

NSW Public Sector Report

2025



Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country across NSW. We acknowledge the spiritual connections and relationships that Traditional Custodians have continued to maintain and strengthen since time began, which will continue well into the future. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise their cultural knowledge and wisdom has been passed down through generations and will remain present through stories and song lines for generations to come.

We extend this respect, acknowledgement and appreciation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members who helped develop this report and who contribute across the public sector. We recognise their skills and experiences as foundational assets to support the people of NSW.

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About this report

The 2025 NSW Public Sector Report is a report on the state of the NSW public sector by the Secretary of the Premier's Department. The report assesses the sector's performance, including notable achievements, challenges and priorities, and provides an analysis of government sector workforce data. Under section 82A of the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* (GSE Act), the Minister must ensure that the report is tabled in both Houses of the NSW Parliament.

How to read the data discussed in this report

This report draws on evidence from a range of sources, including the People Matter Employee Survey (People Matter survey) and Workforce Profile Report. The following points will help you understand the information in this report.

- The abbreviation 'pp' stands for 'percentage points'.
- 'Full-time equivalent (FTE) workforce' describes the total number of full-time employees required to account for all ordinary paid hours worked.
- All diversity statistics are based on self-disclosed information. This includes:
 - gender
 - age
 - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
 - people who identify as belonging to a racial, ethnic or ethno-religious group that is a minority in Australian society
 - sexual orientation
 - people who identify as trans or gender diverse
 - people with disability
 - working arrangements
 - caring responsibilities.
- 'Frontline' is defined in the People Matter survey as 'service delivery involving direct contact with the public (e.g. teaching, nursing, policing, shopfront/counter service, train driver, customer service)'.

People Matter Employee Survey

The People Matter survey asks employees about their experience and perceptions of a range of workplace issues and practices, including management and leadership, service delivery, employee engagement, diversity and inclusion, public sector values, and unacceptable conduct. The 2025 survey was open from 18 August to 12 September 2025. Over 229,000 employees across the sector responded to this year's survey, representing a 52% response rate.

Most of the survey results are presented as 'per cent favourable', where 'favourable' includes 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses to a question or set of questions. In this report, some questions have been grouped as topics for theoretical or practical reasons. Topic scores provide an overview of workplace practices that affect employee experience. For topic scores, the 'favourable overall' percentage is the average of the 'per cent favourable' scores for the survey questions that comprise the topic.

Due to changes in the survey's questions, some topics do not have a comparison to the previous year. Survey questions that previously sat under multiple topics have now been assigned to a single, most relevant thematic topic. As a result, previous years' topic scores have been recalculated and may differ slightly from past reports.

Workforce Profile

The Workforce Profile is an annual and comprehensive report of the demographic characteristics and employment arrangements of all NSW public sector employees. The Premier's Department and all public sector agencies jointly collect data for, and contribute to, the Workforce Profile Report. The census date for the *Workforce Profile Report 2025* was 19 June 2025 – the last payday of the financial year. The census period comprised the 2 weeks leading up to and including the census date. The data in this report is for the census date, unless otherwise specified.

Areas of government covered in this report

This report discusses the performance of the Public Service, government sector and public sector.

- The Public Service is defined in the GSE Act to mean the Public Service of New South Wales and consists of those persons employed under Part 4 of the GSE Act by the Government of New South Wales in the service of the Crown. Public Service employees are employed in Public Service agencies, meaning the departments, Public Service executive agencies related to departments and separate Public Services agencies listed in Schedule 1 of the GSE Act.
- The government sector, as defined in the GSE Act, comprises the Public Service, the Teaching Service, the NSW Police Force, the NSW Health Service, the Transport Service of New South Wales, and any other service of the Crown (including service of any NSW Government agency). It also comprises the service of prescribed persons or bodies constituted by or under an Act or exercising public functions.
- The public sector comprises the government sector and other government agencies, including the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Audit Office of New South Wales, the staff of the Parliament of NSW, the Judicial Commission of NSW, judicial officers of NSW, and the service of a State-owned corporation (or a subsidiary) such as water and energy companies.

The data in this report relates to the public sector, unless otherwise specified.

Acknowledgements

The Secretary, Premier's Department would like to acknowledge the assistance of:

- the employees who contributed to the preparation of this report, and
- NSW public sector agencies, for supporting the People Matter survey and Workforce Profile, and for sharing information to be used as case studies for this report.

Foreword

The 2025 NSW Public Sector Report presents an assessment of our workforce, and its role in delivering strategic priorities for the people of NSW.



Simon Draper PSM
Secretary,
Premier's Department

More than 470,000 public sector employees serve our state, working in partnership with local communities to meet diverse needs. The NSW public sector employs 10.7% of the state workforce, with 33.6% of those based in regional areas. In 2025, the number of people employed in the NSW public sector increased by 2.5%, including an additional 2,971 employees in regional areas.

Every day, the public sector delivers accessible essential services, from health care and education to transport, service centres and environmental care. Our frontline public sector workforce is central to this commitment. A key ongoing focus of the NSW Government is to improve the pay and conditions for these workers, whose roles are central to how communities experience public services.

The median remuneration for non-casual employees in the NSW public sector was \$104,754 in 2025, an increase of 4.1% from 2024.

The public sector continues to make progress on inclusive leadership representation. As at June 2025, the public sector employed 4,121 FTE (down from 4,365 FTE in 2024) senior executives, with women comprising 48.4% of this cohort (up from 48.1% last year).

This year, more than half of all public sector employees (52.4%) completed the People Matter survey, marking our third-highest response rate ever. Employee feedback helps shape a public sector that reflects our shared values and provides insights to uplift public sector capability.

Encouragingly, survey results show a more engaged workforce that is connected to its work and capable in its purpose. Overall, the results improved across most key measures compared

with 2024. The employee engagement score increased to 64, up by one point from 2024, and was bolstered by increases of between 1 to 2pp across all 5 engagement questions. 'Job satisfaction' (70.0%) increased by 1pp from 2024, with a noticeable increase for the NSW Police Force, up 5pp to 66.5%.

Pay and conditions improvements were also reflected in this year's results. 'Pay satisfaction' increased by 2pp to 46.2%, with noticeable increases of 23pp for NSW Police Force, 5pp for Health and Transport portfolios, and 3pp for NSW Public Schools.

Confidence in 'senior executives' improved, with 4 of 5 related questions showing gains of 1 to 2pp. 'Ethics and values' (81.4%) continued to perform strongly, unchanged from 2024. This reflects the sector's continued efforts to maintain public trust, a cornerstone of community confidence in our institutions and service delivery.

As we look ahead, our sector must remain resilient and adaptable to ongoing challenges. Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, offer new opportunities to innovate and enhance service delivery through connected governance.

While there is much to celebrate, there is more to be done. We are committed to continuous improvement, through ongoing review and adjustment to support and build our strong workforce and enhance the services we deliver to the community.

I thank everyone who contributed to this year's NSW Public Sector Report. Your input helps us understand what we do well, where we can improve, and the positive impact of the work we do for the people of NSW.

Empowering the public sector workforce



Over 470,000 employees work in the public sector to deliver a wide range of services to the people of NSW.

The number of people (headcount) employed in the NSW public sector increased by 2.5% in 2025, outpacing the growth in the number of people employed in NSW overall, at 1.3%.

Headcount and full-time equivalent employees



478,303

ongoing,
temporary
and casual
employees

Source: Workforce Profile (2025), census date



Equating to
396,004

full-time
equivalent
employees

Source: Workforce Profile (2025), census period

The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in the public sector increased by 4,553 FTE (+1.2%) from 2024. The key contributors to this were increases to the NSW Health Service of 2,670 FTE, the Public Service of 1,410 FTE and other Crown services of 524 FTE.¹

The main contributors to the increase in the NSW Health Service were an additional 1,081 FTE Nurses (+1.9%), 462 FTE Medical Practitioners (+3.2%) and 440 FTE Ambulance Officers (+7.4%).

In the Public Service, the increase was primarily across the Premier and Cabinet; Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport; and Climate Change, Energy and the Environment portfolios.²

In State-owned corporations, Sydney Water Corporation increased by 361 FTE (+10.5%), Essential Energy increased by 316 FTE (+8.7%) and WaterNSW increased by 181 FTE (+19.6%).

The service with the largest decrease was the NSW Police Force, which lost 592 FTE from 2024 (-2.9%). The government reached a significant pay agreement³ with the NSW Police Force in November 2024, which, together with a range of new initiatives, is expected to improve recruitment and retention within the NSW Police Force.

During the 2025 annual reference period,⁴ there was an increase in ongoing FTE employees (+0.6pp to 78.4%) and a decrease in temporary FTE employees (-0.2pp to 14.3%), while casual FTE employees also decreased (-0.4pp to 4.3%).

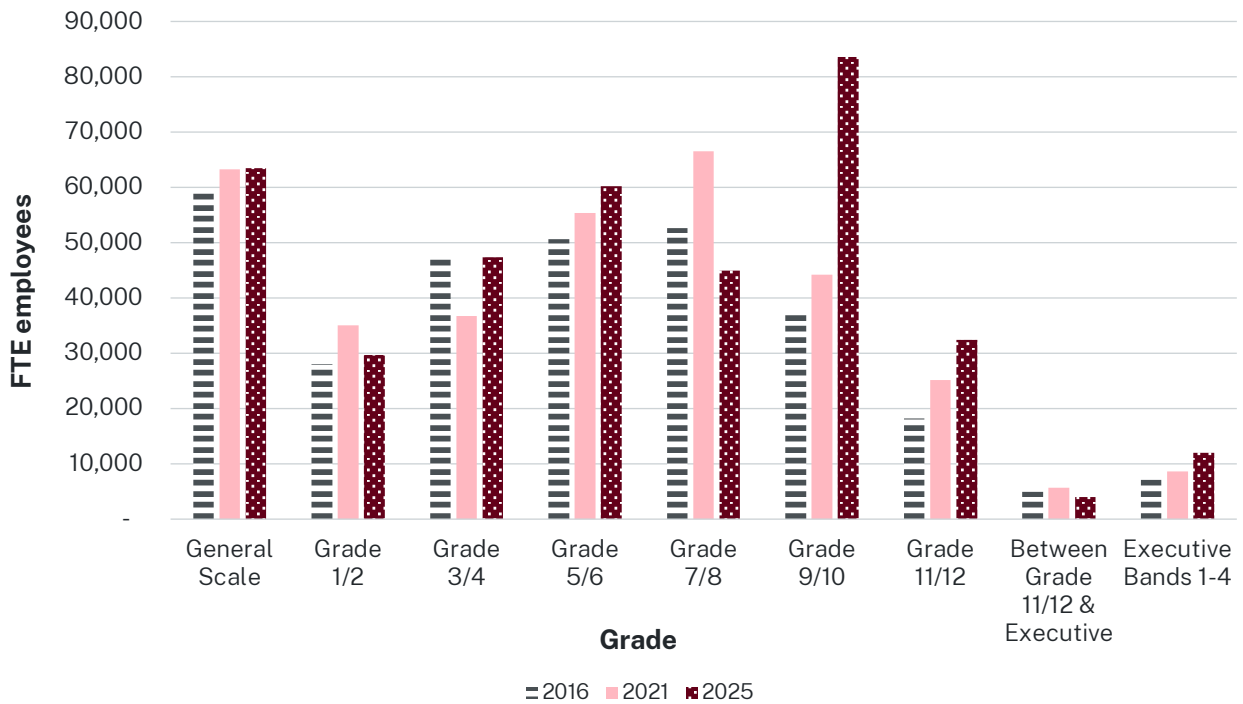
1 See table 2.2 in the *Workforce Profile Report 2025*.

2 NSW Government departments and organisations are arranged into 11 groups, called 'portfolios of agencies'.

3 Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, *Historic award agreement accepted by NSW Police officers*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/historic-award-agreement-accepted-by-nsw-police-officers>), 26 November 2024.

4 The annual reference period starts on the day following the last pay date of the previous financial year and ends on the last pay date of the current financial year.

Full-time equivalent employees by grade, 2025 vs 2021 and 2016



Source: Workforce Profile (2016, 2021 and 2025), census period, non-casual only

Note: To provide a whole-of-sector perspective, remuneration has been aligned with the non-executive grades defined in the Crown Employees (Administrative and Clerical Officers – Salaries) Award 2023. The GSE Act allows the Premier to determine the bands under which Public Service senior executives are employed. Currently, there are 4 bands.

Structure of the NSW public sector

The government employs persons in the public sector. Most public sector employees are employed in the government sector, and within that sector, in the Public Service.



Examples of other Crown services include the services of the Technical and Further Education Commission (TAFE Commission), school administrative and support staff of the Department of Education, and Sydney Trains.

* Under the GSE Act, State-owned corporations are included in the government sector for certain specified purposes. However, in this report, they are treated as part of the public sector, not as part of the government sector.

** The Premier's Department does not collect data on these employees.

Note: Under the GSE Act, NSW universities are part of the government sector for certain specified purposes. The Premier's Department does not collect data on the employees of NSW universities. They are not considered part of the public sector or government sector for the purposes of this report.

There are 12 departments of the Public Service, each headed by a secretary.

NSW Government departments and other agencies are arranged into 11 groups of related government agencies, departments or functions that are aligned under a ministerial leadership to deliver coordinated public services, policy outcomes and operational programs.⁵ The Workforce Profile Report refers to these groups as portfolios. For the purposes of the People Matter survey, the Premier and Cabinet portfolio is treated as 2 separate portfolios, as they each have their own secretary. In 2024–25, the size and the composition of some portfolios changed due to Machinery of Government changes.

The Premier and Cabinet portfolio had the largest proportional increase in employees in 2025, gaining 788 FTE (+34.2%). This growth can be attributed to the NSW Reconstruction Authority Staff Agency becoming an executive agency related to the Premier's Department (moving from the Planning portfolio), resulting in the intake of 471 FTE. The Premier's Department also gained 186 FTE from Investment NSW, 25 FTE from the Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer (which moved from the Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport portfolio), and 135 FTE from the former Public Service Commission.

The next-largest proportional increase was to the Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport portfolio, of 608 FTE (+17.3%). The transfer of sporting and events agencies formerly in the Communities and Justice portfolio (765 FTE) contributed to this increase.

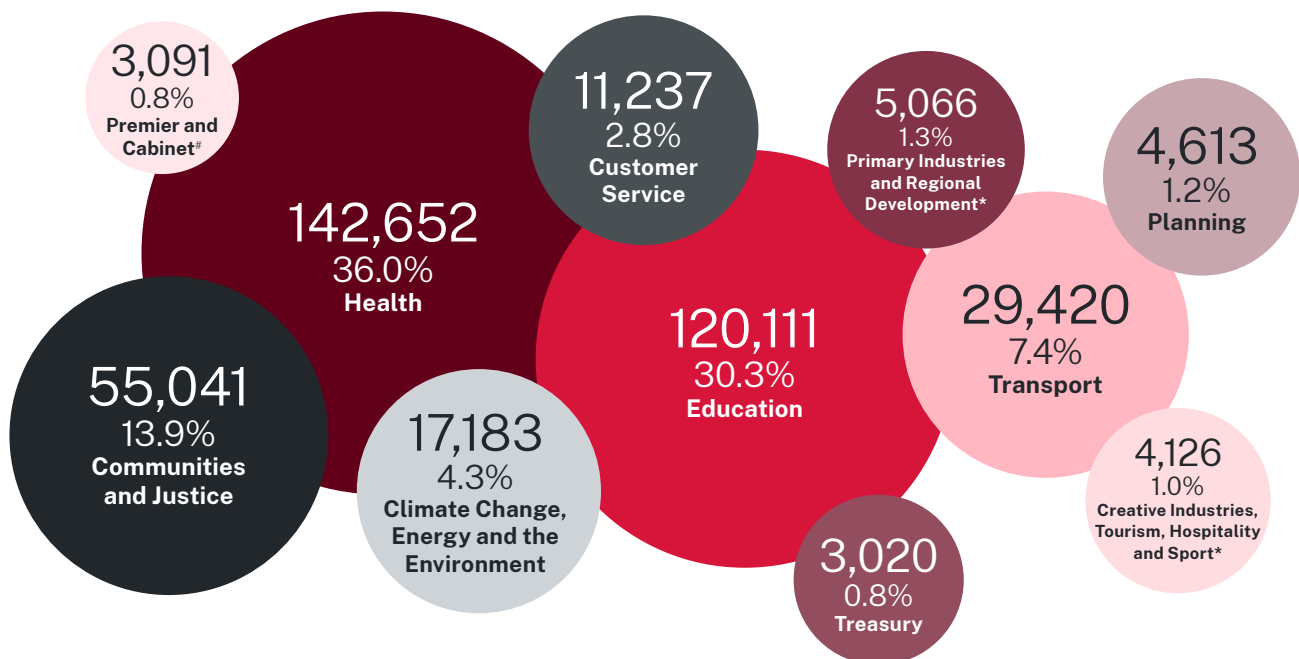
⁵ The Cabinet Office, *Governance Arrangements Chart*, The Cabinet Office website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/cabinet-office/resources/governance-arrangements-chart>), 7 August 2024.

The Climate Change, Energy and the Environment portfolio experienced growth of 1,436 FTE (+9.1%). This was due to growth in employees at State-owned corporations (858 FTE), Machinery of Government changes (including further transfers from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and building internal capability in the newly established Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water) and delivery of government priorities (e.g. continued establishment of the Energy Corporation of New South Wales [EnergyCo] and the Energy Security Corporation).

While the Health's portfolio's proportional increase was not significant (+2.0%), its increase of 2,802 FTE accounted for more than half of the overall FTE growth in the public sector.

The Customer Service portfolio experienced the largest proportional decrease, of 630 FTE (-5.3%) due to a reduction of 783 FTE in Service NSW.

Full-time equivalent employees by portfolio



Source: Workforce Profile (2025), census period

Note: Percentages indicate the contribution of the portfolio's FTE to the public sector's total FTE.

* Portfolios marked with an asterisk (*) have changed names due to Machinery of Government changes. The Enterprise, Investment and Trade portfolio changed to the Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport portfolio, and the Regional NSW portfolio changed to the Primary Industries and Regional Development portfolio. The portfolios were also impacted by structural changes.

Premier and Cabinet portfolio is led by 2 secretaries – one each for Premier's Department and The Cabinet Office.

