2024.

Table A 37: Employee perceptions of wellbeing support

Statement	Level of agreement	%
I am satisfied with the policies/practices in place to help me manage my health and wellbeing	Agree	68
	Neither agree nor disagree	22
	Disagree	11
My agency does a good job of communicating what it can offer me in terms of health and wellbeing	Agree	66
	Neither agree nor disagree	22
	Disagree	12
My agency does a good job of promoting health and wellbeing	Agree	66
	Neither agree nor disagree	22
	Disagree	12
I think my agency cares about my health and wellbeing	Agree	64
	Neither agree nor disagree	22
	Disagree	14
I believe my immediate supervisor cares about my health and wellbeing	Agree	86
	Neither agree nor disagree	9
	Disagree	5

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Service to Australians

Table A 38 presents perceptions held by APS Employee Census respondents in 2024.

Table A 38: Employee perceptions related to role and purpose

Statement		%
I understand how my role contributes to achieving an outcome for the Australian public	Agree	93
	Neither agree nor disagree	5
	Disagree	2
I believe strongly in the purpose and objectives of the APS	Agree	87
	Neither agree nor disagree	12
	Disagree	2

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Appendix 3 – APS agencies

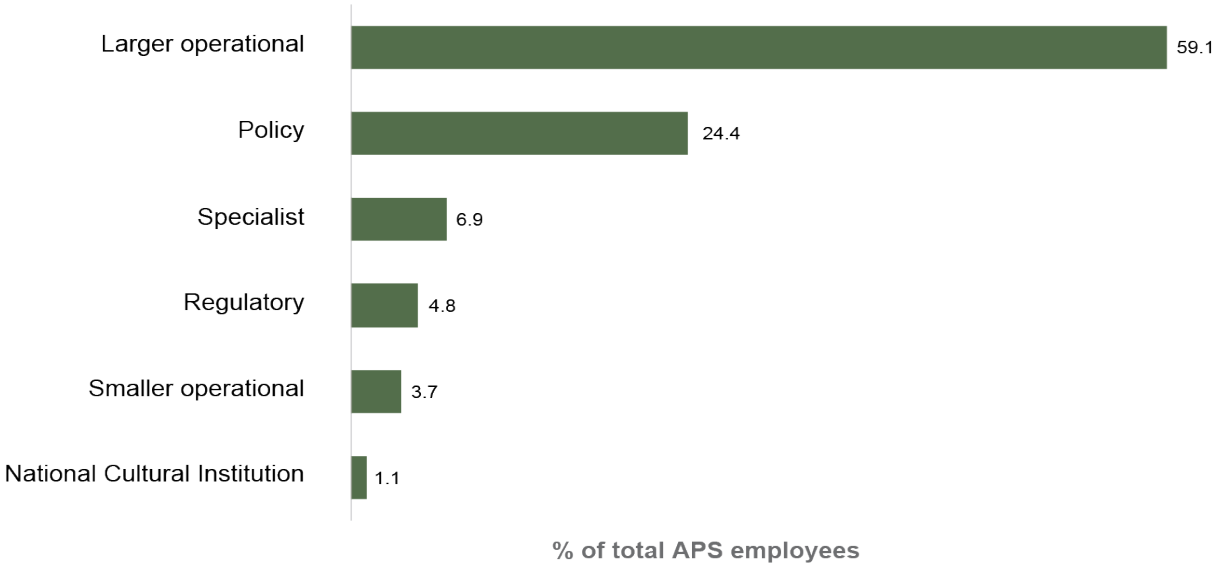
This appendix covers a range of information about Australian Public Service agencies.

APS agencies are grouped into ‘functional clusters’ to allow comparisons to be made between agencies with similar primary functions. The functional clusters applied to APS agencies are:

- Policy – agencies involved in the development of public policy.
- Smaller operational – agencies with fewer than 1,000 employees involved in the implementation of public policy.
- Larger operational – agencies with 1,000 employees or more involved in the implementation of public policy.
- Regulatory – agencies involved in regulation and inspection.
- Specialist – agencies providing specialist support to Government.
- National cultural institutions: agencies that maintain collections of material and offer public programs relevant to Australia’s cultural heritage.

Figure A 3 shows the proportion of functional clusters within the APS, by headcount (at 30 June 2024).

