

# APS Data, Digital and Cyber Workforce Plan 2025-30: Summary

## The government's visions:

Simple, secure and connected public services for all people and business  
A world-leader in cyber security by 2030

**The challenge:** The APS must strengthen its data, digital and cyber workforce capabilities to prepare for the future and to support the government's visions.

**70%**

of APS agencies report critical data skill shortages.  
*(APS Agency Survey)*

**71%**

of entities indicate a reliance on legacy technologies.  
*(cyber.gov.au)*

By 2026 the Australian cyber security workforce shortage will grow to

**3,000**

*(AustCyber 2022)*

Persistent **skills shortages** across the APS and industry.

**Attracting, developing and deploying** data, digital and cyber professionals where they are needed most.

Increasing diversity representation, particularly **women** and **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**.

Developing **in-house** specialist capabilities for sustainable success.

Growing **future-ready** leaders capable of managing and developing a **mixed** workforce.

An **older workforce**, relied upon to support legacy technology that is reaching technical retirement.

**Collection, analysis and reporting** of workforce data to better inform strategic and operational decisions.

## The focus: 4 action areas

**1**

### Attract, recruit and retain a data, digital and cyber workforce

Attract top data, digital and cyber talent, streamline recruitment processes and position ourselves as a modern employer in a challenging labour market.

**2**

### Uplift technical capabilities

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.

**3**

### Grow and deploy a specialist cohort

Address the immediate need for critical data, digital and cyber specialists, recognising these capabilities are difficult to source and take lead-time to grow.

**4**

### Increase capability planning maturity

Enhance capability planning maturity by using data-driven insights and ensuring access to high-quality data, empowering agencies to make informed workforce decisions.

## The skills story: In-demand skills

By uncovering the underlying skills behind in-demand roles, and focusing capability building efforts towards these skills, the APS can effectively address a much larger number of critical roles.

### Data roles

- Data architect
- Data analyst
- Data engineer



### Digital roles

- Software engineer
- Business analyst
- Cloud engineer



### Cyber roles

- Cyber analyst
- Cyber advisor
- Cyber incident responder



### In-demand skills from the above roles

### Data skills

- Data management - (SFIA DATM 4)
- Data visualisation - (SFIA VISL 3)
- Data use and re-use - (DCF USE 1)

### Digital skills

- Programming/coding - (SFIA PROG 3)
- Systems design - (SFIA DESN 5)
- Specialist advice - (SFIA TECH 5)

### Cyber skills

- Specialist advice - (SFIA TECH 4)
- Information security - (SFIA SCTY 3)
- Legal and regulatory environment and compliance - (CiiSec A6:3)

### Adopting a skills-first approach enables us to effectively target multiple roles

- Data engineer
- Data analysis – geospatial
- Research librarian
- Research ops
- Digital testing
- Data analysis
- Data scientist

- AI engineer
- AI research scientist
- Solution architect
- Technology architect
- Infrastructure architect
- Change manager

- Design director
- Systems analyst
- Enterprise architect
- Application architect
- Infrastructure architecture

## Evaluation: What success looks like

### What success looks like for Australians

Australians and businesses can use digital products and services from government that are secure, fit for purpose and supported by a capable workforce.

They have confidence that government can appropriately use and safeguard their data.



### What success looks like for government

Australia has a digital government that is world class, trusted and supported by a highly capable APS workforce.

Government improves its capability to use its data holdings and harness analytical tools and techniques, improving service delivery, evidence-based decision making and policy and program evaluation.



### What success looks like for the Australian Public Service

The APS' workforce is skilled, capable and achieves government's objectives.

The APS improves how it attracts, recruits and retains specialist talent, reducing digital project delivery risks.



### What success looks like for the APS' data, digital and cyber workforce

The APS is a great place to work and offers a quality employee experience in dynamic workplaces.

Data, digital and cyber employees enjoy a diverse and rewarding career, with opportunities to pursue life-long learning that keeps pace with industry developments.



# APS Data, Digital and Cyber Workforce Plan 2025-30: Roadmap

The delivery of the workforce plan requires whole-of-service collaboration and leadership.



