



Secretaries Board Communique

Date: 19 March 2025

The Secretaries Board met at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to discuss the following matters.

Strategic Outlook

The Board discussed government priorities, emerging risks and strategic issues.

The Board received an update on geostrategic issues from Ms Jan Adams AO PSM, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Mr Greg Moriarty AO Secretary, Department of Defence.

The Board received an economic and budget update from Ms Jenny Wilkinson PSM, Secretary of the Department of Finance, and Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of the Treasury.

ANAO Auditor-General

The Board welcomed the new Auditor-General, Dr Caralee McLeish, and noted the Australian National Audit Office's work program.

Commonwealth Ombudsman discussion – Robodebt Royal Commission Legislative Reform

The Board welcomed the Commonwealth Ombudsman, Mr Iain Anderson, who provided a briefing on the implementation of amendments to the *Ombudsman Act 1976* that provide the Ombudsman with enhanced information gathering powers and impose new obligations on agency heads to assist the Ombudsman. These amendments implement recommendations 21.1 and 21.2 of the *Report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme*.

Delivery of Legislation Taskforce Final Report

The Board considered options to enhance management of legislative projects across the APS.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Implementation Taskforce

The Board received an update on the establishment of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Implementation Taskforce, its key priorities and work underway.

Blavatnik Index of Public Administration Report 2024

The Board noted the findings of the *Blavatnik Index of Public Administration Report 2024*.

Other Business

The Board acknowledged the excellent work of emergency services, the Australian Defence Force and public servants at all levels of government in responding to ex-tropical Cyclone Alfred.

Next Meeting

The Secretaries Board will meet for a Strategy Session in April 2025.