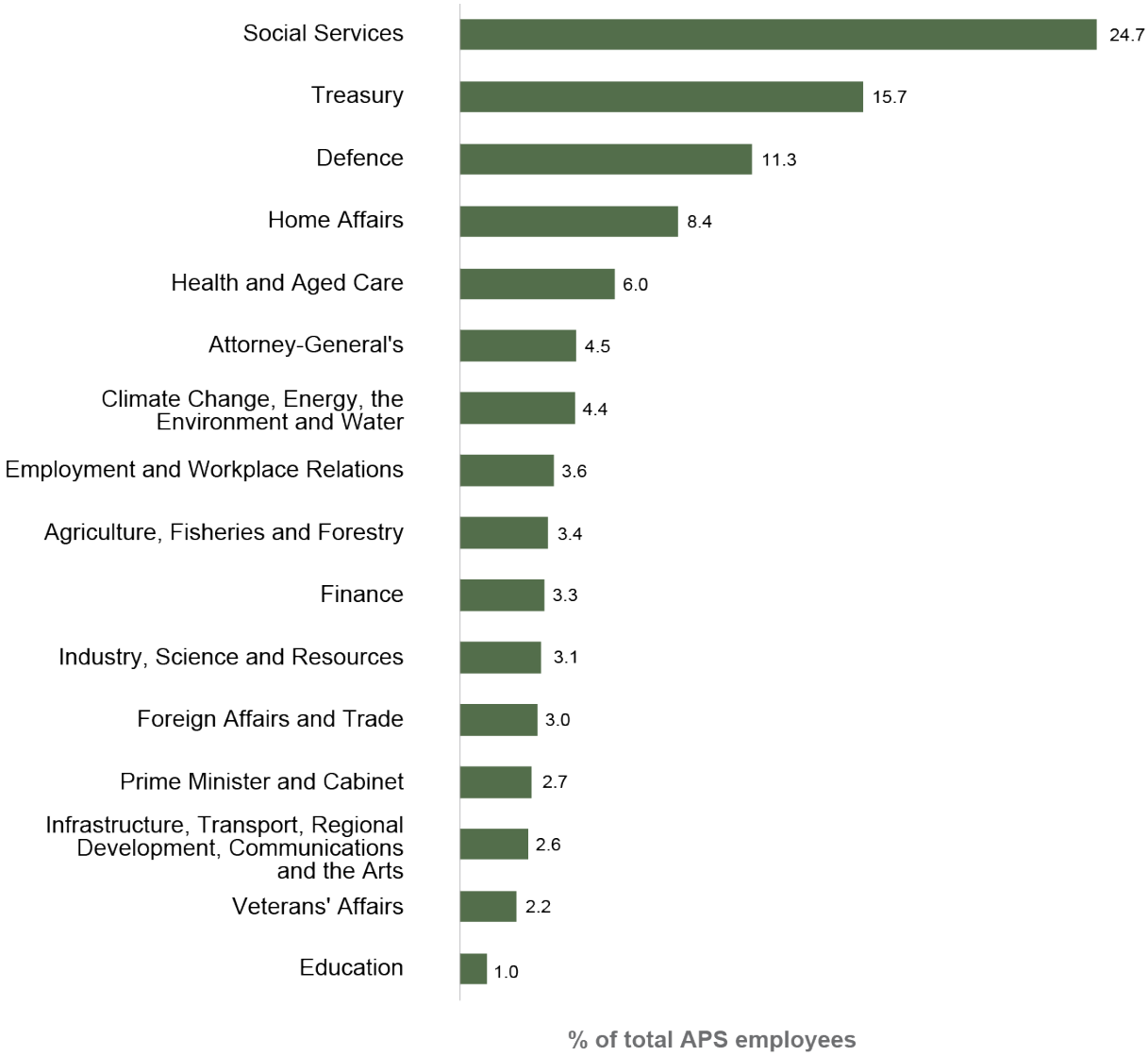
Figure A 3: Proportion of functional clusters within the APS, by headcount (at 30 June 2024)



Source: APSED

Figure A 4 shows the portfolio proportion of the APS, by headcount (at 30 June 2024).

Figure A 4: Portfolio proportion of the APS, by headcount (at 30 June 2024)



Source: APSED

Table A 39 lists APS agencies and employee numbers and reflects data in the APS Employment Database (APSED) as at 30 June 2024.

These are headcount numbers and include ongoing and non-ongoing employees. Note that the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service is not listed because as at 30 June 2024 they had no headcount due to the pending establishment of the agency.

The list of 101 agencies can be found at APS Agencies – size and function, https://www.apsc.gov.au/aps-agencies-size-and-function.

Table A 39: List of APS agencies by portfolio (at 30 June 2024)

Agency name	Functional cluster	Headcount
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	**Larger operational**	**5,889**
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	Regulatory	173
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	Regulatory	228
Attorney-General's	**Policy**	**2,413**
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	Smaller operational	816
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	Specialist	866
Australian Financial Security Authority	Regulatory	466
Australian Human Rights Commission	Specialist	216
Australian Law Reform Commission	Specialist	17
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	Regulatory	552
Federal Court of Australia	Specialist	1,603
National Anti-Corruption Commission	Specialist	214
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	Regulatory	220
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	Specialist	282
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	Specialist	453
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	Specialist	41
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	Specialist	119
Office of the Special Investigator	Specialist	4
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	**Policy**	**5,157**
Bureau of Meteorology	Larger operational	1,903
Clean Energy Regulator	Regulatory	433
Climate Change Authority	Specialist	69
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	Specialist	265
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	Policy	414
Defence	**Larger operational**	**19,803**
Australian Submarine Agency	Specialist	542
Defence Housing Australia	Smaller operational	609
Education	**Policy**	**1,680**
Australian Research Council	Specialist	140
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	Regulatory	109

Agency name	Functional cluster	Headcount
Employment and Workplace Relations	**Policy**	**4,295**
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency	Specialist	18
Australian Skills Quality Authority	Regulatory	255
Comcare	Smaller operational	717
Fair Work Commission	Smaller operational	337
Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman	Regulatory	998
Safe Work Australia	Policy	101
Finance	**Policy**	**2,254**
Australian Electoral Commission	Smaller operational	3,163
Digital Transformation Agency	Smaller operational	287
Future Fund Management Agency	Specialist	298
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	Specialist	60
Foreign Affairs and Trade	**Policy**	**4,805**
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	Specialist	55
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	Specialist	670
Health and Aged Care	**Policy**	**7,155**
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	Regulatory	1,466
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	Specialist	135
Australian Digital Health Agency	Smaller operational	468
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Specialist	626
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	Specialist	173
Cancer Australia	Specialist	72
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	Regulatory	112
National Blood Authority	Specialist	77
National Health and Medical Research Council	Specialist	239
National Health Funding Body	Specialist	35
National Mental Health Commission	Specialist	38
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care	Specialist	20
Organ and Tissue Authority	Specialist	32
Professional Services Review	Regulatory	43
Sport Integrity Australia	Regulatory	444
Home Affairs	**Larger operational**	**15,215**
National Emergency Management Agency	Specialist	415
Industry, Science and Resources	**Policy**	**5,601**
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	Regulatory	162