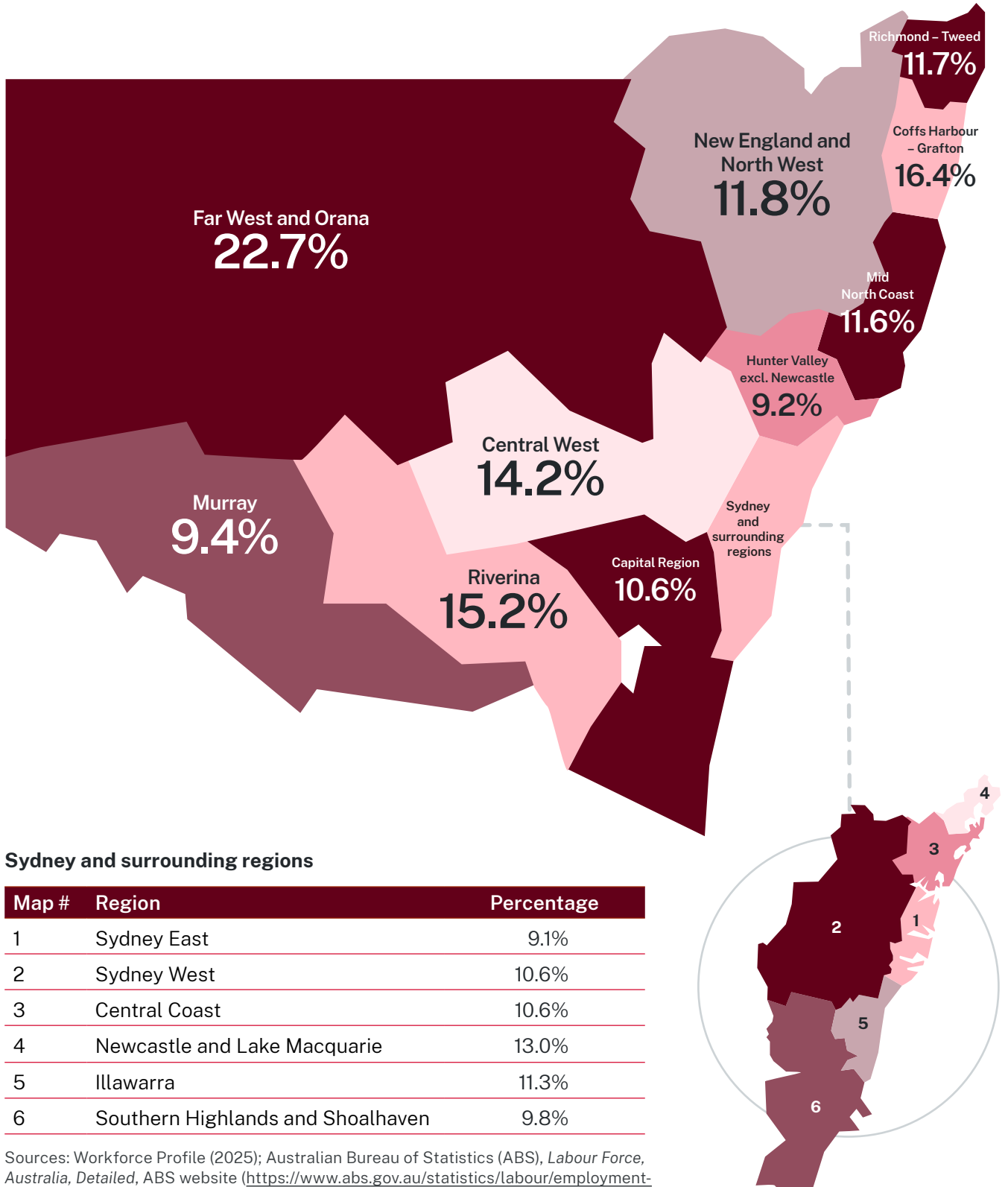
Employment by NSW region

The NSW Government is a significant employer in every part of the state.

In 2025, 33.6% of public sector employees were based in regional areas, representing an increase of 2,971 employees from 2024. All Statistical Areas Level 4 (SA4) regions within Sydney, as well as the Newcastle and Wollongong regions, are classified as metropolitan, while all other areas are classified as regional. Despite the numeric growth, the overall proportion of employees in regional areas experienced a slight decline, from 33.8% in 2024.

The public sector comprised 10.7% of the total NSW workforce (approximately 4.5 million people) as at June 2025. Sydney (which combines Sydney East and Sydney West) is the location of work for 59.8% of public sector employees.

An analysis of the geographic distribution of public sector employees (including casual employees) compared to the total NSW workforce indicates the extent of public sector employment across local and regional economies in NSW. The proportion of NSW workers who were public sector employees varied from 9.2% to 22.7% across different regions in 2025.

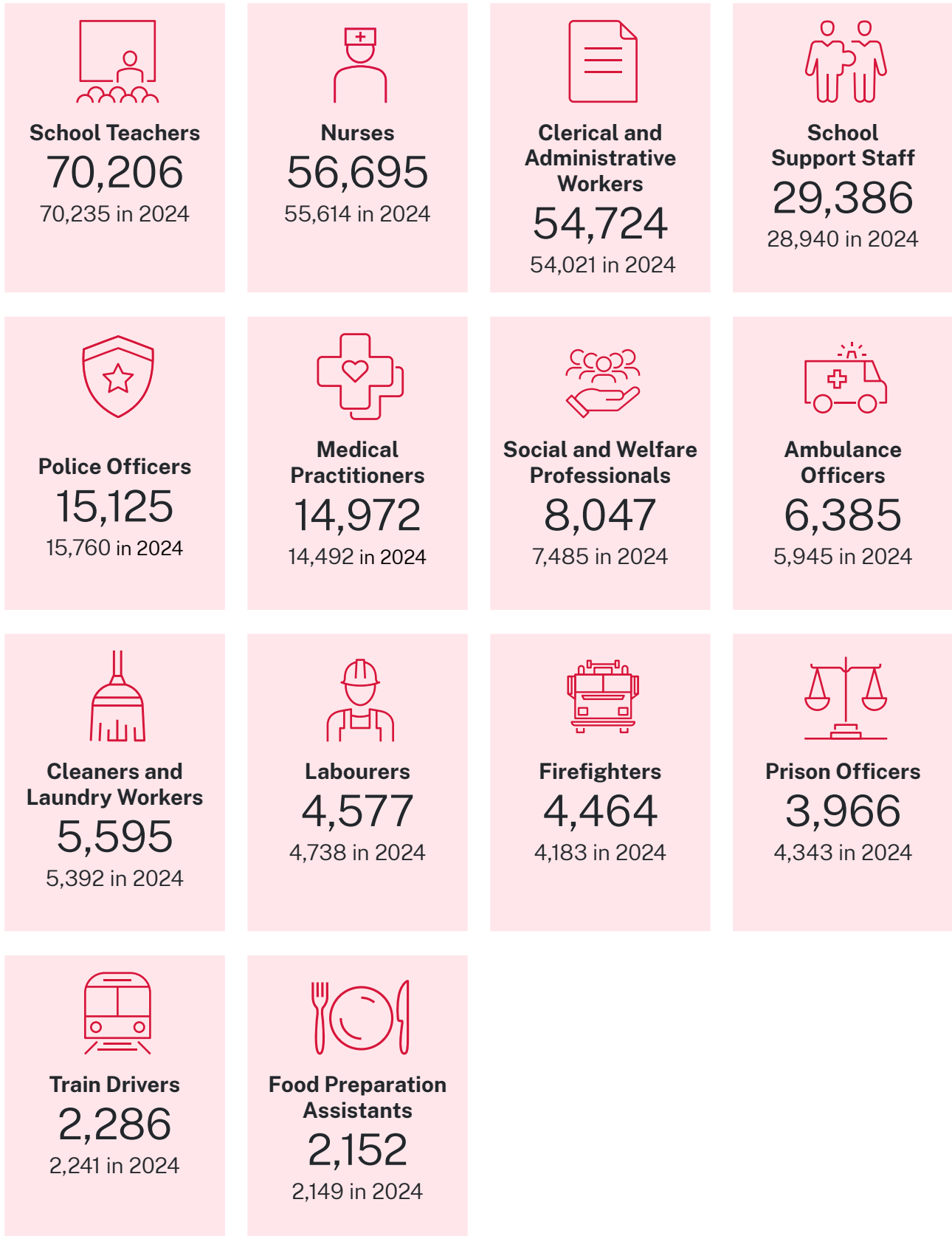


Sources: Workforce Profile (2025); Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, ABS website (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/jun-2025>), June 2025, accessed 3 September 2025.

Key occupations

The NSW public sector employs people in a wide range of occupations.

Full-time equivalent employees in key occupations, 2025 vs 2024



Source: Workforce Profile (2025, 2024), census period

Purpose and values: shaping our workplace culture



This section of the report examines the many aspects of employment that matter to our employees, including employee engagement, belonging, learning and development, inclusion and diversity, tenure and remuneration. It highlights the drivers of engagement and reflects on how our shared purpose and values shape a positive workplace culture.

The NSW Government is committed to remaining an attractive employer and recognises the importance of fair and competitive remuneration to attract and retain the best talent across the sector.

Engaging and values-driven workplaces

Our workplaces are the lens through which public sector employees experience the sector's values – whether through psychologically safe teams, fair processes, or transparent and integrity-led decision-making.

Engagement increased: a sign of growing confidence

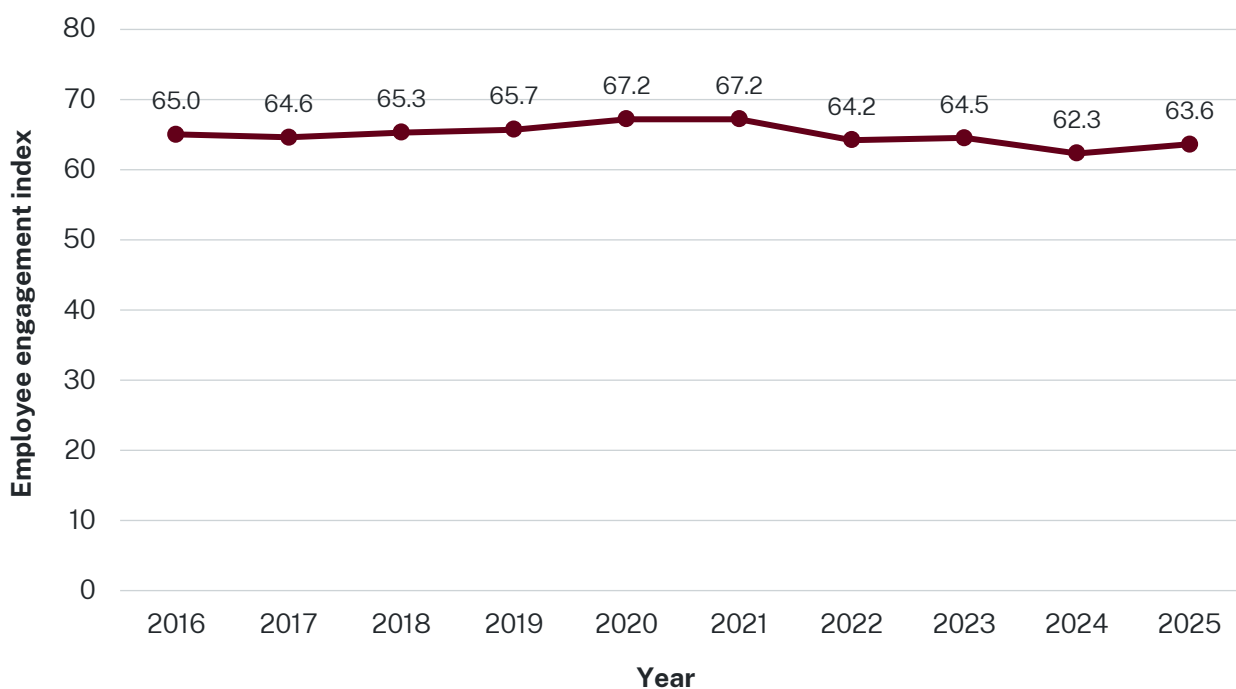
The People Matter survey has tracked public sector employee engagement since 2012. Employee engagement refers to an employee's connection to their organisation. It is a global measure of employee experience and, for the purpose of this report, is expressed as an index score out of 100. Employee engagement has a strong connection to productivity, making it a key indicator of the public sector's overall performance.

Many factors influence employee engagement, including leadership, a positive and inclusive work culture, wellbeing, manager support, and accountability. In 2025, employee engagement for the public sector increased to 63.6, from 62.3 in 2024. For context, recent Gallop surveys indicate an overall employee engagement level of 23% in Australia.⁶

Employee engagement increased in most portfolios, with score changes ranging from a modest decrease of 4.6 points to a strong increase of 7.3 points.

⁶ GALLUP, *Employee Engagement, by Country*, GALLUP website (<https://www.gallup.com/394373/indicator-employee-engagement.aspx>), 2025, accessed 24 October 2025.

Employee engagement trend, 2016–2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2016–2025)

Notably, the responses to all 5 engagement questions recorded gains of 1 to 2pp. The largest increase among the engagement questions was 1.9pp, for the statement, ‘I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work’.

This statement is widely recognised as a proxy for employee pride, satisfaction and intent to stay. An increase in agreement with this question suggests a more positive employee experience, and a stronger connection to the organisation’s culture and values.

Employee engagement, 2025 vs 2024

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
I am proud to tell others I work for my organisation	67.0	1.3
I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work	59.7	1.9
I feel a strong personal attachment to my organisation	58.8	1.4
My organisation inspires me to do the best in my job	53.8	1.7
My organisation motivates me to help it achieve its goals	52.3	1.5

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Engagement drivers: change management, communication and leadership

Each year, the People Matter survey data is analysed to identify the factors influencing employee engagement in the public sector.⁷ This key driver analysis highlights the questions that have the strongest relationship with employee engagement. These questions are listed below in order of importance for the sector.

Questions with the strongest association with engagement across the sector

Topic	Engagement key driver questions	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
Communication and change management	I am supported through changes that affect my work	55.5	0.7
Wellbeing	I am satisfied with current workplace practices to help me manage my wellbeing	55.4	0.2
Ethics and values	My organisation shows a commitment to ethical behaviours	71.0	0.2
Recognition	I receive adequate recognition for my contributions from my organisation	50.2	0.6
Risk and innovation	My organisation is making improvements to meet future challenges	52.9	1.0
Ethics and values	My senior executives model the values of my organisation	52.8	1.4

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

In 2025, communication and change management continued to be the strongest driver of employee engagement, maintaining the top ranking from 2024. The question, 'I am supported through changes that affect my work' saw a modest increase of 0.7pp, reversing the 3.5pp decline observed in 2024. This reinforces the sector's ongoing focus on structured change support.

Wellbeing, and ethics and values also remained highly ranked key drivers of engagement, with slight improvements in favourable scores. The question, 'My organisation is making improvements to meet future challenges' increased by 1.0pp, indicating growing confidence in innovation and adaptability.

A standout insight in 2025 is the emergence of the senior executive leadership question, 'My senior executives model the values of my organisation' as one of the top 6 key drivers, with 52.8% of respondents agreeing that senior executives model the values of their organisation, up 1.4pp from 2024. This replaced the 2024 senior executive question on listening to employees, which had a lower favourable score (43.6%). This shift suggests that employees are increasingly valuing visible alignment between leadership behaviour and organisational values.

Recognition continued to be a critical factor, with a slight increase to 50.2% favourable responses, reversing the 3.7pp decline seen in 2024. This suggests early signs of recovery in how employees perceive organisational appreciation.

While change management, wellbeing, and ethics and values are commonly observed drivers across the sector, each agency and business unit has its own distinct drivers, shaped by its specific context, challenges and workplace culture. To support agencies to act on results, the Premier's Department provides tailored reports and guides to support action planning based on People Matter survey results.

⁷ Key driver analysis identifies factors (survey questions) that have the strongest relationship with overall employee engagement. It involves calculating the correlation between survey question responses and the engagement score. Questions with high correlations are considered key drivers.

Communication and change management

Proactive, timely communication focuses on what matters most, giving employees the essential details they need, especially about how organisational changes will affect them.

Change is a constant in the public sector, making change management and good communication key focus areas for leaders. The People Matter survey question, 'I am supported through changes that affect my work' remained the leading key driver of employee engagement for a second consecutive year, holding the top position in 2025.

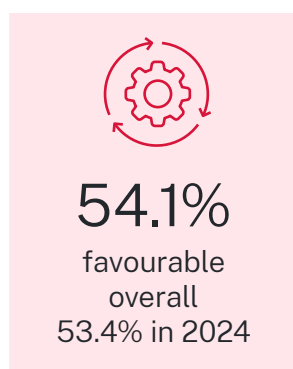
Employee perceptions of communication and change management improved in this year's survey to 54.1%, up 0.7pp from 2024. Each communication and change management question also improved, with the question, 'My senior executives provide clear direction for the future of the organisation' recording the largest increase, of 1.8pp to 48.5%.

There was a slight improvement on managing change, with 35.8% of respondents agreeing that change is managed well within their organisation, up from 35.1% in 2024. The primary reasons cited for poor change management were poor communication from leadership (55.4%), poor planning and execution (48.4%) and limited employee consultation (46.6%). To address these gaps, organisations must prioritise transparent leadership communication, strengthen planning and execution processes, and actively involve employees in decision-making to drive successful change.

For a second consecutive year, frontline employees had an additional question relating to change management – 'Change is managed well in my organisation' – that ranked in the top 6 key drivers of employee engagement. This trend indicates that a continued focus is needed on change management processes to support frontline employee experiences of change management.

Machinery of Government changes are a major driver of organisational change within the NSW government sector. Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring all change is managed effectively and for working collaboratively with other affected agencies to ensure a smooth transition to new operating arrangements. Effective planning, communication and employee consultation helps to maintain employee engagement and trust.

Employee perceptions of communication and change management, 2025 vs 2024



Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
My manager communicates effectively with me	74.2	0.1
I have the opportunity to provide feedback on change processes that directly affect me	56.1	0.2
I am supported through changes that affect my work	55.5	0.7
My senior executives provide clear direction for the future of the organisation	48.5	1.7
Change is managed well in my organisation	35.8	0.7

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Building organisational capability in change management

Improving change management remains a strategic priority across the NSW public sector.

To support government agencies to deliver this, the Premier's Department established a Workforce Planning Change Management Hub. The hub was developed in partnership with other government agencies to adopt a structured and consistent approach to the way the sector plans, delivers and embeds change. It provides practical frameworks, tools and resources to help build individual, team and organisational capabilities in change management.

By strengthening change leadership and fostering a shared language for change, the hub supports agencies to navigate complexity, build internal capability, and improve how change is experienced across our organisations.

Greater confidence in our leaders

Leadership is crucial in setting direction, executing strategies, shaping culture, inspiring purpose and delivering services.

The Premier's Department provides executive leadership programs to equip sector leaders with the mindsets, behaviours and capabilities essential for leading high-performing, outcomes-focused workplaces.

In today's dynamic work environment, leadership extends beyond traditional management approaches. Leaders should adopt competencies suited for the next generation of employees, fostering a strong sense of accountability and trust. This requires a human-centred approach where leaders balance individual needs with organisational goals to create an environment where both can thrive. Trust in senior leaders is essential for navigating change and uncertainty.

The People Matter survey's individual senior executive questions contribute to broader leadership and management topics, helping to align the questions with key organisational principles and improve how the results are interpreted in context. Four out of 5 senior executive questions increased in favourable responses by 1.4 to 1.8pp, suggesting growing confidence in senior executives' ability to guide, collaborate and model organisational values.

The question, 'My senior executives communicate the importance of customers in our work' declined slightly, by 0.1pp to 62.3%. Despite this minor drop, it remains the highest-scoring question among the senior executive questions.

These results indicate a positive trend in employees' perceptions of leadership, particularly in the areas of strategic direction and collaboration, while also highlighting an opportunity to reinforce focus on our customers.

Employee perceptions of senior executives, 2025 vs 2024

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
My senior executives communicate the importance of customers in our work	62.3	-0.1
My senior executives model the values of my organisation	52.8	1.4
My senior executives promote collaboration between my organisation and other organisations we work with	50.8	1.4
My senior executives provide clear direction for the future of the organisation	48.5	1.8
My senior executives listen to employees	43.6	1.4

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Senior executive numbers are included in the *Workforce Profile Report 2025*, the companion report to the NSW Public Sector Report.

Confidence and trust in leadership is important in times of rapid change, with emerging technologies offering new means to deliver and enhance service delivery. We need strong trusted leadership, guided by ethical principles that protect transparency, privacy and public trust, that can responsibly embrace innovative means to deliver better outcomes for the people of NSW.

Opportunity to strengthen action taken in response to survey results

To build employee engagement, improve the work environment, enhance service delivery and maximise the benefits of the People Matter survey, it is critical that leadership take meaningful action on survey results. Only 30.8% of respondents reported a favourable response to 'My organisation has made improvements based on the survey results from last year.'

There was a 3.7pp reduction in respondents who had confidence that their organisation would act on the results of the People Matter survey, down from 42.2% to 38.5%.

In response to this ongoing need, the Premier's Department established a sector-wide People Matter Employee Survey (PMES) Community of Practice to enhance collaboration across agencies, and drive engagement, positive workplace culture and meaningful change. The aim of the Community of Practice is to help agencies translate survey insights into action through shared learning, best practice and ongoing support.

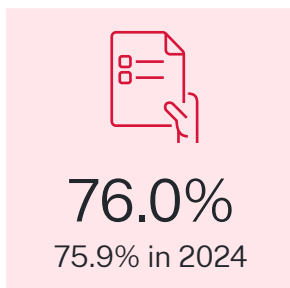
People management

Performance management and feedback show steady gains

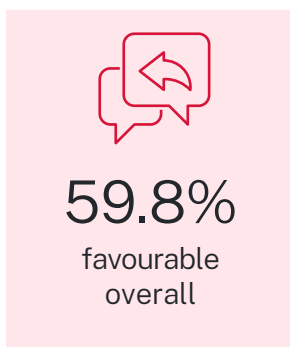
A high-performance culture is underpinned by an effective system for managing individual, team and organisational performance.

