



Australian Government

Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations

Annual Report

2025
2026

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Annual Report 2025–26.

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Australian Government
**Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations**

The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP
Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

It is my pleasure to submit to you the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2025–26 for presentation to the Parliament as required by subsection 46(1) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The report meets the requirements of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule) in relation to annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities.

The report has been prepared for the purposes of section 46 of the PGPA Act, section 1062D of the *Social Security Act 1991* and section 28 of the *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*. Specifically, it includes:

- the department's annual performance statements, as required under paragraph 39(1)(b) of the PGPA Act
- the department's audited financial statements, as required under subsection 43(3) of the PGPA Act
- information about programs funded by the department to assist people to obtain and maintain paid work, as required under section 1062D of the *Social Security Act 1991*
- information about the performance of Jobs and Skills Australia's functions in 2025–26, as required under section 28 of the *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*.

For the purposes of paragraph 17AG(2)(b) of the PGPA Rule, I certify that in 2025–26 the department:

- conducted fraud and corruption risk assessments and prepared fraud and corruption control plans
- had in place appropriate fraud and corruption prevention, detection, investigation, recording and reporting mechanisms that met the needs of the department
- took all reasonable measures to appropriately deal with fraud and corruption relating to the department.

The appendices to the report also include:

- the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Program 2025–26 annual report, which I provide to you in accordance with my obligation under section 103 of the *Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Act 2014*
- the Student Identifiers Registrar 2025–26 annual report, as required under section 51 of the *Student Identifiers Act 2014*.

Yours sincerely

Simon Duggan PSM

22 September 2026

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Contents

1	Overview	3
	Secretary's review	4
	Closing the Gap	8
	Portfolio	12
	Departmental structure	15
2	Performance statements	19
	Statement by the accountable authority	20
	Purpose, outcomes and programs	21
	Analysis	22
	Results	30
	Corrections to previously published annual performance statements	81
3	Management and accountability	83
	Corporate governance	84
	Corporate and business planning	92
	Risk management	94
	Our people	95
	Information and communications technology	99
	Financial performance	100
	External scrutiny	106
	Disability reporting	109
	Gender equality reporting	110
4	Financial statements	115
	Independent auditor's report	116
	Certification of financial statements	119
	Financial statements	120

5

Appendices

169

Appendix A – Agency resource statement and expenses for outcomes	170
Appendix B – Workforce statistics	176
Appendix C – Annual Child Safety Statement	192
Appendix D – Activities funded to assist people to obtain and maintain paid work	194
Appendix E – Commonwealth Climate Disclosure	198
Appendix F – Annual Report of the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans program	199
Appendix G – Annual Report of the Student Identifiers Registrar	202
Appendix H – Annual Report of Jobs and Skills Australia	204
Appendix I – Corrigendum	222

6

Indexes

223

List of requirements	224
Abbreviations and acronyms	230
List of figures and tables	234
Index	236

Highlights

Strategic Framework	6
Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence: First Nations-led innovation in skills and training	11
Supporting safer workplaces for PALM scheme workers	18
Shaping new global standards for decent work in the platform economy	82
Assuring the integrity of government programs and services	114
National Skills Agreement and joint stewardship model	168



Image: Our First Nations artwork *Walking Together, Building Futures* was created through the 2025–26 year by First Nations artist Alysha Menzel, a proud multicultural creative and descendant of the Samsep people from Erub Island in the Torres Strait. Developed in close consultation with First Nations employees, the artwork reflects the department's commitment to walk alongside First Nations people, cultures and communities. It tells the story of a shared journey built on listening, genuine partnerships and action grounded in trust, respect and empathy.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing spiritual and cultural connections to lands, waters, skies and communities. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all First Nations people.

We acknowledge the strength, resilience and enduring contributions of First Nations people, whose cultures and knowledge have been passed down through generations.

Through our work, we remain committed to fostering opportunities in employment, skills and workplace relations, and to building stronger futures through respectful relationships, collaboration and shared purpose.

Wording within this document

Throughout this document, the terms 'First Nations' and 'Indigenous' are used and refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples unless otherwise stated.

Cultural sensitivity advice

First Nations people should be aware that this document may contain the names and images of people who have passed away.

1

Overview

Secretary's review	4
Closing the Gap	8
Portfolio	12
Departmental structure	15

Secretary's review



I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) for 2025–26.

I acknowledge the contribution of my predecessor, former Secretary Natalie James, who led the department from July 2022 to January 2026. During her tenure, the department delivered significant reforms for the Australian Government, particularly in workplace relations.

When I commenced as Secretary in February 2026, I began a conversation with staff about what the department does well, where we can improve and how we can work more effectively as one department. This work has shaped our new Strategic Framework and mission: *Supporting job opportunities. Strengthening workplaces*. Central to the Strategic Framework is our commitment to Closing the Gap and embedding the Priority Reforms across all aspects of our work. The framework will guide how we achieve our purpose and deliver our activities, programs and policies.

This renewed strategic focus comes at an important time. Australia's labour market has remained strong and resilient despite considerable global uncertainty. In June 2026 around 14.8 million people were employed, the unemployment rate was 4.4% and the participation rate was 67%, close to a record high. In 2025, 4.7 million working-age Australians participated in the vocational education and training (VET) system, with 12.7% undertaking Certificate IV qualifications or above.

These strong headline results sit alongside persistent challenges. Close to half a million people have participated in employment services for more than a year – well over half of the caseload – and around 140,000 have been in the system for 5 years or more. In June 2026, the youth (15–24 years) unemployment rate was nearly 2.5 times that for all people aged 15 years and over, and the participation rate for mature-age women (55–64 years) was more than 9 percentage points below that for mature-age men. The latest Closing the Gap report shows that in 2021, 55.7% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25–64 were employed. Although this measure is on track to meet the target of 62% by 2031, it remains well below the rate of employment for the broader population. These figures underline the importance of improving how our systems work to support participation and opportunity for all Australians.

Increasing job opportunities

During 2025–26, we supported the government to progress the most significant reform to mainstream employment services in a generation. The aim is to create a more effective and responsive system that reduces barriers for job seekers and increases job opportunities.

The reforms are being informed by a Lived Experience Panel, engagement with First Nations Australians and other broader consultations. We are also learning from locally led, place-based approaches, including Broome Employment Services in Western Australia. Listening to people with direct experience, as well as to frontline and regional voices, is essential to designing services that work.

We are also increasing opportunities in communities through the Parent Pathways program, which supported more than 36,000 parents and carers across Australia during 2025–26 to build their skills and move closer to the labour market.

We continued to strengthen protections for workers in the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme by deepening partnerships with employers, workers, unions, industry representatives and local communities across Australia.

Strengthening workplaces

Building on the reforms passed by the parliament in 2024, the department supported implementation of a world-leading framework for employee-like workers in the platform economy, as the Fair Work Commission progressed its consideration of minimum standards for on-demand delivery workers. This work is attracting international interest, with Australia providing leadership on global reforms at the International Labour Organization.

The department supported truck drivers facing higher fuel costs, continued to pursue the recovery of employee entitlements and Commonwealth funds following corporate insolvencies, and developed policy that informed the Australian Government's July 2026 announcement of a new Fair Work Court. The department also supported the passage of Baby Priya's law, which protects existing employer-funded paid parental leave when an employee's child is stillborn or dies, delivering on the government's election commitment.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is creating both opportunities and challenges for Australia's workforce. We analysed the impacts on the Australian labour market, while Jobs and Skills Australia examined how generative AI could improve productivity, support higher-value work and reshape the skills workers will need. The tripartite AI Employment and Workplaces Forum, established in April 2026, brings together government, unions and employers to consider these issues.

Lifting workforce capabilities

In partnership with states and territories, the department is helping to deliver the Australian Government's Free TAFE program. The program supported more than 851,000 enrolments between January 2023 and June 2026, helping to address workforce shortages in priority sectors and industries. This included more than 78,000 enrolments in construction-related fields, supporting the workforce Australia needs to address the housing challenge.

In its first full year, the Key Apprenticeship Program supported more than 32,000 apprentices in housing construction trades through its Housing Construction Stream, while the New Energy Stream is helping to build the broader skills pipeline Australia needs for the transition to net zero.

By 1 July 2026, the 5-year National Skills Agreement was entering its third year. Its implementation has included establishing 20 TAFE Centres of Excellence and the National TAFE Network. The agreement is a strategic partnership between the Australian Government and states and territories to help deliver the skilled workforce needed in critical industries.

The department is also building a modern trade skills assessment system and developing a program to recognise the existing skills of migrant workers, creating opportunities for industries and communities. Building Women's Careers is helping to address gender segregation in critical industries, which contributes to persistent skills shortages.

One DEWR, shared impact

It has been a significant year for the department as we continued to deliver the Australian Government's employment, skills and workplace relations agenda. These achievements reflect work across the whole department – from policy, program and service delivery teams to our legal, digital, data, finance, governance, people, communication and corporate functions.

I thank the department's executive, our ministers and portfolio agencies, and our people in offices across Australia for their support since I commenced as Secretary.

Together, we are supporting job opportunities and strengthening workplaces for all Australians.

Simon Duggan PSM



Highlight: Strategic Framework

During 2025–26, DEWR developed a new Strategic Framework, including the department’s first mission statement. The Framework sets a shared direction for how DEWR will focus its efforts and deliver for Australians.

The Framework responds to the need for clearer priorities and a stronger connection between the department’s responsibilities, its decisions and the outcomes it seeks for Australians. Centred on the mission **Supporting job opportunities. Strengthening workplaces** it aligns 5 strategic objectives with 5 departmental values, providing a common purpose for staff across DEWR.

The Framework was shaped through a 2-stage, evidence-led consultation process from April to June 2026. The first phase invited broad input through staff forums, dedicated sessions with staff diversity networks and written submissions, generating nearly 2,000 responses.

The second phase tested and refined the emerging mission, objectives and values with staff, diversity networks, external stakeholders and partner agencies.

This staged approach allowed ideas to be tested, challenged and refined. An SES and First Nations Reference Group provided additional perspectives, and senior leaders, ministers and the department’s Executive Board were consulted before the Framework was endorsed.

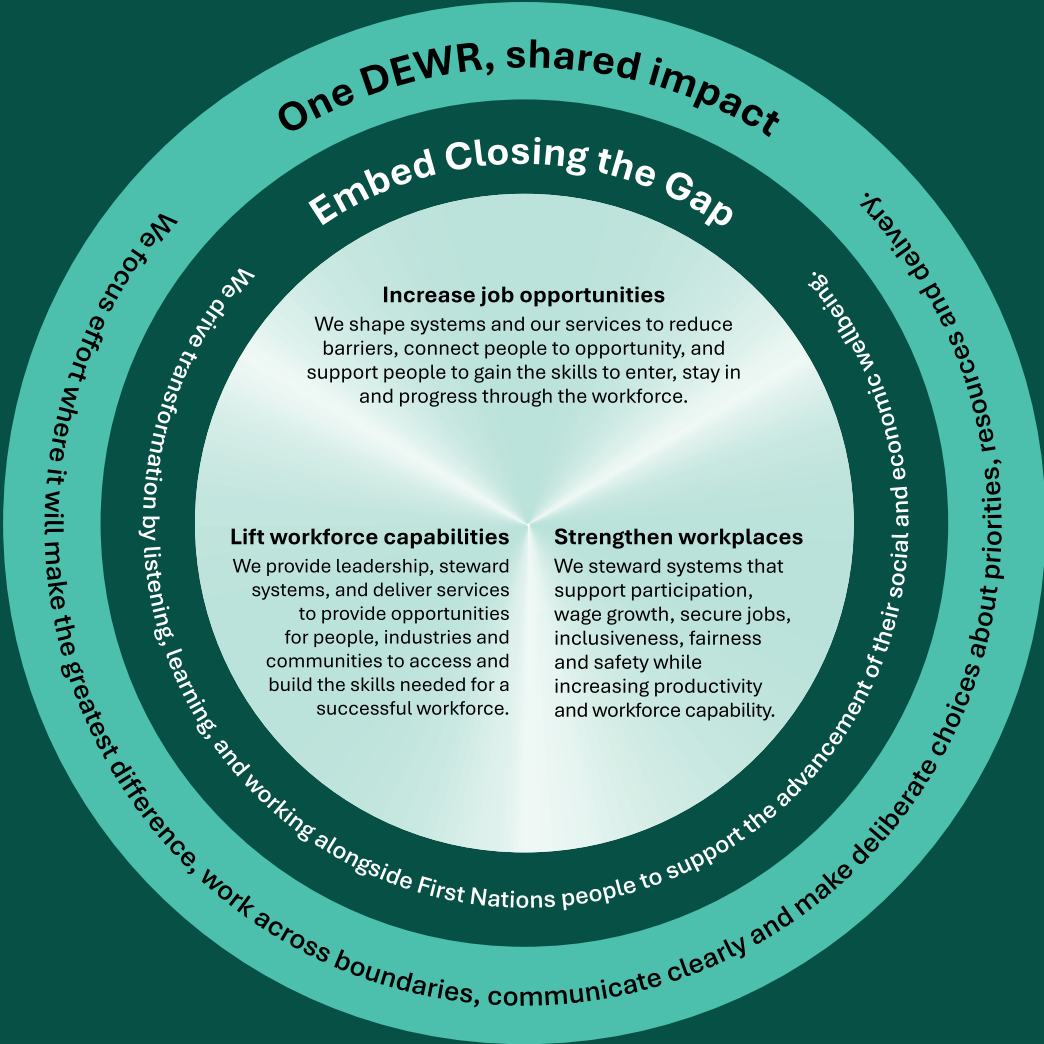
This input materially shaped the final Framework. The mission was made clearer and more accessible; the objectives were reframed as connected departmental outcomes rather than separate areas of responsibility; and the values were strengthened to describe practical, inclusive behaviours.

The result is a whole-of-department approach. Through the objective **One DEWR, shared impact**, the Framework encourages staff to look beyond organisational boundaries, draw on expertise across the department and share responsibility for outcomes.

It brings together DEWR’s employment, skills and workplace relations responsibilities, embeds Closing the Gap across the department’s work and places clearer prioritisation at the centre of its operations. This supports a shift from separate areas delivering individual functions to the department directing its combined capability towards shared objectives.

The Framework is also translating this shared direction into action. It informed Executive Board decisions on departmental priorities and internal budgets for 2026–27 and is being embedded in planning, governance, performance and workforce processes. Aligning these processes with the same mission and objectives will support clearer decisions about effort and resources, strengthen accountability and help DEWR bring its combined capability to delivering outcomes for Australians.

Supporting job opportunities. Strengthening workplaces.



Impactful

We focus effort on work that matters, make evidence-informed choices and follow through on outcomes.



Courageous

We speak up with honesty and respect, challenge constructively and make clear decisions when they are needed.



Collaborative

We work as one DEWR and with others, sharing expertise, listening early and taking responsibility for shared outcomes.



Curious

We stay open, ask questions, listen to different perspectives and use evidence to innovate.



Inclusive

We create space for different voices, value lived experience and ensure decisions are informed by the people they affect.

Closing the Gap

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) sets out a shared commitment between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to achieve meaningful improvements in life outcomes of First Nations people and address systemic inequality.

The department's work contributes directly to 4 of the 17 socio-economic outcome areas under the National Agreement. Our work is fundamental to supporting First Nations people's aspirations for stronger communities, greater economic participation and improved social and wellbeing outcomes.

Aligned with the vision and principles of the department's **Closing the Gap Strategy (2024–2027)**, the department's work is fundamental in supporting self-determination. This includes strengthening the capability, leadership and sustainability of First Nations organisations and communities, while embedding First Nations perspectives, priorities and decision-making across employment and training systems.

In 2025–26 the department deepened its commitments to reconciliation and delivering meaningful progress towards Closing the Gap outcomes through sustained organisational and cultural change, strengthened partnerships, workforce initiatives, and the design and delivery of policies, programs and services that better support First Nations people.

Transformation

During 2025–26 the department commenced implementation of its inaugural **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2025–2027**. Early implementation focused on embedding cultural safety, improving First Nations workforce initiatives and strengthening organisational capability, including increased First Nations representation across our governance forums. These initiatives help position our department as an employer of choice for First Nations candidates while elevating the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members.

Our RAP Implementation Oversight Committee provides enterprise oversight of RAP delivery, supporting accountability, performance reporting and risk management. Through regular reporting to the First Nations Executive Board and other senior governance forums, the committee is driving sustainable organisational change and shared responsibility for reconciliation across the department. As at June 2026, 13 RAP deliverables had been completed, with the remaining 61 deliverables actively progressing through a coordinated program of work across the department.

Our internal transformation is delivering demonstrable benefits across the programs and services we deliver to the community. One element of this work is our Indigenous Liaison Officer network, which operates across all states and territories, including in regional, remote and metropolitan Australia. Our Indigenous Liaison Officer network ensures local knowledge and perspectives inform program design and service delivery, helping to ensure services are culturally appropriate, inclusive, equitable and responsive to individual and community needs.

In 2025–26, we continued to support place-based employment and training service delivery through **Broome Employment Services 2024–2027** and **Yarrabah Employment Services 2024–2027**. Learning from these initiatives, we have successfully grown the share of First Nations providers delivering mainstream employment services through **Parent Pathways** and **Workforce Australia** services. Together, these actions are helping to ensure we provide tailored support that responds to local priorities, promotes self-determination, and strengthens First Nations economic participation.

