



Australian Government

Evaluation Framework

APS Data, Digital and Cyber
Workforce Plan 2025-30









Introduction

The APS Data, Digital and Cyber Workforce Plan is a call to action to attract, develop and retain data, digital and cyber talent in a unified and strategic way across the Australian Public Service.

This evaluation framework has been developed to measure the effectiveness and impact of the initiatives within the workforce plan’s roadmap over time. It is a living document that includes details about:

	evaluation objectives and scope		timeframes and data sources
	stakeholders		links to the workforce planning initiatives and current enablers that will contribute to desired outcomes

Evaluation objectives and scope

The Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) will oversee and manage progress against the plan, working closely with subject matter expert agencies. To streamline reporting, the APSC will collaborate with the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) to report to the Digital Leadership Committee as part of a standing agenda item. Progress will be regularly discussed and shared, without imposing unnecessary reporting burden(s) on agencies.

For initiatives impacting the data domain, there may be instances where the Data Deputy Secretary Governance Group is used to oversee the progress of initiatives. This flexible approach ensures initiatives are attached to suitable governance pathways, avoiding duplication and maintaining transparency and efficiency.

Evaluation results will inform decisions about prioritisation and resource allocation for workforce plan initiatives, assist in the identification of areas requiring additional focused effort and will demonstrate the value of the workforce plan to government, the minister and APS agencies.

Areas of enquiry

The workforce plan outlines four action areas to support agencies to build and strengthen their APS data, digital and cyber workforce and to enhance future skills planning. Each action area has corresponding outcomes as outlined below.

Action area	Desired outcome
Attract, recruit and retain a data, digital and cyber workforce	We will attract top data, digital and cyber talent, streamline recruitment processes, and position ourselves as a modern employer in a challenging labour market.
Uplift technical capabilities	We will ensure long term data, digital and cyber workforce capability by providing career pathways and mobility opportunities, investing in continuous skill development and strengthening in-house expertise.
Grow and deploy a specialist cohort	We will address the immediate need for critical data, digital and cyber specialists, recognising these capabilities are difficult to source and take lead-time to grow.
Enhance capability planning maturity	We will enhance capability planning maturity by leveraging data-driven insights and ensuring access to high-quality data, empowering agencies to make informed workforce decisions

The workforce plan acknowledges that it will take some time to build upon foundations and to realise the benefits of longer-term initiatives. For this reason, the evaluation matrix outlined within this framework highlights the appropriate implementation horizon in which to commence the collection of specific evidence.

Out of scope

‘Supporting Activities and Enablers’ outlined within each of the four action areas of the workforce plan are out of scope for this evaluation framework.

Stakeholders

Monitoring and evaluation activities will be led by the APSC in collaboration with:

- the Digital Transformation Agency, the Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Bureau of Statistics
- the heads of the Digital and Data Professions
- initiative sponsors and contributors
- APS agencies, where relevant (e.g. to gather ‘soft’ intelligence).

From time to time, evaluation activities may require the involvement of a random selection of APS employees involved in the piloting of new initiatives, and broader labour market/field research.

Data sources

This evaluation framework focuses predominantly on data currently captured through existing business processes. This includes human resources data provided to the APSC (APS Employment Database) by APS agencies, in addition to existing surveys such as the APS Employee Census, APS Agency Survey and the APS New Starters Survey.

Formal data collection will be supplemented by soft intelligence gathering through the APSC and DTA’s ongoing engagement and partnership across the APS.

Evaluation matrix: APS Data, Digital and Cyber Workforce Plan 2025-30

Outcome set 1: We will attract top data, digital and cyber talent, streamline recruitment processes, and position ourselves as a modern employer in a challenging labour market.