Agency name	Functional cluster	Headcount
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	**Policy**	**2,322**
Australian Communications and Media Authority	Regulatory	611
Australian National Maritime Museum	National Cultural Institution	111
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	Specialist	115
High Speed Rail Authority	Specialist	16
National Archives of Australia	National Cultural Institution	412
National Capital Authority	Specialist	61
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	National Cultural Institution	278
National Library of Australia	National Cultural Institution	441
National Museum of Australia	National Cultural Institution	286
National Portrait Gallery of Australia	National Cultural Institution	56
Old Parliament House	National Cultural Institution	139
Screen Australia	Specialist	3
Prime Minister and Cabinet	**Policy**	**1,402**
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	Smaller operational	428
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	Specialist	174
Australian National Audit Office	Specialist	448
Australian Public Service Commission	Policy	475
National Indigenous Australians Agency	Policy	1,548
Office of National Intelligence	Specialist	403
Torres Strait Regional Authority	Specialist	154
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	Specialist	52
Social Services	**Policy**	**3,366**
Australian Institute of Family Studies	Specialist	115
National Disability Insurance Agency	Larger operational	7,842
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	Regulatory	938
Services Australia	Larger operational	33,556
Treasury	**Policy**	**2,145**
Australian Bureau of Statistics	Specialist	3,318
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	Regulatory	1,767
Australian Taxation Office	Larger operational	21,601
Inspector-General of Taxation	Specialist	26
Productivity Commission	Specialist	194
Veterans' Affairs	**Larger operational**	**3,653**
Australian War Memorial	National Cultural Institution	350
All		**185,343**

Source: APSED

Appendix 4 – Secretaries Board

Section 64 of the *Public Service Act 1999* establishes the Secretaries Board.

Its functions are to:

- take responsibility for the stewardship of the APS and for developing and implementing strategies to improve the APS
- identify strategic priorities for the APS and consider issues that affect the APS
- set an annual work program
- direct subcommittees to develop strategies to address APS-wide issues and make recommendations to the Secretaries Board
- draw together advice from senior leaders in government, business and the community
- work collaboratively and model leadership behaviours.

Members of the Secretaries Board keep their autonomy and statutory responsibilities as the heads of their respective departments or agencies.

The Secretaries Board Terms of Reference were updated and officially endorsed at the 7 May 2024 meeting.

To be transparent in its priorities and decisions, the Secretaries Board publishes communiques following meetings. These communiques are available on the PM&C website.

At 30 June 2024, the Secretaries Board has the following subcommittees:

- Secretaries Digital and Data Committee
- Partnerships Priorities Committee
- Future of Work Committee
- Chief Operating Officers Committee.

On 10 July 2024, the Board agreed the following 4 sub-committees would support the Board in its functions:

- Secretaries Digital and Data Committee
- Partnership Priorities Committee
- Capability and Workforce Committee (formerly Future of Work Committee)
- Secretaries Talent Council.

The Board agreed that the Chief Operating Officers Committee would continue to operate under its current arrangements.

Table A 40 lists the members of the Secretaries Board for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Table A 40: Members of Secretaries Board 2023–24

Board Position	APS Title	Member
Chair	Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	Professor Glyn Davis AC
Deputy Chair	Australian Public Service Commissioner	Dr Gordon de Brouwer PSM
Member	Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO (to 17 September 2023) Mr Adam Fennessy PSM (from 18 September 2023)
Member	Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department	Ms Katherine Jones PSM
Member	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	Mr David Fredericks PSM
Member	Secretary of the Department of Defence	Mr Greg Moriarty AO
Member	Secretary of the Department of Education	Mr Tony Cook PSM
Member	Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations	Ms Natalie James
Member	Secretary of the Department of Finance	Ms Jenny Wilkinson PSM
Member	Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Ms Jan Adams AO PSM
Member	Secretary of the Department of Health and Aged Care	Professor Brendan Murphy AC (to 16 July 2023) Mr Blair Comley PSM (from 17 July 2023)
Member	Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs	Mr Michael Pezzullo AO (to 27 November 2023) Ms Stephanie Foster PSM (from 28 November 2023)
Member	Secretary of the Department of Industry, Science and Resources	Ms Meghan Quinn PSM
Member	Secretary of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	Mr Jim Betts
Member	Secretary of the Department of Social Services	Mr Ray Griggs AO CSC
Member	Secretary of the Department of the Treasury	Dr Steven Kennedy PSM
Member	Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs	Ms Alison Frame
Other	Chief Executive Officer of the National Indigenous Australians Agency	Ms Jody Broun

Find out more

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (n.d.) *Secretaries Board*, PM&C website, https://www.pmc.gov.au/about-us/accountability-and-reporting/corporate-reporting/secretaries-board, accessed 26 July 2024.

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (n.d.) *Secretary appointments to departments of state*, PM&C website, https://www.pmc.gov.au/government/administration/secretary-appointments, accessed 26 July 2024.

Appendix 5 – Public inquiries into the APS and APS agencies

This appendix refers to royal commissions, parliamentary inquiries and public inquiries established by the Australian Government that were announced, conducted or have reported during 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, and are of particular note for the Australian Public Service.

Royal commissions

A list of current and recent royal commissions can be found at Current Royal Commissions, www.royalcommission.gov.au.

Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme

The Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme was established on 18 August 2022 to inquire into the establishment, design and implementation of the Robodebt scheme; the use of third-party debt collectors under the Robodebt scheme; concerns raised following the implementation of the Robodebt scheme; and the intended or actual outcomes of the Robodebt scheme.

The report was published on 7 July 2023. Subsequently, corrections were made and an updated report was published on 11 July 2023.

More information can be found at Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme, robodebt.royalcommission.gov.au.

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability was established on 4 April 2019 in response to community concern about widespread reports of violence against, and the neglect, abuse and exploitation of, people with disability.

The final report was first published on 29 September 2023. Subsequently, minor corrections were made and an updated report was published on 2 November 2023.

More information can be found at Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, disability.royalcommission.gov.au.

Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was established on 8 July 2021 to inquire into the systemic issues and risk factors relevant to suicide and suicide behaviours in Defence and veteran communities.

An interim report was published on 11 August 2022.

The final report was delivered to the Australian Government on 9 September 2024.

More information can be found at Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au.

Parliamentary inquiries

A list of current parliamentary inquiries can be found at Current Inquiries, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Current_Inquiries.