Under A Better, Safer Future for Central Australia, the department continued work to implement the **Remote Training Hubs Network** (the Hubs), which will expand access to on-Country skills and training opportunities in up to 7 remote community clusters, leading to local, sustainable jobs. The Hubs program is being delivered in partnership with the Northern Territory Government and First Nations organisations, under the guidance of the Central Australia Plan Aboriginal Leadership Group.

In 2025–26 the department delivered the first 2 grant funding rounds to establish the Hubs. The first Hub, in the Rodinga cluster of communities, was established and training is now being delivered. The remaining community clusters will be invited to apply in future grant rounds, the timing of which is aligned to community cluster readiness.

Investment

In partnership with states and territories and First Nations partners, place-based Closing the Gap initiatives in vocational education and training (VET) also progressed. In 2026, all states and territories signed **Closing the Gap Bilateral Implementation Plans** through the National Skills Agreement (2024–2028). With matched contributions of up to \$149.9 million, these activities will expand investment in the capability, sustainability and growth of the Aboriginal community-controlled and First Nations-owned training sector, grow the First Nations VET workforce, and boost the cultural competency of mainstream registered training organisations (RTOs).

Supporting this work, the department continued to invest in Commonwealth-led policies and programs which strengthen First Nations-owned businesses and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ACCOs) to grow their workforces and deliver services to First Nations people. This work was complemented with grant and tender arrangements which recognise the expertise of these organisations in delivering outcomes for First Nations people.

In 2026 the department continued to support the growth of the First Nations VET workforce through commencing the **Building the First Nations VET Workforce Program**. Led by the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), the program builds on the success of the Trainer and Assessor Demonstration Project and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to become trainers, assessors and leaders in the Aboriginal community-controlled VET sector, strengthening the capability and sustainability of community-led training delivery. Round 3 of the **Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) First Nations Delivery grants** was finalised, providing funding to First Nations organisations to deliver locally tailored language, literacy, numeracy and digital (LLND) skills training, aligned with community need. Strong LLND skills are foundational to participation in education, training and employment.

Further to this, the department funded NACCHO to establish and deliver a national **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RTO Community of Practice**, strengthening connections, sharing best practice, and building collective capacity across the First Nations RTO sector. The first meeting was held in July 2025, followed by 9 meetings ahead of a national summit held in July 2026.

The rollout of Phase 1 of the **Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) Program** in February 2026 is helping First Nations people exiting the justice system to build stronger connections with community, employment, education and training services. The program adopted a staged engagement approach and was co-designed with First Nations people with lived experience, supporting culturally safe participation and ensuring community needs are being met. Sixteen organisations were selected to deliver services in facilities across states and territories, 15 of which are either ACCOs or First Nations led. Building on the engagement and consultation from Phase 1, the program will be expanded to approximately 26 additional locations and 53 correctional facilities nationally in late 2026.

Evidence

We also progressed initiatives to strengthen the evidence base for policy and program development while enabling First Nations communities to have a greater influence over the data and decisions that affect them. The work is underpinned by the continued implementation of the 7-year **Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data Implementation Plan**, designed to advance First Nations self-determination by improving the accessibility, relevance, interpretability and timeliness of government-held data.

In 2025–26, Jobs and Skills Australia completed the co-design phase of the **Murtu Yayngiliyn Feasibility Study**, which is investigating culturally informed, place-based approaches to assessing LLND skills across 5 remote First Nations communities. The study seeks to address a gap in available evidence on First Nations foundation skills and is intended to inform future policy, program and investment considerations. The study is also providing an opportunity to examine the role of data, research and governance arrangements in supporting the implementation of the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms, including community involvement in decision-making and the application of Indigenous data sovereignty principles.

The department, in partnership with the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations (Coalition of Peaks), also progressed work to scope the development of a Sector Strengthening Plan for the Aboriginal community-controlled and First Nations-owned RTO sector. This included the delivery of a Sector Capability Analysis project, led by the Coalition of Peaks, and a Government Supports Mapping and Analysis project. Together, the **Sector Strengthening scoping projects** will lay the groundwork to enable governments to explore longer-term reform options that consider how to best support the sustainability, capability and cultural integrity of First Nations RTOs within the VET system.

Partnerships

In 2025–26 the department's commitment to strengthening partnerships with First Nations people has been critical to the progress made through our policies and programs and will help maintain momentum through 2026–27, providing the structural foundations needed to drive long-term reform across the employment and training sectors and advance Closing the Gap outcomes.

The department's continued funding and support for the **National Indigenous Employment and Training Alliance** (the Alliance) remained a key priority. The Alliance plays a critical role in advocating for systemic change and delivering Indigenous-led, evidence-based solutions that drive long-term impact. Support included granting access to the Capability Building Fund to allow the Alliance to deliver projects that build the capacity of the Aboriginal community-controlled sector to deliver employment services. The Alliance will continue to be an important partner in shaping future employment services reforms.

Establishment of the **Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence** (ICOVE) represents a significant milestone following several years of collaboration between the Coalition of Peaks, governments and First Nations RTOs. Led by Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Ltd in partnership with Tranby Cooperative Ltd, the ICOVE is a First Nations-led initiative grounded in community governance and cultural authority. Operational from 1 July 2026, it will function as a national, evidence-informed VET hub, promoting best-practice approaches to improving outcomes for First Nations people and strengthening the capability and sustainability of the First Nations training sector.

The establishment of the ICOVE reinforces the department's commitment to genuine partnership with First Nations organisations in shaping policies and reforms that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. A key role of the ICOVE is to partner with the department in co-chairing the First Nations VET Policy Partnership, providing a formal mechanism for shared decision-making and contributing to advancing outcomes under Closing the Gap.



Highlight: Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence: First Nations-led innovation in skills and training

In 2025–26 the department progressed significant commitments under the National Skills Agreement (clause A99) through the establishment of the Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence (ICOVE), a national, evidence-informed, best practice vocational education and training (VET) hub designed to strengthen VET opportunities and outcomes for First Nations people.

The ICOVE is an important reform initiative that embeds the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reforms into the national skills and training system.

Developed through extensive engagement with First Nations stakeholders and building on a proposal designed by the Coalition of Peaks and its members, the ICOVE represents a collaborative approach to skills policy and program delivery. The initiative brings together governments, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs), First Nations-owned (FNO) Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and industry partners to support stronger pathways to training, employment and economic participation for First Nations people.

As part of the establishment process, the department led a restricted competitive grant opportunity open only to ACCOs and FNO RTOs. The process was supported by a third-party First Nations consultancy to promote cultural safety and self-determination, strengthen the community-controlled sector and ensure First Nations leadership was embedded throughout decision-making. Following the grant application assessment process – conducted by an independent assessment panel – Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Limited (KAMS), in consortium partnership with Tranby Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd, was selected to lead the ICOVE as host organisation.

Operational from 1 July 2026, the ICOVE is a national centre of excellence focused on 4 key areas: innovation, capacity building, policy and advocacy, and research and data. Through these pillars, the ICOVE will support culturally responsive training approaches, strengthen the capability of First Nations-led training providers, contribute First Nations perspectives to national VET policy discussions, and build a stronger evidence base to inform future reform.

A unique feature of the model is its formal connection with the First Nations Vocational Education and Training Policy Partnership (VETPP). The ICOVE host co-chairs the VETPP alongside the Commonwealth and provides joint secretariat support, embedding First Nations leadership directly within national VET governance arrangements. This reflects the department's commitment to genuine partnership, shared decision-making and long-term structural reform.

The ICOVE demonstrates the department's commitment to collaborative design, First Nations leadership and innovative approaches to skills and training reform, supporting implementation of the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms.

Portfolio

Ministers as at 30 June 2026



The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP

Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations



The Hon Andrew Giles MP

Minister for Skills and Training



The Hon Patrick Gorman MP

Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister

Assistant Minister for the Public Service

Assistant Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Purpose¹

We support people in Australia to have safe, secure and well-paid work with the skills for a sustainable future.

Mission

Supporting job opportunities. Strengthening workplaces.

Roles and functions

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is committed to delivering effective and meaningful outcomes for the Australian community. Through the ongoing design and delivery of high-quality programs and policies, DEWR supports Australians to access meaningful employment and gain high-quality skills, and promotes fair and safe workplaces.

DEWR leads the delivery of Workforce Australia, the government’s employment services system, which helps people move into or towards secure employment. We focus on improving employment outcomes through targeted programs for people facing disadvantage, including young people, First Nations people and those in regional and remote communities. DEWR also administers the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme, which supports Australian businesses to address labour shortages while creating opportunities for workers from participating Pacific countries and Timor-Leste to gain employment and skills development.

Through its digital platforms, service delivery arrangements and partnerships with providers, employers and community organisations, DEWR provides support to job seekers, employers, apprentices, trainees, PALM scheme participants and communities across Australia. These delivery channels help to make government programs accessible, responsive and tailored to local labour market needs, particularly in regional and remote areas.

DEWR works closely with other Australian Government agencies and with state and territory government counterparts to advance a more integrated tertiary education system, strengthening alignment between the vocational education and training (VET) and higher education sectors to better respond to labour market needs and improve outcomes for students.

Within DEWR there are 2 statutory offices: Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) and the Student Identifiers Registrar. JSA provides independent advice on Australia’s current, emerging and future workforce, skills, and training needs. The Student Identifiers Registrar is responsible for administering the Unique Student Identifier (USI) system, which enables students to access a secure online record of their nationally recognised training. The Registrar ensures the integrity, privacy and accessibility of student training

records, supporting lifelong learning and mobility across the education and training system. Together, these bodies contribute to Australia’s commitment to fair work, inclusive employment opportunities and a responsive skills system.

DEWR also leads reforms in workplace relations, ensuring Australia’s industrial relations system is modern, fair and fit for purpose. We support institutions such as the Fair Work Commission and Fair Work Ombudsman, and drive initiatives to improve job security, gender equity and compliance with workplace laws.

Our work is guided by a commitment to evidence-based policy, collaboration and continuous improvement. Through strategic investment in rapidly developing technology, artificial intelligence (AI) adoption and workforce capability, we are enhancing operations and service delivery to better meet the needs of workers, employers and communities across Australia.

Accountable authority

Simon Duggan PSM, Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, was the department’s accountable authority from 16 February 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Table 1.1: Details of accountable authority during the reporting period, 2025–26

Name	Position title/ position held	Period as the accountable authority or member within the reporting period	
		Start date (1 July 2025 or after)	End date (30 June 2026 or before)
Simon Duggan PSM	Secretary	16 February 2026	30 June 2026
Tania Rishniw	Acting Secretary	17 December 2025	15 February 2026
Natalie James	Secretary	1 July 2025	18 January 2026

Note: The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is managed by the TPS Director, an independent statutory office holder operating within the Department of Education and appointed by the Minister for Education. A component of the TPS’s work relates to VET Student Loans; for this work, the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is the accountable authority. Information on the TPS can be found on the [TPS website](http://www.education.gov.au/tps) (www.education.gov.au/tps)

¹ The department revised its purpose statement in the 2026–27 Corporate Plan to ‘Support Australians to have safe, secure and well-paid work with the skills for a sustainable future’.

Our portfolio entities

As at 30 June 2026

Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency

Jodie Deakes – Chief Executive Officer

Outcome: Assist in the prevention of exposure to asbestos fibres and respirable crystalline silica, to eliminate asbestos and silica related disease in Australia through coordinating the implementation of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan and the Silica National Strategic Plan.

For further information: www.asbestossafety.gov.au

Australian Skills Quality Authority

Saxon Rice – Chief Executive Officer

Outcome: Through our regulation and partnership with stakeholders, ensure quality vocational education and training so that students, employers, the community and governments have confidence in the integrity of national qualifications issued by training providers.

For further information: www.asqa.gov.au

Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation (Coal LSL)

Darlene Perks – Chief Executive Officer

Board of Directors – Accountable Authority

Outcome: Responsible for the Coal Mining Industry Long Service Leave Fund, Coal LSL connects employers and employees with long service leave for the good of Australia's black coal mining industry.

For further information: www.coallsl.com.au

Comcare

Colin Radford – Chief Executive Officer

Outcome: Promote and enable safe and healthy work.²

For further information: www.comcare.gov.au

Fair Work Commission

Murray Furlong – General Manager

Outcome: Simple, fair and flexible workplace relations for employees, employers and others through the exercise of powers to set and vary minimum wages and modern awards, facilitate collective bargaining, approve agreements, deal with disputes and promote the financial transparency and effective governance of registered organisations.

For further information: www.fwc.gov.au

Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman

Anna Booth – Fair Work Ombudsman

Outcome: Compliance with workplace relations legislation through advice, education and where necessary enforcement.

For further information: www.fairwork.gov.au

Safe Work Australia

Marie Boland – Chief Executive Officer

Outcome: Healthier, safer and more productive workplaces through improvements to Australian work health and safety and workers' compensation arrangements.

For further information: www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority

Darren Kavanagh – Accountable Authority and Chairperson of the Seacare Authority

Outcome: Promote healthy and safe workplaces and appropriate and timely compensation for, and rehabilitation of, injured workers covered by the Seacare scheme and maintain a scheme safety net that is able to meet its liabilities.

For further information: www.seacare.gov.au

² Comcare provides support through expert advice and services to the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission and the Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority (Seacare Authority).

Departmental structure

As at 30 June 2026



Simon Duggan PSM
Secretary



Catherine Rule
Deputy Secretary
Chief Operating Officer
Chief Security Officer



Tania Rishniw
Deputy Secretary



Anna Faithfull
Deputy Secretary



Greg Manning
Deputy Secretary

Corporate and Enabling Services Group

- Digital Experience and Solutions
- Enterprise Technology
- Finance, Governance and Enterprise Services
- Legal and Assurance
- People and Communication

Employment and Workforce Group

- Customer Experience and Engagement
- Delivery and Partnerships
- Employment Services Reform Taskforce
- Labour Market and Industry Policy
- Pacific Labour Operations
- Quality, Strategy and Improvement

Skills and Training Group

- Apprenticeships and Digital Projects
- Defence, International, VSL and Assessment
- Industry Partnership, Quality and Integrity
- National Reform and Foundation Skills
- Policy Pathways and Inclusion

Workplace Relations Group

- Closing the Gap Unit
- Employment Conditions
- Entitlements Safeguards
- Office of the Chief Economist
- Safety and Industry Policy
- Workplace Relations Legal

Statutory authorities

- Jobs and Skills Australia
- Student Identifiers Registrar

Our people

Key highlights



Our workforce of 4,200³ Australian Public Service (APS) employees continued to deliver on our purpose: supporting people in Australia to access safe, secure and well-paid work, while building the skills needed for a sustainable future.



Key initiatives delivered this year included the launch of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2025–2027, delivery of the 2025–26 Capability Catalogue, launch of our Manager 101 program, and investment in our early intervention function – each of which contributes to creating a workplace culture that is impactful, courageous, collaborative, curious and inclusive.



We maintained our role as a model employer, prioritising wellbeing and inclusion through the continued implementation of our People Strategy, Strategic Workforce Plan and Working Well Framework.



As at 30 June 2026 the department maintained a median gender pay gap for base salary of 0.0%,⁴ underscoring our enduring commitment to pay equity.

APS employees by location⁵



³ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations employee data, headcount at 30 June 2026.

⁴ Further information on how the gender pay gap is calculated is available at www.wgea.gov.au.

⁵ Includes official postings to overseas location.

Our workforce



⁶ Based on 3 options – male, female, or ‘uses a different term’ – provided to respondents when asked to specify their gender.

⁷ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations external workforce headcount as at 30 June 2026. This figure reflects enhanced data capture and reporting processes introduced under the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework. Compared to 30 June 2025, the external workforce headcount reflects a deliberate reduction in external workforce utilisation, and improved workforce planning across the department.



Highlight: Supporting safer workplaces for PALM scheme workers

The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme continued to support the workforce needs of Australian industries while creating economic opportunities for workers from 9 Pacific countries and Timor-Leste throughout 2025–26.

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) focused on enhancing worker protections and strengthening engagement with employers and regional communities to support the sustainable growth of the scheme and reinforce confidence in the scheme's integrity. Employer participation in the scheme was at a record high, increasing from 519 PALM scheme employers in July 2025 to 556 in June 2026.¹ The number of PALM scheme workers rose from 30,835 workers on average in 2024–25 to 31,715 on average in 2025–26.

DEWR enhanced incident management arrangements, improved driver safety education, supported workers affected by gender-based violence, and progressed disability and social inclusion initiatives. Together, these measures helped ensure support services reflected the needs of PALM scheme workers and promoted safe and inclusive workplaces.

DEWR also continued its efforts to address worker disengagement. The department implemented recommendations from the Interdepartmental Disengagement Taskforce and strengthened coordination across government, employers and stakeholders, resulting in disengagement rates below the peak levels recorded prior to 2023. Close collaboration supported earlier intervention, clearer support pathways and improved outcomes for workers, while helping employers and communities respond to emerging challenges.

