Australian Government
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

2026 APS Employee Census Action Plan

Successes

Employee Engagement

Our staff remain committed to the department's objectives, proud of their work and motivated to contribute. A strong sense of purpose, ability to utilise skills, and flexible and supportive culture continue to underpin positive employee experiences.

Immediate Supervisor Performance

Our staff continue to report high confidence in their immediate supervisors, with particularly strong results for communication, providing support, encouraging improvement and helping teams deliver.

Areas to improve

Wellbeing and Support

Our staff highly value flexible work arrangements and people-centred support. However, heavy workloads, competing priorities, stress and burnout remain significant wellbeing risks, alongside declining confidence in the department's available support. We will strengthen awareness of wellbeing supports and address key drivers of wellbeing to foster a healthier, more sustainable work environment.

Change and Prioritisation

Our staff want change to be genuinely consultative, with clear reasons for decisions and transparent and accountable feedback loops. We are committed to improving how we prioritise, communicate and coordinate change to build confidence, support adoption and deliver sustainable outcomes.

Areas to monitor

Innovation and Capability Building

Our staff are highly engaged in contributing new ideas and improving the way we work. We will continue to monitor capability initiatives and how our people are supported to access learning, skills and tools, particularly in people management, data and AI.

Mid-level Executive Leader Experience

Our Executive Level leaders play a critical role in connecting organisational strategy with delivery. However, workload pressure, competing priorities and other barriers can affect their ability to perform at their best. Experiences vary across cohorts, reinforcing the need to monitor capacity, wellbeing, and performance supports.

What we are doing

Our department's work is broad and diverse, with different priorities and contexts across teams. Leaders work with their teams to analyse their results, identify priorities, set appropriate goals and take practical action in their local context. As a department, we will focus on the following shared priorities and actions:

Wellbeing and Support

Supporting an inclusive, healthy, high-performing culture by implementing strategies on ways we work including:

- Embedding our Hybrid Working Framework and site leadership model that support connection, collaboration and wellbeing of our staff across all locations.
- Inclusion Framework Action Plan and Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan with a focus on retention and progression, leadership and accountability, and strengthening cultural capability.
- Mental Health Strategy and toolkit, to help our staff and managers navigate everyday workplace challenges, build resilience and support one another.

Change and Prioritisation

Refining our workforce planning and design approach to respond to changing priorities, including:

- Support consistent use of our Change Management Framework and Transition Model.
- Identifying critical roles to ensure we can put strategies in place to attract and retain the capability we need.
- Uplifting change management capability by promoting best practice learning, consultation guidance and resources, and responding to our change management maturity assessment outcomes.
- Supporting organisation design to align structure, processes and systems, including appropriate spans of supervision, to deliver outcomes in our operating environment.

Maintain Success and Monitor Capability and Innovation

Maintain strong engagement and manager performance by recognising our expertise and building skills for the future, including:

- Advancing Executive Level leadership and management development through our Elevate and Activate programs and Executive Level 2 forums. This will include an emphasis on strengthening leaders' capability and confidence to lead their teams through change and adapt to changing priorities.
- Maturing AI adoption by setting clear expectations, supporting learning, encouraging innovation and scaling successful approaches.
- Implementing enhancements to our performance framework, including upwards feedback, improving access to mentoring, leadership masterclasses and targeted management training.

Measuring Activity and Impact

To support action on these insights, we will:

- Support leaders to collaborate with their teams to identify key priority areas based on their results and agree on practical goals to address them. Progress against these priorities will be monitored and discussed throughout the year.
- Use our internal Culture Pulse survey to monitor change, capability and wellbeing across employee cohorts and undertake a deeper analysis of key drivers.
- Continue priority initiatives in the corresponding rollouts of our Workforce Strategy, Capability Review Response and Corporate Strategy and monitor impacts and progress.

See our Corporate Plan 2026-27 which further outlines who we are, what we do, where we are heading and how we will get there.