Senate inquiries

Public Service Amendment Bill 2023

On 22 June 2023, the Selection of Bills Committee referred the provisions of the Public Service Amendment Bill 2023 to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees for inquiry.

The report was delivered on 30 August 2023.

More information can be found at Public Service Amendment Bill 2023, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/PSABill2023.

The operation of Commonwealth Freedom of Information (FOI) laws

On 28 March 2023, the Senate referred an inquiry into the operation of Commonwealth Freedom of Information (FOI) laws to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee.

The report was delivered on 7 December 2023.

More information can be found at The operation of Commonwealth Freedom of Information, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Legal_and_Constitutional_Affairs/CommonwealthFOI2023.

Inquiry into management and assurance of integrity by consulting services (Consulting Services)

On 9 March 2023, the Senate referred an inquiry into the management and assurance of integrity by consulting services provided for the Australian Government to the Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee for inquiry.

The report was delivered on 12 June 2024.

More information can be found at Inquiry into management and assurance of integrity by consulting services, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/Consultingservices.

Australian Securities and Investments Commission investigation and enforcement

On 27 October 2022, the Senate referred an inquiry into the capacity and capability of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission to undertake proportionate investigation and enforcement action arising from reports of alleged misconduct to the Senate Economics References Committee (the Committee) for report by the last sitting day in June 2024. On 24 June 2024, the Senate agreed to an extension of the reporting date to 3 July 2024.

The report was delivered on 3 July 2024.

More information can be found at Australian Securities and Investments Commission investigation and enforcement, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Economics/ASICinvestigation/Report.

Inquiry into the performance of the Department of Defence in supporting the capability and capacity of Australia's defence industry

On 21 June 2023, the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee resolved to inquire into the performance of the Department of Defence in supporting the capability and capacity of Australia's defence industry.

An interim report was published on 19 October 2023.

On 28 February 2024, the reporting day was extended to 28 November 2024.

More information can be found at Performance of the Department of Defence in supporting the capability and capacity of Australia's defence industry, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Foreign_Affairs_Defence_and_Trade/PerformanceofDefence47.

Joint Committee inquiries

Commonwealth procurement: Inquiry into Auditor-General Reports 6, 15, 30, 42 (2021–22) and 5 (2022–23)

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit conducted an inquiry into Commonwealth procurement, with a view to improving the culture of how procurement rules and guidelines are implemented across the Australian Public Service.

The report was released in August 2023.

More information can be found at Commonwealth procurement: Inquiry into Auditor-General Reports 6, 15, 30, 42 (2021–22) and 5 (2022–23), www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Public_Accounts_and_Audit/CommonwealthProcurement.

Capability and Culture of the NDIA

The Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme conducted an inquiry into the capability and culture of the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

The final report was released in November 2023.

More information can be found at Capability and Culture of the NDIA, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/National_Disability_Insurance_Scheme/CapabilityandCulture.

Inquiry into procurement at Services Australia and the National Disability Insurance Agency

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit conducted an inquiry into procurement at Services Australia and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), with a particular focus on the matters contained in or related to the Independent Review of Services Australia and NDIA Procurement and Contracting (Watt Review).

The final report was released in June 2024.

More information can be found at Inquiry into procurement at Services Australia and the National Disability Insurance Agency, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Public_Accounts_and_Audit/SAandNDIA.

Inquiry into probity and ethics in the Australian Public Sector

On 27 June 2023, the Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit initiated an inquiry into probity and ethics in the Australian Public Sector, with a view to examining whether there are systemic factors contributing to poor ethical behaviour in Government agencies, and identifying opportunities to strengthen government integrity and accountability.

The report was released in June 2024.

More information can be found at Inquiry into probity and ethics in the Australian Public Sector, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Public_Accounts_and_Audit/AustralianPublicSector.

Ethics and Professional Accountability: Structural Challenges in the Audit, Assurance and Consultancy Industry

On 22 June 2023, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services resolved to start an inquiry into recent allegations of, and responses to, misconduct in the Australian operations of the major accounting, audit and consultancy firms (including but not exclusive to the 'Big Four').

The committee intends to report to the Parliament by December 2024.

More information can be found at Ethics and Professional Accountability: Structural Challenges in the Audit, Assurance and Consultancy Industry, www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Corporations_and_Financial_Services/ConsultancyFirms.

Public inquiries

Public inquiries listed here are discrete and temporary bodies established by Executive Government. They draw membership from outside of Government and have public processes of review and reporting.

National Disability Insurance Scheme Review

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Review was announced by the Australian Government on 18 October 2022, to examine the design, operations and sustainability of the NDIS. It looks at ways to make the market and workforce more responsive, supportive and sustainable.

The final report, Working together to deliver the NDIS, was published on 7 December 2023.

More information can be found at NDIS Review, www.ndisreview.gov.au.

Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry

On 21 September 2023, the Prime Minister the Hon Anthony Albanese MP announced an independent inquiry into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Inquiry will review the Commonwealth Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and make recommendations to improve response measures in the event of future pandemics. It will consider opportunities for systems to more effectively anticipate, adapt and respond to pandemics in areas of Commonwealth Government responsibility.

The Prime Minister has appointed an Independent Panel of 3 eminent people to conduct the Inquiry.

The final report will be presented to the Australian Government by 25 October 2024.

More information can be found at Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry, www.pmc.gov.au/domestic-policy/commonwealth-government-covid-19-response-inquiry.

Review of Public Sector Board Appointments Processes

The Review of Public Sector Board Appointments Processes was announced by the Australian Government on 5 February 2023, to consider and propose appropriate standards for the processes by which Board members are appointed to Government Boards.

The Review's Final Report to the Australian Government was delivered in August 2023 and is under consideration by Government.

Other reports

Under Australian Government reporting guidelines, the annual reports of all government agencies must include particulars on any report on the agency made by:

- the Auditor-General, other than a report under section 43 of the Act (which deals with the Auditor-General's audit of the annual financial statements for Commonwealth entities)
- a Committee of either or both Houses of the Parliament
- the Commonwealth Ombudsman
- the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
- any capability reviews of the entity released during the reporting period.