Recognising that strong partnerships are critical to the scheme's success, DEWR expanded its regional delivery footprint and deepened engagement with employers, workers, unions, industry representatives and local communities across Australia. During 2025–26, the department hosted 2 regional engagement fora, 3 regional stakeholder disengagement briefings and 5 targeted safe driving events, creating opportunities to collaborate on workforce needs, worker welfare and emerging challenges.

DEWR also engaged employers, workers, unions, industry representatives and other stakeholders through consultation activities, stakeholder forums and direct engagement to identify opportunities to improve scheme delivery. Through initiatives such as the Review of the Impact of Key Deed and Guidelines Settings, extensive consultation is informing advice to government on policy settings and future improvements to support the scheme's effectiveness, integrity and long-term sustainability.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate DEWR's commitment to protecting PALM scheme workers and engaging with communities and stakeholders. Through a worker-centred, collaborative and evidence-based approach, the department is helping ensure the PALM scheme remains a trusted and sustainable program that delivers benefits for workers, employers, participating countries and Australian communities.

¹ DEWR, *PALM scheme data publication – June 2026* [dataset], PALM scheme website, June 2026, accessed 28 July 2026. <https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/palm-scheme-data>

2

Performance statements

Statement by the accountable authority	20
Purpose, outcomes and programs	21
Analysis	22
Results	30
Corrections to previously published annual performance statements	81

Statement by the accountable authority

I, as the accountable authority of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, present the 2025–26 Annual Performance Statements of the department, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Duggan', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Simon Duggan PSM
Secretary
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

17 September 2026

Purpose, outcomes and programs

We support people in Australia to have safe, secure and well-paid work with the skills for a sustainable future

Our outcome statements

Outcome 1

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs.

Outcome 2

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.

Outcome 3

Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces.

Our programs and key activities

Program 1.1 – Employment Services

Key activities

- Provide quality services to job seekers and employers
- Support job seekers to achieve sustainable employment
- Support target groups to improve their work readiness and prepare for employment

Program 2.1 – Building Skills and Capability

Key activities

- Enhance the quality of vocational education and training (VET)
- Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills
- Improve language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy (LLND) skills for target groups

Program 2.2 – VET Student Loans

Key activities

- Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET

Program 2.3 – Nuclear-powered Submarine Program

Key activities

- Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills

Program 3.1 – Workplace Support

Key activities

- Promote fair, productive and safe workplaces through policy advice and programs
- Support the protection of workers' entitlements

Note: The Employment and Workplace Relations 2025–26 Portfolio Budget Statements also lists Program 3.2, which covers the Comcare workers' compensation scheme and is managed by Comcare. Comcare reports against this program and associated performance measures in its annual report.

Analysis

Our purpose is to support people in Australia to have safe, secure and well-paid work with the skills for a sustainable future.

In 2025–26, the department worked across its employment, skills and training, and workplace relations responsibilities to support an inclusive, productive and resilient labour market. Together, these activities connected people with employment and participation opportunities, built the workforce capabilities needed by employers and the economy, and supported fair, safe and productive workplaces. The following analysis reports on the department's performance against its key activities and their collective contribution to outcomes for workers, job seekers, learners, employers and communities.

Employment and participation

Australia's labour market continued to ease over the course of 2025–26, against a backdrop of ongoing global economic uncertainty. While low by historical standards, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force data show unemployment rising over the period (to 4.4% in June 2026).¹ With employment growth also slowing, the number of participants in Workforce Australia rose steadily over the course of the last year (3.8% higher than in June 2025, growing from 697,900 to 724,740).²

A decline in low-skill jobs contrasts with the education profile of employment services participants – more than half of whom have completed Year 12 or less as their highest level of attainment (51.5%).³ This misalignment of labour supply with demand has created challenges in achieving employment outcomes for participants, despite overall unemployment remaining low and participation remaining high (67.0%).⁴

Nevertheless, participant satisfaction with Workforce Australia Services has increased, with 78.8% of participants satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of service they received in 2025–26.⁵

In 2025–26 the department commenced employment services reform to support the government's vision of a more responsive and personalised system that connects people to the right support at the right time, improves pathways to suitable and sustainable employment, and better meets the needs of employers and local labour markets. Consultation to support employment services reform was launched on 27 May 2026, with the release of the *Shaping the future of employment services* discussion paper.⁶ The consultation invited individuals, organisations and communities to help shape a more responsive employment services system that provides tailored support, improves pathways to secure employment, and better meets the needs of employers. Further opportunities for engagement continue into the latter half of 2026 through public submissions, community forums, a Lived Experience Panel and an advisory group, as well as other targeted consultation, ensuring diverse perspectives to inform the development of the future service model.

During 2025–26 the department maintained high levels of community engagement – handling approximately 395,000 calls and emails through the Digital Services Contact Centre and approximately 408,000 calls, emails and webforms through the National Customer Service Line. The department's complaints service received 10,485 complaints about employment and pre-employment services, 8,145 (77.7%) of which were resolved at the first point of contact. To support further transparency of complaint volumes, the department publishes data on complaints on dewr.gov.au.

¹ ABS, 'Labour Force, Australia – June 2026' [dataset], ABS website, 23 July 2026, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/jun-2026>

² Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), 'Workforce Australia Caseload Time Series – October 2022 to June 2026' [dataset], DEWR website, 24 July 2026, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-services-data/resources/workforce-australia-caseload-time-series-30-june-2026>

³ 'Low-skilled jobs' refers to jobs requiring Certificate II or Certificate III (Skill Level 4), or jobs requiring Certificate I or secondary education (Skill Level 5). Data as at 30 June 2026 includes education groups: Year 1 to 9, Year 10 to 11, Completed Secondary School, and None. (DEWR, 'Workforce Australia Caseload by Selected Cohorts – 30 June 2026' [dataset], DEWR website, 24 July 2026, accessed 14 August 2026.

<https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-services-data/resources/workforce-australia-caseload-selected-cohorts-30-june-2026>)

⁴ The ABS June 2026 Labour Force data reported that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.4%, and the participation rate was 67.0%. (ABS, 'Labour Force, Australia – June 2026' [dataset], ABS website, 23 July 2026, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/jun-2026>)

⁵ Further analysis of the proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered is available on [page 34](#).

⁶ Submissions responding to the *Shaping the future of employment services* discussion paper were accepted until 31 July 2026. Further information is available at dewr.gov.au.

Employment programs and initiatives

The department continues to deliver programs and place-based initiatives that strengthen workforce participation.

This role includes administering the WorkFoundations pilot, which provides funding for social enterprises and businesses to deliver paid employment placements of up to 6 months to assist job seekers with complex barriers to employment to build their work readiness. As of 30 June 2026 there have been 167 placements provided, offering paid, meaningful job placements with wraparound support.

In 2025–26 the department collaborated with the Victorian Government and delivery partners on 2 place-based employment initiatives: the Dandenong Pathway to Employment Hub (being delivered by Greater Dandenong City Council) and the extension of the Thrive Hubs in Broadmeadows and Frankston (being delivered by the Brotherhood of St Laurence). Activities undertaken in 2025–26 included partnership development and establishment of governance arrangements, delivery, planning and stakeholder engagement to support the initiatives. The Thrive Hubs in Broadmeadows and Frankston continued operations in 2025–26, while the Dandenong Pathway to Employment Hub focused on planning, ahead of opening in early 2026–27. The initiatives adopt locally driven approaches to better connect people with employment, training and support services and strengthen engagement with employers. The hubs will also provide insights into how locally led employment solutions can deliver outcomes for job seekers and employers.

Another focus this year was the continued delivery of Parent Pathways, which supported some 28,985 participants as at June 2026.⁷ The service helped parents and carers identify and work towards their education, training, employment and personal goals through tailored mentoring and support. Strengthening engagement and helping participants make meaningful progress towards their goals remained a priority during 2025–26. Supporting First Nations parents and carers also continued to be a key focus, with First Nations participants representing more than 20% of the people using the service.⁷

The department continued to progress activities to support workers and communities in the transition to a clean energy economy. Building on several years of direct community engagement, Worker Transition Advisory Groups have been established in the Hunter and Gippsland regions, with local communities identifying local priorities for workforce transitions.⁸ Worker Transition Advisory Groups bring together community stakeholders – including unions, employers, community organisations, education and training providers and governments – in a structured forum to identify priorities, share insights and coordinate responses. As a result of this work, initial projects have been contracted in the Hunter to address immediate priorities under the Transitioning Workforce Fund, with more initiatives to follow.

The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme continued to help Australian businesses meet their workforce needs while supporting economic growth in the Pacific and Timor-Leste by providing employment opportunities for workers from 10 countries. Work towards integrating New Caledonia into the scheme as the 11th participating country is underway. As at 30 June 2026 there were 32,645 PALM scheme workers around Australia working in agriculture, meat processing, health care and other sectors.⁹ The department implemented targeted initiatives to promote worker welfare and strengthened coordination across government to address worker disengagement. These efforts succeeded in keeping disengagement rates below the peak levels recorded before 2023.

The department also strengthened engagement with industry, employers, unions, workers and local communities to collaborate on workforce needs, support worker welfare and inform advice to government on future improvements to the scheme.

These employment initiatives were complemented by investment in the skills system, helping people build the capabilities needed to participate in a changing labour market and supporting employers to meet current and emerging workforce needs.

⁷ DEWR, 'Parent Pathways Caseload Data – 30 June 2026' [dataset], DEWR website, 24 July 2026, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-services-data/resources/parents-pathway-caseload-data-30-june-2026>

⁸ DEWR, 'Supporting worker transition through energy system changes', DEWR website, 8 July 2026, accessed 28 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/supporting-worker-transition-through-energy-system-changes>

⁹ DEWR and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 'PALM scheme data publication – June 2026' [dataset], PALM Scheme website, 14 August 2026, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/palm-scheme-data>

Lifting Australia's workforce capabilities

In 2025–26 the department contributed to improved workforce capability, productivity and economic resilience by strengthening the accessibility, quality and responsiveness of Australia's VET system. Working in partnership with state and territory governments, employers, unions, training providers, the Coalition of Peaks, Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) and Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs), the department progressed major reforms and investments to build the skilled workforce required to meet current and future labour market needs.

Building workforce pipelines in priority occupations remained a significant focus in 2025–26. The department progressed reforms arising from the Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeship Incentive System, including implementation of the expanded Key Apprenticeship Program and enhanced support for occupations critical to housing, clean energy and other areas of strategic workforce demand.¹⁰ The department also continued implementing the Building Women's Careers program, delivering structural and cultural change in targeted male-dominated industries and helping to expand workforce pipelines in priority occupations.¹¹ JSCs continued to play a central role in aligning training delivery with workforce demand and supporting implementation of key national reforms. During 2025–26, all 10 JSCs completed their third tranche of workforce plans, providing evidence-based analysis of current and emerging workforce pipeline needs and helping inform skills policy and training priorities.¹²

The department contributed to addressing workforce shortages and improving labour market responsiveness through its skills assessment functions, including supporting the regulatory role of the Minister for Skills and Training in relation to skilled migration assessing authorities. During 2025–26, Trades Recognition Australia continued to provide robust and timely skills assessment services that support skilled migration pathways and workforce mobility in occupations experiencing national shortages. Approximately 54,000 applications were received during the year, including significant volumes in construction and other priority industries critical to housing, infrastructure and economic development. The department further strengthened the quality and integrity of the assessing authority sector by introducing new best-practice principles and standards, supporting greater consistency, transparency and confidence in skills assessment processes.¹³

The department continued to strengthen the long-term capability of Australia's skills system through investment in TAFE and the broader VET system. During 2025–26, the remaining TAFE Centres of Excellence were announced, establishing a nationally connected network of 20 centres focused on critical and emerging industries, including clean energy, advanced manufacturing, housing construction, defence capability, and care and support services. The department worked with jurisdictions to establish the National TAFE Network, which brings together TAFEs from across the country to foster collaboration between TAFE teachers and administrators to develop resources, improve the quality of teaching and learning practices, and enhance the status of TAFE. The department continued working with the Australian Tertiary Education Commission, the Department of Education, and JSA to support the development of a more joined-up tertiary education system with stronger pathways between VET and higher education.¹⁴

¹⁰ DEWR, 'Key Apprenticeship Program', Australian Apprenticeships website, n.d., accessed 27 August 2026.
<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.au/key-apprenticeship-program>

¹¹ DEWR, 'Building Women's Careers', DEWR website, 14 May 2026, accessed 19 August 2026.
<https://www.dewr.gov.au/building-womens-careers-program>

¹² DEWR, 'Jobs and Skills Councils', DEWR website, 8 May 2026, accessed 19 August 2026.
<https://www.dewr.gov.au/skills-reform/jobs-and-skills-councils>

¹³ DEWR, 'Assessing Authority Policy and Assurance', DEWR website, 25 June 2026, accessed 19 August 2026.
<https://www.dewr.gov.au/assessing-authority-policy-and-assurance>

¹⁴ DEWR, 'TAFE Centres of Excellence', DEWR website, 29 May 2026, accessed 19 August 2026.
<https://www.dewr.gov.au/national-skills-agreement/tafe-centres-excellence>

Supporting workplaces

The department promotes fair, productive and safe workplaces through the implementation of the government's workplace relations agenda. The department continued its support for reform of the construction industry, supported the government response to reviews of important aspects of the workplace relations system, enabled tripartite consultation, and progressed health and safety measures.

The department facilitated engagement by bringing together members from across government and organisations representing employers and employees through the National Workplace Relations Consultative Council (NWRCC) to constructively consult on workplace relations matters.¹⁵ The department also facilitated the meetings of Workplace Relations Ministers and of Work Health and Safety Ministers, which bring together the Commonwealth, state and territory ministers responsible for workplace relations and work health and safety respectively to discuss and advance matters of national importance.¹⁶

In 2025–26 the department continued to advance long-term reform in the construction industry, including through the National Construction Industry Forum (NCIF) and the scheme for the administration of the Construction and General Division of the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union.¹⁷ The NCIF is chaired by the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and its membership comprises equal numbers of members representing employees and employers in the building and construction industry, with at least one member with experience representing contractors and one member with experience in small to medium-sized enterprises in the residential building sector. The NCIF provides advice to government on a broad range of issues relating to work in the building and construction industry including safety, workplace relations, skills and training, industry culture, diversity and gender equity, and productivity.

In 2025–26 the NCIF endorsed its Blueprint for the Future, representing the strong commitment and engagement of NCIF members to create lasting and tangible change across the building and construction industry.¹⁸ It is also developing a Joint Construction Industry Charter, which will set out shared behavioural expectations for all industry participants. The draft charter was released for consultation on 21 August 2026.¹⁹

The department led the preparation of the government's submission in conjunction with the Treasury to the Fair Work Commission's 2025–26 Annual Wage Review. The submission recommended that the Expert Panel award an economically sustainable real wage increase to Australia's award workers. On 2 June 2026 the Expert Panel announced an increase to minimum award wages of 4.75%, effective from 1 July 2026.²⁰

The department progressed the government's agenda to promote the responsible, inclusive and innovative adoption of artificial intelligence in Australian workplaces, by facilitating the establishment of the tripartite AI Employment and Workplaces Forum, chaired by the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations. On 29 April 2026 the Minister convened the first ministerial-level meeting of the forum, bringing together government, union and employer representatives to consider the impact of AI on jobs and workplaces.²¹ The forum considered and informed approaches to harness the potential productivity benefits of AI, while managing risks, addressing the impacts of AI on workers and workplaces, and fostering and supporting worker adaptation to changing roles and work opportunities.

¹⁵ *National Workplace Relations Consultative Council Act 2002*, Federal Register of Legislation website, 26 August 2024, accessed 18 August 2026. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A01703/latest/text>

¹⁶ DEWR, 'Meetings of Workplace Relations Ministers', DEWR website, 31 October 2025, accessed 18 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/meetings-workplace-relations-ministers>

¹⁷ DEWR, 'National Construction Industry Forum', DEWR website, 21 August 2026, accessed 27 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/australian-building-and-construction-industry/national-construction-industry-forum>; DEWR, *Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU), Construction and General Division – Third bi-annual report*, DEWR website, 11 March 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/workplace-relations/resources/cfmeu-construction-and-general-division-third-biannual-report>

¹⁸ DEWR, *Blueprint for the Future*, DEWR website, 6 May 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/australian-building-and-construction-industry/resources/blueprint-future>

¹⁹ National Construction Industry Forum, *Draft Joint Construction Industry Charter*, DEWR website, 21 August 2026, accessed 9 September 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/australian-building-and-construction-industry/resources/draft-joint-construction-industry-charter>

²⁰ Fair Work Commission, 'Annual Wage Review Decision 2026', Fair Work Commission website, 2 June 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.fwc.gov.au/hearings-decisions/major-cases/annual-wage-reviews/annual-wage-review-2026>

²¹ DEWR, 'AFR Workforce Summit, Sydney', Ministers of the Employment and Workplace Relations Portfolio – Media Centre website, 28 April 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://ministers.dewr.gov.au/rishworth/afr-workforce-summit-sydney>

The department supported the urgent development and passage of the *Fair Work Amendment (Fairer Fuel) Act 2026* (Fairer Fuel Act) on 30 March 2026, which provides a new expedited pathway for the Fair Work Commission to consider an application for a road transport contractual chain order (RTCCO), following a ministerial determination. On 10 April 2026, the minister made the first determination under the Fairer Fuel Act amendments. The Fair Work Commission subsequently made the Fuel Cost Recovery RTCCO (Fuel Order) on 20 April 2026, which provided for fortnightly rate adjustments to ensure fuel cost recovery.²² The RTCCO requires road transport contractual chains (like manufacturers and suppliers, large retailers and construction companies) to pay more to providers (like small fleet operators, non-employed truck drivers such as owner-drivers, and employee-like workers who perform digital labour platform work) because of increases in fuel prices. The Fairer Fuel Act will enable the Fair Work Commission to make orders as needed to assist providers to manage higher fuel costs.