The percentage of employees with a performance and development plan remained largely unchanged, increasing by 0.1pp this year. Employee perceptions of feedback and performance management was 59.8% favourable in 2025.

Employees with a performance and development plan, 2025 vs 2024



Employee perception of feedback and performance management, 2025



Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
In the last 12 months, I have received feedback to help me improve my work	63.3	-1.2
My performance is assessed against clear criteria	54.4	-1.3
I am confident my manager would appropriately deal with employees who perform poorly	61.6	-

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Recognition is an essential tool for driving employee engagement and performance. Effective recognition helps employees feel valued and can significantly impact morale and productivity.

In this year's survey, more employees agreed that their manager provides recognition for their work, and they receive adequate recognition from their organisation. This improvement in recognition reverses the decline in 2024. To improve recognition practices, organisations should ensure that recognition is timely, specific and aligned with organisational values.

Employee perceptions of workplace recognition, 2025 vs 2024

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
My manager provides recognition for the work I do	70.7	0.2
I receive adequate recognition for my contributions from my organisation	50.2	0.6

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Learning and development: building capability

Learning and development is essential to adapt to the rapidly changing technological landscape driven by the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI). By focusing on learning and development initiatives, agencies can support employees to build the skills and capabilities they need to succeed in their roles and deliver positive outcomes for the people of NSW.

Over two-thirds of respondents (66.3%) felt they had the opportunity to develop the skills needed to perform their job well. This is an increase of 0.8pp from 2024.

The NSW Government runs a Leadership Academy to advance the development of talented leaders and build cross-sector collaboration across the NSW public sector.

The Leadership Academy:

- develops and promotes a leadership model that encourages a sector-wide perspective and focuses on positive leadership impact across teams, organisations and communities
- provides thought leadership and connection opportunities that drive innovation, support change, and deliver value for executives and their teams
- delivers cross-sector leadership development programs that align with agency talent strategies and build leadership capability, capacity and connection
- delivers the Aboriginal Career Leadership Development Program as part of the *NSW Government Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019–2025*, supporting the growth and advancement of Aboriginal leaders across the sector.

Through these efforts, the Leadership Academy strengthens leadership across the sector, ensuring our leaders are equipped to meet today's challenges and shape a better future for NSW.

Wellbeing: progress and challenges

‘Wellbeing’ means feeling good, functioning well and experiencing satisfaction and fulfilment in work and life. There is a strong connection between wellbeing and employee engagement, as wellbeing influences how employees perceive their work and their level of commitment.

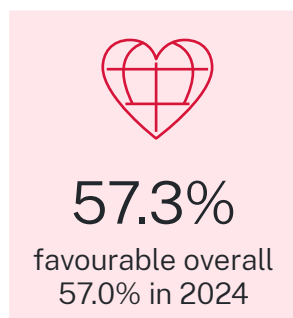
Positive wellbeing occurs when employees can use their skills, adapt to change, manage stress, and feel respected, safe and supported in the workplace. These factors are foundational to a thriving workforce and help employees not only manage challenges but also excel in their roles.

The 2025 People Matter survey was refined to improve clarity, resulting in an overall reduction of 16 questions. As part of these changes, the question related to burnout was removed from the wellbeing topic score and is reported separately.

This change reflects a shift in how burnout is understood, recognising its complexity and the need to interpret it independently from broader wellbeing indicators. Burnout is now treated as a distinct psychosocial risk factor, allowing for more targeted analysis and action planning.

In 2025, wellbeing remains a key driver of engagement, with overall scores showing marginal improvement. The overall topic score was 57.3%; up 0.3pp from 2024. The percentage of survey respondents satisfied with workplace practices to manage wellbeing rose slightly to 55.4%, up 0.2pp from 2024. This is a modest gain that signals an opportunity to build on existing efforts and strengthen outcomes.

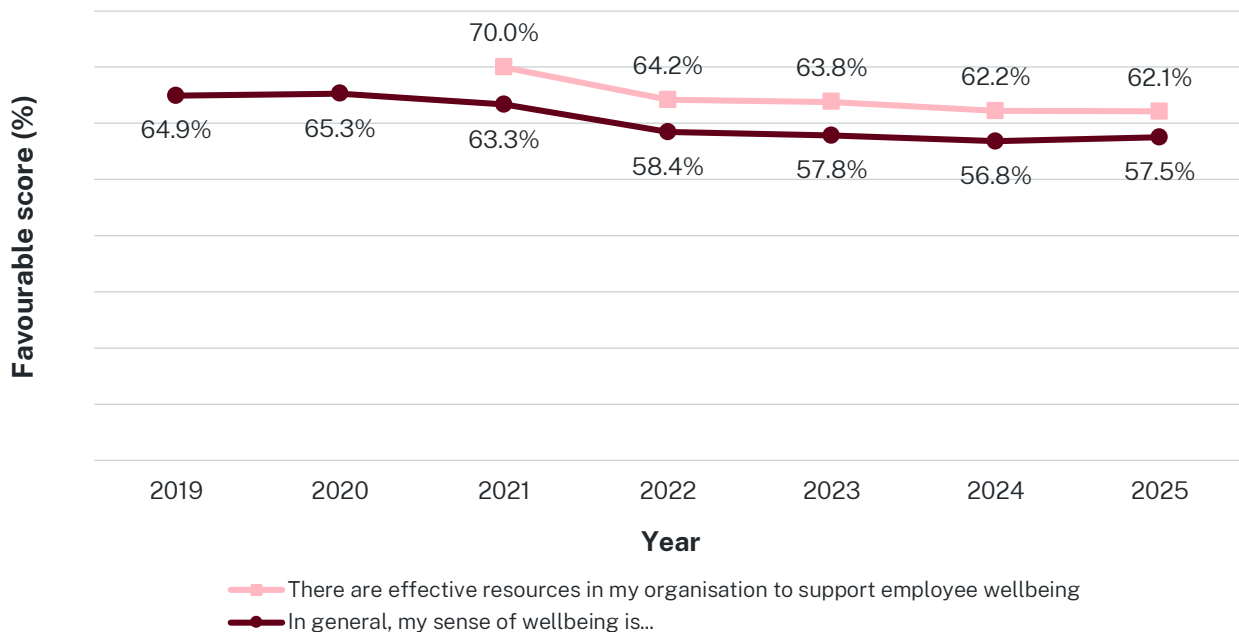
Employee perceptions of wellbeing, 2025 vs 2024



Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
There are effective resources in my organisation to support employee wellbeing	62.1	-0.1
In general, my sense of wellbeing is ...	57.5	0.7
I am satisfied with current workplace practices to help me manage my wellbeing	55.4	0.2
The amount of stress in my job is manageable	54.2	0.1

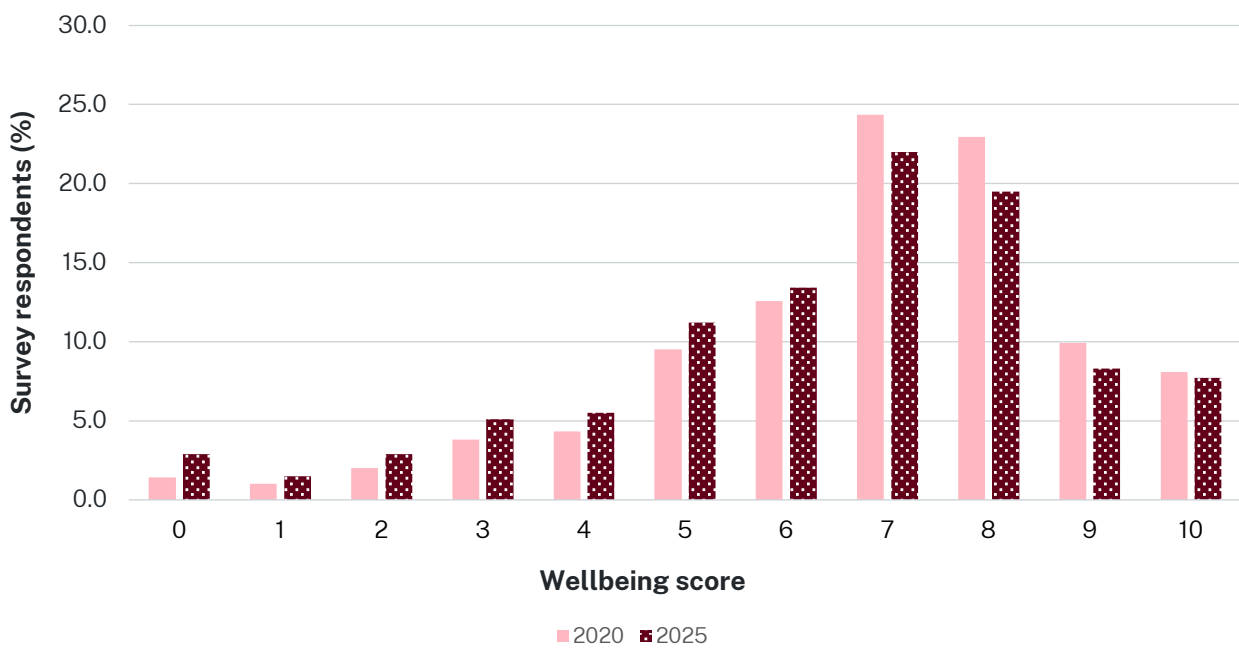
Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Wellbeing questions with trend, 2019–2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2019–2025)

Distribution of employees' general sense of wellbeing, 2025 vs 2020



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2020, 2025)

Note: Respondents were asked to rate the statement, 'In general, my sense of wellbeing is ...', on a scale of 0 to 10.

Resilience: adapting to change

Resilience and workload management remain central to employee wellbeing. Survey respondents reported confidence in their ability to adapt to change.

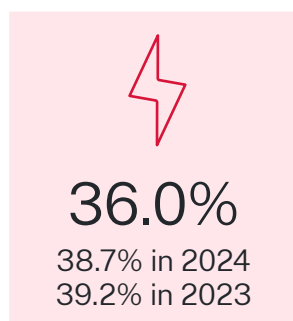
In 2025, 87.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they could adapt when changes occur. The proportion of respondents who strongly agreed increased by 3.0pp to 22.6%, while those who agreed fell by 2.6pp to 65.2%. Neutral and 'disagree' responses remained largely unchanged. This shift suggests growing confidence among employees, with more expressing strong adaptability even as overall agreement levels remained stable.

Fewer employees reported feeling burnt out

Burnout is a specific type of work-related stress that results from chronic exposure to stressful work conditions. According to the World Health Organization, 3 dimensions characterise burnout: exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy.⁸

Over the past 3 years, reported feelings of burnout in the People Matter survey have steadily declined. This year's survey results show a slight improvement, with fewer employees reporting feeling burnt out and a small decline in the number experiencing all 3 dimensions of burnout.

Employees who felt burnt out, 2023–2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2023–2025)

A total of 36.0% of respondents reported feeling burnt out by their work, a decrease of 2.7pp from 2024. This follows a 0.5pp decrease between 2023 and 2024, suggesting a continued reduction in burnout levels. However, in the 2025 survey, the proportion of neutral responses rose by 3.5pp, indicating a growing number of employees who are uncertain about their wellbeing. While the decline in burnout is encouraging, the increase in neutrality may signal a need for further engagement to better understand and support employee wellbeing.

Frontline employees also reported a reduction in feelings of burnout in this year's People Matter survey. The proportion of respondents who felt burnt out by work fell by 3.8pp to 42.4%, with neutral responses increasing by 3.8pp to 26.7%.

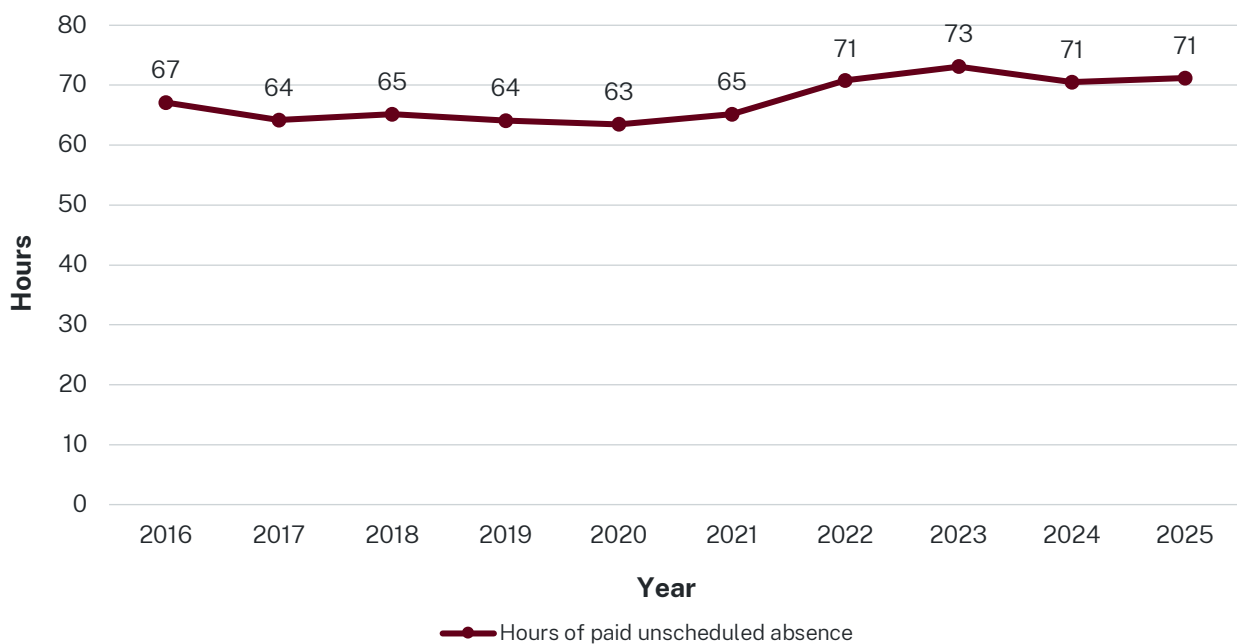
The inclusion of a new question on workload capacity showed workload is a pressure point for many employees. A total of 57.3% of respondents reported working above capacity, with 20.5% indicating they were well above capacity and 36.8% slightly above capacity. A further 34.5% felt they were working at capacity, while only 8.2% reported being below capacity. These results suggest that most employees are operating under sustained workload pressure, which may contribute to feelings of burnout and impact overall wellbeing.

⁸ World Health Organization, *Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International Classification of Diseases*, World Health Organization website (<https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupational-phenomenon-international-classification-of-diseases>), 28 May 2019, accessed 8 December 2025.

Employees with manageable workloads report higher engagement, wellbeing and job satisfaction, and are less likely to leave. Frontline employees are more likely to experience above capacity workloads, with 63.0% of frontline respondents reporting a workload above capacity compared to 52.7% reported by non-frontline employees.

Elevated absenteeism rates continue to pose significant risks to the sector's workforce. The hours of paid unscheduled absences per FTE employee increased slightly to 71.3 hours in 2025, which is the second-highest rate since 2016. This 0.7pp increase highlights the ongoing challenge of managing unscheduled absences and underscores the importance of sustained efforts to support employee wellbeing and workload balance.

Hours of paid unscheduled absence per full-time equivalent employee, 2016–2025



Source: Workforce Profile (2016–2025)

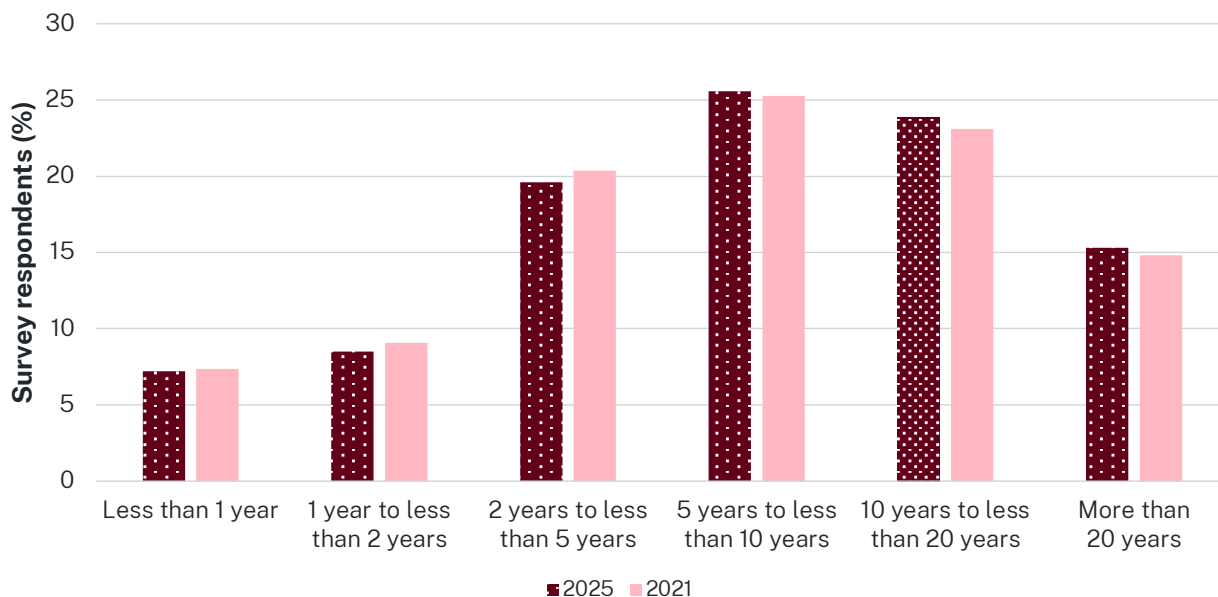
Tenure and intention to stay

‘Tenure’ is the duration an employee has worked for an organisation, while ‘intention to stay’ refers to their desire to remain with their current organisation. This intention is influenced by factors like employee engagement and can be used to predict turnover; however, respondents who indicate that they are thinking about leaving do not always act on this intention.

Employees’ decisions to stay are increasingly influenced by career development opportunities and senior leadership quality. The top 3 reasons for employees considering leaving their organisation, according to the People Matter survey, are a lack of future career opportunities, perceptions of poor quality of senior leadership, and higher salary opportunities elsewhere.

To improve retention, agencies should use insights from ‘intention to stay’ People Matter survey results, turnover data and exit surveys.

Employees' intention to stay in current organisation, 2025 vs 2021



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2021, 2025)

Median agency tenure, 2025 vs 2024



Source: Workforce Profile (2025, 2024)

Inclusion and diversity

Creating an inclusive and diverse workforce is essential for delivering high-quality services in NSW. An inclusive workplace enables participation and contribution regardless of seen or unseen individual difference, and helps drive improvements in organisational performance, innovation, customer service and employee wellbeing.⁹ By reflecting the diversity of the community in the workforce of the public sector, the government is better able to deliver services and outcomes that meet the needs of the community.

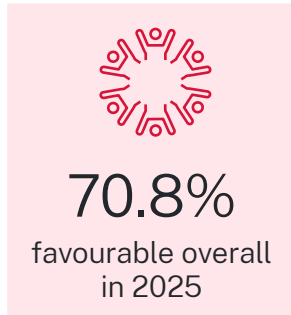
The government supports inclusion and diversity in the workforce through:

- upholding government sector core values
- leading disability and Aboriginal employment initiatives
- offering flexible work
- facilitating employee networks
- setting targets and supporting diversity and inclusion plans.

⁹ Diversity Council Australia (DCA), *DCA's Inclusive@Work Index 2023-2024*, DCA website (<https://www.dca.org.au/resources/di-planning/business-case-for-di>), n.d., accessed 29 October 2025.