Annual reports are found on the Transparency Portal, www.transparency.gov.au.

Appendix 6 – APS workforce planning

This appendix captures information which is relevant for Australian Public Service workforce planning.

Table A 41 presents the number and proportion of APS agencies that identified critical skills shortages in 2023 and 2024.

Table A 41: Number and proportion of agencies that identified critical skills shortages

Has your agency identified any critical skills shortages?	2023		2024	
	Number of agencies	%	Number of agencies	%
Yes	87	88	83	88
No	12	12	11	12

Source: 2023 and 2024 APS Agency Survey

Table A 42 presents the number and proportion of agencies that have identified specific critical skills shortages in 2023 and 2024.

Table A 42: Number and proportion of agencies with specific critical skills shortages

Has your agency identified any critical skills shortages?	2023		2024	
	Number of agencies	%	Number of agencies	%
Digital and ICT	66	76	67	81
Data	64	74	66	80
Portfolio, program or project management	38	44	32	39
People management and leadership	45	52	31	37
Legal	30	34	30	36
Change management	34	39	29	35
Procurement and contracting	32	37	29	35
Policy or strategic policy	33	38	23	28
Regulatory	19	22	20	24
Accounting/finance	–	–	19	23
Risk management	16	18	17	20
Collaboration and stakeholder engagement	21	24	15	18
Cultural capability	–	–	15	18
Written or verbal communication	–	–	14	17
Science and/or engineering	22	25	13	16
Communicating with influence	18	21	12	14
Green capabilities (e.g. sustainability, capabilities for net zero, environmental policy and planning)	–	–	12	14

Has your agency identified any critical skills shortages?	2023		2024	
	Number of agencies	%	Number of agencies	%
Information and knowledge management/ records management	13	15	12	14
Economics, including behavioural economics	8	9	11	13
Agile or agile working	10	11	10	12
Delivery and implementation	9	10	10	12
Evaluation	–	–	10	12
Understanding the APS environment	14	16	7	8
Integrity	4	5	4	5
Working with ministers and their offices	–	–	4	5
Other	–	–	17	20

Source: 2023 and 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: Percentages are based on agencies which had identified critical skills shortages (87 agencies in 2023; 83 agencies in 2024). As agencies could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%. The following options were included in 2024, but not in 2023: accounting/finance, cultural capability, evaluation, green capabilities, working with ministers and their offices, written or verbal communication and other.

Table A 43 presents the number and proportion of agencies that have identified specific data skills as critical skills shortages in 2024.

Table A 43: Number and proportion of agencies with specific data critical skills shortages

What specific data skills have been identified as critical skills shortages?	2023		2024	
	Number of agencies	%	Number of agencies	%
Data analysis	51	80	48	73
General data literacy - analyse, interpret and apply data outputs and products	44	69	38	58
Communication of data (e.g. visualisation, effective reporting)	–	–	34	52
Data governance	35	55	34	52
Data science	30	47	30	45
AI/machine learning design and validation	–	–	28	42
Data or information architect	27	42	27	41
Data modelling	–	–	24	36
Data engineering	22	34	22	33
Data or information officer	16	25	10	15
Data mining	10	16	8	12
Other	13	20	9	14

Source: 2023 and 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: Percentages are based on agencies which had identified data as a critical skills shortage (64 agencies in 2023; 66 agencies in 2024). As agencies could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%. The following options were included in 2024, but not in 2023: communication of data, data modelling and AI/machine learning design and validation.

Table A 44 presents the number and proportion of agencies that have identified specific digital and ICT skills as critical skills shortages in 2024.

Table A 44: Number and proportion of agencies with specific digital and ICT critical skills shortages

What specific digital and ICT skills have been identified as critical skills shortages?	2023		2024	
	Number of agencies	%	Number of agencies	%
Cyber security specialist	53	80	49	73
General digital literacy - use and apply correct technologies in day to day work	29	53	33	49
Enterprise/ Technology architect	35	44	33	49
ICT/Digital project management	–	–	30	45
IT systems architect	33	50	28	42
AI/Machine learning software	–	–	25	37
Automation/AI/RPA developer	15	23	24	36
IT project specialist	26	39	24	36
Data integration and migration specialist	26	39	23	34
Development and programming (design, creation, testing and documentation of new and amended software components)	–	–	22	33
Infrastructure engineer	22	33	22	33
Network engineer	21	32	20	30
DevOps engineer	25	38	18	27
Product or service manager	12	18	18	27
System analyst	–	–	14	21
Tester/test analyst/performance tester	–	–	12	18
Interaction Designer	6	9	7	10
SAP specialists	–	–	6	9
Robotic engineer	3	5	5	7
Digital channels/social media officer or specialist	8	12	4	6
RPA analyst	3	5	4	6
Other	16	24	19	28

Source: 2023 and 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: Percentages are based on agencies which had identified digital and ICT as a critical skills shortage (66 agencies in 2023; 67 agencies in 2024). As agencies could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%. The following options were included in 2024, but not in 2023: ICT/digital project management, development and programming, system analyst, tester/test analyst/performance tester, AI/machine learning software and SAP specialists.

Table A 45 presents the number and proportion of agencies in 2024 that had designed or implemented specific initiatives to address identified critical skills shortages.

Table A 45: Number and proportion of agencies that had designed or implemented specific initiatives to address identified critical skills shortages

Which initiatives has your agency designed or implemented to specifically address these shortages?	2024	
	Number of agencies	%
Individual Flexibility Arrangements (IFA)	66	80
Capability uplift activities or programs (training, upskilling)	64	77
Targeted recruitment campaigns	55	66
Other capability uplift activities (conferences, professional membership)	46	55
Internal mobility programs (e.g. secondments, temporary transfer)	44	53
Graduate programs	41	49
Trainee/apprentice/cadet programs	34	41
Developing targeted employee value proposition	31	37
Succession planning	31	37
Rewards and recognition activities or programs	28	34
Talent management	27	33
Specific APS Job Family or other workforce segment workforce plans or strategies	23	28
Embedding the APS Professions within the agency	21	25
Targeted retention initiatives	20	24
Re-skilling activities or programs	11	13
Other	17	20

Source: 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: Percentages are based on agencies which had identified any critical skills shortages (83 agencies). As agencies could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

Table A 46 presents the number and proportion of agencies in 2024 that had designed or implemented workforce plans or strategies for specific APS Job Families or other workforce segments to address identified critical skills shortages.