The department managed Australia's representation at the International Labour Organization (ILO). Australia helped drive the first binding international labour standard on decent work in the platform economy, drawing on, and showcasing, Australia's employee-like framework for gig economy workers. Department delegates worked in close collaboration with delegates from the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in advancing this outcome.²³ Australia served as the Chair of the Government Group at the ILO over 2025–26 with the department supporting Australia's role in setting the agenda for consideration of the issues affecting workers at the peak body for the ILO.

Strengthening systems

We shape and steward systems that deliver employment services, help people gain vocational qualifications and skills, and support workforce participation.

Assuring the integrity of the Targeted Compliance Framework

Throughout 2025–26 the department undertook foundational work under the Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF) Integrity Assurance program to address areas of the TCF that were not operating in alignment with the law and policies. This included responding to issues identified in the Commonwealth Ombudsman's reports and an independent assurance review.²⁴ Priority work under the program included establishing and building assurance over the TCF, implementing system repair and improvements, and providing assurance that decision-making under the TCF is operating in accordance with the legislative framework, as well as developing and embedding training and tools to strengthen decision-making integrity. During this time provisions that reduce or cancel a person's social security participation payment under the TCF were paused, and they will remain paused until the necessary decision-making processes and IT systems operate as intended and in line with the law.

The department reviewed each decision that cancelled a person's social security participation payments due to persistent mutual obligation failures under section 42AF(2)(d) of the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999* between 8 April 2022 and 4 July 2024. As part of this process, \$870,000 in compensation was paid to more than 600 individuals, with approximately 50 people paid around \$65,000 in 2025–26.²⁵

²² Fair Work Ombudsman, 'Fairer Fuel: Reforms to road transport orders', Fair Work Ombudsman website, 20 April 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/workplace-laws/legislation-changes/fairer-fuel-reforms-to-road-transport-orders>

²³ ILO, *Decent work in the Platform Economy Convention, 2026 (No. 193)*, ILO website, 15 June 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.ilo.org/resource/record-decisions/convention-concerning-decent-work-platform-economy-2026>

²⁴ DEWR, 'Targeted Compliance Framework reviews', DEWR website, 9 December 2025, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/assuring-integrity-targeted-compliance-framework/ombudsman-draft-report-and-independent-assurance-review-statement-assurance>.

DEWR, *Targeted Compliance Framework Assurance Review – Final Report*, DEWR website, 14 August 2025, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/assuring-integrity-targeted-compliance-framework/resources/targeted-compliance-framework-assurance-review-final-report>

²⁵ As at 1 December 2025, 651 people have been recommended for compensation under the Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration (CDDA) Scheme, with a combined total compensation of \$936,124.80. With the assistance of Services Australia, 604 people have received compensation payments totalling \$872,963.80. (Commonwealth Ombudsman, *Fairness in the Targeted Compliance Framework: when decisions are made beyond your control* [PDF, 8.1 MB], Commonwealth Ombudsman website, December 2025, accessed 14 August 2026. https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/323205/Fairness-in-the-Targeted-Compliance-Framework.pdf)

Stewardship and partnerships

A key focus during the year was continued implementation of the 2024–2028 National Skills Agreement (NSA) to strengthen Australia's VET system and improve outcomes for learners, employers and communities. Through its stewardship of the NSA, oversight of implementation plans and cooperation with states and territories, the department supported improvements in access to training, VET workforce capability, completion outcomes, system quality and national data capabilities. By 30 June 2026 the Commonwealth had transferred \$5.7 billion to states and territories under the NSA to support skills delivery and reform activity. The department also continued to modernise national skills data and digital infrastructure to improve transparency, evidence-based decision-making and system performance.²⁶

The department strengthened job opportunities by reducing barriers to participation including cost of living challenges. Through Free TAFE, working with states and territories, the department helped reduce financial barriers to training in priority sectors including care and support services, construction and digital occupations. Since its commencement, the initiative has supported more than 814,000 enrolments and over 258,000 course completions nationally. The VET Student Loans program also reduced barriers to training through assisting eligible students to pay their tuition fees with income contingent loans. Since the program's commencement it has paid over \$2.23 billion in loans and supported more than 260,000 enrolments for over 216,000 students. Further, the Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) provided cost of living support to eligible Diploma of Nursing students to help them manage the costs associated with undertaking a mandatory practicum placement. Since its commencement on 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, the CPP has supported 5,675 students.²⁷

Quality skills and training

The department continued to support the government's investment in quality VET data and evidence through new contractual arrangements with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) to deliver national VET data custodian and statistical services that support decision-making for the Australian, state and territory governments and other stakeholders.

Working closely with the Australian Skills Quality Authority and regulators in Western Australia and Victoria, the department also strengthened the quality, integrity and effectiveness of the VET system by implementing major regulatory and system reforms. This included supporting implementation of the 2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations, progressing qualification and training package reforms and, together with the Department of Education, supporting integrity in the international VET sector through implementation of legislative reforms passed in December 2025.²⁸ JSCs maintained strong project delivery, with projects resulting in improved responsiveness, quality and relevance of nationally recognised training products.

Building workforce capability is one part of supporting a productive and resilient labour market. The department's workplace relations responsibilities complemented this work by promoting the fair, safe and productive conditions needed to sustain workforce participation and economic growth.

²⁶ DEWR, 'National Skills Agreement', DEWR website, 13 December 2024, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/national-skills-agreement>

²⁷ DEWR, 'Fee-Free TAFE Program Snapshot – Quarter 1, 2026', DEWR website, 13 July 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/skills-reform/resources/feefree-tafe-program-snapshot-quarter-1-2026>

²⁸ DEWR, '2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations', DEWR website, 20 August 2025, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/standards-for-rtos>; DEWR, 'VET qualification reform – the new purpose-led, principles-based approach', DEWR website, 30 June 2025, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/vet-qualification-reform/resources/vet-qualification-reform-new-purposed-led-principles-based-approach>; National Training Register, 'National Schedule of Training Product Development', training.gov.au, 18 August 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://training.gov.au/training-packages-under-review>

Supporting the workplace relations system

To better support workplaces and the rights of workers, the Closing Loopholes Review was undertaken by former Fair Work Commissioner Ms Susan Booth. This was an independent review of the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Act 2023*, the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes No. 2) Act 2024* and the *Fair Work Amendment (Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave) Act 2022*.²⁹ The review considered whether the operation of the amendments is appropriate and effective, and was required to identify any unintended consequences of the amendments, to determine whether further amendments to the *Fair Work Act 2009*, or any other legislation, are necessary. After publication of the draft report on 18 May 2026, the final report was tabled in parliament on 20 August 2026. The report indicates that the reforms as a whole are operating as intended to enhance the rights of workers.

A comprehensive review of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*, the legislative framework that underpins the Comcare workers' compensation scheme, concluded in 2025. This was the first holistic review of the scheme since its introduction and centred on the needs, experiences and wellbeing of workers. The final report, addressing all aspects of the scheme, including governance, usability and entitlements, was provided to the Australian Government on 25 September 2025. The government continues to carefully consider and analyse the report's 124 recommendations, including on policy design, actuarial analysis and cost-benefit analysis, which focused on best practice in workers' compensation, workers' experience of the scheme, scheme coverage and entitlements, governance and administration, and reducing the number of disputes. Initial targeted consultation has been undertaken and the government plans to further consult with stakeholders on the findings.³⁰

In 2025–26 the department progressed the government's workplace relations legislative agenda. This included the *Fair Work Amendment (Baby Priya's) Act 2025*, which increased certainty for employers and employees about when employer-funded paid parental leave is available to parents who experience the stillbirth or death of a child.³¹ It also included the *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Penalty and Overtime Rates) Act 2025*, which preserves penalty and overtime rates as fundamental entitlements within the modern awards safety net by ensuring that these rates cannot be reduced or substituted in such a way that workers lose out on their take-home pay.³²

Closing the Gap

The department contributes to Closing the Gap socio-economic outcomes through employment services, VET programs, and initiatives that support First Nations people to participate in skills, training and sustainable employment. At the Commonwealth level, the department shares responsibility for the Closing the Gap employment target and several education- and training-related outcome areas under the skills and training targets.³³ The department's progress can be measured through participation in employment and skills programs, transitions into employment or training, and the achievement of longer-term outcomes that support economic participation and development.

During 2025–26 the department continued to support First Nations people through a range of employment services and through skills and training initiatives designed to strengthen pathways to sustainable employment. This included targeted initiatives as well as mainstream employment and skills programs that contribute to improved labour market and training outcomes for First Nations people.

²⁹ DEWR, 'Review of the Closing Loopholes Acts', DEWR website, 20 August 2026, accessed 27 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/workplace-relations-australia/review-closing-loopholes-acts>

³⁰ DEWR, 'Getting the best outcomes for injured and ill workers', DEWR website, 13 February 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/workers-compensation/getting-best-outcomes-injured-and-ill-workers>

³¹ *Fair Work Amendment (Baby Priya's) Act 2025*, Federal Register of Legislation website, 6 November 2025, accessed 18 August 2026. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2025A00056/asmade/text>

³² *Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Penalty and Overtime Rates) Act 2025*, Federal Register of Legislation website, 29 August 2025, accessed 18 August 2026. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2025A00037/asmade/text>

³³ At the Commonwealth level, DEWR shares responsibility with the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) for outcome area 8 – Strong economic participation and development of people and their communities, with DEWR responsible for a range of employment support and policy activities, NIAA responsible for Indigenous-specific employment and remote area employment activities, and DSS responsible for disability employment activities. At the Commonwealth level, the department shares responsibility for Closing the Gap socio-economic outcome areas with the Department of Education (DE), including 5 – Students achieve their full learning potential, 6 – Students reach their full potential through further education pathways, and 7 – Youth are engaged in employment or education, with the department responsible for skills and training actions and DE responsible for schools, youth and higher education actions.

Supporting First Nations employment opportunities

A key focus was the implementation of new initiatives to support people into sustainable employment.

The Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) program supports First Nations people on remand or in prison to build pathways to employment, education and training opportunities. REAL commenced in February 2026 and service delivery is now operational across all Phase 1 jurisdictions. REAL is continuing to transition from establishment activities into active service delivery, with 49 participants engaged up to 30 June 2026. Fifteen of the 16 organisations selected to deliver Phase 1 are First Nations-led and community-controlled organisations, demonstrating the importance of trusted community organisations in delivering culturally appropriate services for First Nations people.³⁴

During 2025–26, Broome Employment Services supported 1,620 participants and assisted 210 participants into employment. Working closely with local employers and community partners, the service connected First Nations job seekers with employment, training and work experience opportunities, helping employers access local talent while supporting participants to build skills and workforce readiness.

During 2025–26, 163,420 First Nations people accessed Workforce Australia employment services. Of the First Nations participants who exited Workforce Australia employment services between 1 January 2025 and 31 December 2025, just over two-thirds (67.8%) of those exiting Workforce Australia Online achieved a positive outcome – i.e. were in employment and/or study or training about 3 months after exiting Workforce Australia Online. This percentage was 49.1% for First Nations participants exiting Workforce Australia Services, and 56.6% for those exiting Transition to Work. These results provide a direct measure of the department's contribution to Closing the Gap employment, education and economic participation targets.

First Nations skills and training initiatives

The department continued to contribute to Closing the Gap education, skills and training outcomes by improving equity and inclusion across the skills system. This included progressing initiatives that support Closing the Gap objectives, improve access to training in regional and remote communities and increase participation among groups that have historically experienced barriers to education, training and employment.

Working in partnership with the Coalition of Peaks, the Aboriginal community-controlled organisations sector and communities was a key focus in 2025–26. During the year, the department advanced First Nations-led approaches to VET through establishment of the Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence and support for the Vocational Education and Training Policy Partnership.³⁵ Through the Remote Training Hubs Network, the department strengthened shared decision-making, worked to improve culturally safe training and pathways to employment and supported greater access to skills and training opportunities.³⁶

The department, in partnership with its state and territory counterparts, continued to reduce barriers for First Nations people to undertake VET through Free TAFE and VET Student Loans. Free TAFE places were offered to students across Australia, including more than 50,800 enrolments by First Nations people between 1 January 2023 and 31 March 2026, while the VET Student Loans program also assisted eligible First Nations students to pay their tuition fees through income contingent loans, paying around \$7.7 million in loans and supporting just under 900 students, which is approximately 2.9% of the total VSL population in 2025–26.³⁷

Notes:

Further information about Closing the Gap can be found in Part 1: Overview of this annual report.

For information about the performance of the Student Identifiers Registrar, see Part 5, Appendix G of this annual report.

For information about the performance of Jobs and Skills Australia, see Part 5, Appendix H of this annual report.

³⁴ DEWR, 'Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) Program', DEWR website, 5 May 2026, accessed 14 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/reconnection-employment-and-learning-real-program>

³⁵ DEWR, 'Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence', DEWR website, 6 May 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/building-first-nations-skills-and-training-partnerships/indigenous-centre-vocational-excellence>; DEWR, 'First Nations VET Policy Partnership', DEWR website, 7 August 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/building-first-nations-skills-and-training-partnerships/first-nations-vet-policy-partnership>

³⁶ DEWR, 'Remote Training Hubs Network', DEWR website, 10 July 2026, accessed 19 August 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/remote-training-hubs-network>

³⁷ DEWR, 'Fee-Free TAFE Program Snapshot – Quarter 1, 2026', DEWR website, 13 July 2026, accessed 1 September 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/skills-reform/resources/feefree-tafe-program-snapshot-quarter-1-2026>

Results

Approach

The department is committed to transparency and accountability, with a clear line of sight between planned performance and reported results. The department maintains an enterprise-wide performance framework that supports the development, monitoring and reporting of performance information. The framework provides a consistent approach to the design, assessment and reporting of performance measures, supporting meaningful assessment of the department's contribution to its purpose and outcomes.

These annual performance statements report on the department's performance against the measures published in the 2025–26 Corporate Plan. The results are supported by analysis and contextual information to provide a balanced and transparent assessment of performance. Given the breadth and complexity of the department's responsibilities, performance should be considered collectively, as no single measure can fully reflect the department's overall achievements.

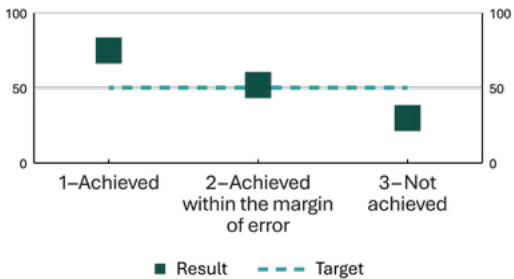
Where targets have been established, results are generally assessed as achieved, not achieved or achieved within the margin of error. For measures based on survey data or other sampling methodologies, a margin of error will be disclosed where relevant. Where a target is within the reported result's margin of error, the department will assess the target as 'achieved within the margin of error'. This recognises that minor differences between the result and the target may reflect normal sample variation rather than a meaningful difference in performance.

In some circumstances, the department may determine that available information is not of sufficient quality to support a reliable assessment. Where this occurs, the department will report that there is insufficient data quality to assess performance and explain the nature of the limitation.

The department uses a combination of internal and external data sources and applies governance, quality assurance and verification processes to provide confidence in the accuracy, completeness and reliability of reported results.

The following sections provide an overview of performance results before presenting detailed results, analysis, methodologies and data sources for each performance measure.

Figure 2.1: Visual representation of results with sampling error against a hypothetical target of 50



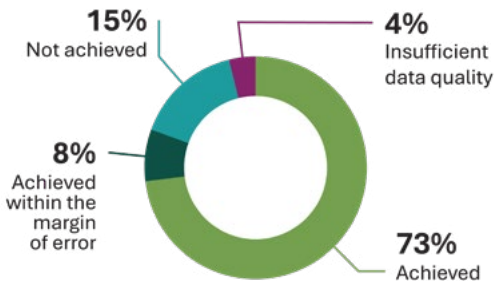
Overview of performance results

In 2025–26 the department reported against 19 performance measures comprising 26 targets. This excludes SK010 – Support to the Nuclear-powered Submarine Program, for which it is not reasonably practicable to set a target, and instead analysis is provided through the department's performance reporting on engagement and advice in relation to workforce and training.

Of the 26 targets:

- 19 were achieved, and 2 were achieved within the margin of error³⁸
- 4 were not achieved
- 1 had insufficient data quality.³⁹

Figure 2.2: Performance measure result summary 2025–26



³⁸ Where results are based on sampling data, such as sample surveys, there is an associated level of uncertainty, which is expressed as a margin of error and disclosed where relevant. Where a target is within the reported result's margin of error, the department may assess the target as 'achieved within the margin of error'. This recognises that minor differences between the result and the target may reflect normal sample variation rather than a meaningful difference in performance.