	Attract, recruit and retain a data, digital and cyber workforce	Uplift technical capabilities	Grow and deploy a specialist cohort	Enhance capability planning maturity
Horizon 1 (Year 1)	<p><b>Digital and cyber employee value proposition</b> Extend the APS Employee Value Proposition to attract the professional and technical capability needed within agencies. <i>Sponsor: Digital Transformation Agency</i></p> <p><b>Enhance APS-wide recruitment programs and pathways</b> Leverage and improve existing programs; re-position the Digital Traineeship Program as a mid-career program; raise agency awareness of the mid-career experience of candidates; develop materials to support APS agencies. <i>Sponsor: Australian Public Service Commission</i></p> <p><b>APS Career Pathfinder and APSJobs enhancements</b> Enhance Career Pathfinder and APSJobs to support APS agencies with talent acquisition and ongoing workforce/skills planning. <i>Sponsors: Australian Public Service Commission; Digital Transformation Agency</i></p>	<p><b>EL2 and SES data capability uplift</b> Improve and expand on existing SES and EL2 Data Leadership modules (APS Academy) and promote their broader adoption to build baseline capability across the APS leadership cohort. <i>Sponsors: Australian Bureau of Statistics; Australian Public Service Commission</i></p> <p><b>SES Accountabilities for Data</b> Actively drive the promotion and implementation of the SES Accountabilities for Data across the APS. <i>Sponsor: Department of Finance</i></p> <p><b>APS digital skills program (pilot)</b> Take a collective approach to upskilling APS employees in critical technology, digital, cyber and adjacent roles through temporary mobility into expert 'host' agencies where there are deep pockets of expertise. <i>Sponsor: Services Australia</i></p> <p><b>SRO digital governance program</b> Empower EL and SES leaders with the capability to lead and govern digital projects. <i>Sponsor: Digital Transformation Agency</i></p> <p><b>Support legacy technology transition</b> Partner with industry to develop and fund critical skill development programs for current and potential APS employees to maintain legacy systems while supporting the transition to modern systems. <i>Sponsor: Digital Transformation Agency</i></p>	<p><b>Specialist deployment framework</b> Develop a framework to encourage the temporary deployment of specialist expertise across the APS, including improving visibility of which agencies hold particular specialist expertise, and principles to support agency decision making. <i>Sponsors: Australian Public Service Commission; Digital Transformation Agency</i></p>	<p><b>Digital workforce data insights report</b> Develop a digital workforce data insights report to improve the ongoing collection, analysis and reporting of workforce data, risks and insights for agencies. <i>Sponsors: Digital Transformation Agency; Australian Public Service Commission</i></p> <p><b>Remuneration benchmarking and report (pilot)</b> Undertake external salary benchmarking for in-demand digital, data and cyber roles to inform options to close the gap between public/private sector remuneration for specialists, as well as reduce internal competition for talent and strengthen the overall EVP for the APS. <i>Sponsors: Digital Transformation Agency; National Disability Insurance Agency</i></p> <p><b>Harmonise workforce data</b> Develop a workforce data strategy and roadmap to improve the consistency of workforce data across the APS, enhance workforce planning capability and to better inform decision-making. <i>Sponsor: Digital Transformation Agency</i></p>
Horizon 2 (Years 2-3)	<p><b>Data, digital and cyber workforce recruitment pilot</b> Building off the digital and cyber EVP and innovative hiring practices initiatives, design and pilot a modernised hiring process for mid-career data, digital and cyber workers.</p> <p><b>Digital Role Description Library extension</b> Extend the Digital Role Description Library within Career Pathfinder to encompass emerging roles and encourage its broader adoption; develop accountability standards for key roles.</p> <p><b>Data and Digital Cadet Program extension</b> Engage with academia to attract graduates straight from VET/TAFE and universities, and extend the Data and Digital Cadet Program to include those interested in pursuing cyber careers within the APS.</p> <p><b>AI skills suggester</b> Scope the development of or investment in an AI skills suggester to match jobs with skills and to connect non-APS job seekers with relevant APS employment opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Technical fast track (digital skills program extension)</b> Extend the APS digital skills program (Horizon 1), to accelerate the development of deep technical expertise at pace and scale through experiential and formal learning, linked to career pathways. The initial focus will be on highly specialised, high-demand roles and projects, informed by the Digital Project Pipeline.</p> <p><b>Data capability uplift (academic extension)</b> Partner with academia and with industry bodies to foster development pathways that grow the general workforce data capability of the APS.</p> <p><b>Transition to retirement guidance</b> Improve the retention of critical knowledge by developing better practice guidance and/or a toolkit for agencies to improve knowledge transfer practices and succession planning.</p>	<p><b>Specialist work level standards</b> Explore the potential for specialist work level standards or extended specialist classifications to support the career advancement of specialist/technical employees.</p>	<p><b>Long-term insights briefing</b> Develop an insights briefing on emerging technology to inform thinking and decision making on specific policy and workforce challenges that may affect Australia and the APS in the medium and long term.</p> <p><b>Skills forecasting and program policy alignment</b> Collaborate with agencies to identify current and future skills needs. Align data, digital and cyber workforce programs and policies to better address identified and anticipated critical skills gaps. Explore opportunities to enhance capability through Volume Sourcing Agreements and contracts that incorporate skills building.</p>
Horizon 3 (Years 4-5)	<p><b>Reduce barriers to re-entry</b> Work across the APS to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduce inefficient practices and hurdles that typically deter former employees from re-joining the APS</li> <li>enable the APS to rapidly recapture essential talent</li> <li>strengthen cross-sector collaboration</li> <li>increase the likelihood of top talent viewing the APS as a flexible and long-term career option.</li> </ul>	<p><b>APS digital micro-credentialing bootcamps</b> Partner with academia, industry and private sector technology giants, and leverage Volume Sourcing Agreements to fund targeted micro-credentialing and capability development programs for employees.</p>	<p><b>Explore options for APS digital, data and cyber remuneration and conditions</b> Drawing on the APS Digital, Data and Cyber Salary Survey and Remuneration Report as a key input, explore options to reduce the gap between public and private sector remuneration for these specialists, within the context of a broader EVP strategy.</p>	<p><b>Digital skills directive</b> Uplift service-wide planning, data collection and reporting through the development of a digital workforce policy.</p>
Supporting activities	<p>APS Employee Value Proposition APS data employee value proposition Supported career pathways APS Location Framework Innovative hiring practices (APS Reform) SES100 APS Job Family Framework review APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021-26 Affirmative measures (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and those with disability) NSW Digital Skills and Workforce Compact</p>	<p>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 SES and EL2 Data Leadership modules (APS Academy) Curated 'data' learning offerings APS Leadership Edge Regional collaboration (AI)</p>	<p>APS Strategic Commissioning Framework Contractor conversion Specialist arrangements guidance</p>	<p>APS workforce data APS Data Maturity Assessment Tool and guide APS digital maturity assessment Data Job Role Personas APS Centre of Excellence for Workforce Planning APS Workforce Metrics Modernisation Program Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data</p>