Overall, for questions around inclusion and diversity in the work environment, 70.8% of survey respondents provided a favourable response. There was a small decrease of 1.0pp, from 78.2% to 77.2%, in favourable responses to the question, 'People in my workgroup treat each other with respect'. There was a marginal increase in survey respondents' agreement to feelings of belonging in their organisation. Continuing to foster respectful, psychologically safe and inclusive workplaces will help ensure everyone feels valued and able to contribute.

Employee perceptions of inclusion and diversity, 2025



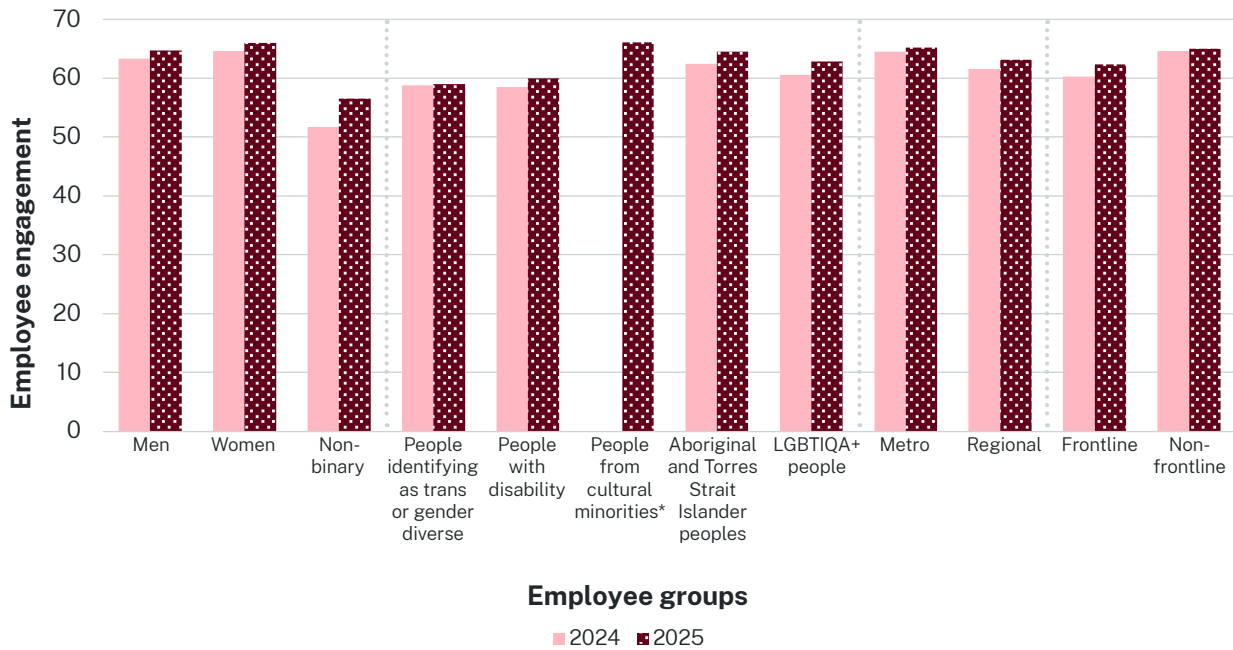
Note: A comparison to the 2024 overall score is not possible because some questions contributing to the 2025 overall score have changed.

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
People in my workgroup treat each other with respect	77.2	-1.0
I feel culturally safe at work	76.5	-0.5
If I chose to, I would feel safe sharing personal aspects about myself at work	67.8	0.0
I feel that I belong in my organisation	67.1	0.4
My manager supports my career advancement	65.4	-

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

There were improvements in employee engagement score for most employee groups this year, with the largest improvement for non-binary employees.

Employee engagement score by employee group, 2025 vs 2024



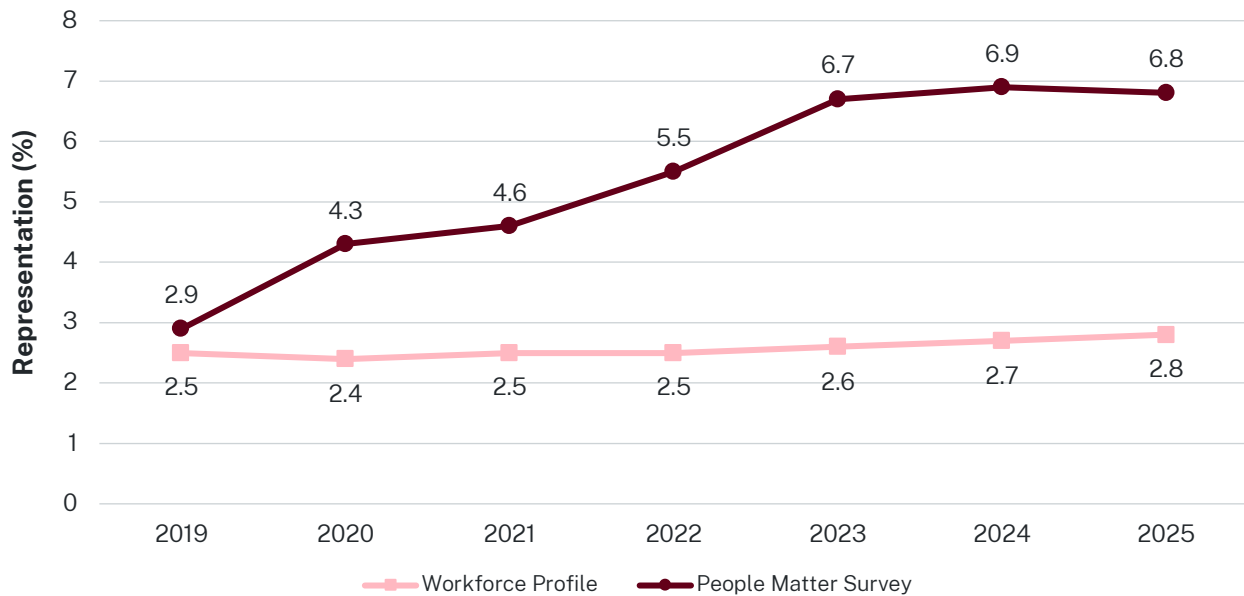
* The cultural minorities question changed in 2025; therefore, a comparison with the 2024 survey result cannot be provided.
Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2024, 2025)

People with disability

The NSW Government uses a social model definition of disability. Disability includes long-term physical, mental health, intellectual, neurological or sensory differences that, in interaction with various attitudinal and environmental barriers, may hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Significant efforts are needed to improve workforce inclusion of people with disability. The government committed to a target of 5.6% of the total workforce being people with disability by 2025.

In 2025, 6.8% of respondents to the People Matter survey, from the government sector, identified as living with a disability, down 0.1pp from 2024. However, this figure remains significantly higher than the estimated proportion of employees with disability reported in the 2025 Workforce Profile (2.8%), up from 2.7% in 2024.

People with a disability in government sector, variance in People Matter survey vs Workforce Profile, 2019–2025



Sources: Workforce Profile (2019–2025); People Matter Employee Survey (2019–2025)

There are several factors contributing to the difference between reported disability in the Workforce Profile and the percentage of respondents identifying as having a disability in the People Matter survey. The People Matter survey is anonymous and provides a current response. The Workforce Profile collects data from HR systems, where updating disability data is optional. Both datasets are valuable, and the Premier's Department will continue collaborating with the sector to improve measurement and results.

The NSW Government continued to focus on improving disability employment and inclusion, including by supporting efforts to meet the disability employment target set under Election Commitment number 239, and position the sector as an employer of choice for people with disability.

In November 2024, the Public Service Commissioner issued a Direction to all agency heads to implement a workplace adjustments policy. The Direction sets out minimum standards that every policy must meet. These include ensuring effective systems are in place to implement adjustments, providing an appropriate escalation pathway and communicating a strong organisational commitment to inclusion and accessibility. A model policy, Easy Read version, fact sheets and conversation guide were also developed to help agencies implement their policy and comply with the Direction.

The results of the People Matter survey indicate an increase in the number of people that require workplace adjustments, from 3.0% to 3.4%, and a marginal increase in satisfaction with workplace adjustments.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The *NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019–2025* was developed to build a culturally safe and capable NSW public sector that reflects the communities we serve, and where Aboriginal employees feel supported, respected, valued and empowered to pursue their career aspirations. Initiatives in 2024–25 focused on resources and initiatives to attract, retain and support a talented Aboriginal workforce and create inclusive and respectful workplaces for the Aboriginal workforce. With the current strategy expiring at the end of 2025, an independent review of the strategy has commenced to assist in developing a successor strategy for 2026 to 2030.

In this year's People Matter survey, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported an employee engagement index of 64.5, which was slightly higher than the sector engagement score of 63.6. Results in most categories, excluding inclusion and diversity, were equal to or within 2pp of the sector average. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents reported a 66.1% favourable response to the inclusion and diversity topic, which was below the sector inclusion and diversity topic score of 70.8%, indicating a need for further improvement.

In July 2024, the Office of the Public Service Commissioner (OPSC) launched the Career Advancement Guide for NSW Public Sector Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Senior Executives. The guide supports the progress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders into senior executive leadership roles.

The NSW Government continued to implement the Everyone's Business cultural capability training package, an eLearning and interactive web journey developed in partnership with Stolen Generations organisations.

Industrial relations reform

In 2025, the NSW Government implemented reforms to the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* via the *Workplace Protections Act 2025*, which delivers on a commitment to continue building a better industrial relations system that will help drive productive and efficient public sector workplaces.

The amendments are designed to modernise workplace protections, improve gender equality outcomes, strengthen the jurisdiction of the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) in addressing critical issues such as bullying and sexual harassment, and enhance the standards for a safe workplace.

Many of the provisions of the Workplace Protections Act commenced on 3 July 2025, the date of assent; these included enhancing the powers of the commission when resolving industrial disputes and facilitating return to work for injured employees in the public sector and local government. The remaining provisions will commence by proclamation on 13 October 2025, 1 March 2026, and 1 July 2026.

Settlement of major public sector industrial instruments

There are 112 public sector industrial instruments, including awards, enterprise agreements, determinations and contracts of employment for which bargaining is conducted. Of these, 89 are either awards or enterprise agreements.

As at the beginning of October 2025, of the 89 awards or enterprise agreements:

- 69 are resolved
- 12 have been agreed in principle and are awaiting approval by the IRC or Fair Work Commission (FWC)
- a small number remain outstanding but are on a pathway to resolution.

Public sector bargaining outcomes

In 2025, the NSW Government provided 50,000 health workers – including hospital cleaners, security officers, scientists, dentists and other health professionals – with an 8.0% increase over 2 years, comprising:

- an increase of 4% backdated from 1 July 2025
- from 1 July 2026, another increase of 4%.

In July 2025, a new Sydney Trains Enterprise Agreement was approved by the FWC. This followed a period of extensive bargaining, protected industrial action, and legal proceedings in the FWC and the Federal Court of Australia.

In 2025, the NSW Government announced its intention to insource cleaners (mainly school-based cleaners) to be employed as public service employees by the Department of Education. Intensive bargaining occurred between the Department of Education and the United Workers Union for a new 18-month award. The IRC made the new award in September 2025, which will cover up to 1,000 new cleaners in the Hunter/Central Coast region from 1 January 2026.

To address attraction and retention issues in the child protection workforce, negotiations between the Department of Communities and Justice and the Public Service Association of NSW resulted in a new Crown Employees (Child Protection Workers) Award 2025, made by the IRC in September 2025. The new 3-year award sets improved pay rates for child protection employees with a fit-for-purpose classification structure and career path, and enhanced conditions. In addition, there will be 100 new and additional roles of Leading Caseworker.

On 14 August 2025, a Full Bench of the IRC published its decision for 3-year awards for permanent and retained firefighters. The Full Bench determined an increase to wages and wage-related allowances of 14%. Importantly, the decision recognises the work value associated with road crash rescue operations undertaken by firefighters and includes new allowances.

In October 2025, the IRC delivered its decision in the Psychiatrist Staff Specialists arbitration case, awarding a temporary 10% ‘stop-gap’ attraction and retention allowance. This 12-month lift is in addition to the 10% ‘abnormal duties allowance’ paid since February as an interim retention strategy, providing a combined interim uplift of 20% for a year, designed to attract staff specialists to the state health system and retain them.

Remuneration

Employees’ pay and conditions differ depending on the legislative and industrial instruments applicable to their job type and employing agency.

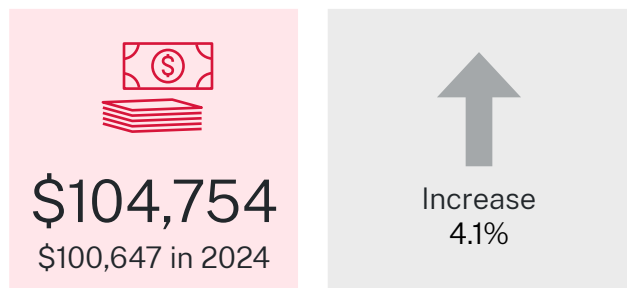
The NSW Government aims to maintain competitiveness as an employer and acknowledges the role of fair remuneration in attracting talent to the sector. Satisfaction with pay has increased by 2.2pp overall, with respondents in frontline positions showing an increase of 3.4pp.

The increases in satisfaction with pay reflect salary agreements that were reached for several groups, as outlined in the previous section.

Median remuneration for non-casual employees in the NSW public sector was \$104,754 in 2025, an increase of 4.1% from 2024. The NSW Government’s remuneration offer for 2024–25 was for up to 4%, inclusive of superannuation.

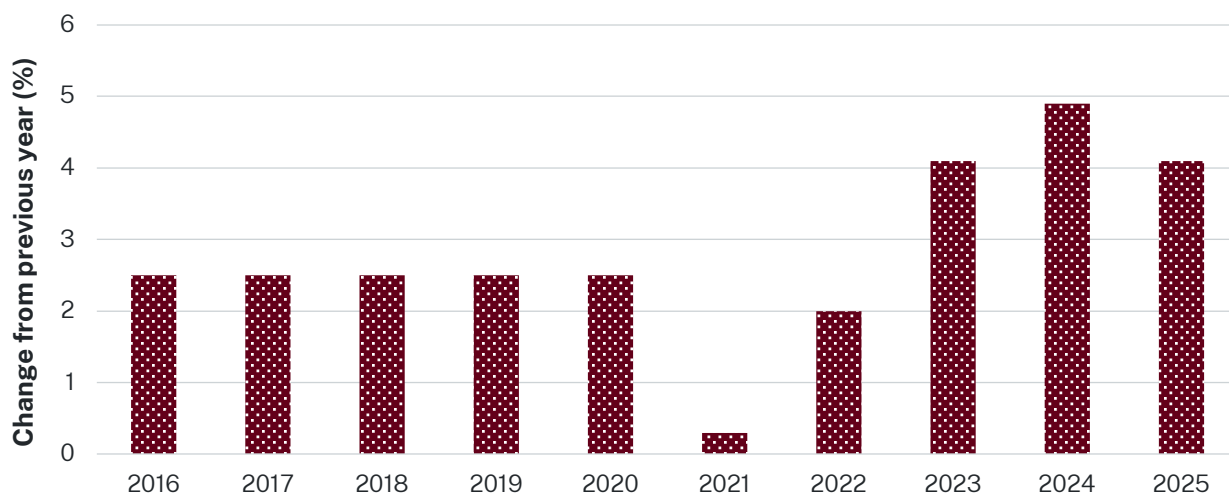
An example of this was the successful negotiation with the Public Service Association of NSW for the state’s first multi-year pay agreement for Crown employees in over a decade, which included a 4% increase to salaries in 2024–25.¹⁰ This was above the increase in Sydney’s Consumer Price Index (1.9%).¹¹

Median remuneration for NSW public sector employees, 2025 vs 2024



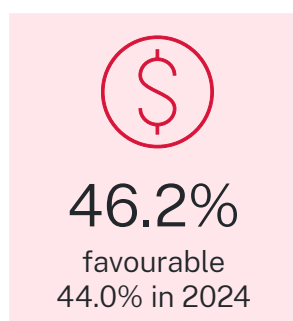
Source: Workforce Profile (2025, 2024)

Changes in median remuneration of non-casual NSW public sector employees, 2016–2025



Source: Workforce Profile (2016–2025)

Employee perceptions of being paid fairly for the work they do, 2025 vs 2024



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Overall, 34.6% of respondents indicated they do not believe they are paid fairly for the work they do, compared to 37.7% in 2024.

¹⁰ Premier’s Department, *C2024-07 Crown Employees (Public Sector – Salaries 2024) Award*, NSW Government Administrative Requirements Portal website (<https://arp.nsw.gov.au/c2024-07-crown-employees-public-sector-salaries-2024-award>), 2024, accessed 9 September 2025.

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (June 2025), *Consumer Price Index, Australia*, ABS website (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/latest-release>), accessed 09 September 2025.

Respondents who believe they are paid fairly for the work they do, by specific group, 2025 vs 2024

Specific group	2024 (%)	2025 (%)	pp difference
NSW Police Force frontline*	29.0	57.6	28.6
NSW Ambulance	29.4	34.1	4.7
Teachers	42.3	45.2	2.9
Nurses	17.8	18.7	0.9
Health frontline*	24.7	24.8	0.1

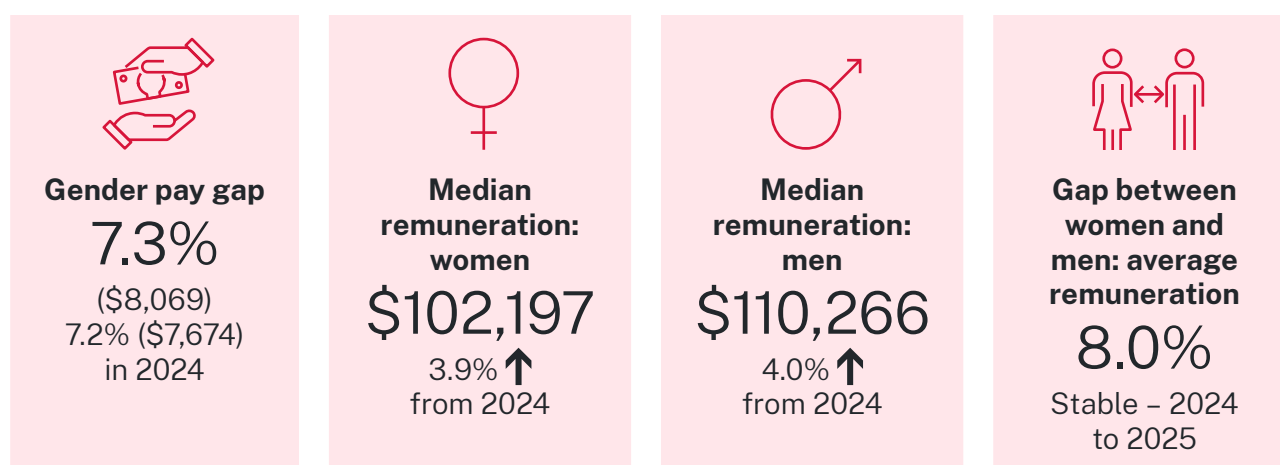
* Type of work: 'Service delivery involving direct contact with the public' is used to identify frontline employees.

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2024, 2025)

Gender equality and the gender pay gap

In 2025, the gender pay gap increased slightly to 7.3% (\$8,069), from 7.2% (\$7,674) in 2024.¹² The median remuneration for women increased by 3.9% (to \$102,197) compared to 2024, while the median remuneration for men increased 4.0% (to \$110,266). In contrast, when calculating the pay gap using average remuneration, the gap remained stable at 8.0% from 2024 to 2025.

The gender pay gap can partly be explained by industry and occupational segregation, with men disproportionately represented in higher-paid industries and occupations, as well as positions of leadership.¹³ Female-dominated industries are often associated with caring roles, providing essential social infrastructure to individuals and communities. The NSW Government employs large workforces in these industries, including nurses, teachers, and school-based support staff, and is committed to strengthening them.¹⁴



Source: Workforce Profile (2025, 2024)

¹² Pay gap is calculated using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development method, which compares the male and female median remuneration expressed as a proportion of male remuneration. This differs from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency methods and published national figures. Note: superannuation is included for contract senior executives in total annual base remuneration used to calculate the pay gap.

