



COO Committee Communique

Date: 28 August 2024

The COO Committee (the Committee) met today at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to discuss the following matters:

Strengthening Partnerships between the Public Service and Ministers and their Offices

The Committee welcomed the Honourable Patrick Gorman MP, Assistant Minister for the Public Service to the meeting for this discussion.

COO Committee Strategy Session

The Committee discussed the outcomes of the strategy session held in June 2024 and agreed to develop a strategic approach to immediate and emerging initiatives aligned with the Committee's purpose.

Commonwealth Public Sector Gender Equality Scorecard

The Committee considered the *Workplace Gender Equality Agency's Commonwealth Public Sector Gender Equality Scorecard* and discussed actions COOs can take to accelerate action on gender equality under the APS Reform priority to be a 'model employer', including initiating discussions with their executive board and portfolio agencies and preparing Employer Statements for employer gender pay gap publishing in 2025.

Diversity Deep Dives to drive whole of APS Reform

The Committee discussed the delivery of diversity and inclusion initiatives across the APS, and agreed to hold deep dives to drive delivery of our diversity goals.

SES100 next round design and CORE training

The Australian Public Service Commission provided an update on the SES100 initiative work underway to boost First Nations employment in the APS, including the timing for a second recruitment exercise. First Nations cultural competency training was discussed, with AIATSIS CORE being made available to all agencies via the APS Academy free of charge until December 2025 to support cultural competency uplift.

APS Consultative Committee update

The Committee were updated on the establishment and operation of the APS Consultative Committee. The APS Consultative Committee has been established to discuss matters related to the employment relationship and of interest to the APS as a whole. Agency Heads are required to support the operation of the APS Consultative Committee.

APS Location Framework

The Committee considered the options available to agencies through the APS Location Framework to employ staff in a range of locations and how this can help agencies fill skill gaps and support workforce diversity.

Review of the SES Performance Leadership Framework

The Australian Public Service Commission will commence work to review the SES Performance Leadership Framework. Noting that the Framework was designed to be refined iteratively and introduce emerging best practice, the review will consider if amendments are required to refine the Framework and take into account lessons learnt from the first year of implementation.

Building psychological safety in the APS

The Committee received an update on the Capability and Workforce Committee's project to build psychological safety in the APS. The Committee noted the discovery research and proposed recommendations to address key findings.

An update on the Accounting and Finance Profession

The Department of Finance and the APS Accounting and Finance Profession Working Group provided an update to the Committee on several initiatives to address key issues impacting the accounting and finance profession in the APS.

The Committee agreed to making it mandatory to have a specialist panellist who is a qualified senior accounting and finance professional (such as a full member of CPA Australia or Chartered Accountants Australia New Zealand) to sit on the recruitment panels as member when recruiting for SES Accounting and Finance roles.

Review of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*

The Committee was provided with an overview of the review of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*, the legislation underpinning the Commonwealth's workers' compensation scheme, Comcare. The Committee noted Commonwealth agencies from both a policy and employer perspective would be consulted as part of the review and provided their support for participation in consultation.

Review of Conflicts of Interest Management Framework – recommendation 14

The Committee noted the whole of service approach on improving conflict of interest management across the APS.

Next Meetings

The next COO Committee meeting is scheduled for 26 September 2024.