Table A 46: Number and proportion of agencies that had designed or implemented workforce plans or strategies for specific APS Job Families or other workforce segments to address identified critical skills shortages

For which APS Job Families or other workforce segments has your agency designed or implemented a workforce plan or strategy to specifically address critical skills shortages?	2024	
	Number of agencies	%
ICT and Digital Solution	17	74
Data and Research	9	39
Compliance and Regulation	7	30
Human Resources	6	26
Accounting and Finance	5	22
Intelligence	5	22
Legal and Parliamentary	5	22
Policy	5	22
Communication and Marketing	4	17
Information and Knowledge Management	4	17
Monitoring and Audit	4	17
Portfolio, Programs and Project Management	3	13
Administration	2	9
Service Delivery	2	9
Engineering and Technical	1	4
Science and Health	1	4
Trades and Labour	1	4
Other	5	22

Source: 2024 APS Agency Survey

Note: Percentages are based on agencies which had designed or implemented specific APS Job Family or other workforce segment workforce plans or strategies to address identified critical skills shortages (23 agencies). As agencies could select more than one option, total percentages may exceed 100%.

Table A 47 presents the proportion of 2024 APS Employee Census respondents performing each type of work who identified data as a skill or capability missing from their immediate workgroup.

Table A 47: Proportion performing each type of work who identified data as a skill or capability missing from their immediate workgroup

Type of work	% who selected data as a skill or capability missing from their immediate workgroup	
	2023	2024
APS Overall	23	22
Data and research	50	49
Monitoring and audit	34	33
Intelligence	34	31
Senior executive	32	30
Policy	31	29
Information and knowledge management	28	29
Portfolio, program and project management	30	27
Human resources	29	26
Compliance and regulation	23	22
Science and health	19	22
Communications and marketing	18	20
Accounting and finance	22	19
Administration	15	16
Engineering and technical	15	14
ICT and digital solutions	14	14
Legal and parliamentary	15	13
Service delivery	14	13
Trades and labour	11	8

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: APS Overall refers to the proportion of all APS respondents. Proportions are based on the number of respondents who identified a skill or capability gap within their immediate workgroup.

Table A 48 presents the proportion of 2023 and 2024 APS Employee Census respondents performing each type of work who identified ICT or digital as a skill or capability missing from their immediate workgroup.

Table A 48: Proportion performing each type of work who identified ICT or digital as a skill or capability missing from their immediate workgroup

Type of work	% who selected ICT or digital as a skill or capability missing from their immediate workgroup	
	2023	2024
APS Overall	30	29
ICT and digital solutions	58	57
Information and knowledge management	42	42
Intelligence	42	38
Data and research	34	34
Compliance and regulation	28	31
Communications and marketing	29	30
Engineering and technical	31	29
Monitoring and audit	27	29
Science and health	35	29
Service delivery	27	28
Accounting and finance	26	27
Administration	26	26
Human resources	26	26
Portfolio, program and project management	28	26
Legal and parliamentary	23	26
Senior executive	25	24
Trades and labour	18	24
Policy	20	18

Source: 2024 APS Employee Census

Note: APS Overall refers to the proportion of all APS employees. Proportions are based on the number of respondents who identified a skill or capability gap within their immediate workgroup.

Appendix 7 – Methodology

This appendix presents additional information to support content included in this report.

APS Employment Database

The Australian Public Service Employment Database (APSED) contains employment, diversity and education details for people employed in the APS under the authority of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Information on staffing, including trends in the size, structure and composition of the APS, contributes to research and evaluation work on the changing nature of the service. This, in turn, assists agencies to formulate their people management policies and practices.

APSED is the definitive source of APS employment data, supporting strong, evidence-based APS workforce policy, people management and advice.

APSED scope and collection methodology

APSED stores the employment data of all current and former APS employees. The database was established in 1999 but contains data on APS employees from 1966.

APSED is maintained by the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC). Data is supplied to APSED from the human resource (HR) systems of APS agencies.

Two types of data files are used to update and maintain APSED – movement files and snapshot files. In general, both file types contain the same data items, but they differ in purpose.

- **Movement files** are provided to the APSC from each agency every month. They are used to document changes in employment history (for example, engagements, promotions and maternity leave) for all people employed under the *Public Service Act 1999* on a monthly basis. Changes in employment characteristics every month are recorded using movement codes. Movement files contain a record for every movement relevant to updating and maintaining employee records in APSED that has been processed in an agency's HR system during the month. Therefore, if an employee undertakes multiple movements within a reference period, the corresponding movement files will contain multiple records for that employee. Conversely, if an employee has no movements during the reference period, they will not appear in the movement file.
- **Snapshot files** are provided to the APSC from each agency on a 6-monthly basis. They are used to verify that all the information stored in APSED is correct and current at 31 December and 30 June each year. Snapshot files contain a single record for every APS employee employed by a particular agency on 31 December and 30 June.

APSED items

Agency HR systems supply APSED with unit records containing this personal information:

- personal particulars – Australian Government staff number, name and date of birth
- diversity data – gender, Indigenous identification, country of birth, year of arrival, first and main languages spoken, parents' first languages, disability status

- employment data – classification, email address, date of engagement, employment status, standard hours, workplace postcode, any movement details and dates, operative status, previous employment, job family, job function, job role, current and previous agencies
- educational qualifications and main fields of study.