³⁹ Results where the margin of error is too large to provide a clear read of the result because the available information is not of sufficient quality to support a reliable assessment, the department will report that there is insufficient data quality to assess performance and explain the nature of the limitation.

Annual performance results

Outcome 1

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs

Table 2.1: Outcome 1 performance summary

Performance measure	Program	DEWR reference code	Result rating	Page reference
Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered	1.1 – Employment Services	EM002	a) Workforce Australia Online: Achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved	34
Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who achieve a 26-week employment outcome	1.1 – Employment Services	EM005	Not achieved	38
Proportion of participants in work or study 3 months after exiting services	1.1 – Employment Services	EM006	a) Workforce Australia Online: Not achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved	40
Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who believe working with their provider has improved their chances of getting a job	1.1 – Employment Services	EM009	Achieved	44
Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services	1.1 – Employment Services	EM010	Insufficient data quality	46
Investment per employment outcome	1.1 – Employment Services	EM011	Not achieved	48
Average time to process decision-ready new employer applications to join the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme	1.1 – Employment Services	EM012	Achieved	51

Outcome 2

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training

Table 2.2: Outcome 2 performance summary

Performance measure	Program	DEWR reference code	Result rating	Page reference
Proportion of VET graduates who are satisfied with the overall quality of the training	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability	SK001	a) Achieved b) Achieved c) Achieved	<u>55</u>
Proportion of VET graduates who are employed or enrolled in further study after training	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability	SK002	a) Achieved b) Achieved within the margin of error c) Achieved	<u>58</u>
Proportion of employers using nationally recognised training	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability	SK004	Achieved	<u>61</u>
Proportion of participants assessed in the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program who show language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills improvements	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability	SK005	Achieved	<u>63</u>
Proportion of units of study successfully completed by VET Student Loans (VSL) students	2.2 – VET Student Loans	SK007	Achieved	<u>64</u>
Proportion of students who report that financial barriers to training were removed by participation in the VSL program	2.2 – VET Student Loans	SK009	Achieved	<u>67</u>
Support to the Nuclear-powered Submarine Program is provided through engagement and advice on workforce and training	2.3 – Nuclear-powered Submarine Program	SK010	Not applicable – no target set for 2025–26	<u>68</u>
Proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability	SK011	Achieved	<u>70</u>

Outcome 3

Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces

Table 2.3: Outcome 3 performance summary

Performance measure	Program	DEWR reference code	Result rating	Page reference
Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely	3.1 – Workplace Support	WR001	Achieved	<u>72</u>
Average processing time for initial effective claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program	3.1 – Workplace Support	WR002	Achieved	<u>74</u>
Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct	3.1 – Workplace Support	WR003	Achieved within the margin of error	<u>76</u>
Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) collectively reported by companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme	3.1 – Workplace Support	WR004	Not achieved	<u>79</u>

Note: To visually present meaningful data and support data interpretation, the ranges of vertical axes for some charts in the following section of the annual performance statements have been adjusted.

Performance measure results

Outcome 1

Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs

Measure EM002	Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered
Target	a) Workforce Australia Online: 60% or higher ⁴⁰ b) Workforce Australia Services: 66% or higher ⁴¹ c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 75% or higher ⁴²
Result rating	a) Workforce Australia Online: Achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved
Result value	a) Workforce Australia Online: 63.9% ⁴³ b) Workforce Australia Services: 78.8% ⁴⁴ c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 84.3% ⁴⁵
Analysis	Workforce Australia is the Australian Government’s suite of employment services programs, designed to upskill individuals, prepare them for employment, and achieve employment outcomes. It supports people to access services and find work. This measure demonstrates how well the department is delivering the primary Workforce Australia employment services programs, Workforce Australia Online, Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work, by measuring participant satisfaction with the overall quality of services delivered. The targets for this measure were achieved for Workforce Australia Online, Workforce Australia Services, and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work. Compared with 2024–25, the results for this measure in 2025–26 are: - Workforce Australia Online – a decrease from 64.5% for 2024–25 (31 March 2024 to 28 February 2025 reporting period)⁴⁶ to 63.9% for 2025–26 (30 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 reporting period) (see Figure 2.3). - Workforce Australia Services – an increase from 78.0% for 2024–25 (30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 reporting period)⁴⁷ to 78.8% for 2025–26 (30 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 reporting period) (see Figure 2.4).

⁴⁰ Workforce Australia Online supports participants assessed as most job ready and likely to find work without more direct assistance. Support is provided through a digital platform and the Digital Services Contact Centre.

⁴¹ Workforce Australia Services delivers provider-led employment assistance to participants assessed as requiring more intensive and tailored support to move towards employment.

⁴² Workforce Australia – Transition to Work provides employment support for young people who are at higher risk of not successfully transitioning to employment or education, including through intensive, locally delivered assistance.

⁴³ The margin of error for Workforce Australia Online is ± 0.5 percentage points at the 90% confidence level.

⁴⁴ The margin of error for Workforce Australia Services is ± 0.3 percentage points at the 90% confidence level.

⁴⁵ The margin of error for Workforce Australia – Transition to Work is ± 1.2 percentage points at the 90% confidence level.

⁴⁶ The Online Services Satisfaction Survey transitioned from a quarterly to a monthly survey cycle over 2024 and 2025, to align with other post-program monitoring surveys conducted by the department and to better account for seasonal variation. This means that the results reported in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2024–25 comprised a combination of quarterly and monthly surveys conducted over 12 months. This transition was completed for the 31 October 2024 to 30 September 2025 reporting period onwards.

⁴⁷ DEWR, 'Quality and Progress Survey detailed results (Workforce Australia Services) – 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025' [dataset], DEWR website, 15 September 2025, accessed 25 June 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-research/resources/quality-and-progress-survey-detailed-results-workforce-australia-services-30-april-2024-31-march>

Measure EM002	Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered
	Workforce Australia – Transition to Work – an increase from 83.7% for 2024–25 (30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 reporting period)⁴⁸ to 84.3% for 2025–26 (30 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 reporting period) (see Figure 2.4). Improved rates of participant satisfaction with overall quality of services over the year may reflect that Workforce Australia is now a reasonably mature service. For Workforce Australia Online, the overall satisfaction result for 2025–26 exceeded the target by 3.9 percentage points, despite a decrease from the 2024–25 result. Satisfaction rates across more specific domains of servicing experienced decreases over the same period. This includes declines in participant satisfaction with information and access to education and training options, searching and applying for jobs, and using the tools available on the Workforce Australia homepage. For Workforce Australia Services, the overall satisfaction result for 2025–26 was 12.8 percentage points above the target and represented an improvement compared with the 2024–25 result. Over 2025–26, participant satisfaction increased across most domains of servicing. This includes improvements in providers offering participants services that help them further into the future, offering support that matches participants' needs, connecting participants to support services, and offering services that help participants to find a job or get more hours. The department has also carried out a range of initiatives related to quality service provision, including increasing data and analytics outputs, hosting provider forums, conducting licence reviews and increasing the provider focus on quality servicing through changes to the Workforce Australia Services Provider Performance Framework. For Workforce Australia – Transition to Work, the overall satisfaction result for 2025–26 was 9.3 percentage points above the target and was higher than the 2024–25 result. Satisfaction rates have stayed fairly stable over the last year across specific domains of servicing. This includes for providers giving advice on how to look for work, connecting participants to support services, offering support that matches participants' needs, and offering participants services that will help them further into the future.⁴⁹ On 27 May 2026 the government announced major reforms to employment services to better meet the needs of individuals, communities and businesses. The department has commenced consulting on opportunities to improve the quality of employment services, with an intent to build a more personalised and responsive employment services system that actively supports more people to participate in the labour market and meet the needs of employers and industries. Further information on employment services reform is available at dewr.gov.au.

⁴⁸ DEWR, 'Quality and Progress Survey detailed results (Transition to Work) – 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025' [dataset], DEWR website, 15 September 2026, accessed 25 June 2026.
<https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-research/resources/quality-and-progress-survey-detailed-results-transition-work-30-april-2024-31-march-2025>

⁴⁹ The Quality and Progress Survey and Online Services Satisfaction Survey captures satisfaction with various domains of servicing. Domains of servicing are derived from the Quality and Progress Survey for Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work, and from the Online Services Satisfaction Survey for Workforce Australia Online. Presented below are the survey questions that capture the domains of servicing mentioned in the analysis.

Quality and Progress Survey:

Question 1: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with provider (site) with regard to:

- Giving you advice on how to look for work?
- Connecting you to support services?

Question 3: Thinking about provider (site), to what extent do you agree that:

- The support they offer matches your needs?
- The services you are getting from them are helping you to find a job or get more hours?
- The services you are getting from them will help you further into the future?

Online Services Satisfaction Survey:

Question 1: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Workforce Australia Online with regard to:

- Information and access to education and training options?
- Searching and applying for jobs?
- Using the tools available on your Workforce Australia homepage (e.g. recommended jobs, tasks, PBAS targets)?

Measure EM002	Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered
Methodology	This measure relies on 2 surveys. The Quality and Progress Survey collects information on participant satisfaction with their service provider and their progress to employment in 2 Workforce Australia employment services programs: Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work. The Online Services Satisfaction Survey collects information on participant satisfaction and their progress to employment in Workforce Australia Online.⁵⁰ The Quality and Progress Survey and the Online Services Satisfaction Survey operate over a rolling 12-month data collection period, to account for potential seasonal effects. Data relates to the reporting period of 30 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.⁵¹ The measure is calculated using the proportion of a representative sample of participants who indicate they are either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the services received from Workforce Australia during the reference period (a rolling 12 month period).⁵² Responses are weighted relative to their significance in the total caseload population to maintain representation.⁵³ This measure is calculated by dividing the: Numerator: Weighted responses reporting that participants are ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the overall quality of services <u>Over</u> Denominator: Weighted number of responses to the survey question.
Source	DEWR Post-Program Monitoring – Online Services Satisfaction Survey and Quality and Progress Survey
Contributing program	1.1 – Employment Services
Key activity	Provide quality services to job seekers and employers

⁵⁰ For targets (b) and (c), participants can only be surveyed if they have been commenced with a Workforce Australia Services or Workforce Australia – Transition to Work provider for at least 91 days. For target (a), there is no business rule on length of time in servicing. For 2025–26, the response rates were:

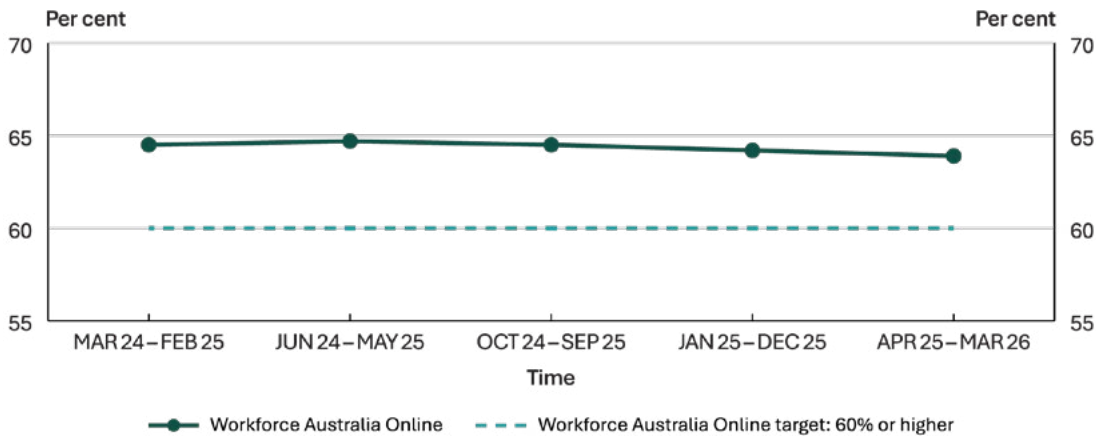
- a. Workforce Australia Online: 27.6%
- b. Workforce Australia Services: 19.6%
- c. Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 24.2%.

⁵¹ **Rolling 12-month data collection period:** a 12-month rolling period means the results are from the most recent available 12 months. As the 12-month period rolls forward each quarter, the survey results from the last 3 months are added and those from the 3 months over a year ago are removed; **Data availability:** as the Quality and Progress Survey and Online Services Satisfaction Survey cycle runs for around 3 months, the period ending March 2026 is the nearest available period for results.

⁵² The survey question is: ‘How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with provider (site)/Workforce Australia Online with regard to overall quality of service?’.

⁵³ Results are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population. This ensures that variations in quality of service that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

Figure 2.3: Participant satisfaction with overall quality of service – Workforce Australia Online



Source: DEWR, Post-Program Monitoring – Online Services Satisfaction Survey, DEWR website, accessed 25 June 2026.

Figure 2.4: Participant satisfaction with overall quality of service – Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work



Source: DEWR, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Quality and Progress Survey, DEWR website, accessed 25 June 2026.

Measure EM005	Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who achieve a 26-week employment outcome
Target	15% or higher
Result rating	Not achieved
Result value	12.9%
Analysis	This measure tracks how well Workforce Australia Services supports its participants to achieve job placements, and the extent to which those job placements result in secure and sustained employment.⁵⁴ It reports on the proportion of participants who achieved a 26-week employment outcome.⁵⁵ The target for this measure was not achieved. The 26-week employment outcome rate was 12.9% for the 12-month period to 31 May 2026. This was an increase of 1.2 percentage points from the 11.7% result published in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2024–25, and an increase of 0.2 percentage points from the 12.7% result published in the Employment and Workplace Relations 2026–27 Portfolio Budget Statements.⁵⁶ Despite an improvement since the previously published results, it is still below the target of 15%. This reflects trends in the labour market including a recent rise in unemployment and an extended change in the nature of vacancies available. The target recognises that Workforce Australia Services participants may require more intensive, tailored support from their employment services provider to help them find and keep a job. As reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the unemployment rate rose from a low 3.4% in October 2022 to 4.4% in May 2026.⁵⁷ Higher unemployment rates have made it more difficult for employment services participants to secure employment, and in particular Workforce Australia Services participants, who face additional labour market disadvantages. In addition to a higher unemployment rate, the Australian labour market is undergoing a shift towards jobs that require higher levels of education and skills. Since the beginning of Workforce Australia, the proportion of low-skilled vacancies among online job advertisements in the Australian labour market has fallen from 41.0% in July 2022 to 35.5% in May 2026, according to the Internet Vacancy Index.⁵⁸ This shift presents further challenges for Workforce Australia Services participants, given that fewer than half have a non-school qualification.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Outcome payments are only relevant to provider-serviced participants in Workforce Australia Services. Therefore, Workforce Australia Online participants are outside the scope of this measure. Similarly, participants in Transition to Work are not included in this measure.

⁵⁵ This measure assesses commenced periods of assistance where the participant recorded at least one job placement that later converted to a 26-week outcome, during the 12-month period to 31 May 2026.

⁵⁶ The result published in the Employment and Workplace Relations 2026–27 Portfolio Budget Statements relates to the 12-month period to 30 November 2025.

⁵⁷ ABS, 'Labour Force Data–May 2026' [dataset], ABS website, 25 June 2026, accessed 13 August 2026.
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/may-2026>

⁵⁸ 'Low-skilled vacancies' in this context refers to Skill Levels 4 and 5 according to the ABS Occupation Standard Classification for Australia, which generally require lower levels of formal education and training than occupations classified at higher skill levels (ABS, 'Conceptual model–Occupation Standard Classification for Australia', ABS website, 6 December 2024, accessed 13 August 2026.
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/classifications/osca-occupation-standard-classification-australia/2024-version-1-0/conceptual-model>); JSA, 'Vacancy Report – May 2026' [PDF, 645 KB], JSA website, 24 June 2026, accessed 14 July 2026.
https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-06/vacancy_report_-_may_2026_-_jobs_and_skills_australia.pdf

⁵⁹ DEWR, 'Workforce Australia Caseload by Selected Cohorts – 31 May 2026' [dataset], DEWR website, 19 June 2026, accessed 13 August 2026.
<https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-services-data/resources/workforce-australia-caseload-selected-cohorts-31-may-2026>

Measure EM005	Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who achieve a 26-week employment outcome
	There has been an improvement in performance against this measure since the publication of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2024–25. Part of the increase in the result over the past year is due to changes in the measure's methodology. The methodology was refined to increase its completeness, and this contributed to a higher number of outcomes in the numerator.⁶⁰ The department has encouraged providers to improve their performance. The Workforce Australia Services Provider Performance Framework continues to incentivise providers to assist participants into employment. Improvements in outcomes for participants over the longer term are expected to be delivered as part of employment system reforms and through policy levers, including our skills and training system through workforce planning undertaken by the JSCs, qualification reform and delivering the Foundational Skills Strategy. The reforms to employment services will create a more responsive, effective and dignified system. Three new service streams with different service offerings will be introduced, replacing the current model. The way people are matched to supports both from the start and while in employment services will be overhauled, so they are connected to the right supports at the right time. Closer connections to employers, other local supports and the labour market, as well as the right skills and training, will help participants more quickly benefit from the dignity of work. The department will continue to monitor the performance of this measure, which will inform decisions on employment system reforms.
Methodology	This measure is calculated using the proportion of participants in Workforce Australia Provider Services who recorded at least one job placement which converted to a 26-week outcome, over a 12-month period. This measure is calculated by dividing the: Numerator: Commenced periods of assistance in Workforce Australia Services where the participant recorded at least one job placement which converted to a 26-week outcome, over a 12-month period <u>Over</u> Denominator: Commenced periods of assistance in Workforce Australia Services, over a 12-month period.
Source	DEWR program administrative data from the ESSWeb system
Contributing program	1.1 – Employment Services
Key activity	Support job seekers to achieve sustainable employment

⁶⁰ Refinements include implementing a one-month lag in reporting and adding 26-week employment outcomes that were achieved by Workforce Australia Services participants in the Self-Employment Assistance service, and those claimed manually by providers to the department.

