



# Communique

## Secretaries Board

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Date: 11 July 2023

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

### APS Integrity Update

The Board discussed the report of the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme and related matters, including:

- a taskforce led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Attorney-General's Department and the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) to consider the Commissioner's recommendations and lead the development of advice to Government on responding to the report; and
- APSC is overseeing an independent process to determine if public servants with adverse findings have breached the APS Code of Conduct.

### Consultant Engagement

Ms Jenny Wilkinson PSM, Secretary of the Department of Finance, and Ms Roxanne Kelley PSM, Acting Secretary of the Treasury, provided an update on the engagement of contractors and consultants.

### Senate Estimates Reflections

The Board discussed accountability and transparency processes, including the accountability of APS officials to the Parliament through the Senate estimates process.

### Closing the Gap

The Board agreed the approach to development of the proposed 2024 Commonwealth Closing the Gap Annual Report and Implementation Plan.

### Acknowledgement of Country in the Australian Capital Territory

The Board endorsed the adoption of an interim APS protocol for Acknowledgement of Country in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) until outcomes of the ACT Government's community-led process are finalised. The National Indigenous Australians Agency will engage with the ACT Government and local

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Traditional Custodians on the protocol. The Australian Public Service Commission will provide updated guidance to all APS Agencies on the protocol when finalised.

## **APS Purpose Statement**

The Board discussed options for the APS Purpose Statement prepared by the APS Deliberative Committee.

## **SES Performance Leadership Framework**

The Board discussed the APS Senior Executive Service (SES) Performance Leadership Framework. The Framework gives equal weighting to delivery and behaviour in assessing and developing leadership. The Board agreed to discuss details of implementation of the Framework at its next meeting. The Framework and supporting guidance for APS agencies will be published on the APSC website.

## **Place-based, community-led partnership – Bourke, NSW**

The Board affirmed its commitment to embedding a culture of partnership in the public service by endorsing the Maranguka Principles as a framework to guide programs, projects and services in Bourke, NSW. The Principles were co-designed by the Bourke Tribal Council, Maranguka, and the Maranguka Cross Sector Leadership Group (comprised of governments and philanthropic partners). <https://maranguka.org.au/about-us/principles/>

## **Partnership Priorities Committee**

The Board endorsed the Terms of Reference for the newly-formed Partnership Priorities Committee. The Committee will steer better policy and delivery outcomes for Australians by further embedding culture and behaviours that promote and encourage partnership in the public service in alignment with the Secretaries Board's strategic direction.

## **Economic and Budget Update**

Ms Jenny Wilkinson PSM, Secretary of the Department of Finance, and Ms Roxanne Kelley PSM, Acting Secretary of the Treasury, provided an update on the Budget and economic outlook.

## **Other Business**

Ms Jane Urquhart, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Industry, Science and Resources provided an update on the revitalisation of Australia's National Science and Research Priorities and National Science Statement.

The Board thanked Professor Brendan Murphy AC for his service following his retirement from the APS on 6 July 2023, and noted Mr Blair Comley PSM will commence as Secretary of the Department of Health and Aged Care on 17 July 2023.

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## Next Meeting

The next Secretaries Board meeting is scheduled for 16 August 2023.