Under section 54(1) of the APS Commissioner's Directions 2022, an agency head must ensure measures are in place to collect information from each employee in the agency and give collected information to the APS Commissioner. While individuals do not explicitly consent to the collection of their movement and employment data, they can choose to supply or withhold all diversity data except gender data. An agency head must allow APS employees to provide a response of 'choose not to give this information'.

Management and administration

Agency HR systems collect relevant data items and supply these to the APSC through secure means. Agencies are responsible for the collection, security, quality, storage, access, use, and disclosure of their HR data. They are responsible for compliance with the Australian Privacy Principles. While agency HR systems capture detailed information on each APS employee's pay, leave history and entitlements, these are out of scope for APSED. Only data fields supplied to the APSC are in scope.

Upon receipt, each data file is corrected in an iterative process. Once validated and transferred to the APSC, error checks on the new files are performed by the APSC against the extant data in APSED. The APSC and the agency work together to resolve these differences. Once resolved, cleaned data is incorporated into APSED.

APSED data is stored on a secure information technology system that is password protected and accessible only by a team in the APSC who have been granted access by team supervisors and trained in protecting and using these collections. Standard operating procedures dictate when personal information can be added or changed. All changes to the database are logged in an audit file.

Privacy and confidentiality

APSED complies with the APSC's privacy policy, which sets out the kinds of information collected and held, how this information is collected and held, its purposes, and authority for its collection. The full APSC privacy policy, which includes specific information related to APSED collection, is available at Australian Public Service Commission Privacy Policy, www.apsc.gov.au/privacy.

The APSC has undertaken a detailed privacy impact assessment in relation to APSED, concluding that it complies with all relevant Australian Privacy Principles.

APS Employee Census

The APS Employee Census is an annual employee perception survey of the APS workforce. All eligible personnel employed under the *Public Service Act 1999* are invited to participate. The APS Employee Census has been conducted since 2012 and collects APS employee opinions and perspectives on a range of topics, including employee engagement, wellbeing, leadership and general impressions of the APS.

APS Employee Census collection methodology

In 2024, the APS Employee Census was administered to eligible APS employees during 6 May to 7 June 2024. This timing was consistent with all past APS Employee Census administrations apart from 2020. The APS Employee Census was postponed to October in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although participation is encouraged, the APS Employee Census is voluntary. If a respondent chooses to participate, only a limited number of demographic-type questions must be answered. The remaining questions do not require a response.

APS Employee Census design

Questions from previous years were used as the basis for the 2024 APS Employee Census questionnaire to maintain a reliable longitudinal dataset. Questionnaire content was evaluated, reviewed and updated. New questions were included to address topical issues or to improve the quality of data collected. The underlying framework initially applied in 2021 was maintained. This model from the field of organisational psychology continued to define core question sets and direct the interpretation and reporting of results. While a standardised questionnaire was employed, agencies could ask their employees a limited number of additional questions.

APS Employee Census development

The 2024 APS Employee Census questionnaire included 138 individual questions. These questions were grouped into 13 sections addressing key aspects of working for an APS agency.

Each year the content of the APS Employee Census is reviewed to ensure each question has value and meets a specific purpose. The APSC researches and consults broadly to develop and select questions for inclusion. In 2024, the APSC:

- considered strategic-level priorities coming from the Secretaries Board and other senior-level committees to ensure the APS Employee Census would capture appropriate information to inform these priorities
- consulted with subject matter experts from within the APSC and other APS agencies to seek their input to question design and information requirements for supporting APS-level policies and programs
- researched contemporary understanding of issues and options for questionnaire content
- provided participating agencies with an opportunity to give feedback and input to questionnaire design.

The resulting questionnaire covered numerous themes and measures.

APS Employee Census delivery

In the 2024 APS Employee Census, employees were offered a number of collection methods:

- online, through a unique link provided to each employee by email
- telephone surveys with employees who did not have available supportive information technology to provide reasonable adjustment for their disability
- paper-based surveys for employees who did not have access to an individual email account or did not have suitable access to the internet.

Sampling and coverage

The population for the APS Employee Census is provided by participating agencies. It is up to individual agencies to set their eligibility criteria. For example, some agencies remove employees on long-term leave, while others contact employees on long-term leave to ask if they would like to participate.

The 2024 APS Employee Census covered eligible ongoing and non-ongoing employees from 106 agencies and entities that engage staff under the *Public Service Act 1999*. Invitations to participate in the 2024 APS Employee Census were sent to employees from 6 May 2024. The number of invitations was adjusted as new employees were added, separations processed, and incorrect email addresses corrected. The deadline for survey completion was 7 June 2024.

The final sample size for the 2024 APS Employee Census was 173,830. A total of 140,396 APS employees responded, giving a response rate of 81%.

Management and administration

The APS Employee Census is managed and coordinated by the APSC's People Insights Branch. The APSC contracts an external service provider to support survey administration and reporting activities. Ipsos (formerly Big Village) was this service provider in 2024.

Public release

The public release of agency APS Employee Census data is aggregated and de-identified to protect individual's privacy. The release complies with the *Privacy Act 1988*, and the principles and codes under the Act.

The *Public Service Act 1999* requires all participating APS agencies, except by formal exemption, to publish a report of their APS Employee Census results and a responding action plan. Agencies publish their report and action plan on their respective websites after this report is tabled. These results can be centrally accessed on the APSC website.

Privacy

The APSC employs specific rules around how results are reported. Such rules protect the privacy of respondents and individual agency results.

De-identification of data is undertaken in accordance with guidance provided by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

More information about how privacy is maintained can be found within the APSC Privacy Policy at Australian Public Service Commission Privacy Policy, www.apsc.gov.au/privacy.

Communication Index

The 2024 APS Employee Census addressed communication through a set of dedicated questions that contribute to an index score. The Communication Index assesses communication at individual, group and agency levels.