Measure EM006	Proportion of participants in work or study 3 months after exiting services
Target	a) Workforce Australia Online: 80% or higher b) Workforce Australia Services: 60% or higher c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 60% or higher
Result rating	a) Workforce Australia Online: Not achieved b) Workforce Australia Services: Achieved c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: Achieved
Result value	a) Workforce Australia Online: 76.8% ⁶¹ b) Workforce Australia Services: 61.1% ⁶² c) Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 65.2% ⁶³
Analysis	This performance measure demonstrates how well the primary Workforce Australia employment services programs, Workforce Australia Online, Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work, are supporting participants to achieve positive outcomes: being employed and/or in study or training 3 months after exiting employment services. The targets for Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work were achieved, but the target for Workforce Australia Online was not achieved. There has been a small decline in the positive outcome rate for Workforce Australia Online over the past year, while there has been an increase in positive outcome rates for Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work over the same period (shown in Figure 2.5): ■ Workforce Australia Online – from 77.4% for the 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 reporting period to 76.8% for the 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 reporting period. ■ Workforce Australia Services – from 60.3% for the 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 reporting period to 61.1% for the 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 reporting period. ■ Workforce Australia – Transition to Work – from 62.6% for the 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 reporting period to 65.2% for the 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 reporting period. The decline in the positive outcome rate for Workforce Australia Online was driven by a reduction in the proportion of employed participants after exiting services (shown in Figure 2.6), partially offset by a small increase in study or training rates. The decline in the proportion of participants finding employment after exiting Workforce Australia Online over the past year was predominantly for those with lower levels of educational attainment. Employment rates for participants who had only completed Years 10 or 11 fell from 63.8% to 56.9%, while employment rates for those who had completed secondary school alone fell from 68.3% to 64.3%. Results were stable for those with a post-secondary school qualification.

⁶¹ The margin of error for Workforce Australia Online is ± 1.0 percentage points at the 90% confidence level.

⁶² The margin of error for Workforce Australia Services is ± 1.0 percentage points at the 90% confidence level.

⁶³ The margin of error for Workforce Australia – Transition to Work is ± 1.8 percentage points at the 90% confidence level.

Measure EM006	Proportion of participants in work or study 3 months after exiting services
	This reduction could be attributed to a lack of vacancies suitable to participants without post-secondary qualifications. According to the JSA Vacancy Report – December 2025, the total number of vacancies available nationally declined by 0.8% over the year.⁶⁴ Vacancies fell for Skill Level 3, 4 and 5 occupations, but increased slightly for Skill Level 1 and 2 occupations, which represent the highest levels of qualification.⁶⁵ This means there are improved employment opportunities for participants with higher-level qualifications. However, only about 28.1% of participants who exited Workforce Australia Online over the year to December 2025 held a university qualification.⁶⁶ The decline in the employment rate for Workforce Australia Online may also be influenced by broader changes in labour market conditions. Labour market conditions in Australia have been softening since the very strong post-COVID recovery period. Annual employment growth eased to 1.0% in December 2025, down from a recent peak of 7.3% in October 2022. The unemployment rate rose from a low 3.4% in October 2022 to 4.1% in December 2025, although it remains low by historical standards.⁶⁷ In this environment, more job-ready Workforce Australia Online participants, such as those with a university qualification, are experiencing slightly higher employment rates compared with a year ago. However, slowing employment growth may also make it more difficult for some Workforce Australia Online participants to obtain suitable employment. Some cohorts in Workforce Australia Online, including people with disability, First Nations participants, women, those with lower levels of education, older participants, young people and those living in regional areas, have continued to experience modest declines in employment rates over the year. Outcomes for these groups tend to be more sensitive to changes in labour market conditions as they tend to be disproportionately impacted by economic downturns and upswings, compared with the overall population.

⁶⁴ Data is seasonally adjusted. JSA, 'Vacancy Report – December 2025' [PDF, 469 KB], JSA website, 21 January 2026, accessed 13 June 2026. https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-01/vacancy_report_-_december_2025_-_jobs_and_skills_australia.pdf

⁶⁵ The ABS Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) defines skill levels as follows:

Skill Level 1 – Occupations at Skill Level 1 have a level of skill commensurate with a bachelor degree or higher qualification. At least 5 years of relevant experience may substitute the formal qualification. In some instances, relevant experience and/or on-the-job training may be required in addition to the formal qualification.

Skill Level 2 – Occupations at Skill Level 2 have a level of skill commensurate with one of the following:

- New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) Diploma or
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma or Diploma.

At least 3 years of relevant experience may substitute for the formal qualifications listed above. In some instances, relevant experience and/or on-the-job training may be required in addition to the formal qualification.

Skill Level 3 – Occupations at Skill Level 3 have a level of skill commensurate with one of the following:

- NZQF Level 4 qualification
- AQF Certificate IV or
- AQF Certificate III including at least 2 years of on-the-job training.

At least 3 years of relevant experience may substitute for the formal qualifications listed above. In some instances, relevant experience and/or on-the-job training may be required in addition to the formal qualification.

Skill Level 4 – Occupations at Skill Level 4 have a level of skill commensurate with one of the following:

- NZQF 2 or 3 qualification or
- AQF Certificate II or III.

At least one year of relevant experience may substitute for the formal qualifications listed above. In some instances, relevant experience may be required in addition to the formal qualification.

Skill Level 5 – Occupations at Skill Level 5 have a level of skill commensurate with one of the following:

- NZQF Level 1 qualification
- AQF Certificate I or
- compulsory secondary education.

For some occupations a short period of on-the-job training may be required in addition to or instead of the formal qualification.

In some instances, no formal qualification or on-the-job training may be required. (ABS, 'Conceptual basis of ANZSCO – 2022', ABS website, 22 November 2022, accessed 23 June 2026.

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/classifications/anzsco-australian-and-new-zealand-standard-classification-occupations/2022/conceptual-basis-anzsco>)

⁶⁶ The department's Workforce Australia Online administrative data, as at 31 May 2026.

⁶⁷ Seasonally adjusted data obtained from ABS, 'Labour Force, Australia, April 2026' [dataset], ABS website, 21 May 2026, accessed 9 June 2026. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2026>

Measure EM006	Proportion of participants in work or study 3 months after exiting services
	While positive outcome rates improved for both Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work, these gains were driven by increases in study or training rates. Both these employment services programs had relatively stable employment rates over the year, but a decline in the number of suitable vacancies and moderating labour market conditions have made it challenging for all Workforce Australia participants to find suitable work. In these conditions, it is expected that a higher proportion of Workforce Australia participants have turned to study or training in order to increase their job readiness. More broadly, the department continues to support participants to build skills and improve employability through existing employment and training pathways, including referrals to education and training opportunities. The improvement in positive outcomes for Workforce Australia Services and Transition to Work was partly driven by increased participation in study or training, which may reflect participants responding to changing labour market demand by building their skills and qualifications. Improvements over the longer term are expected to be delivered as part of employment system reforms that will be delivered over the next few years. Furthermore: ▪ The 2026–27 Budget included funding for critical investments to help Workforce Australia Online participants to find work. For example, the digital platform will be enhanced to provide career mapping and advice for participants. ▪ The department recently made changes to ensure participants assessed as having low digital capability through the Job Seeker Snapshot are referred to a provider, rather than to Workforce Australia Online.⁶⁸ ▪ Any participants currently in Workforce Australia Online who undertake an eligibility reassessment and who have previously indicated they have low digital capability will also be referred to a provider.
Methodology	The department monitors positive outcomes for Workforce Australia participants through the Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey.⁶⁹ This survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period to account for potentially seasonal effects and assesses positive outcomes for participants around 3 months after exiting employment services. Due to the length of the survey process, and additional quality assurance requirements, results are produced around 4 months after the end of the relevant reporting period – these results relate to the reporting period of 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. The measure is calculated using the proportion of a representative sample of participants who indicate they are in work and/or study or training about 3 months after exiting employment services during the reference period (a rolling 12-month period). Responses are weighted relative to their significance in the total population to maintain representation.⁷⁰ This measure is calculated by dividing the: Numerator: Weighted responses reporting participants are employed and/or in study or training Over Denominator: Weighted number of responses to the survey question (asked of participants who have exited employment services).

⁶⁸ For more information on the Job Seeker Snapshot Overview (1 July 2022), visit dewr.gov.au.

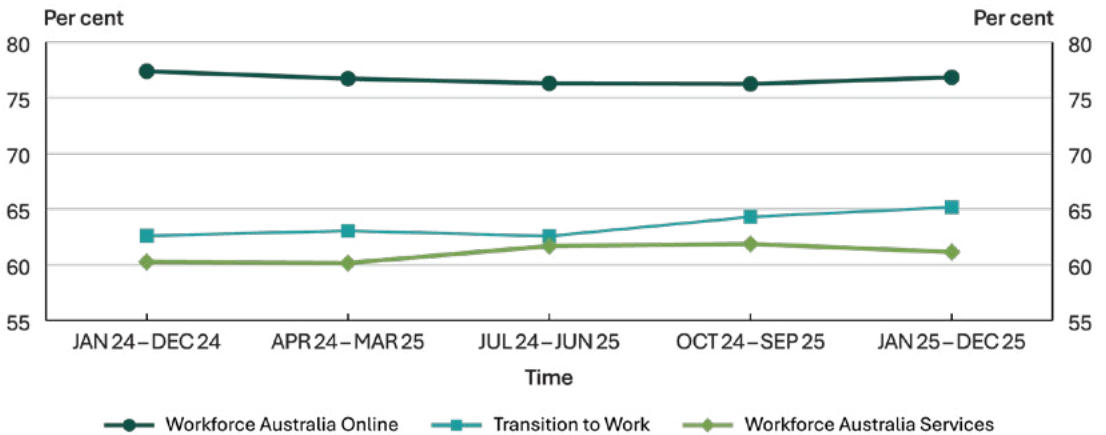
⁶⁹ The department's Post-Program Monitoring – Labour Force Survey provides information on the employment and education status of participants in 3 Workforce Australia employment services programs – Workforce Australia Online, Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work. Workforce Australia participants who were in or have exited any of these 3 employment services programs in the reference period can receive the survey, with the following response rates for 2025–26:

a. Workforce Australia Online: 17.8%
b. Workforce Australia Services: 16.4%
c. Workforce Australia – Transition to Work: 17.7%.

⁷⁰ Results are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population. This ensures that variations in labour force and/or study or training outcomes that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

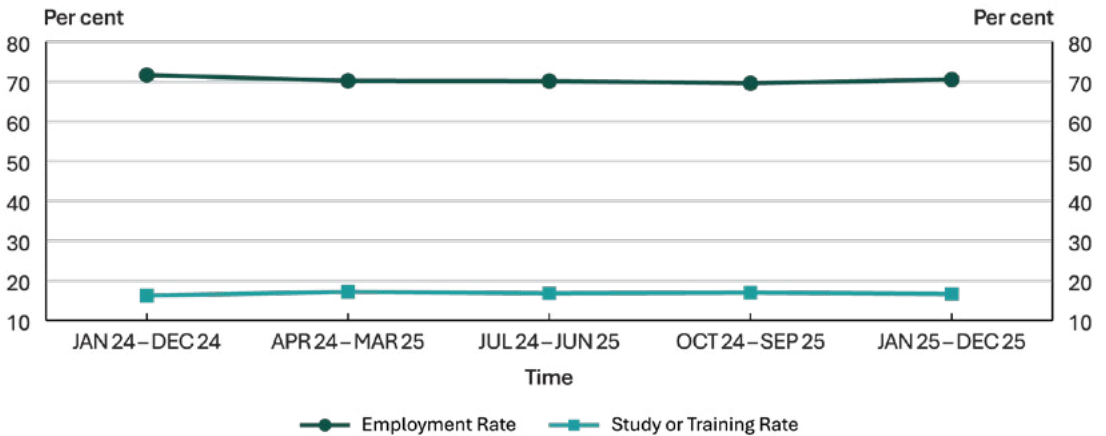
Measure EM006	Proportion of participants in work or study 3 months after exiting services
Source	DEWR Post-Program Monitoring – Labour Force Survey
Contributing program	1.1 – Employment Services
Key activity	Support job seekers to achieve sustainable employment

Figure 2.5: Positive outcome rates for Workforce Australia programs



Source: DEWR, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Labour Force Survey, DEWR website, accessed 13 June 2026.

Figure 2.6: Employment and/or study or training rates for Workforce Australia Online



Source: DEWR, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Labour Force Survey, DEWR website, accessed 13 June 2026.

Measure EM009	Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who believe working with their provider has improved their chances of getting a job
Target	66% or higher
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	73.1% ⁷¹
Analysis	Workforce Australia is the Australian Government's suite of employment services programs, designed to upskill individuals, prepare them for employment, and achieve employment outcomes. It supports people to access services and find work. This measure assesses whether Workforce Australia Services, as delivered by the department's contracted providers, help participants move closer to employment. Improving participants' chances of finding a job by improving their work readiness and preparedness for employment is a key activity for the department's role and commitments. The result of 73.1% (30 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 reporting period) exceeded the minimum target for this measure by 7.1 percentage points and is an increase of 1.5 percentage points from the 2024–25 result of 71.6% (30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 reporting period) (see Figure 2.7).⁷² Similar to performance measure EM002 – Proportion of participants who are satisfied with the overall quality of services delivered (page 34 refers), an increase in the proportion of participants who believed working with their provider improved their chances of getting a job may be a reflection of an improvement in service quality and the maturation of Workforce Australia Services over time. Over the year, there has been an improvement in Workforce Australia Services participant views on service provision across most domains of servicing. This includes improvements in providers offering participants services that help them further into the future, offering support that matches participants' needs, connecting participants to support services, and offering services that help participants to find a job or get more hours.⁷³
Methodology	The Quality and Progress Survey collects information on participant satisfaction with their service provider and their progress to employment in 2 Workforce Australia employment programs: Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work.⁷⁴ The Quality and Progress Survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period to account for potential seasonal effects. Data relates to the reporting period of 30 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.⁷⁵ The measure is calculated using the proportion of a representative sample of participants who indicate that services received improved their chances of getting a job either 'a lot' or 'a little' during the reference period (a rolling 12-month period).⁷⁶

⁷¹ The margin of error is ± 0.3 percentage points at the 90% confidence level.

⁷² DEWR, 'Quality and Progress Survey detailed results (Workforce Australia Services) – 30 April 2024 to 31 March 2025' [dataset], DEWR website, 15 September 2025, accessed 25 June 2026.
<https://www.dewr.gov.au/employment-research/resources/quality-and-progress-survey-detailed-results-workforce-australia-services-30-april-2024-31-march>

⁷³ The Quality and Progress Survey captures satisfaction with various domains of servicing. Presented below are the survey questions that capture the domains of servicing mentioned in the analysis.

Question 1: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with provider (site) with regard to:

- Connecting you to support services?

Question 3: Thinking about provider (site), to what extent do you agree that:

- The support they offer matches your needs?
- The services you are getting from them are helping you to find a job or get more hours?
- The services you are getting from them will help you further into the future?

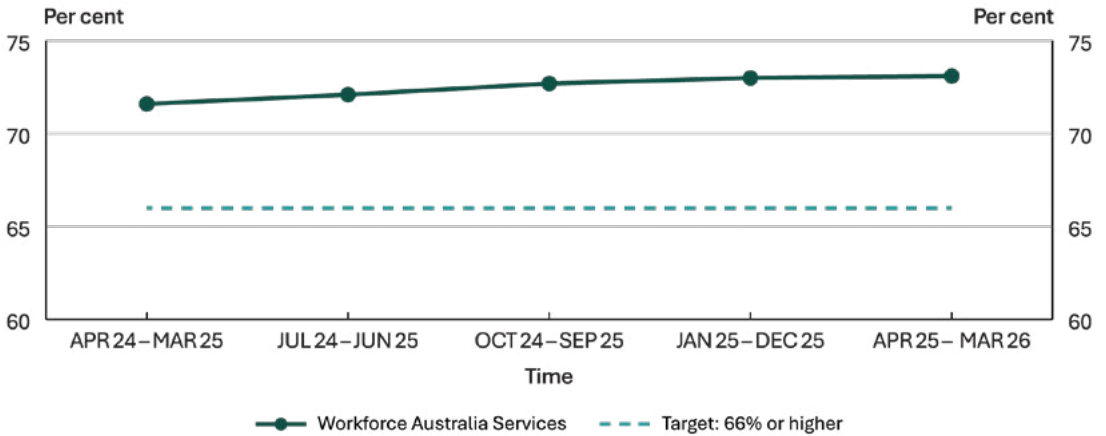
⁷⁴ Participants can only be surveyed if they have been commenced with a Workforce Australia Services provider for at least 91 days. For 2025–26, the response rate was 19.6%.