¹³ NSW Treasury, *Budget Paper No.02 Performance and Wellbeing Statement*, Chapter 10: Gender Equality Budget Statement, NSW Budget website (<https://www.budget.nsw.gov.au/2025-26/budget-papers>), 24 June 2025, accessed 21 November 2025.

¹⁴ NSW Treasury, *NSW Budget Paper 2023-24, Gender Equality Budget Statement*, NSW Budget website (<https://www.budget.nsw.gov.au/budget-archives>), 19 September 2023, accessed 21 November 2025.

Safe and healthy work environments

Work health and safety

Managing work health and safety (WHS) is the responsibility of everyone. It involves addressing risks to the physical and psychological health and safety of everyone in a workplace.

This year, the NSW Government released a new mental health and wellbeing strategy for first responders, setting out 15 priority actions areas for implementation to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Under the strategy, agencies are required to ensure mental health services are accessible, particularly for those in regional and remote areas.

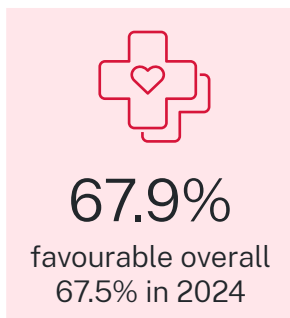
The strategy sets a high baseline for mental health and wellbeing support across first responder agencies and for the provision of training for managers to better recognise and support workers.

Importantly, this strategy includes road workers, national park employees and forestry workers, ensuring they have access to the same psychological support offered to other first responders.

The strategy drives long-term improvement in the sector to ensure first responders have the assistance they need to perform their critical roles effectively and sustainably.

To support improvements in work health and safety, the Premier's Department is undertaking collaborative research with the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) to examine the leadership capabilities that best support the public sector to manage psychosocial hazards and risks.¹⁵ A report on this research will be available in 2026.

Employee perception of health and safety, 2025 vs 2024

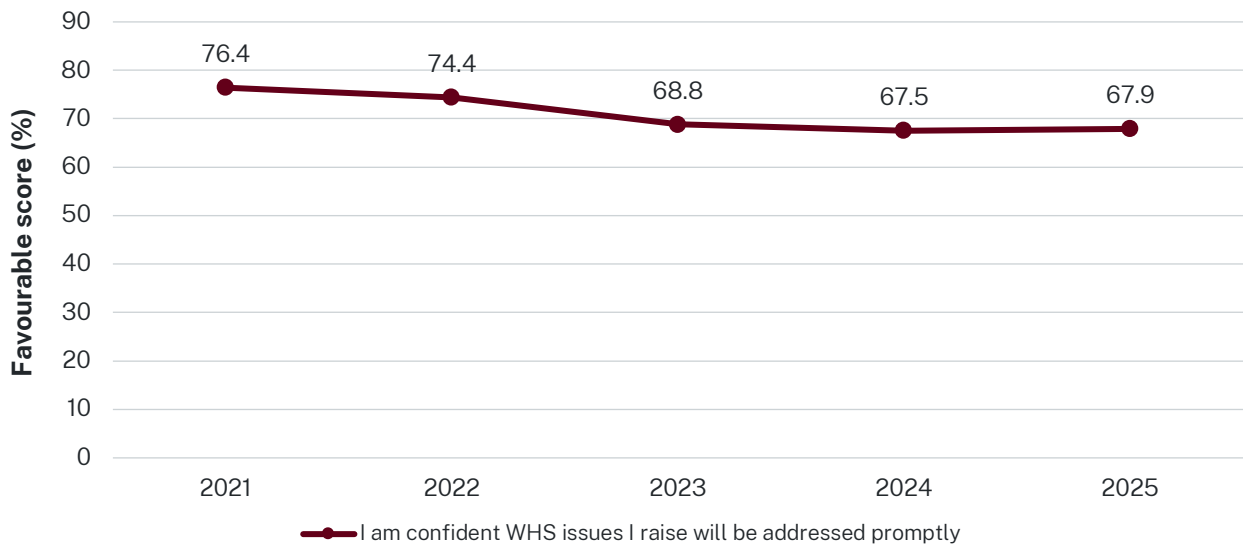


Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Over a third of survey respondents (67.9%) responded favourably to the question, 'I am confident work health and safety issues I raise will be addressed promptly.' This is an increase of 0.4pp on 2024 (67.5%), reversing the decline over the past 4 years.

15 ANZSOG, *Improving Leadership Awareness and Capabilities for Managing Psychosocial Wellbeing in the Public Sector*, ANZSOG website (<https://anzsog.edu.au/research-insights-and-resources/current-research-projects/improving-leadership-awareness-and-capabilities-for-managing-psychosocial-wellbeing-in-the-public-sector/>), n.p, accessed on 14 November 2025.

Health and safety confidence, 2021–2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2021–2025)

Flexible working arrangements

Flexible working arrangements assist the NSW Government to attract and retain talented people, particularly people with commitments outside of work. There are many ways to achieve flexibility in the workplace, such as by offering part-time roles, job-share arrangements, purchased leave, working from different locations, variations to starting and finishing times, and career breaks.

According to the People Matter survey, the top 3 flexible working arrangements in 2025 were consistent with the 2024 results:

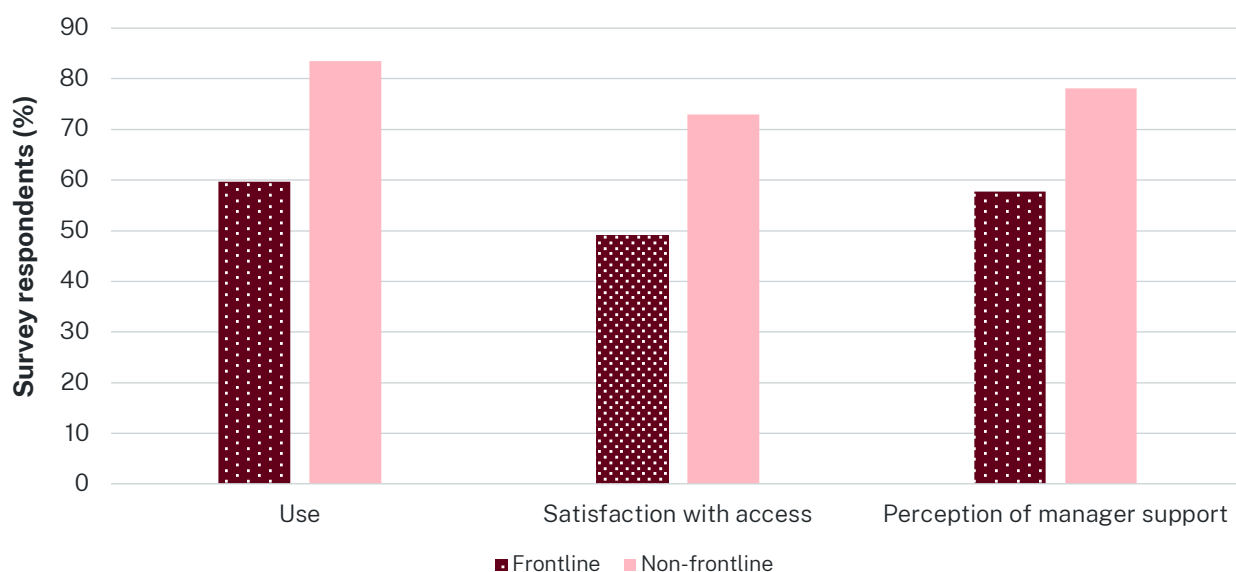
- flexible start and finish times
- working from home
- working from different locations.

Employee use and perceptions of flexible working arrangements, 2025 vs 2024



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Employee use and perception of flexible working arrangements, frontline vs non-frontline, 2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025)

Creating positive workplace environments

The NSW Government is committed to reducing and preventing negative workplace behaviours towards zero. Negative workplace behaviours have detrimental effects on employees and undermine efforts to create positive and productive workplaces.

Pleasingly, all results for experienced negative workplace behaviours reduced in 2025. The largest improvement was in reported incidences of threats or physical harm, which fell 7.2pp to 2.6%. The percentage of respondents reporting they experienced discrimination fell by 2.7pp and reported racism fell by 1.3pp.

Negative workplace behaviours, 2025 vs 2024*

Behaviour	2024 (%)	2025 (%)	pp difference
Aware of misconduct	14.1	13.8	-0.3
Witnessed bullying	21.1	18.9	-2.2
Experienced bullying	13.6	12.5	-1.1
Witnessed sexual harassment	2.6	2.3	-0.3
Experienced sexual harassment	5.0	4.2	-0.8
Experienced threats or physical harm	9.8	2.6	-7.2
Witnessed discrimination	11.6	8.2	-3.4
Experienced discrimination	8.4	5.7	-2.7
Witnessed racism	8.4	5.9	-2.5
Experienced racism	4.0	2.7	-1.3

* Due to the negative workplace behaviour questions changing to one multi-select question in 2025, the 2024 results are indicative.

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

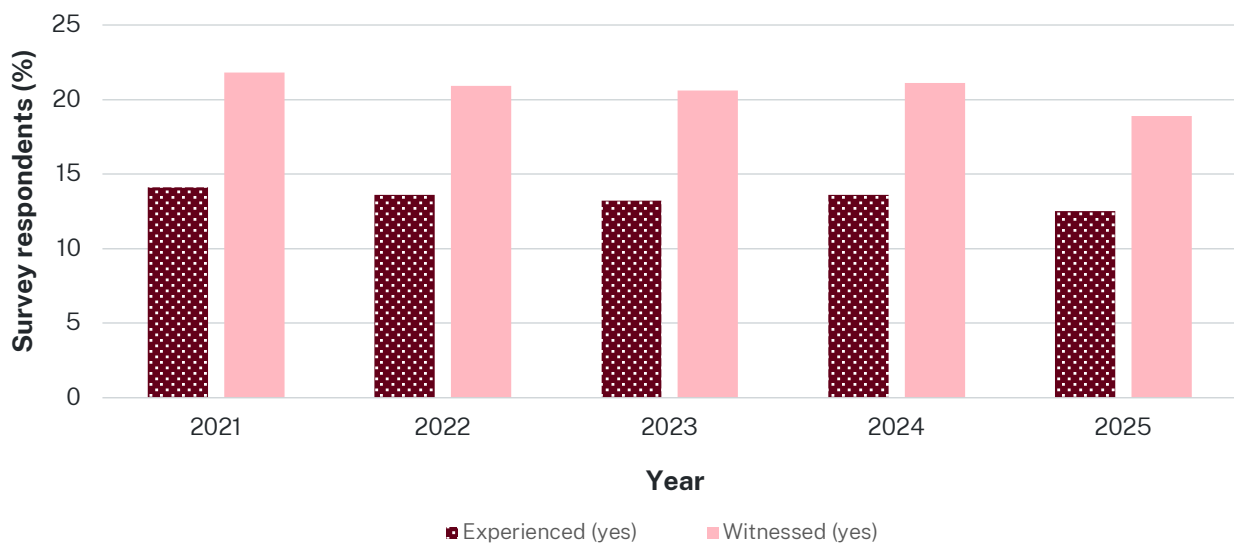
Bullying

Workplace bullying is a psychosocial hazard and is defined as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.¹⁶ Reasonable feedback on work performance, delivered in an appropriate manner, is not bullying.

While the rate of bullying continues to decline year on year, it is an issue that requires continuous focus and proactive measures to reduce occurrences to zero.

People Matter survey results for bullying declined in 2025, with 18.9% of respondents indicating they had witnessed bullying, a decline of 2.2pp from 2024, and 12.5% of respondents indicating they experienced bullying, a decline of 1.1pp. Of those who indicated they experienced bullying, over half reported it (51.7%), an increase of 1.3pp from 2024. Of those who reported their experience, 27.0% were satisfied with how their complaint was handled, which is a 0.9pp increase from 2024.

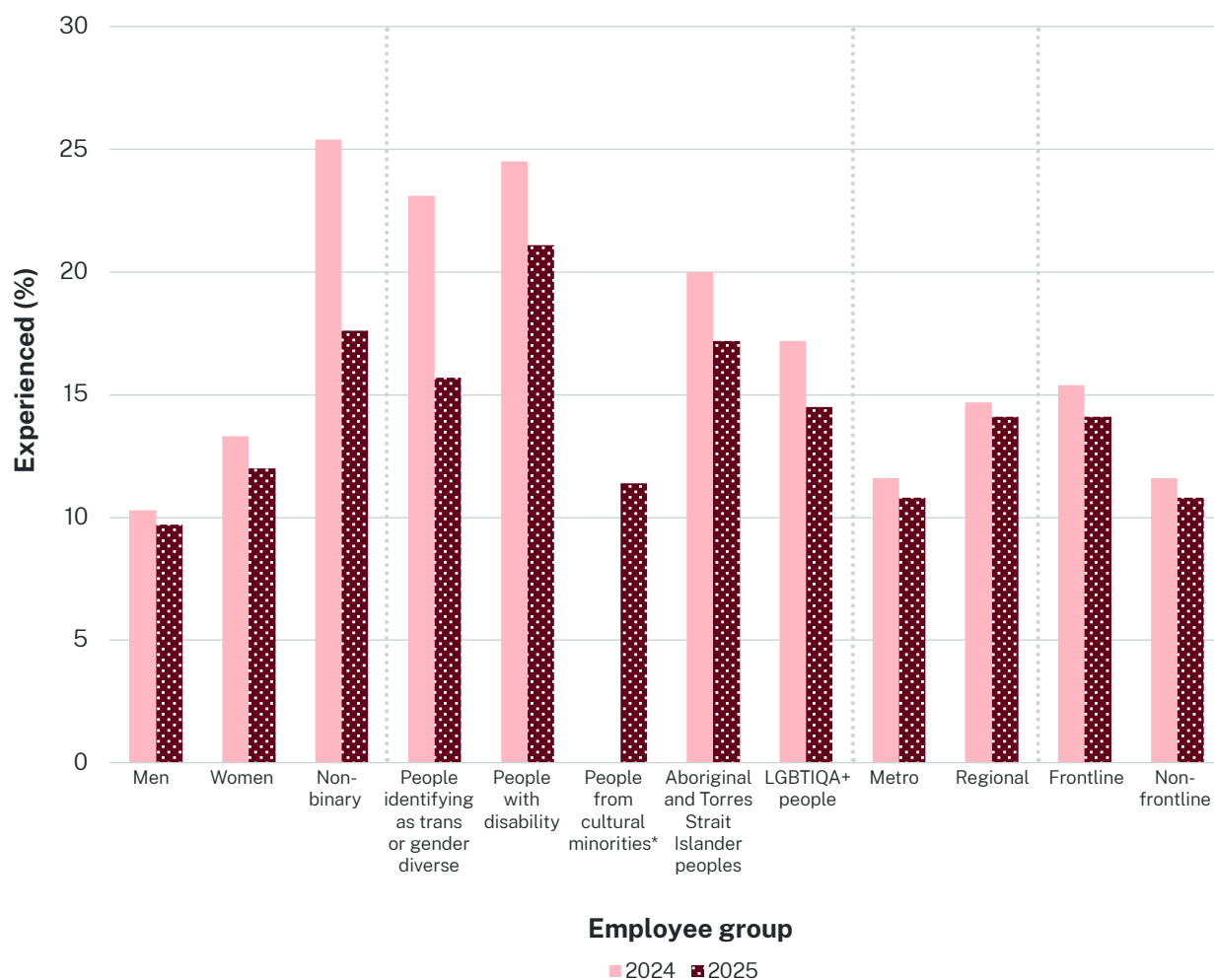
Respondents who indicated they experienced or witnessed bullying, 2021–2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2021–2025)

¹⁶ SafeWork, *Workplace bullying*, SafeWork website (<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/bullying/workplace-bullying>), n.d. accessed 29 October 2025.

Respondents who indicated they experienced bullying, by employee group, 2024 vs 2025



* The cultural minorities question changed in 2025; therefore, a comparison with the 2024 survey result cannot be provided.
Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2024, 2025)

In this year’s People Matter survey, the proportion of employees who reported experiencing bullying declined from 2024 rates for both frontline and non-frontline employees, with frontline employees recording 14.1% (–1.3pp) and non-frontline employees recording 10.8% (–0.8pp).

Bullying disproportionately affects individuals with certain demographic characteristics. People with disability reported the highest rate of bullying, at 21.1%, a decline of 3.4pp from 2024. The rates of bullying reported by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees decreased by 2.8pp to 17.2%.

Zero bullying is more likely to be achieved where a proactive, systemic approach is taken to a range of workforce management and culture factors. Bullying can cause both psychological and physical harm, making it a risk to employee health and safety.¹⁷ Recent changes to NSW work health and safety laws require persons conducting businesses and undertakings to manage psychosocial risks and implement control measures to eliminate or minimise psychosocial risks so far as is reasonably practicable.¹⁸

17 SafeWork, *Workplace bullying*, SafeWork website (<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/bullying/workplace-bullying>), n.d., accessed 13 November 2025.

18 SafeWork, *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2025*, SafeWork website (<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation/accordians/work-health-and-safety-regulation-2025>), n.d., accessed 27 November 2025.

Discrimination and racism

Discrimination occurs when a person or group is treated less favourably than others due to their background or certain personal characteristics. Racism refers to prejudice, discrimination or hatred directed at someone because of their colour, ethnicity or national origin.

Racism and unlawful discrimination are never acceptable. It is crucial to understand these experiences among employees to reduce the incidence of these harmful workplace behaviours towards zero.

In this year's People Matter survey, 5.7% of respondents indicated they experience discrimination, representing a decrease of 2.7pp from last year. More than one third of respondents who experience discrimination reported their experience, of which almost 20% were satisfied with how their complaint was handled.

Discrimination disproportionately affects individuals based on employee attributes. The most frequently reported discrimination was based on employment activity, accounting for 28.8% of incidences. This refers to discrimination experienced as result employment activities such as making a reasonable request for information on employment entitlements or communicating concerns about the provision of these entitlements.

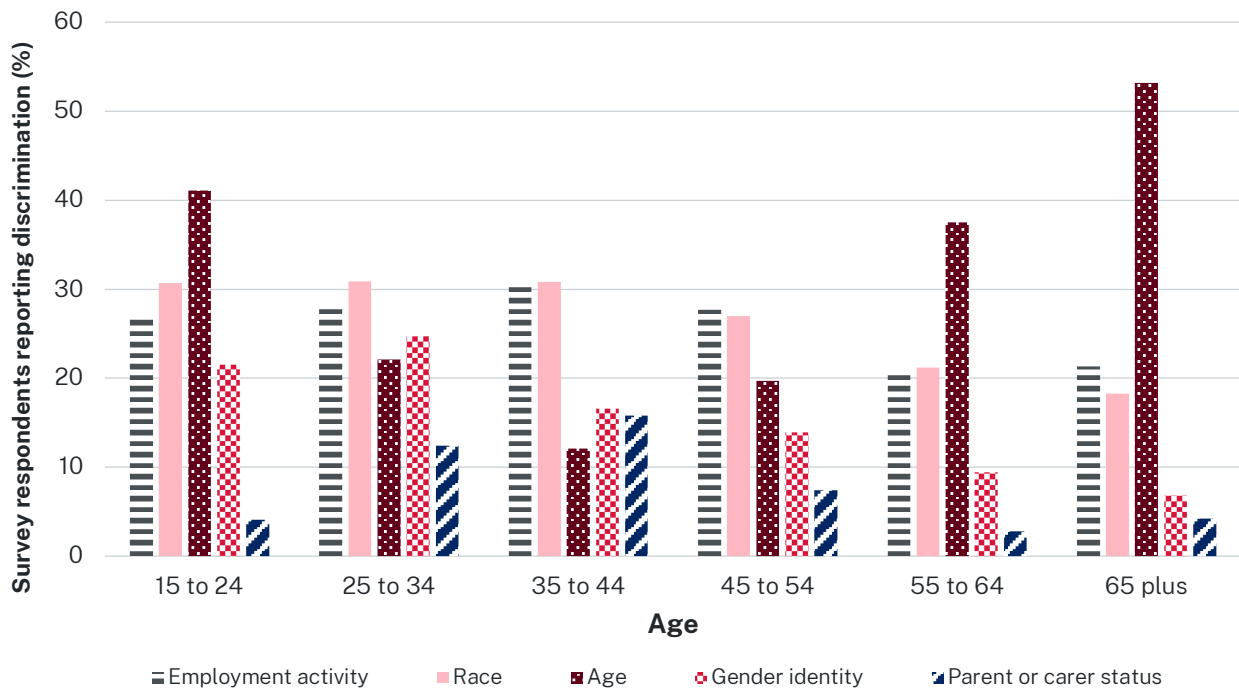
This was followed by discrimination based on race (27.4%), which declined by 1pp; age (23.7%), which increased by 1.7pp; and gender identity (15.9%), which increased by 1.2pp. The decline in race-based discrimination reflects encouraging progress; however, its continued prevalence signals persistent challenges that require sustained attention. At the same time, rising incidences of age and gender identity discrimination point to emerging areas of concern. These trends highlight the need for targeted interventions to address evolving risks and ensure an inclusive and equitable workplace for all employees.