How will we know we are achieving these outcomes? (indicators)	Evidence we will use to track our progress	Frequency	Horizon			Additional data that could be collected as the plan evolves
1.1 Our ability to attract digital and cyber professionals to the APS has increased.	Workforce supply: Number of new ongoing employees (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) <i>Source: APS Employment Database</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
1.2 Our ability to attract data professionals to the APS is maintained.						
1.3 The awareness of the APS employment brand within the broader labour market has increased.	External labour market research <i>Source: TBA. Baseline data set available for 2023 (APSC/Ellis Jones research)</i>	Every 2 years	1	-	3	
	Candidate attraction factors <i>Sources: APS Employee Census, and APS New Starters Survey when available¹</i>	Annually/ biannually	1	2	3	
	Entry-level and pathway programs data	Annually	1	2	3	
1.4 The recruitment experience for new and existing APS data, digital and cyber employees has improved.	Candidate recruitment experiences <i>Source: APS New Starters Survey</i>	Biannually	-	2	3	Time to fill ongoing APS data, digital and cyber roles <i>Source: APS agency recruitment data</i>
	Entry-level and pathway programs data	Annually	1	2	3	
1.5 The awareness and benefits of pathways and programs designed to recruit entry and mid-career employees has increased.	Entry and mid-career pathway applicant numbers	Annually	1	2	3	
	Entry and mid-career pathway applicant diversity statistics	Annually	1	2	3	
	Agency uptake of program candidates	Annually	1	2	3	
1.6 The representation of diversity groups, particularly First Nations employees and women, in APS data, digital and cyber roles has increased.	Diversity representation – ongoing employees (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) <i>Source: APS Employment Database; APS Employee Census</i>	Annually	-	2	3	# affirmative measures recruitment processes by job family <i>Source: APS Jobs</i>
	% of women and First Nations employees in senior data, digital and cyber leadership positions (SES Band 1+) <i>Source: APS Employment Database</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
1.7 Levels of inclusion amongst diverse cohorts in APS data, digital and cyber roles has increased.	Employee perceptions of inclusion <i>Source: APS Employee Census</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
1.8 The geographical distribution of the APS data, digital and cyber workforce more closely reflects broader labour market distribution of these skills.	% ongoing employees by state (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families), compared to Australian labour market (closest Occupation Standard Classification for Australia match) <i>Sources: APS Employment Database, ABS labour force data releases</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
1.9 Employee satisfaction with their role and employment conditions has been maintained or has increased.	% ongoing employees (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) agreeing and strongly agreeing to the following questions: <i>Overall, I am satisfied with my job; I am fairly remunerated for the work that I do; I am satisfied with my monetary and non-monetary conditions; I want to leave my position as soon as possible/within 12 months (for a position outside of the APS)</i> <i>Source: APS Employee Census</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
	Proportion of APS data, digital and cyber employees re-entering the APS within three years of separation <i>Source: APS Employment Database</i>	Annually	-	-	3	
1.10 Retention rates for APS data, digital and cyber employees are maintained or increased.	Average length of service, ongoing employees (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) <i>Source: APS Employment Database</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
	Voluntary separation rate (resignations), ongoing employees – 12-month average (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families); consider by diversity group e.g. First Nations, women and CALD <i>Source: APS Employment Database</i>	Annually	-	2	3	
	Average length of service at time of separation, ongoing employees (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) <i>Source: APS Employment Database</i>	Annually	-	2	3	

Initiatives contributing to the achievement of these outcomes

New initiatives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital and cyber employee value proposition Enhance APS recruitment programs and pathways APS Career Pathfinder and APSJobs enhancements Data, digital and cyber recruitment pilot Digital Role Description Library extension Data and Digital Cadet Program extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI skills suggester Reduce barriers to re-entry Explore options for APS data, digital and cyber remuneration and conditions Remuneration benchmarking and report (pilot)

Existing activities and enablers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APS Employee Value Proposition APS data employee value proposition Supported career pathways APS Location Framework Specialist arrangements Innovative hiring practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SES100 APS Job Family Framework review APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026 Affirmative measures (Indigenous and disability) Contractor conversion NSW Digital Skills and Workforce Compact

¹ The APS New Starters Survey may not be conducted on an annual basis. This measure is complemented by data gathered through the APS Employee Census.

Outcome set 2: We will ensure long term data, digital and cyber workforce capability by providing career pathways and mobility opportunities, investing in continuous skill development and strengthening in-house expertise.

How will we know we are achieving these outcomes? (indicators)	Evidence we will use to track our progress	Frequency	Horizon			Additional data that could be collected as the plan evolves
2.1 The capability of the workforce has increased.	% APS agencies reporting critical data, digital and cyber skills shortages has decreased <i>Source: APS Agency Survey</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
	% ongoing employees (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) agreeing and strongly agreeing to the following question: My work group has the appropriate skills, capabilities and knowledge to perform well <i>Source: APS Employee Census</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
	Promotion rate (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) <i>Source: APS Employee Database</i>	Annually	-	2	3	
2.2 APS agencies are successfully deploying workforce capabilities to deliver positive outcomes for government and the community.	Mobility rate – ongoing employees (Data and Research; ICT and Digital Solutions job families) <i>Source: APS Employee Database</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
	# digital project delivery risks attributed to workforce <i>Source: DTA Digital Investment Pipeline</i>	Biannually	1	2	3	
	Trust in and satisfaction with Australian public services accessed via digital channels has increased <i>Source: Survey of Trust in Australian Public Services Questionnaire²</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
2.3 The ability to identify current and emerging capability needs with a whole of system view has been increased.	A workforce data strategy has been created <i>Source: Digital Transformation Agency</i>	At delivery	1	-	-	
	# APS agencies mapping their workforce to the APS Job Family Framework <i>Source: APS Employee Database</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
	Average APS data maturity score <i>Source: Data Maturity Assessment Tool results for in-scope agencies (Department of Finance)</i>	Annually	1	2	3	
	Proportion of APS agencies that have ‘defined’ (or higher) activities to upskill staff in data management practices <i>Source: Data Maturity Assessment Tool results for in-scope agencies (Department of Finance)</i>	Annually	1	2	3	