⁷⁵ **Rolling 12-month data collection period:** a 12-month rolling period means the results are from the most recent available 12 months. As the 12-month period rolls forward each quarter, the survey results from the last 3 months are added and those from the 3 months over a year ago are removed. **Data availability:** as the Quality and Progress Survey cycle runs for around 3 months, the period ending March 2026 is the nearest available period for Workforce Australia Services results.

⁷⁶ The survey question is: 'Do you feel that working with provider (site) has improved your chances of getting a job?'

Measure EM009	Proportion of Workforce Australia Services participants who believe working with their provider has improved their chances of getting a job
	Responses are weighted relative to their significance in the total population to maintain representation.⁷⁷ This measure is calculated by dividing the: Numerator: Weighted responses reporting that services received by participants improved their chances of getting a job by a little or a lot <u>Over</u> Denominator: Weighted number of responses to the survey question.
Source	DEWR Post-Program Monitoring – Quality and Progress Survey
Contributing program	1.1 – Employment Services
Key activity	Support target groups to improve their work readiness and prepare for employment

Figure 2.7: Proportion of participants who believed working with their provider improved their chances of getting a job



Source: DEWR, Post-Program Monitoring Surveys – Quality and Progress Survey, DEWR website, accessed 25 June 2026.

⁷⁷ Results are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population of employment services participants. This ensures that variations in improved job chances that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

Measure EM010	Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services
Target	80% or higher
Result rating	Insufficient data quality ⁷⁸
Result value	77.6% The margin of error for this result is 9.0 percentage points at the 90% confidence level. This means there is a 90% chance that the true value was between 68.6% and 86.6%. ⁷⁹
Analysis	This measure helps assess whether the assistance delivered by the department's contracted employment services providers is of a high quality. The measure reflects satisfaction with the assistance provided by the Australian Government employment service to the employer in their attempt to fill their most recent vacancies. Results are taken from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS), conducted by JSA. For the 12-month period to May 2026, 77.6% of employers were satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services. This result was based on a sample of employers who indicated they had used Australian Government employment services in their most recent recruitment round.⁸⁰ While the result for this measure is below the performance target of 80%, there was a small increase in the result from both the result of 76.8% published in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2024–25, and the result of 76.5% published in the Employment and Workplace Relations 2026–27 Portfolio Budget Statements.⁸¹ However, these small changes are well within the margin of error, and conclusions cannot be drawn with confidence about trends in performance over the past year. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Job Vacancies Survey, the seasonally adjusted number of available job vacancies decreased by 2.1% in the year to May 2026, across both private and public sectors.⁸² Similarly, the JSA Vacancy Report showed a 3.3% decline in the number of online job advertisements over the same period.⁸³ The decline in overall recruitment activity across the Australian labour market may have led to fewer employers seeking assistance from Australian Government employment services, which may have contributed to the decline in the number of responses used in this measure over the year to May 2026. As part of employment services reform, the government is considering how to strengthen employer engagement and deliver supports that better meet the needs of employers.

⁷⁸ The result is reported as 'Insufficient data quality' because the survey-based estimate has a margin of error that exceeds the department's threshold for reliable performance assessment, meaning a clear determination against the target cannot be made. The result value is reported below for transparency, noting the level of statistical uncertainty associated with the estimate.

⁷⁹ For the 12-month period to May 2026, only 84 responses to the REOS could be used for this result. The declining trend in the number of responses over the past 2 years has resulted in increasing standard errors and therefore higher margins of error for the result.

⁸⁰ Where employers are categorised as 'used a government employment service' and as 'employment services not further defined', this is due to responses received that indicate the service used was free of charge, such as 'free' or 'unpaid'.

⁸¹ Results published in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2024–25 for this measure related to responses to the REOS received in the 12-month period to May 2025. Results published in the Employment and Workplace Relations 2026–27 Portfolio Budget Statements for this measure related to responses to the REOS received in the 12-month period to November 2025. Both publications are available at dewr.gov.au.

⁸² ABS, 'Job Vacancies, Australia – May 2026' [dataset], ABS website, 25 June 2026, accessed 31 July 2026. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/jobs/job-vacancies-australia/may-2026>

⁸³ JSA, 'Vacancy Report – May 2026' [PDF, 645 KB], JSA website, 24 June 2026, accessed 31 July 2026. https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-06/vacancy_report_-_may_2026_-_jobs_and_skills_australia.pdf

Measure EM010	Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services
Methodology	The measure is calculated using the proportion of employers that are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services, based on their most recent recruitment experience, over a 12-month period.⁸⁴ JSA provides independent advice to government on the labour market, workforce skills and training needs, and priorities to assist with government policy development and program delivery. Results for this measure are sourced from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey conducted by JSA. This measure is based on a sample of employers with 5 or more staff who respond to the survey and have used Australian Government employment services in their most recent recruitment activity. The survey collects responses to the following questions for the calculation of the performance measure result: - How did you try to fill this vacancy/these vacancies? - Is this a paid or unpaid employment service? - Were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the assistance provided by this agency? If a respondent answers 'Unsure' to the question regarding satisfaction then they are not included in the denominator.
Source	JSA, Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey
Contributing program	1.1 – Employment Services
Key activity	Provide quality services to job seekers and employers

Table 2.4: Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services, May 2024 – May 2026

Final month of 12-month survey period	Employer satisfaction rate	Number of employer respondents contributing to the measure	Margin of error (percentage points at the 90% confidence level)
May 2024	80.9%	236	5.1
August 2024	80.1%	208	5.6
November 2024	81.8%	174	6.0
February 2025	82.2%	160	6.3
May 2025	76.8%	139	7.3
August 2025	80.6%	123	7.1
November 2025	76.5%	101	8.2
February 2026	76.9%	85	8.9
May 2026	77.6%	84	9.0

⁸⁴ Based on responses to the REOS from employers who have used Australian Government employment services in their most recent recruitment round. This data is based on broad Australian Government employment services; a small amount of data may reflect other government services data, depending on the level of understanding of the person/employer being surveyed (for example, state or territory linked employment services providers, Inclusive Employment Australia, and Community Development Program providers). DEWR accounts for the majority of government employment services offered. Should inaccuracies occur, they are expected to be minor.

Measure EM011	Investment per employment outcome
Target	\$3,500 or lower per employment outcome
Result rating	Not achieved
Result value	\$3,959
Analysis	This measure helps assess the department's efficiency in service delivery through contracted Workforce Australia Services providers. Delivering efficient employment services supports value for money. Workforce Australia is the Australian Government's primary employment program, supporting people to access services and find work. Workforce Australia Services provides tailored assistance through contracted providers for participants who may require greater support and are at higher risk of long-term unemployment. The target for this measure was not achieved in 2025–26 (1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 reference period). There has been an increase in the investment per employment outcome since a result was published in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2024–25 (1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 reference period) – from \$3,479 to \$3,959.⁸⁵ A lower value for this measure indicates better performance. This increase since the 2024–25 result has been driven by both a lower estimated number of employed participants, and an increase in variable expenditure (shown in Figure 2.8). The increase in variable expenditure since the 2024–25 result has mostly been driven by an increase in Employment Fund expenditure, as well as in outcome payments and Youth Bonus Wage Subsidies.⁸⁶ Part of the overall increase in variable expenditure over the year has been offset by a reduction in expenditure for engagement payments. Another factor contributing to the increase in variable expenditure over 2025–26 is the indexation of several key payments to providers, including engagement payments, employment outcome payments, progress payments, and fees associated with activity participation. From 1 July 2025, the amounts of these payments increased by 6.8%. A mismatch between jobs available and the skills of Workforce Australia Services participants may explain the decline in the estimated number of employed participants since 2024–25. The types of job vacancies most accessible to disadvantaged participants are in decline, and demand appears to be weakening for occupations suitable for many participants' skill levels. According to the JSA Vacancy Report – December 2025, Skill Level 5 job vacancies (the most relevant for participants with no tertiary qualifications) made up around 10.9% of total job vacancies in December 2025, and declined by 1.2% over the year.⁸⁷ Around 51.9% of participants on the Workforce Australia Services caseload on 31 December 2025 had no tertiary qualifications.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ The result value and rating for this measure for the 2024–25 reporting year were incorrectly reported in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2024–25. The 2024–25 investment per employment outcome (IPEO) result was incorrectly reported as \$3,575 and 'not achieved'. The correct result value for the 2024–25 reporting year is \$3,479 and the result rating is 'achieved' (against a target of \$3,500 or lower per employment outcome). The 2024–25 IPEO result has been amended accordingly and is available in Table 2.8—Corrections to the 2024–25 performance reporting on investment per employment outcome (EM011) on [page 81](#). A further update to previously published IPEO results is \$3,726 (from \$3,829) for the 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 reference period, published in the Employment and Workplace Relations 2026–27 Portfolio Budget Statements. Both publications are available at dewr.gov.au.

⁸⁶ The Workforce Australia Services Employment Fund is a flexible pool of funds used by providers to purchase goods and services that help people get and keep a job. The Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy provides eligible employers with financial assistance to employ young people participating in employment services, supporting pathways into ongoing employment.

⁸⁷ Skill Level 5 is equivalent to Certificate I or secondary education; JSA, 'Vacancy Report – December 2025' [PDF, 469 KB], JSA website, 21 January 2026, accessed May 2026.
https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2026-01/vacancy_report_-_december_202_-_jobs_and_skills_australia.pdf;
The April 2026 Internet Vacancy Index Data Download was used for detailed analysis, accessed in May 2026.

⁸⁸ DEWR, Workforce Australia Services administrative data, as at 31 May 2026.

Measure EM011	Investment per employment outcome
	The department continues to encourage Workforce Australia Services providers to assist their participants into employment using both financial and performance incentives. While increased expenditure on the Employment Fund contributes to the high result for this measure, it is a key support to help people in Workforce Australia find and keep employment. The department will continue to work with providers to enable them to flexibly provide support to participants based on individual circumstances. Over the longer term, the department is progressing reforms to employment services to support improved outcomes. The Australian Government is reforming mainstream employment services to better meet the needs of individuals, employers, communities, and the economy. Based on extensive community feedback, the government has developed a vision and framework for the future employment services system. The future system is intended to give people the best opportunity to secure a meaningful well-paid job. This will also be supported by policy levers in the skills and training system, including the Foundational Skills Strategy, qualification reform and workforce planning undertaken by the JSCs.
Methodology	The measure relies on the Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey, undertaken by the department. This survey operates over a rolling 12-month data collection period to account for potential seasonal effects and assesses employment outcomes for participants.⁸⁹ Due to the length of the survey process, and additional quality assurance requirements, results are produced around 4 months after the end of the relevant reporting period. These results relate to the reporting period of 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. The investment per employment outcome is a measure of the ratio between the aggregated actual variable expenditure in providing Workforce Australia Services and the estimated number of employed participants using Workforce Australia Services.⁹⁰ Responses used for the denominator are weighted relative to their significance in the total population to maintain representation.⁹¹ This measure is calculated by dividing the: Numerator: The aggregated actual variable expenditure in providing Workforce Australia Services over the reporting period.⁹² Over Denominator: The estimated number of employed participants using Workforce Australia Services over the reporting period.⁹³

⁸⁹ A 12-month rolling period means the results are from the most recent available 12 months. As the 12-month period rolls forward each quarter, the survey results from the last 3 months are added and those from the 3 months over a year ago are removed.

⁹⁰ Changing employment outcome rates create a lag in the result for the investment per employment outcome. Any jobs that were found in late 2024 that matured into paid outcomes in early 2025 would count towards the investment in the numerator, but not the outcomes in the denominator.

⁹¹ Post-program monitoring employment rates used for the denominator are weighted to ensure relevant cohorts or groups are reflected relative to their significance within the total population. This ensures that variations in the labour force that may affect or coincide with cohorts of interest do not bias the results.

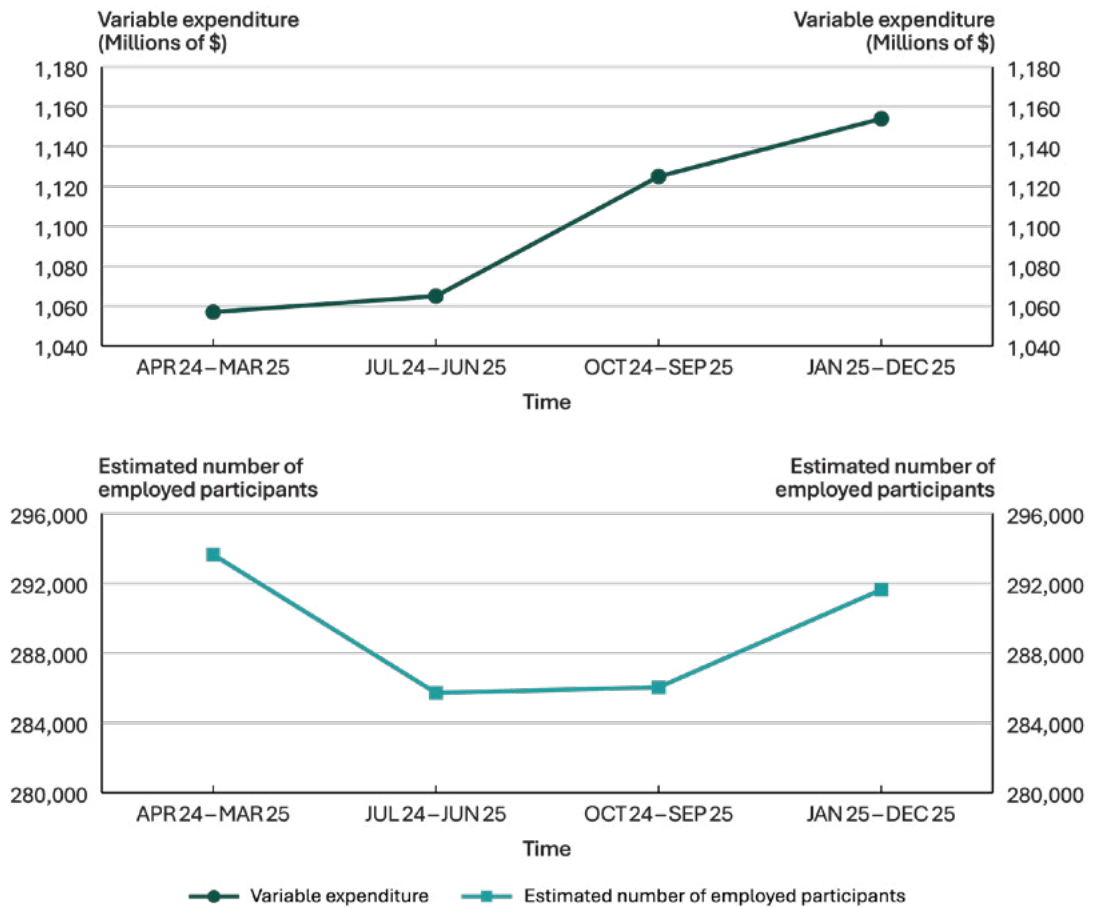
⁹² Variable expenditure on Workforce Australia Services relates to provider-serviced participants only and includes engagement fees; outcome payments; progress fees; transfer between provider fees; Employment Fund; Youth Bonus Wage Subsidy; Employability Skills Training; Career Transition Assistance; and Work for the Dole. Fixed expenditure is not included in this measure as it stays reasonably static by its nature and does not respond to changes in performance. Limiting the measure to expenditure that naturally varies in response to caseload size and outcome payments makes the measure responsive to changes in costs.

⁹³ Employment data from the Labour Force Survey is used for the denominator since all employment should be considered, not just employment that results in a 26-week outcome, which only captures certain types of work. The number of employed participants is estimated by taking the post-program monitoring employment rates in each reporting period from the Labour Force Survey and applying these rates to the Workforce Australia Services caseload and exit populations over the same reporting period. Over the reporting period:

- the number of unique participants on the Workforce Australia Services caseload is multiplied by the caseload post-program monitoring employment rate from the Labour Force Survey
- the number of participant exits from Workforce Australia Services is multiplied by the exit post-program monitoring employment rate from the Labour Force Survey
- these 2 figures are then added together to derive the estimated number of employed participants.

Measure EM011	Investment per employment outcome
Source	DEWR Post-Program Monitoring – Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey. DEWR program administrative data from the Employment Business Intelligence Warehouse and the Employment Services Program Reporting Database. DEWR administrative data from systems for Workforce Australia Services program expenditure.
Contributing program	1.1 – Employment Services
Key activity	Provide quality services to job seekers and employers

Figure 2.8: Variable expenditure and estimated number of employed participants



Source:

DEWR program administrative data from the Employment Business Intelligence Warehouse and the Employment Services Program Reporting Database.
DEWR administrative data from systems for Workforce Australia Services program expenditure.
DEWR Post-Program Monitoring – Workforce Australia Labour Force Survey.