The following graph shows employee experience of discrimination by age, for those who reported discrimination, and highlights the top 5 attributes reported as the basis for the discrimination. For employees aged 65 years or over, 53.2% of respondents identified age as the basis for their discrimination. High rates of reported age discrimination also occurred for employees aged 15 to 24 years (41.1%) and 55 to 64 years (37.5%).

Respondents aged 25 to 34 years reported the highest rate of discrimination based on race (30.9%), followed by respondents aged 35 to 44 years (30.8%), and respondents aged 15 to 24 years (30.7%).

High rates of employee activity-based discrimination were reported across all age groups. This ranged from a high of 30.7% to 30.9% across respondents aged 15 to 44 years, to lower levels for older respondents (18.3% for 65 plus).

Employee experiences of discrimination by age, 2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025)

Positively, reported experiences of racism declined for a second consecutive year, from 4.0% in 2024 to 2.7% in 2025, a fall of 1.3pp. Achieving zero tolerance towards racism is a high priority in the sector and linked to Closing the Gap Priority Reform 3: Transforming government organisations and the *NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025*.

The OPSC in the Premier’s Department leads initiatives to identify, address and prevent racism. The OPSC’s *Anti-Racism Guide* was launched in August 2024 to help address racism, discrimination and other unlawful behaviours. The guide provides practical information for the public sector to identify, address and eliminate racism.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. This kind of behaviour is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated in any form. Examples of sexual harassment include unwelcome touching, sexually suggestive comments and inappropriate staring that may make someone feel intimidated.

Overall, the number of respondents indicating that they experienced sexual harassment at work fell from 5.0% in 2024 to 4.2% in 2025. Frontline respondents indicated that they experienced sexual harassment at work at a slightly higher rate than the overall sector, at 5.6%, which is a reduction of 1.3pp from 2024. Frontline respondents aged 20 to 24 years reported the highest level, with 11.6% indicating that they experienced sexual harassment, down from 17.9% in 2024.

There was an increase in respondents who selected ‘prefer not to answer’, up 2.3% to 3.5% for the overall sector, and up from 2.2% to 3.2% for frontline respondents.

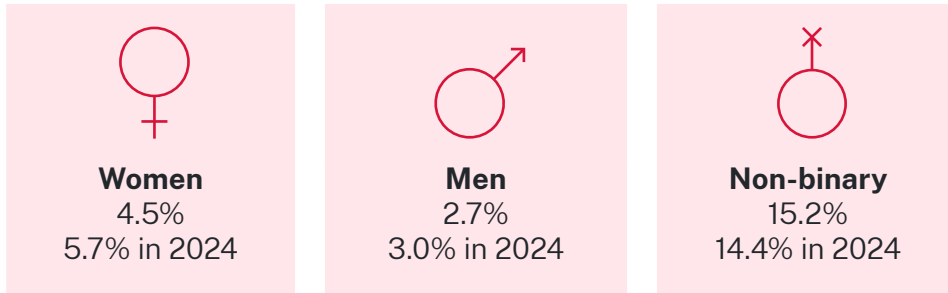
For those who reported their experience of sexual harassment, nearly half indicated they were satisfied with how their complaint was handled. There was a small increase in satisfaction, of 1.2 pp, for the overall sector-wide responses, and 3pp for frontline respondents.

The NSW Government aims to foster safer and more respectful workplaces in NSW.

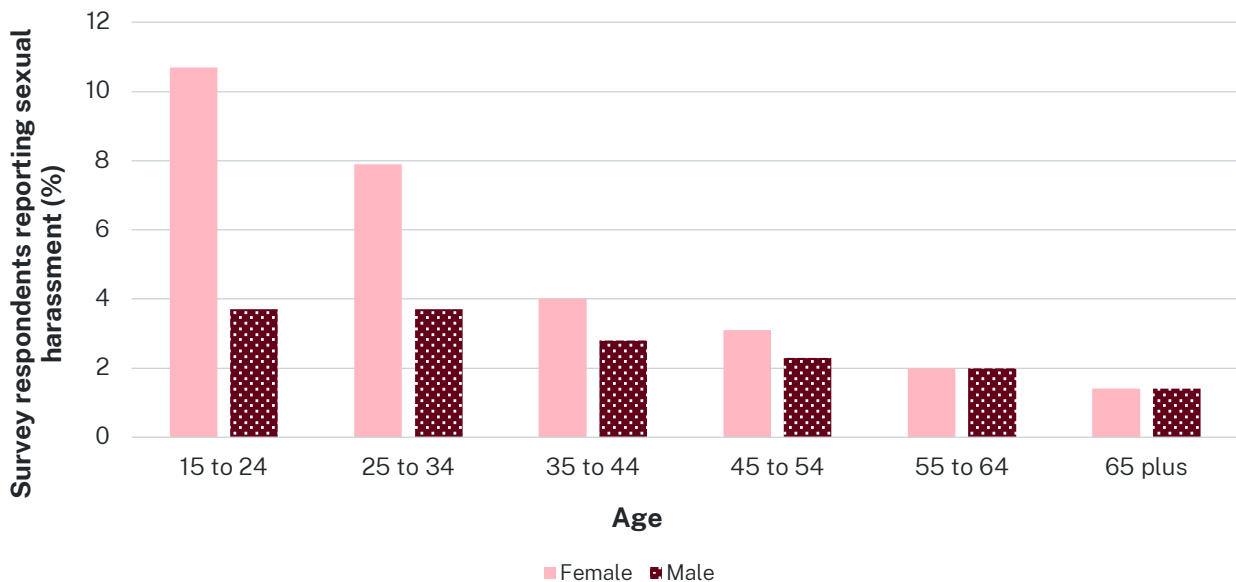
SafeWork NSW introduced its inaugural *Respect at Work Strategy: preventing sexual harassment 2023 to 2027*. This strategy sets out SafeWork NSW’s 4-year plan for the prevention of gender-based harmful behaviours across NSW workplaces, with an initial focus on sexual harassment.

All NSW public sector agencies were required to implement a sexual harassment prevention policy that meets minimum standards by 1 March 2024.

Employees who experienced sexual harassment, by gender, 2025 vs 2024



Employees who experienced sexual harassment by age and gender*, 2025



* The age split for non-binary respondents cannot be reported as the number of responses was insufficient to meet privacy thresholds.

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025)

Our organisations

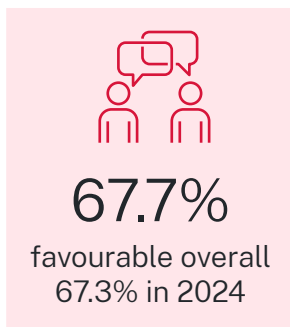
Organisational and role design

Organisational and role design involves defining organisational structures, employee roles, and workforce plans to support the business in achieving its objectives. Prioritising people-centred structures enables organisations to foster an environment conducive to enhanced productivity, reduced stress and optimal employee performance.

Continuous improvement in job design, role support and work processes, along with thoughtful integration of technology, helps to unlock the full potential of both individuals and the organisation. Employees should be empowered to make informed decisions in their roles, having access to the necessary resources and support.

In 2025, 67.7% of respondents reported favourable responses to the role clarity and support topic, marking a slight increase of 0.4pp from 2024. Perceptions of role clarity and support varied across different survey questions, with marginal improvement across all questions. The majority of respondents understand what is expected of them to do well in their job, and just over half of respondents agreed they had adequate time to do their job well.

Employee perceptions of role clarity and support, 2025 vs 2024

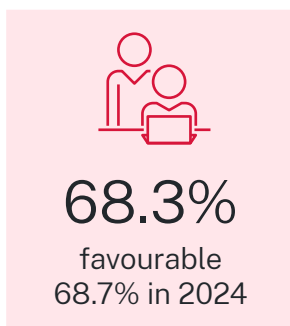


Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
I understand what is expected of me to do well in my job	84.4	0.5
I have the tools and technology to do my job well	68.3	0.3
I get the support I need to do my job well	64.8	0.7
I have the time to do my job well	53.5	0.5

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Employees in the public sector should understand how their role aligns with their organisation’s overall vision, mission, purpose and strategy. This understanding helps them see how their work adds value, which in turn, increases employee engagement.

My manager communicates how my role contributes to my organisation’s purpose, 2025 vs 2024



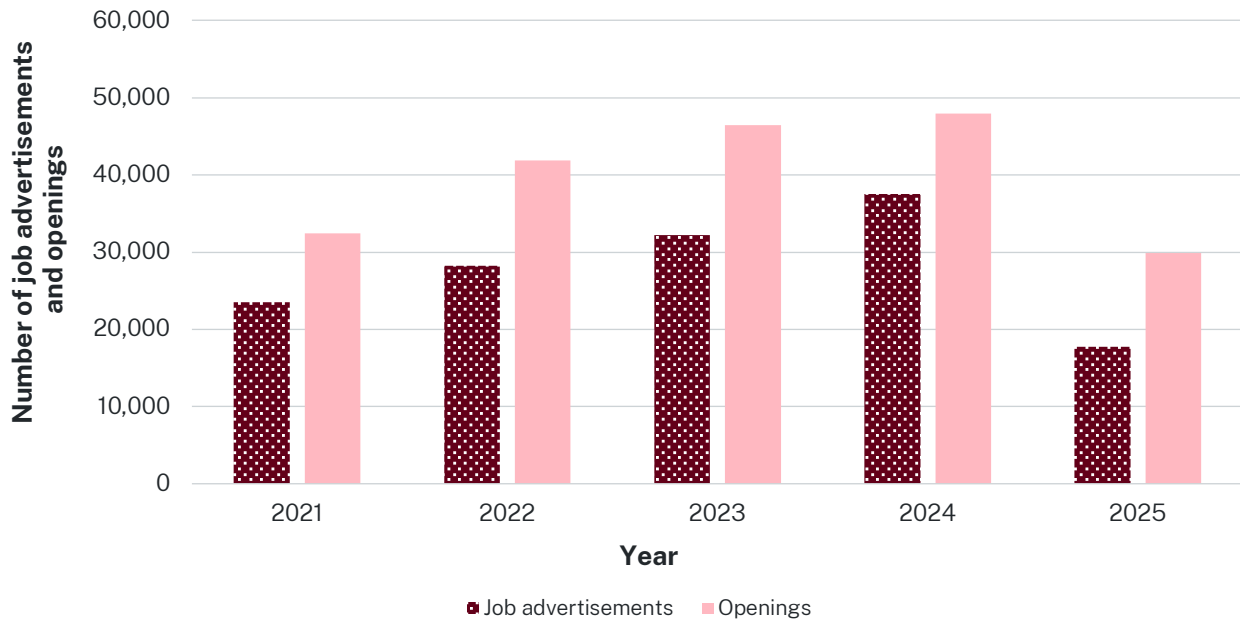
Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Recruitment and mobility

Recruitment involves attracting, screening and onboarding employees. As the largest employer in Australia, the sector advertised around 17,757 roles in 2025, a 52.7% decrease from 2024.

This decrease was primarily driven by the Education portfolio, where a large number of roles were placed through internal processes prior to advertisement.

Number of job advertisements and openings, 2021–2025

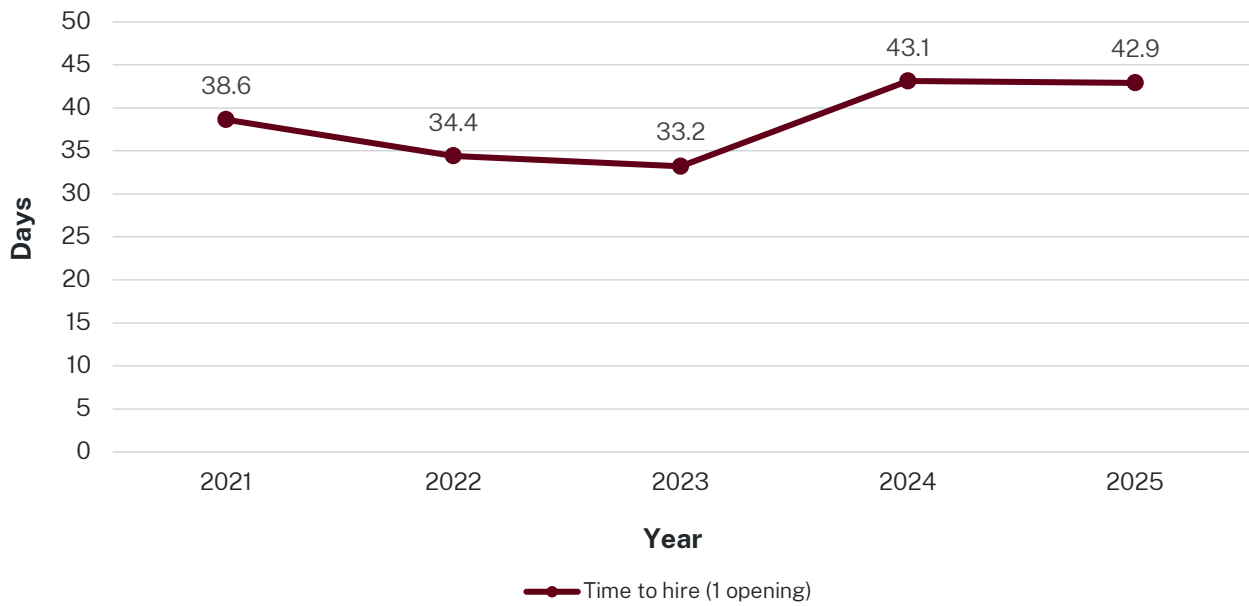


Source: Workforce Profile (2021–2025)

Effective recruitment based on merit helps select the best person for the role and supports managers in making informed decisions. In 2025, 50.9% of survey respondents agreed that their organisation follows a merit-based process for recruitment and promotion decisions.

The time to hire decreased to 42.9 days from 43.1 days in 2024.

Average time to hire, 2021–2025



Source: Workforce Profile (2021–2025)

A mobile workforce allows for quick resource redeployment, matching priorities and adapting effectively to change. It helps place the right person in the right job quickly and may introduce innovative ideas and practices into a workplace.

Employee mobility is key to developing leadership capability, providing enriching careers and retaining expertise. In the People Matter survey, 50.9% of respondents indicated they are satisfied with opportunities for career development in their organisation, down 0.5pp from 2024. Conversely, over a third of survey respondents found a lack of promotion opportunities to be the top barrier preventing movement to another role.

Delivering what matters for NSW



The NSW Government delivers a diverse range of critical and day-to-day services to support and enhance the quality of life of the people of NSW. The public needs to know that the government will be there to support them, and how this will occur. Strong governance, cross-agency collaboration and the smart use of resources are essential to ensure the government can deliver on the strategies it commits to.

The community also expects the public service to remain apolitical, with government sector employees acting professionally, ethically and impartially.¹⁹ NSW government sector agencies need to consistently and openly demonstrate these behaviours and deliver results that matter to the community.

Service delivery that puts our communities at the heart

Building homes and communities for living

NSW has one of the largest populations in Australia, and the demand to live here is increasing. Through the National Housing Accord, NSW has an ambitious target to deliver 377,000 new homes over 5 years, by July 2029.

In 2025, the government put collaboration first to solve challenges in housing supply. Government agencies and local government are working together and alongside each other to build homes where people want to live. The Housing Taskforce has focused on driving urgent, whole-of-government action to speed up housing development approvals, while supporting government agencies to manage consent conditions in a timely manner. Established in September 2024, the taskforce brings together employees from multiple NSW Government agencies and departments seconded into the same office.

The Premier's Department, The Cabinet Office, Infrastructure NSW, and Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure worked together to support the establishment the Housing Delivery Authority. The authority supports the rapid assessment of large-scale residential developments in self-contained sites to accelerate the delivery of a high volume of homes, while local government works to increase the provision of homes within existing communities.

Government sector collaboration is also ensuring the community can continue to thrive. The Department of Education continued essential work to build and staff high-quality schools where families and communities need them, while Transport for NSW continued to expand metro services in the south-west of Sydney and expand bus services in growth areas like Lane Cove. These connected and accessible services ensure new and growing communities can flourish and enrich our state.

¹⁹ Public Service Commission, *PSCC 2024-02 Code of Ethics and Conduct for NSW Government Sector Employees*, Administrative Requirements Portal website (<https://arp.nsw.gov.au/pssc-2024-02-code-of-ethics-and-conduct-for-nsw-government-sector-employees>), 13 May 2024, assessed 16 November 2025.

CASE STUDY

Cross-collaboration and innovation help improve housing supply in NSW

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's Property and Development NSW team (PDNSW) is leading the property audit to deliver on the NSW Government's commitment for 30,000 well-located homes through the Building Homes for NSW program.

Innovating to address the needs of our community

PDNSW designed, coordinated and implemented a strategy to undertake a whole-of-government review of the government property holdings to identify sites suitable to deliver housing. This involved:

- establishing a working group, with representatives across government, to oversee and endorse decisions on sites considered for housing
- evolving and partially automating the Land IQ platform to efficiently assess sites for housing, based on key criteria
- designing and establishing a streamlined due diligence review process, including a consolidated analysis report for each site, supported by expert legal and technical advice
- developing an assurance process whereby department heads were able to confirm the availability of sites suitable for housing and public announcement
- working to resolve significant impediments preventing sites from becoming available for housing
- developing and implementing the Government Property Framework (Premiers Memorandum M2024-08), which provides clarity to land-owning agencies and ensures government-owned land directly supports government priorities, specifically for land suitable for housing.

Through the property audit, PDNSW is ensuring surplus government land is identified and that agencies collaborate with one another to address the housing crisis and contribute towards the delivery of 30,000 homes through the Building Homes for NSW program.

Prioritising what matters for NSW

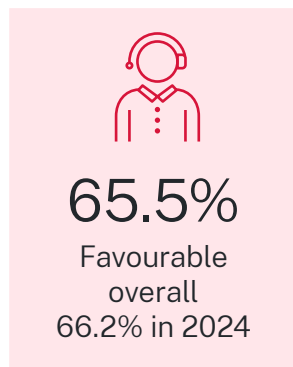
Since the audit started in mid-2023, PDNSW has assessed over 25,000 government-owned lots, from which 58 sites have been identified. This exceeds the public commitment of 44 and has the potential to deliver 9,900 homes.

The property audit continues to deliver exceptional outcomes by fostering whole-of-government collaboration, driving innovation in housing delivery and addressing community needs. Its success is a testament to PDNSW's commitment to sustainable growth, community prosperity and problem-solving.

Continued delivery of strong essential services

A key measure of the performance of the NSW public sector is the community's satisfaction with NSW Government services. Public sector agencies aim to deliver services that are easy to use, high quality and accessible to all. Putting customers at the centre of government means being there when people need support, being easy to deal with and working hard in the background to make lives better.

In 2025, employee perceptions of customer service in the People Matter survey showed mixed results. While 56.5% of respondents agreed that the processes in their organisation are designed to support the best experience for customers, more agreed that their organisation meets the needs of the communities, people and businesses of NSW (64.1%).