Initiatives contributing to the achievement of these outcomes

New initiatives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance APS recruitment programs and pathways Data, digital and cyber recruitment pilot Data and Digital Cadet Program extension Reduce barriers to re-entry EL2 and SES data capability uplift SES Accountabilities for Data APS digital skills program (pilot) SRO digital governance program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support legacy technology transition Technical fast track Data capability uplift (academic extension) Transition to retirement guidance APS digital micro-credentialing bootcamps Digital workforce data insights report Harmonise workforce data Skills forecasting and program policy alignment

Existing activities and enablers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APS Digital and Data Professions and Communities of Practice APS Academy APS Academy Campuses APS Data Capability Framework Policy for the responsible use of AI in government and AI fundamentals training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SES and EL2 Data Leadership modules (APS Academy) Curated ‘data’ learning offerings Data Job Role Personas APS Leadership Edge Regional collaboration (AI)

² Result is a combination of the following questions: In the last 12 months, have you accessed Australian public services from any of the following; Thinking about your experience with the services you accessed from each of the following, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you; Thinking about your experience with each of the services you accessed, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement, “The service is trustworthy”; How did you access [insert service] - please select all that apply.

Outcome set 3: We will address the immediate need for critical data, digital and cyber specialists, recognising these capabilities are difficult to source and take lead-time to grow.

How will we know we are achieving these outcomes? (indicators)	Evidence we will use to track our progress	Frequency	Horizon	Additional data that could be collected as the plan evolves
3.1 The APS has increased its ability to access specialist capability.	Decrease in reported levels of inter-agency competition for data, digital and cyber talent. <i>Source: Soft intelligence gathering (APSC, DTA)</i>	Ad-hoc	1 2 3	Size of gap between public and private sector remuneration for data, digital and cyber specialists <i>Source: Annual Data, Digital and Cyber Salary Benchmarking and Remuneration Report</i>
	Number of digital transformation initiatives that are delivered on time, on budget and to a high standard. <i>Source: Digital Transformation Agency</i>	Annually	1 2 3	
3.2 The APS strategically utilises the external digital workforce when it is beneficial to the APS.	# digital project delivery risks attributed to workforce <i>Source: DTA Digital Investment Pipeline</i>	Biannually	1 2 3	Number and value of ICT contracts <i>Source: Digital Marketplace (2.0)</i>
	\$ expenditure on external workforce (ICT and digital) <i>Source: Audit of Employment</i>	As available	1 2 3	

Initiatives contributing to the achievement of these outcomes

New initiatives:	Existing activities and enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist deployment framework Specialist work level standards Digital and cyber employee value proposition AI skills suggester Innovative hiring practices, including the sharing of merit lists Reduce barriers to re-entry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data, digital and cyber recruitment pilot APS digital skills program (pilot) Technical fast-track APS digital micro-credentialing bootcamps Remuneration benchmarking and report (pilot) Explore options for APS data, digital and cyber remuneration and conditions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported career pathways APS Location Framework APS Digital and Data Professions and Communities of Practice APS Data Capability Framework Curated 'data' learning offerings APS Strategic Commissioning Framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor conversion Specialist arrangements guidance APS Centre of Excellence for Workforce Planning

Outcome set 4: We will enhance future capability planning maturity by using data-driven insights and ensuring access to high-quality data, empowering agencies to make informed workforce decisions.

How will we know we are achieving these outcomes? (indicators)	Evidence we will use to track our progress	Frequency	Horizon	Additional data that could be collected as the plan evolves
4.1 Workforce data collection, consistency and analysis has been improved.	Agreed data definitions and keys across core APS workforce data collections have been created as part of the 'Harmonise workforce data' initiative. <i>Source: 'Harmonise workforce data' sub-deliverable</i>	At delivery	1 - -	
	Methods to assess consistency and accuracy of APS and contractor workforce data across core APS workforce data collections have been created	During life of plan	1 2 3	
	Improved data collection and understanding in respect to the external (contractor) workforce <i>Source: Department of Finance</i>	During life of plan	1 2 3	
	Greater consistency and accuracy of financial, contractor and workforce data reported to relevant states of the Investment Oversight Framework <i>Source: Digital Transformation Agency</i>	Ad-hoc	1 2 3	
	Guidance to support agencies with collecting, understanding and using workforce data to inform future workforce planning efforts has been created, linked to the 'Harmonise workforce data' initiative. <i>Source: 'Harmonise workforce data' sub-deliverable</i>	At delivery	1 2 -	
4.2 Agency workforce planning maturity has increased.	APS agency workforce planning capability and maturity <i>Source: APS Capability Review outcomes</i>	Annually	1 2 3	

Initiatives contributing to the achievement of these outcomes

New initiatives:	Existing activities and enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APS Career Pathfinder and APSJobs enhancements Digital workforce data insights report Remuneration benchmarking and report (pilot) Harmonise workforce data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills forecasting and program policy alignment Long-term insights briefing Digital skills directive
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APS workforce data APS Workforce Metrics Modernisation Project APS Data Maturity Assessment Tool and guide Data Job Role Personas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SES Accountabilities for Data APS Centre of Excellence for Workforce Planning Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data