Employee Engagement Index

The APS Employee Census uses a model of employee engagement developed by the external service provider. This model addresses 3 attributes associated with employee engagement and measures the emotional connection and commitment employees have to working for their organisation.
In this model, an engaged employee will:

- Say – the employee is a positive advocate of the organisation.
- Stay – the employee is committed to the organisation and wants to stay as an employee.
- Strive – the employee is willing to put in discretionary effort to excel in their job and help their organisation succeed.

First introduced in 2017, the Say, Stay, Strive employee engagement model is flexible and the APSC has tailored questions for the APS context.

Enabling Innovation Index

The 2024 APS Employee Census addressed innovation through a set of dedicated questions that contribute to an index score. This Enabling Innovation Index assesses whether employees feel willing and able to be innovative, and whether their agency has a culture that enables them to be so.

Senior Executive Service (SES) Manager Leadership Index

In 2022, the APS Employee Census introduced the SES Manager Leadership Index. This index assesses how employees view the leadership behaviours of their immediate SES manager in line with the APS Leadership Capability Framework.

Immediate Supervisor Index

In 2022, the APS Employee Census introduced the Immediate Supervisor Index. Similar to the SES Manager Leadership Index, this index assesses employee views of the leadership behaviours of their immediate supervisor as described in the APS Leadership Capability Framework.

Wellbeing Policies and Support Index

The Wellbeing Policies and Support Index in the APS Employee Census measures both the practical and cultural elements that allow for a sustainable and healthy working environment. The APS has long been focused on the wellbeing of its employees. As employers, APS agencies have obligations under work health and safety legislation. Together with these obligations is an acknowledgement that high performance of employees and organisations cannot be sustained without adequate levels of employee wellbeing.

Calculating and interpreting index scores

The questions comprising all APS Employee Census indices were asked on a 5-point agreement scale (Table A 49).

To calculate the index score, each respondent's answers to the set of questions were recoded to fall on a scale of between 0 and 100. Recoded responses were then averaged across the 3 or more index questions to provide the index score for that respondent. An individual only receives an index score if they have responded to all questions comprising that index.

Table A 49: Example table used to calculate index scores (for one APS employees)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Score
Weight	100	75	50	25	0	
Example question 1		✓				75
Example question 2		✓				75
Example question 3			✓			50
Example question 4				✓		25
Example question 5	✓					100
Sum of question weights for this employee						325
Index score for this example respondent (325/5)						65

Index scores for groups of respondents are calculated by averaging the respondent scores comprising that group.

An index score on its own can provide information about the group to which it relates. Index scores, however, have the most use when compared with scores over time or between work units, organisations and demographic groups.

Treatment of responses of 'do not know' and 'not applicable'

Specific questions included within the 2024 APS Employee Census enabled respondents to provide responses of 'do not know', 'not applicable' or similar. Responses of this nature were typically excluded from the calculation of results for inclusion within this report. This was so that results reflected respondents who expressed an informed opinion to the relevant question.

Depending on intent, other products generated from the 2024 APS Employee Census may not apply these same rules. The method in analysis and reporting will be made clear within these products.

APS Agency Survey

The APS Agency Survey is conducted annually and collects information on a range of workforce initiatives, strategies and compliance matters, including the number and type of APS Code of Conduct breaches. The information collected through the APS Agency Survey is used to inform workforce strategies and for other research and evaluation purposes.

Since 2002, the APS Agency Survey has been administered to APS agencies with at least 20 APS employees employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*. The survey assists the APS Commissioner to fulfil a range of duties as specified in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

- informing the annual State of the Service Report
- strengthening the professionalism of the APS and facilitating continuous improvement in its workforce management
- monitoring, reviewing and reporting on APS strategies, initiatives and policies.

APS Agency Survey collection methodology

In 2024, the APS Agency Survey was administered to 94 agencies from 17 June to 26 July 2024. The response rate for 2024 was 100%, which is typical for this survey.

Each year the APS Agency Survey is sent to the contact officers nominated for each agency. These contact officers are responsible for coordinating the input from relevant areas and uploading responses to the survey. The survey requires each Agency Head or a delegate to verify their agency's submission for completeness and accuracy of responses.

APS Agency Survey management and administration

The People Insights Branch of the APSC manages and coordinates the APS Agency Survey. The APSC contracts an external service provider to support survey administration. Ipsos was the service provider in 2024.

Privacy

The 2024 APS Agency Survey did not collect personal information.

Collection of diversity data

Concise demographic information enables the APS to produce accurate workforce descriptions to support the management of its workforce. The APSC collects personal data including diversity information concerning employees employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*. On engagement to the APS, employees provide personal information to their employing agencies. This information is provided to the APSC to enable the execution of the APS Commissioner's functions.

With the exception of gender, the provision of diversity data is voluntary for APS employees. As a result, diversity rates represent the proportion of employees who identify as belonging to that diversity group, and actual diversity rates may be underestimated. The APS Employee Census, in which responses are de-identified, records higher rates for some diversity groups.

This difference is historically largest for the proportion of employees with ongoing disability. The APS Employee Census likely attracts higher disclosure rates as responses are not readily identifiable to individual employees, unlike the more formal human resource system. Many people are likely to regard their diversity information as sensitive information and it has long been established that people avoid reporting details they regard as sensitive. Employees may decide to withhold information when they believe it does not affect their ability to carry out their role. Some may have concerns about possible impacts to their future employment or how it will affect them socially within the workplace. The APS takes pride in its ability to foster inclusive workplaces but respects employees' rights to privacy regarding personal information.

Collecting gender information

Individuals may identify and be recognised within the community as a gender other than the sex they were assigned at birth or during infancy, or as a gender which is not exclusively male or female. Therefore, where gender information is collected and recorded in a personal record, individuals should be given the option to select M (Male), F (Female) or X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified).

From 2014 to 2020, respondents to the APS Employee Census could identify their gender as X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified). From 2021, this question was aligned with the updated Australian Bureau of Statistics standard. This standard better provides all employees the opportunity to more accurately describe their gender as man or male, woman or female, non-binary or that they use a different term.