Employee perceptions of customer service, 2025 vs 2024

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
My workgroup considers customer needs when planning our work	78.4	-2.5
My organisation meets the needs of the communities, people, and/or businesses of NSW	64.1	-0.1
My senior executives communicate the importance of customers in our work	62.3	-0.1
The processes in my organisation are designed to support the best experience for customers	56.5	0.1

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

As part of its work for the 2025–26 Budget, NSW Treasury established a Performance and Wellbeing Framework to connect the budget decisions of the government with the wellbeing of the people it serves – the first framework of its kind in NSW.

By expanding beyond traditional measures of economic progress, we can better understand the full impact of NSW Government policy and resources decisions on societal wellbeing. Better information serves our community by supporting more effective allocation of resources to improve wellbeing.

Wellbeing metrics and performance indicators track progress against domains of life and service areas that communities have said are important to them, and that the government is prioritising. By reporting progress, the framework brings together evidence to highlight opportunities for reform and innovation.

NSW Treasury commenced implementation of gender impact assessments to support the NSW Government to make better informed and equitable decisions when designing policy and allocating resources.²⁰ Gender impact assessments can also improve the design of new policies to ensure the needs of different cohorts are not inadvertently overlooked.

The Department of Customer Service, through its Customer Experience Survey, asks respondents to rate the extent they trust government services to be working in their best interests. In the March 2025 survey, 74% of respondents responded positively to this question.²¹

In 2025, the NSW Government increased support for many of our essential workers, including negotiating historic pay increases for police and teachers, and doubling the incentive for regional health workers. These supports not only bolster the wellbeing of our workforce, but support them to engage with, and provide a better service to their communities.

²⁰ NSW Treasury, *TPG23-27 Gender Impact Assessment Policy*, NSW Government Administrative Requirements Portal website (<https://arp.nsw.gov.au/tpg23-27-gender-impact-assessment-policy/>), September 2024, accessed 6 October 2025.

²¹ NSW Treasury, *NSW Budget 2025-26, Budget Papers No.02, Performance and Wellbeing*, NSW Budget website (<https://www.budget.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-06/bp2-performance-and-wellbeing-statement-nsw-budget-2025-26.pdf>), June 2025, accessed 28 October 2025, Chart 7.6, p7-7.

Working together with local communities to deliver better services

Identifying and responding to regional priorities

The NSW Government has improved how it identifies and responds to the challenges facing regional communities. This has included transferring responsibility for regional coordination to the Premier's Department to increase visibility of regional communities and the vital work of public sector employees who support them. Greater insight into the challenges facing regional communities enables the government to respond quickly and with greater impact.

In 2025, a purpose-built State Emergency Service headquarters opened in Moss Vale to support flood response initiatives – a collaboration between the NSW Government, Wingecarribee Shire Council and resident donors.

Local Land Services worked closely with community groups to restore landscapes and rivers across the state.²² It also worked with Transport for NSW and local governments to seal roads to protect waterways from run-off and traffic pollutants.²³

Transport for NSW improved bus services connecting Tumut to Wagga Wagga and Wyangala to Canberra, increasing connection and accessibility for people living in regional areas.²⁴ The Tumut-to-Wagga Wagga service, which also stops at Adelong and Tarcutta, connects with NSW TrainLink services, making it easier for people in isolated communities to access regional centres for essential healthcare, education, employment and social opportunities.

The condition of country roads is consistently raised as an issue by regional communities. In areas where public transportation options are limited, personal vehicles are required for everyday tasks such as transporting children and attending appointments, meaning reliable roads are essential. Transport for NSW delivered upgrades to major roads across the state, including the Gwydir Highway²⁵ west of Moree and the Kings and Monaro highways²⁶ in the state's south. With a third of NSW's population living in regional areas, but two-thirds of the state's road fatalities occurring on regional roads, these repairs and improvements are necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

The NSW Government recognises that for many regional communities, the land and environment provides for their people and fuels their economy. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, and Local Land Services responded to biohazard events all over the state, including working with other jurisdictions to protect our cross-board communities.²⁷ The government continued to put work into early detection and safeguarding against biohazards, with the establishment of an Independent Biosecurity Commissioner working full-time on issues relating to pests and weeds.

22 Local Land Services, NSW Government, *Restoring flow and reviving habitat in the Capertee River*, media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/local-land-services/news/restoring-flow-and-reviving-habitat-capertee-river>), 12 June 2025, accessed 4 October 2025.

23 Minister for Agriculture, *Sealing Richmond River dirt roads equals cleaner water and better fishing*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/sealing-richmond-river-dirt-roads-equals-cleaner-water-and-better-fishing>), 13 August 2024, accessed 4 October 2025.

24 Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, *Better bus services secured for isolated communities*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/better-bus-services-secured-for-isolated-communities>), 1 July 2024, accessed 4 October 2025.

25 Transport for NSW, *Gwydir Highway improvement and repair work paves way for safer journeys west of Moree*, media release, Transport for NSW website (<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/news-and-events/media-releases/gwydir-highway-improvement-and-repair-work-paves-way-for-safer>), 30 June 2025, accessed 5 October 2025.

26 Transport for NSW, *Final stages of upgrades on the way for the Kings and Monaro Highways*, media release, Transport for NSW website (<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/news-and-events/media-releases/final-stages-of-upgrades-on-way-for-kings-and-monaro-highways>), 18 June 2025, accessed 5 October 2025.

27 Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional NSW, *NSW bird flu response in Hawkesbury and around ACT pulls back after clean-up*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/dpird/local-land-services/news/nsw-bird-flu-response-hawkesbury-and-around-act-pulls-back-after-clean-up>), 30 August 2024, accessed 4 October 2025.

CASE STUDY

Supporting communities through connected governance

A coordinated multi-agency response to the East Coast flood event in May to July 2025 delivered fast, inclusive and effective support to communities across the state. Around 90 Service NSW staff, including 25 Business Concierges, were deployed to 26 recovery sites, assisting 8,924 customers as of 11 July 2025. Feedback was especially positive from Aboriginal communities, who engaged with culturally safe, co-designed recovery hubs, setting a new benchmark for inclusive disaster recovery.

During May, the East Coast flood events impacted 19 local government areas (LGAs) and over 48,000 people, exacerbating existing challenges from a series of severe and unpredictable weather events in 2024 and 2025. A coordinated NSW Government multi-agency response provided rapid frontline deployment, culturally appropriate assistance for Aboriginal communities, and timely, accurate information to isolated residents.

Service NSW swiftly mobilised a surge workforce, reallocating staff and managing complex logistics across affected regions, with the need for culturally safe support for Aboriginal communities being quickly recognised. Co-designed with Aboriginal elders and organisations, dedicated Aboriginal hubs ensured trust and accessibility for Aboriginal communities.

Digital teams introduced innovative solutions to streamline grant delivery, including:

- postcode- and suburb-based eligibility filters to target only impacted areas
- creation of manual application pathways for multi-family households or those without documentation
- merged business grant programs to reduce administrative burden.

Simultaneously, the Department of Customer Service's Brand, Digital and Communications team launched a rapid, multi-channel communications strategy. This included geo-targeted media, emails, social media, radio, print, and digital signage in Service Centres, ensuring residents and businesses across the 19 LGAs received timely updates on safety, evacuation, mental health and financial support. These communications were acknowledged by communities as being timely, considerate, compassionate and informative.

Improved service delivery during crisis

The NSW Government's disaster recovery response in 2024–2025 set new benchmarks in speed, inclusivity, communication and collaboration. Service NSW and the All of Government Crisis Communications Executive Committee demonstrated exceptional commitment and innovation across multiple severe weather events.

These combined initiatives went beyond service delivery; they restored trust and dignity, and provided practical communication, supporting thousands of NSW residents during their most vulnerable moments.

Through collaboration, governments and communities can arrive at better policy solutions and deliver more responsive and accountable services. Trust is a key enabler of this work. The NSW Government and ANZSOG commissioned the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales to undertake a major program of research over 2 years on co-governance, with the aim of enhancing the evidence base and providing practical guidance. A report on this work was released in September 2025, along with case studies and a practical guide on developing co-governance arrangements that build and sustain trust and enable better policy outcomes.

Fostering effective collaboration and trust in government

The NSW Government seeks to raise the standard of the public sector. This requires a culture of continuous improvement and inter-agency collaboration to strengthen good governance and enhance service delivery every day. It requires keeping trains running, hospitals available, streets safe, and government agencies operating in the public interest. It also means ensuring every dollar spent works harder for the people of NSW. This requires a government that listens before it leads and puts service before politics.

Strengthening the capability of government

Workplace presence

The government sector comprises a diverse range of roles, including office workers, rangers, nurses, health workers and paramedics, teachers and school support staff, case workers, emergency response workers, transport workers, police officers, correctional officers and people who work on project delivery.

The majority of government sector employees work on the frontline and attend their workplace as part of their duties. In 2024, the Secretary of the Premier's Department issued the *NSW Government Sector Workplace Presence Circular*²⁸ to ensure that government sector employees work together in person to build strong institutions and make effective use of public assets, including workplaces and offices, across the full working week. While government sector agencies are expected to have flexible work policies that meet reasonable requests from employees, the default arrangement is that employees work principally in an approved workplace, office or related work site. Individual agencies are responsible for designing and monitoring their policies.

The connections fostered through in-person work are essential to supporting public trust in government, including by ensuring the next generation of public sector employees have role models to work with. In-person collaboration also ensures our talented and dedicated workforce can share their knowledge and skills.

Supporting internal capability

In 2025, the NSW Government established the Expert Advisory Network (EAN) to make effective use of expertise across government for project work, as an alternative to outsourcing.

The Secretary of the Premier's Department also issued the *Whole of Government Core Work Circular* in 2025, requiring government sector agencies to apply the Core NSW Public Service Work Policy in support of the government's commitment to reducing reliance on external resources to deliver government services.²⁹ This is supported and complemented by strategic workforce planning, sector capability uplift and mobility programs to build sector-wide capability and reduce risks to our expertise, integrity and public trust.

Mobility and sharing talent across the sector are pivotal to building a highly capable and agile workforce that is able to fulfil government priorities and meet service delivery requirements. The sector-wide Workforce Mobility Placement program commenced in December 2023 and focuses on retaining and mobilising talent across government, minimising, wherever feasible, the need for non-executive employee redundancies in the public sector. Premier's Department has developed agency talent guidance to enable a sector-wide shared approach to mobility.

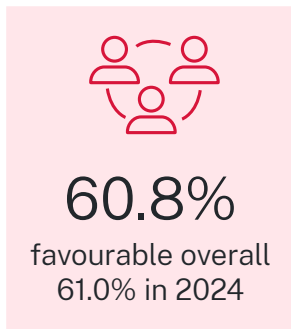
28 Premier's Department, *C2024-03 NSW Government Sector workplace presence*, NSW Government Administrative Requirements Portal website (<https://arp.nsw.gov.au/c2024-03-nsw-government-sector-workplace-presence/>), 5 August 2024, accessed 6 October 2025.

29 Premier's Department, *C2025-05 Whole of Government Core Work Circular*, NSW Government Administrative Requirements Portal website (<https://arp.nsw.gov.au/c2025-05-whole-of-government-core-work-circular/>), 17 July 2025, accessed 8 December 2025.

In the 2025 People Matter survey, 75.5% of respondents agreed that collaboration in their workgroups is strong, 55.4% of respondents agreed that there is good cooperation between teams in their organisation, and half of respondents agreed that senior executives promote collaboration between their organisation and other organisations they work with.

A key element of effective collaboration is role clarity and support. A large majority (84.4%) of survey respondents agreed that they understood what was expected of them to do well in their jobs, up 0.5pp from 2024.

Employee perceptions of teamwork and collaboration, 2025 vs 2024



Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
My workgroup works collaboratively to achieve its goals	75.5	-2.1
There is good cooperation between teams across my organisation	55.4	0.2
My senior executives promote collaboration between my organisation and other organisations we work with	50.8	1.4

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

CASE STUDY

Building public sector capability

In 2025, the NSW Government launched the Expert Advisory Network (EAN) to help NSW Government agencies access the expertise of in-house teams. The EAN aims to reduce reliance on external consultants and build capability within the NSW Government. Comprising over 50 in-house expert teams, the EAN offers a broad range of services across policy, evaluation, business process, customer and stakeholder engagement, finance and economic modelling, technology and infrastructure. In its first year, the EAN focused on building the expert partner network, raising awareness of the service, removing barriers to procuring in-house services and supporting project inquiries.

One such project is the Office of the Children’s Guardian’s review of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*. EAN expert partners, including the Department of Customer Service and Multicultural NSW, are supporting the Office of the Children’s Guardian’s comprehensive community consultation process by providing expertise in survey design, analytics, translation and CALD community engagement; providing an online engagement platform; and promoting the consultation to citizens and businesses.

Putting local suppliers, small businesses and sustainability first

Each year, the government spends around \$40 billion on goods, services and infrastructure. NSW Treasury introduced several policies to help lead the transition to a more sustainable, circular economy while ensuring government procurement serves our communities.

The NSW Procurement Board made new directions to agencies to consider local suppliers in procurement wherever possible,³⁰ while embedding sustainability into every step of the procurement process.³¹ Meanwhile, Treasury's new Faster Payment Terms Policy³² facilitates early payment to small business suppliers to support their financial viability and improve their capacity to supply to government.

Building public trust through ethical governance

At the heart of working in the public sector is the commitment to building and maintaining the community's trust through every action and decision. This trust is fundamental; without it, democratic institutions and norms are undermined, and the community's confidence in the services we deliver erodes. Each employee plays a vital role in upholding this trust, not just through their professional conduct but also in how they represent the sector in public and private forums.

In 2024, the Public Service Commissioner adopted a new *Code of Conduct for NSW Government Sector Employees* (the Code). All NSW government sector employees are required to comply with the Code, which identifies minimum mandatory requirements of behaviour consistent with the NSW government sector core values of integrity, trust, service and accountability (the Ethical Framework). Government sector departments and agencies may supplement this new Code with requirements specific to their department or agency, but cannot alter or subtract from it. The government has introduced a range of resources to support the implementation of the Code, including an e-learning module and an Ethics Hub.



Integrity

- Consider people equally without prejudice or favour
- Act professionally with honesty, consistency and impartiality
- Take responsibility for situations, showing leadership and courage
- Place the public interest over personal interest



Trust

- Appreciate difference and welcome learning from others
- Build relationships based on mutual respect
- Uphold the law, institutions of government and democratic principles
- Communicate intentions clearly and invite teamwork and collaboration
- Provide apolitical and non-partisan advice



Service

- Provide services fairly with a focus on customer needs
- Be flexible, innovative and reliable in service delivery
- Engage with the not-for-profit and business sectors to develop and implement service solutions
- Focus on quality while maximising service delivery



Accountability

- Recruit and promote employees on merit
- Take responsibility for decisions and actions
- Provide transparency to enable public scrutiny
- Observe standards for safety
- Be fiscally responsible and focus on efficient, effective and prudent use of resources

30 Buy NSW, *NSW Procurement Board Direction 2024-02 Increasing opportunities for local supplier to supply to government*, Buy NSW website (<https://www.info.buy.nsw.gov.au/news/2024/pbd-2024-02-Increasing-opportunities-for-local-suppliers-to-supply-to-government>), 3 September 2024, accessed 6 October 2025.

31 Buy NSW, *The Guide to environmentally sustainable procurement*, Buy NSW website (<https://www.info.buy.nsw.gov.au/news/2025/the-guide-to-environmentally-sustainable-procurement-is-now-live>), 29 January 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

32 Treasury, *TPG25-04 NSW Government Faster Payment Terms Policy*, NSW Government Administrative Requirements Portal website (<https://arp.nsw.gov.au/tpg25-04-nsw-government-faster-payment-terms-policy>), 3 April 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

A Community of Practice for Ethical Behaviour³³ (CoPEB) was established to grow the capability of the public sector workforce – including those from local government, universities and NSW state-owned corporations – in navigating ethical issues. This wider focus on our sector partners is critical to transforming the way we work with others and to enhancing community trust in the public system. The CoPEB is a joint initiative between the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Audit Office of NSW, the NSW Ombudsman, the Information and Privacy Commission NSW, and the OPSC.

In March 2025, the NSW Government released guidance to support NSW government sector employees in using social media in their private lives.³⁴ Local and global events have profound impacts on the community and on our employees. While the NSW Government recognises the right of employees to participate in public forums, it recognises employees' responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the government sector core values. The guidance notes that employees should not act in a way that casts doubt on their ability, or the ability of their agency, to act impartially, apolitically and professionally.

Positive perceptions of an organisation's ethical culture are associated with higher levels of employee engagement, with senior leaders' commitment to ethics being particularly important for enhancing perceptions of ethical culture. Strong value-driven leadership is the foundation of a public sector that instils confidence in its employees and the public it serves. It aligns decision-making and service delivery with public interest, helping to sustain a diverse workforce equipped to serve communities across NSW. Supporting purpose-driven work in the public sector relies on modelling values, making fair and transparent decisions, and ensuring public interest is always considered in decision-making.

To support and enhance the capabilities of our senior executives, the NSW Government partnered with ANZSOG to deliver applied ethics training for band 2 and 3 senior executives. This training included case studies from NSW and other jurisdictions and focused on building senior executive capability to foster pro-integrity cultures in their agencies.

To provide guidance on contemporary issues faced by public sector employees, the OPSC launched the 'Commissioner's Spotlight' thought leadership series. The first topic was the use of AI in recruitment processes.

Employees understanding of ethics and values

People Matter survey respondents demonstrated a great sense of purpose and a strong understanding of ethics and values in the public sector.

The ethics and values topic achieved the highest topic score for the public sector, at 81.4%. The 4 highest scoring questions in the survey were from the ethics and values topic.

Employees generally supported their organisation's values and positively perceived its commitment to ethical behaviours. Respondents' awareness of their obligations under the code of ethics and conduct for their organisation was exceptionally high, at 95.1%.

While ethical leadership is vital for fostering a culture and practice of integrity, it remains an area for strengthening within the public sector. This year's survey revealed that 52.8% of respondents believe senior executives model the organisation's values, compared with 51.4% in 2024. This question was also ranked 6th as a key driver of engagement.

33 Office of the Public Service Commissioner, *Ethical Behaviour*, NSW Government Communities of Practice website (<https://www.comprac.nsw.gov.au/communities-of-practice/ethical-behaviour>), n.d., accessed on 28 October 2025.

34 Office of the Public Service Commissioner, *Use of social media in a private capacity, Guidance for NSW government sector employees*, Public Service Commission website (<https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/assets/psc/OPSC-Guidance-Use-of-social-media-in-a-private-capacity-v2.pdf>), March 2025, accessed 27 October 2025.

Employee perceptions of ethics and values, 2025 vs 2024



81.4%

favourable overall
80.8% in 2024

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
I am aware of my obligations under the Code of Ethics and Conduct in my organisation	95.1	0.8
I understand what ethical behaviour means within my workplace	93.8	0.1
I would know how to report unethical behaviour if I became aware of it	88.4	0.5
I support my organisation's values	88.0	0.3
My organisation shows a commitment to ethical behaviours	71.0	0.3
My senior executives model the values of my organisation	52.8	1.4

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Misconduct

Misconduct refers to behaviour that is unethical or illegal, or that constitutes a serious offence or a breach of an agency's code of conduct. The government sector core values guide employees on what constitutes 'misconduct' in their work. Fostering a culture where employees feel confident to speak up about wrongdoing is essential for maintaining integrity across the public sector.³⁵

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022* (PID Act) applies to all NSW public sector agencies. It provides a framework for public officials to report serious wrongdoing in the public sector, and to be protected when they do so.

The People Matter survey showed 13.8% of respondents were aware of misconduct at work over the last 12 months, a decline of 0.3pp from 2024.

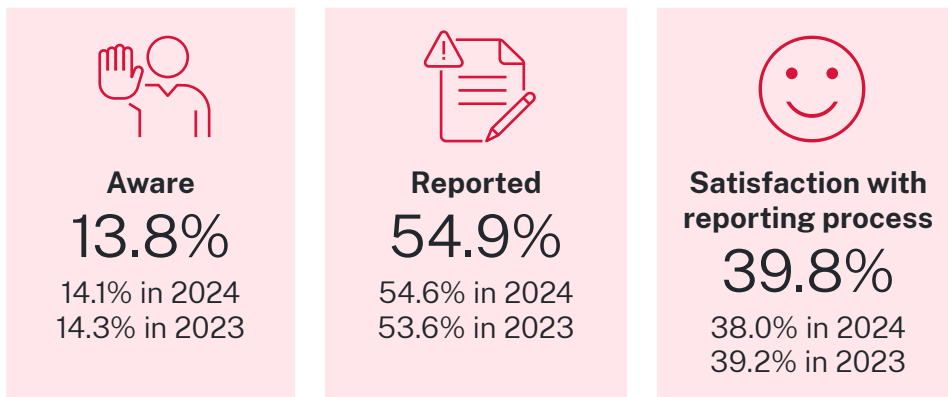
Respondents were able to select one or more types of misconduct that they were aware of. Over half indicated that the misconduct was related to breaking workplace rules, over a third indicated it was related to corruption and over a third indicated it was related to behaviour endangering the health and safety of others.

Corruption was defined in the survey as dishonest actions or partial exercise of functions, misuse of position for personal gain or advantage of others, or misuse of information or resources.

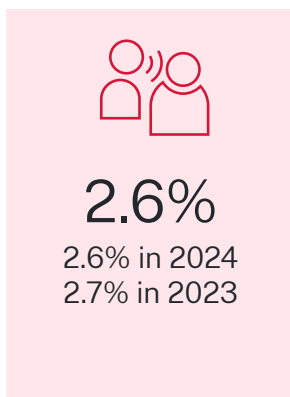
The proportion of respondents who indicated pressure to engage in misconduct was 2.6%, which remained stable. Of the respondents who indicated they were aware of misconduct in their organisation, over half reported it. The top 3 reasons for not reporting included fear of negative consequences (47.6%), feeling it wouldn't make a difference (42.9%), and concerns about confidentiality (39.6%).

³⁵ NSW Ombudsman, *What is a public interest disclosure*, Ombudsman NSW website (<https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/guidance-for-organisations/public-interest-disclosures/pid-guidelines-for-agencies/what-is-a-public-interest-disclosure-nsw-ombudsman>), n.d., accessed 14 November 2025.

Proportion of employees who were aware of misconduct, who reported it and who felt satisfaction with the reporting process, 2023–2025



Employees who experienced pressure to engage in misconduct, 2023–2025



Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2023–2025)

Governance, risk and assurance

Good corporate governance is essential to ensure that the public sector achieves its objectives while complying with relevant laws and meeting community expectations with respect to probity, accountability and transparency.

Corporate governance refers to the processes through which organisations are directed, controlled and held accountable. Agencies within the public sector are required to create governance frameworks in line with the NSW Audit Office’s governance principles. Good governance promotes public confidence and is essential to service delivery and the responsible use of taxpayers’ money.³⁶

Risk management is a key element of good governance, and if managed strategically, can present opportunities and foster innovation within organisations. Getting this balance right is critical to ensuring that the public sector can adapt, innovate and improve its service delivery.

NSW public sector agencies are required to prepare an annual report to demonstrate their accountability to Parliament, the government and the public. Annual reports outline annual performance, key achievements, corporate governance and financial information. The NSW Audit Office undertakes performance audits to assess whether activities of the public sector are carried out effectively, economically, efficiently and in compliance with relevant laws.

³⁶ NSW Treasury, *NSW Treasury governance and policies*, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/nsw-treasury/about-us/governance-policies>), n.d., accessed 4 November 2025.

Employee perceptions of decision-making and accountability, 2025 vs 2024

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
I have confidence in the decisions my manager makes	70.8	0.0
People in my organisation take responsibility for their own actions	49.0	0.1

Employee perceptions of risk and innovation, 2025 vs 2024

Question	2025 (% favourable)	Change from 2024 (pp)
I know how to manage risks related to my role	82.6	1.2
My manager encourages people in my workgroup to keep improving the work they do	74.5	0.1
My organisation is making improvements to meet future challenges	52.9	1.0

Source: People Matter Employee Survey (2025, 2024)

Meeting the future needs of our communities



It's essential we plan for the future, meeting community needs to drive sustainable growth, improve living standards, and tackle the challenges we know are coming.

Cross-sector agency collaboration is essential for fostering innovation and developing novel approaches to addressing complex policy challenges. As the work of government becomes more varied and is required to support more particular challenges – ranging from climate leadership, to housing, to digital innovation – our organisations need more varied capabilities to match, and more response-ready programs to meet the current and future needs of our communities.

Driving innovation to support our people now and tomorrow

Building our future

The NSW Government is continuing to build critical infrastructure to meet future housing needs, while positioning the state as a leader in construction innovation.³⁷ By advancing modern methods of construction, such as prefabrication, 3D printing and automation, NSW is creating strong investment opportunities in scalable, efficient and sustainable housing.

Recognising the urgent need for more affordable, low-carbon homes, the NSW Government is backing innovation in 3 key areas: sustainable and innovative building materials, faster and smarter construction methods, and projects supported by clear planning pathways.

³⁷ Investment NSW, *Housing is a NSW industry mission*, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/investment-nsw/focus-sectors/housing>), n.d., accessed 6 October 2025.

Sustainable and innovative building materials

The NSW Government supported the local manufacturing of eco-friendly materials through the Net Zero Manufacturing Initiative. The government is also increasing the use of recycled materials in public infrastructure, creating steady demand in the domestic market.

Strategic partnerships with the Materials and Embodied Carbon Leaders' Alliance and the SmartCrete Cooperative Research Centre are helping to accelerate industry-wide innovation. Investors are also seeing more opportunities in alternative materials like engineered timber, bamboo, hemp and other bio-based products. These efforts reinforce NSW's commitment to sustainability, economic resilience, and improved quality of life through better housing solutions.

Innovation in construction not only supports the delivery of more housing, but also drives economic growth and supports our climate ambitions. With new methods and materials come savings both on cost and speed for major infrastructure projects, such as Sydney Water's \$34 billion pipeline.³⁸

Faster and smarter construction

Advanced technologies and sustainable materials can speed up delivery and encourage and enable the development of new building techniques and digital design tools.

Smart building systems and digital platforms were identified as strong areas for investment, with potential to transform how housing is planned, built and maintained. Homes NSW committed \$10 million to modular housing to boost social housing supply and demonstrate the scalability of these innovations. The government is also exploring new ways to support investors to scale up their technologies and bring global expertise to the state.

Upskilling our construction workforce will help ensure housing supply across the state for years to come, creating ready-to-live housing for both urban and regional areas.

Accelerated and well-located housing developments

Innovative models like build-to-rent are gaining momentum, supported by targeted tax incentives.

These innovative uses are paired with coordination across the government sector, such as the planning reforms from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's Transport Oriented Development Program to streamlining approvals and align housing delivery with new transport infrastructure,³⁹ or increased funding for public school infrastructure to ensure high-quality schools are built where families and communities need them.⁴⁰

38 Homes NSW, *First factory-built social homes almost ready in Sydney*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/homes-nsw/news/first-factory-built-social-homes-almost-ready-sydney>), 20 May 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

39 Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, *Transport Oriented Development Program*, NSW Government website (<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/transport-oriented-development-program>), n.d., accessed 6 October 2025.

40 The Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning, *Record \$9 million for schools across NSW including a new public school in Sydney's growing South West*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/record-9-billion-for-schools-across-nsw-including-a-new-public-school-sydneys-growing-south-west>), 17 June 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

CASE STUDY

The Office of Chief Scientist and Engineer is innovating for the future by investing in NSW

Strengthening our domestic facilities and workforce provides us with the independence to be at the forefront of challenges that may lie ahead. The Office of Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) is working alongside Health Infrastructure and Investment NSW to develop the new RNA Research and Pilot Manufacturing Facility, allowing RNA research and development in Australia.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the OCSE was tasked by NSW Government with exploring how the state could develop RNA-based therapies in the medical, agricultural and biosecurity sectors. Collaboration was key to developing the RNA ecosystem, which required a shared vision and deep cooperation across government, academia and the private sector.

Innovating for our community's future

Using a model that's unique in Australia, researchers and industries will be able to take their research and intellectual property to the facility for further development and support for scaling up towards clinical trials. When operational, the facility will be unique in the Asian-Pacific region by offering open access to researchers and industry with mRNA, pDNA, and Product Development and Analytical Development (PDAD) services. Benefits will include the development of new therapies, the establishment of new companies and collaborations, and the creation of skilled jobs in NSW.

Engagement across the NSW RNA ecosystem has sharply increased, with national and international jurisdictions, industries and researchers interested. RNA Australia, an independent company established by the NSW Government and 5 member universities, continues to develop in its role as the 'front door' to the NSW RNA ecosystem.

A focus on safety to enable innovation and adoption without fear

NSW is a national leader in digital innovation, with a thriving ecosystem across AI, cybersecurity, data and emerging technologies.⁴¹ This innovation creates jobs and opportunities for our community, enabled by the NSW Government's proactive and ethical approach to digital innovation and AI, which ensures that technology is used responsibly to improve public services while protecting community trust, privacy and transparency.

⁴¹ Investment NSW, *NSW Trade and Investment Strategy*, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/investment-nsw/resources/nsw-trade-and-investment-strategy>), n.d., accessed on 6 October 2025.

The NSW Government is committed to using AI and digital technologies ethically to improve services and address complex challenges, including climate change and natural disasters. Innovation in the public sector means creating better services, embracing risk responsibly, and using new tools to deliver long-term public value.

	Health services	NSW Health’s rapid adoption of telehealth and SMS pathology test results delivery during the pandemic is an example of this innovation in action.
	Office of AI	<p>The state leads in AI investment⁴² – both public and private – and is home to global leaders such as Amazon Web Services and Macquarie Bank.</p> <p>To guide the safe and responsible use of AI, in addition to the <i>Artificial Intelligence Strategy</i> and supporting guidelines, a new Office for AI was established in Digital NSW to advise agencies on the safe adoption of AI, helping the public sector use these technologies effectively and ethically.⁴³</p>
	AI innovation	<p>Programs led by the OCSE also support AI-driven innovation in areas like bushfire response and disaster resilience, enabling small businesses to develop and test cutting-edge solutions.</p> <p>Together, these initiatives ensure NSW remains at the forefront of ethical and impactful digital innovation.</p>
	Safe automation	<p>Digital NSW released the <i>NSW Automation Guide</i> to assist NSW Government leaders and decision-makers to adopt automation technologies safely and securely. Automating repetitive tasks can boost the NSW Government’s productivity, streamline workflows and boost accuracy for frontline workers, freeing up our workers to engage with the community.</p>
	Protection and community engagement	<p>In 2025, the NSW Telco Authority launched the <i>NSW Digital Inclusion Strategy</i>, designed to bridge the digital divide experienced by vulnerable and disadvantaged communities when interacting online and create more equitable digital government services.⁴⁴</p> <p>Consultation on the strategy found over 80% of respondents had experienced online scams, privacy breaches or harassment.</p> <p>Immediately following the strategy’s launch, a new Compromised Credential Register⁴⁵ and fraud check service was established, while the Service NSW’s ID Support NSW team began a tour of regional communities to teach people about protecting their identities online.</p> <p>Community cybersecurity and privacy training – to build digital literacy skills and help keep people safe online – is an essential element of the Digital Inclusion Strategy.⁴⁶</p>

42 Investment NSW, *Digital technologies is a NSW focus sector*, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/investment-nsw/focus-sectors/digital-technologies>), n.d., accessed on 5 October 2025.

43 Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, *New Office to drive safe adoption of AI in NSW Government*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/new-office-to-drive-safe-adoption-of-ai-nsw-government>), 4 September 2025., accessed on 6 October 2025.

44 Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Disability Inclusion, *First NSW digital inclusion strategy to help bridge digital divide*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/first-nsw-digital-inclusion-strategy-to-help-bridge-digital-divide>), 8 May 2025, accessed on 6 October 2025.

45 Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, *Stronger safeguards for identity security in ID support bill*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/stronger-safeguards-for-identity-security-id-support-bill>), 7 May 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

46 Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Disability Inclusion, *First NSW digital inclusion strategy to help bridge digital divide*, ministerial media releases, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/first-nsw-digital-inclusion-strategy-to-help-bridge-digital-divide>), 8 May 2025, accessed on 6 October 2025.

CASE STUDY

Connecting our communities through the state's first NSW Digital Inclusion Strategy

NSW is a diverse and evolving state, with a thriving economy and rich cultural landscape. However, there is a large digital divide that threatens to leave a significant portion of the population behind.

Different people and communities experience digital exclusion in various ways and at different life stages. As we continue transitioning to digital services, the exclusion gaps are widening, particularly affecting those who are less digitally enabled.

The *NSW Digital Inclusion Strategy* is based on research and consultation with digitally excluded communities, the public, local government, non-government organisations and industry.

The strategy provides an all-of-government framework and focuses on 5 key pillars that form the basis for digital inclusion: connectivity, affordability, digital ability, accessibility, and digital trust and safety.

Accelerating progress towards equity and inclusion

Research shows 1 in 4 Australians are digitally excluded, which means they are not afforded the same opportunities as those who are able to connect to the digital world.

Research and consultation identified that the digital divide is most likely to affect socio-economically disadvantaged communities; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; culturally and linguistically diverse communities; older people; rural, regional and remote communities; people with disability; LGBTIQ+ people; and women.

An action plan comprising more than 30 initiatives underpins the delivery of the strategy, in collaboration with government agencies, non-government organisations and industry.

Initiatives include:

- implementing a NSW Device Bank pilot to connect, refurbish and distribute end-of-use NSW Government laptops to people in need
- establishing a digital inclusion mentorship network to connect digital mentors with community centres and libraries
- recommendations to help victim-survivors of domestic and family violence have safe and reliable access to digital tools and services
- implementing the NSW Digital Inclusion Standard to guide how digital services are designed and delivered, ensuring government digital products and services are inclusive and user-friendly.

Strategic initiatives attract investment and economic growth

The NSW Government is driving economic growth and attracting investment through a series of targeted initiatives that reduce regulatory barriers and accelerate key projects.



Announced in early 2025, the Investment Delivery Authority (IDA) will fast-track approvals for large-scale developments, including data centres, renewable energy projects and major hotels.⁴⁷

The IDA takes a prioritised approach focused on critical infrastructure and sectors that support the state's long-term economic future. It works in parallel with the Housing Delivery Authority to support investment in productivity-enhancing and job-creating sectors where communities will benefit.



The Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport has introduced changes to boost Sydney's night-time economy,⁴⁸ including greater capacity for live entertainment and a streamlined development application process. These reforms follow recommendations from the NSW Productivity and Equality Commissioner's report⁴⁹ and are aimed at revitalising Sydney's cultural scene and creating new business opportunities.



While embracing opportunities to renew our existing communities, the NSW Government is taking strategic investment opportunities to create new communities with the development of Bradfield, Australia's first new city in a century.⁵⁰

With cutting-edge digital infrastructure and a focus on sustainability, Bradfield is designed to support businesses and residents, offering a forward-thinking environment for growth.

47 The Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, *Investment Delivery Authority to turbocharge business investment in NSW*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/investment-delivery-authority-to-turbocharge-business-investment-nsw>), 20 June 2025; Treasurer, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Jobs, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Minister for Tourism, *Investment Delivery Authority to open for business*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/investment-delivery-authority-to-open-for-business>), 15 September 2025, assessed 6 October 2025.

48 Minister for Music and Night-time Economy, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, *The even greater outdoors: Red tape overhaul frees up venues and outdoor events*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/dciths/ministerial-media-releases/even-greater-outdoors-red-tape-overhaul-frees-up-venues-and-outdoor-events>), 27 September 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

49 NSW Productivity and Equality Commission, *Review of Regulatory barriers impeding a vibrant 24-hour economy*, Productivity and Equality Commission website (<https://www.productivity.nsw.gov.au/review-of-regulatory-barriers-impeding-a-vibrant-24-hour-economy>), September 2025, accessed 8 December 2025.

50 Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Minister for Western Sydney, *Digital deal delivers boost to Bradfield innovation ecosystem*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website, (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/digital-deal-delivers-boost-to-bradfield-innovation-ecosystem>), 2 June 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

Climate change and sustainable leadership

The NSW Government wants to build a more sustainable, resilient and low-carbon economy, positioning the state as a leader in climate change action in Australia.

Leading the way in transitioning to Net Zero



At the end of June 2025, the NSW Government was only 4% away from its 2030 target of a 50% reduction in emissions compared to 2005 levels, demonstrating that we can achieve these impressive emissions reductions and setting up a fantastic launch position for the 2050 Net Zero Plan.⁵¹

These reductions would not have been possible without coordinated efforts led by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water and the Net Zero Commission. This coordination remains essential as we progress, with the largest sources of emissions shifting from energy production to the built environment and transport sectors.

CASE STUDY

Moving towards net zero: improving patient care, reducing waste and emissions

The NSW Health Climate Risk and Net Zero (CRNZ) Unit has established a strategic, innovative, world-class response to net zero and climate adaptation across our state's health system.

NSW Health services are at the frontlines of escalating climate-health impacts, which disproportionately impact the most disadvantaged in our community, including lower socio-economic groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and rural and regional communities.

Escalating climate-health impacts and the imperative of a net zero transition affects our system's ability to continue providing high-quality care. The CRNZ Unit has recognised the need to respond to these climate risks, and the ways decarbonisation actions can improve the quality, safety and accessibility of healthcare, while reducing waste and emissions.

NSW Health, like many health systems worldwide, has a large carbon footprint due to its size and complexity. NSW is the first jurisdiction in Australia to measure the carbon footprint of its hospitals and local health districts to estimate a baseline carbon footprint. In its *Net Zero Roadmap 2025–2030*, NSW Health sets out an approach to reducing emissions, to transition to a modern health system fit for purpose in a low-carbon world.

The roadmap improves effective collaboration across NSW Health, to rethink and re-imagine the health system to be one increasingly characterised by:

- renewable energy – improving air quality
- innovative telehealth options – improving the accessibility of care, particularly for rural and regional communities
- value-based healthcare – reducing the risks and harms of over-diagnosis and over-treatment
- reusable equipment to reduce single-use plastics – reducing waste costs.

⁵¹ Minister for Environment and Heritage, *NSW Government only 4% off 2030 emissions target with new Net Zero Plan to come*, ministerial media release, NSW Government website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/nsw-government-only-4-off-2030-emissions-target-new-net-zero-plan-to-come>), 26 June 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

Supporting the transition to greener infrastructure and a circular economy



Further supporting NSW as a climate leader are efforts to transform the finance ecosystem, including through the Sustainability Bond Programme, green financing and use of the TCorp's ESG integration framework, and the continued support of grants programs to support private transformation, like the High Emitting Industries Grant.⁵²



NSW cemented its position as one of Australia's leading jurisdictions for recyclers, with upgrades to infrastructure enabling the processing of 140,000 additional tonnes of material each year funded by the Environment Protection Authority's Product Improvement Program.⁵³ Allowing the processing of the equivalent of 1,700 Olympic swimming pools of extra material each year, this upgrade reduces contamination by 11% and supports circular economy initiatives.

Combatting growing demand for landfill also provides the opportunity to redirect recovered materials into the broader economy. The launch of the first *NSW Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan* lays the groundwork to engage councils, industry and the community to divert \$23 billion of waste into construction, manufacturing and plastics.⁵⁴

52 NSW Government, High Emitting Industries grant, NSW Government website (<https://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry/programs-grants-and-schemes/high-emitting-industries-grant>), n.d., accessed 6 October 2025.

53 Environment Protection Authority, *NSW recycling capacity expands with \$9.1 million boost*, Media Release, EPA website (<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/News/Media-Releases/2024/EPAMedia241122-NSW-recycling-capacity-expands-with-%2491-million-boost>), 22 November 2024, accessed 6 October 2025.

54 Environment Protection Authority, *First NSW Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan released*, Media Release, EPA website, (<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/news/epamedia/250514-first-nsw-waste-and-circular-infrastructure-plan-released>), 14 May 2025, accessed 6 October 2025.

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