Measure EM012	Average time to process decision-ready new employer applications to join the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme
Target	12 weeks or less
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	5.9 weeks
Analysis	The PALM scheme is a demand-driven temporary employment program. It responds to shortages in unskilled, low-skilled and semi-skilled labour, primarily in regional and rural Australia, by facilitating PALM scheme employers to recruit workers from 9 Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste. DEWR works to meet these employers' labour needs while ensuring adequate protections for PALM scheme workers. The scheme also supports Australia's strategic interests in the Pacific. In the 2025–26 reporting period, the number of PALM scheme employers increased from 519 in July 2025 to 556 in June 2026, comprising 443 direct employers and 113 labour hire companies (see Figure 2.9). The number of workers rose from 30,835 on average in 2024–25, to 31,715 on average in 2025–26. However, the number of PALM workers in Australia varies each month, reflecting the cyclical nature of the program and visa conditions (up to 9 months for the short-term stream and up to 4 years for the long-term stream), changes to workforce demand (for example, owing to growing cycles for different crops in different regions), and workers returning home for holidays or other personal commitments. Figure 2.10 shows the number of PALM scheme workers in Australia, by PALM stream, during 2025–26. This performance measure captures the average time DEWR takes to process new decision-ready employer applications.⁹⁴ Efficient processing of applications helps to address employers' workforce needs by allowing them to become eligible to recruit PALM workers, thereby supporting a wider range of placements for PALM workers. The 2025–26 reporting period is the second period for which a performance result has been reported. The average processing time for 2025–26 was 5.9 weeks for 56 decision-ready applications (see Figure 2.11). The result substantially exceeded the target processing time of 12 weeks or less, with applications processed on average 6.1 weeks faster than the target. It represents a reduction of 0.5 weeks in average processing time compared with 2024–25.⁹⁵ The improved result for 2025–26 was supported by system enhancements made to the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Information System (PALMIS) in May 2025 and reflects the continued maturation of processes following the insourcing of PALM scheme delivery functions in December 2023.⁹⁶ Improvements have resulted in enhanced capability for capturing PALM scheme employer application data. This has streamlined processes and enabled more efficient, automated reporting. Other enhancements were made to PALMIS to mature existing processes, including incorporating additional information previously tracked separately and improving data holdings to support both PALM employers and workers. This measure has been reported for a relatively short period of time and has begun to provide insight into employer application processing times. As the PALM program continues to mature, and priorities evolve, the department will review the appropriateness of this performance measure and associated target, within the context of overall program performance. Further information on the department's performance in relation to the PALM scheme is available on page 18 and further information on the PALM scheme is available on page 23.

⁹⁴ This measure begins at the point of new decision-ready employer applications being assessed to join the scheme and does not take into consideration any recruitment processes. The process to arrive at being decision ready includes requesting and receiving integrity checks from the Department of Home Affairs and the Fair Work Ombudsman, and a DEWR financial viability assessment. The end point of the measure is at the point of delegate sign-off (i.e. employer application either approved or rejected).

⁹⁵ Minor update to the previously published timeliness result of 6.4 weeks from 6.8 weeks for 2024–25.

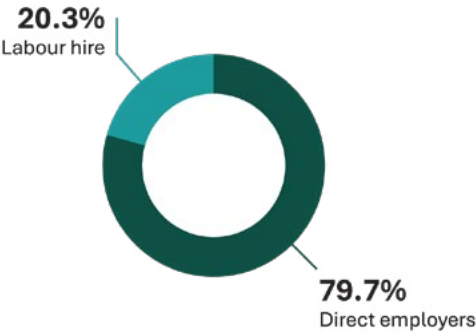
⁹⁶ The PALMIS is the information management system DEWR uses to support PALM scheme operations. It has an external-facing portal used by PALM scheme employers and an internal application used by the department.

Measure EM012	Average time to process decision-ready new employer applications to join the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme
Methodology	This measure is calculated by dividing the: Numerator: The sum of the total time to process all decision-ready PALM scheme applications finalised in the reporting period⁹⁷ Over Denominator: The total number of decision-ready applications finalised in the reporting period. Processing time is measured from when a new PALM scheme application is considered 'decision-ready' until that application is finalised.^{94 98} To reach 'decision-ready' status, an application is first checked to ensure the business is eligible and all required information has been supplied. Once this is confirmed, DEWR conducts a financial viability assessment. This is to assess if the applicant is financially sound, is sustainable and has the finances in place to cover the upfront and ongoing costs for employing PALM workers. DEWR also seeks information on the employer's history of compliance with migration and workplace laws from the Department of Home Affairs and the Fair Work Ombudsman, respectively. If the employer meets these eligibility requirements and no concerns are identified through financial and credential checks, the application is considered 'decision-ready' and DEWR invites the employer to participate in an interview to confirm their understanding of PALM obligations under the PALM scheme deed and guidelines. Employers must demonstrate: ▪ an understanding of worker welfare responsibilities ▪ readiness to manage accommodation, transport and pastoral care ▪ knowledge of other obligations under the PALM scheme deed and guidelines. An application is also considered to be 'decision-ready' when any of the 3 financial and credential checks return adverse information to indicate that the employer is not suitable to join the PALM scheme. Where this occurs, the application is rejected and the employer is not invited to participate in an interview.
Source	PALMIS and DEWR program administrative data
Contributing program	1.1 – Employment Services
Key activity	Provide quality services to job seekers and employers

⁹⁷ 'Decision ready' refers to DEWR receiving all information and supporting documentation from the applicant and other government entities (for example, the Department of Home Affairs and the Fair Work Ombudsman) required for assessment. A 'decision-ready' application is finalised when it is provisionally approved or not approved.

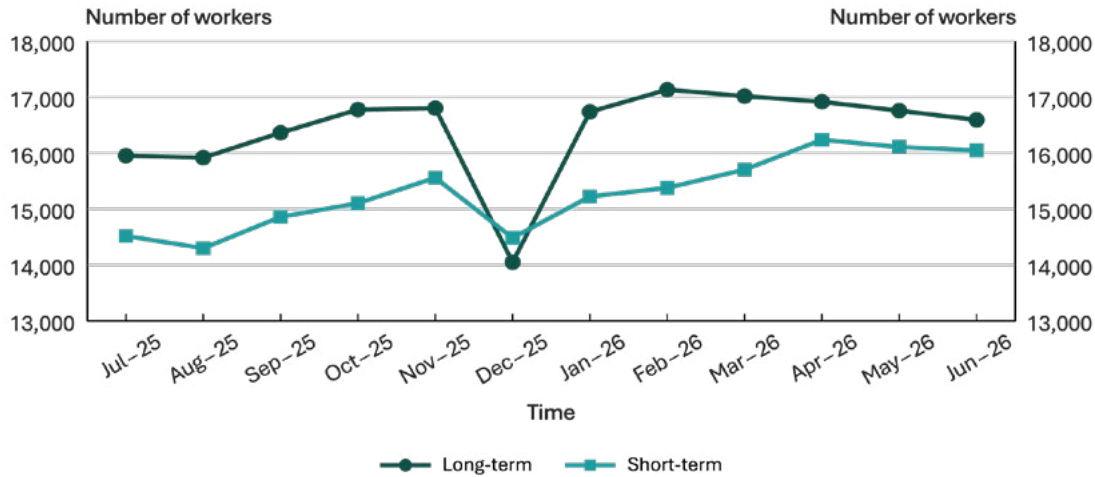
⁹⁸ Delegate sign-off is selected as the end point for this performance measure because it marks the formal conclusion of the department's internal decision-making process. It provides a consistent, auditable milestone that reflects the department's accountability for assessing applications, without being influenced by external factors such as deed execution timelines, which fall outside the department's direct control. This measure accurately captures internal processing efficiency and supports timely decision-making.

Figure 2.9: PALM scheme employers, direct and labour hire, June 2026



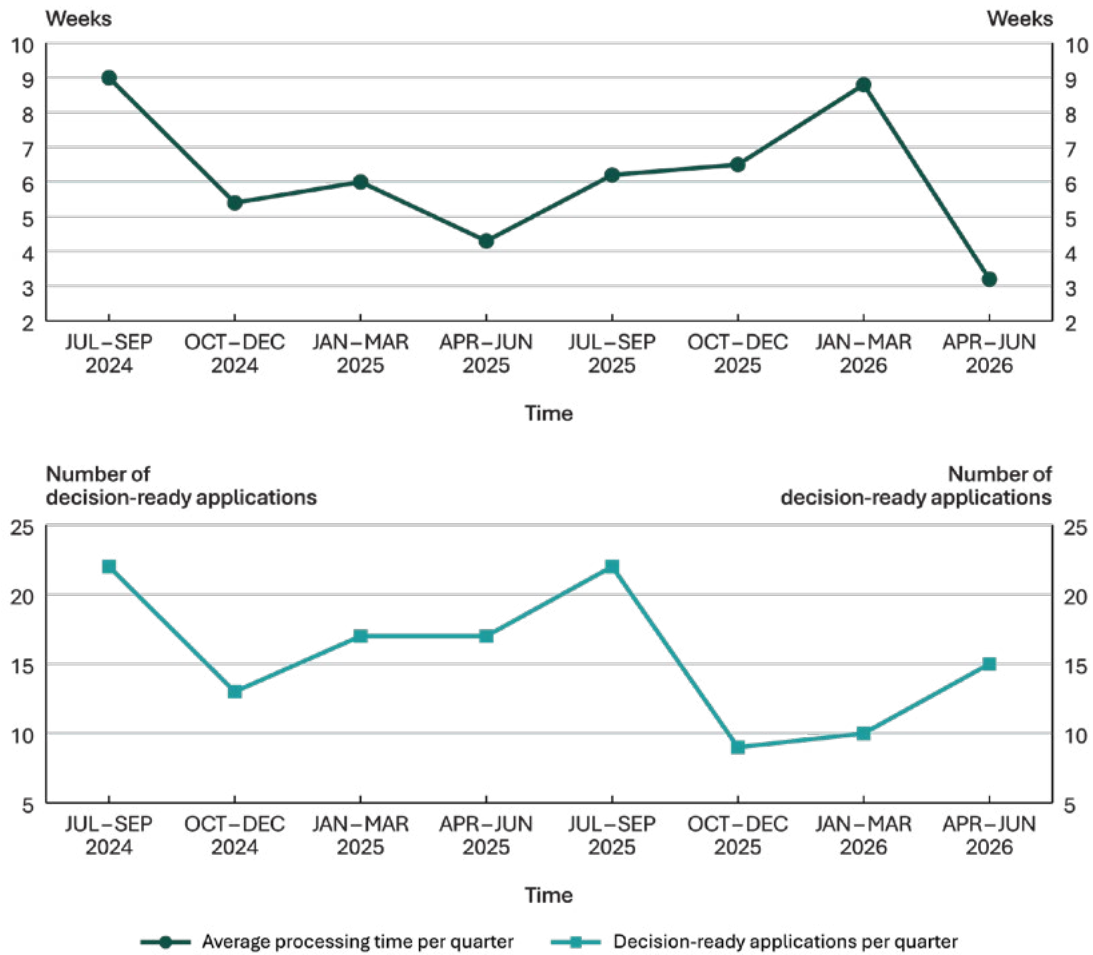
Source: DEWR, 'PALM scheme data publication – June 2026' [dataset], PALM scheme website, June 2026, accessed 28 July 2026. <https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/palm-scheme-data>.

Figure 2.10: PALM scheme workers, short-term and long-term streams, 2025–26



Source: DEWR, 'PALM scheme data reports (September 2025 – June 2026)' [dataset], PALM scheme website, June 2026, accessed 28 July 2026. <https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/palm-scheme-data>.

Figure 2.11: Average processing time of PALM scheme decision-ready applications and number of decision-ready applications per quarter



Source: PALMIS.

Outcome 2

Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training

Measure SK001	Proportion of VET graduates who are satisfied with the overall quality of the training ⁹⁹
Target	a) All graduates: 85% or higher b) First Nations graduates: 85% or higher c) Female graduates: 85% or higher
Result rating	a) All graduates: Achieved b) First Nations graduates: Achieved c) Female graduates: Achieved
Result value	a) All graduates: 89.3% ¹⁰⁰ b) First Nations graduates: 91.3% ¹⁰¹ c) Female graduates: 89.3% ¹⁰²
Analysis	In 2025, the NCVER sent the National Student Outcomes Survey to 554,091 VET graduates, who completed their VET in Australia during 2024.¹⁰³ Of the 186,642 VET graduates who responded to the survey, 180,287 responded to a question seeking their overall level of satisfaction with the training. Of VET graduates overall, the proportion who responded that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the training they received was 89.3%. This is a small decrease from the 89.5% of VET graduates who responded in this way to the same question in the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey.¹⁰⁴ Of First Nations VET graduates who responded to the question (6,988), the proportion who reported being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the training they received was 91.3%. This is a small decrease from the 91.4% of First Nations graduates who responded in this way to the same question in the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey.¹⁰⁴ Of female VET graduates who responded to the question (103,569), the proportion who reported being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the training they received was 89.3%. This is a small decrease from the 89.4% of female graduates who responded in this way to the same question in the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey.¹⁰⁴ These results are consistent with the results of VET graduates in previous years (see Figure 2.12). Student satisfaction with VET has remained consistent over the past 5 years. This appears to reflect stable quality standards, effective training delivery and strong alignment with student expectations.

⁹⁹ 'Graduates' in this context refers to VET students who have completed a qualification (qualification completers).

¹⁰⁰ The margin of error for all graduates as calculated by the NCVER is ± 0.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

¹⁰¹ The margin of error for First Nations graduates as calculated by the NCVER is ± 0.6 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

¹⁰² The margin of error for female graduates as calculated by the NCVER is ± 0.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

¹⁰³ NCVER, 'VET student outcomes – NCVER Collection', NCVER website, n.d., accessed 27 March 2026.
<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/student-outcomes/vet-student-outcomes>

¹⁰⁴ NCVER, 'VET student outcomes 2024' [dataset], NCVER website, 18 December 2024, accessed 27 March 2026.
<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/vet-student-outcomes-2024>

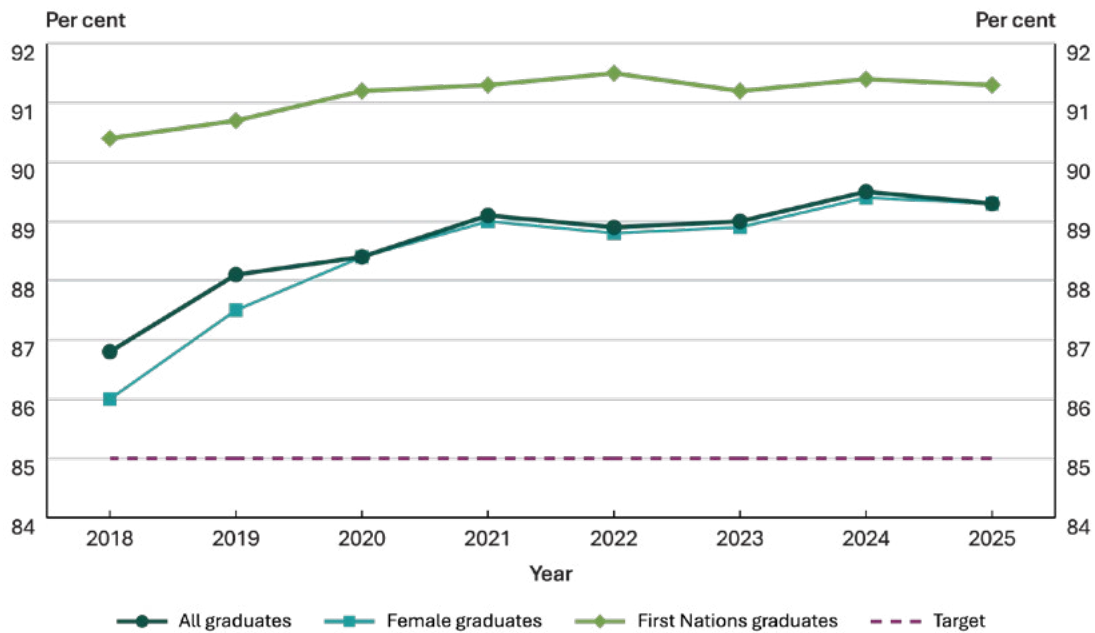
Measure SK001	Proportion of VET graduates who are satisfied with the overall quality of the training ⁹⁹
	Australia's VET system is a complex, shared responsibility between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, with each level of government holding different levers that influence student outcomes. DEWR has access to levers that are indirect but system wide: ■ Funding shapes access and affordability. ■ Regulation affects quality and consistency. ■ Data informs continuous improvement and accountability. In 2024, the period covered by this outcome, the Commonwealth provided funding for programs targeting students from priority groups. These programs included SEE, Free TAFE and incentives and programs supporting apprentices and trainees. Benefits of such support include removal of barriers to training via affordability and reducing financial stress, as well as access to courses aligned with labour market demand, both of which can improve relevance, student engagement and completion rates, with a flow-on positive effect on satisfaction rates.
Methodology	The NCVER is the official national professional body responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics on the Australian VET sector. The National Student Outcomes Survey is an annual survey carried out by the NCVER, which surveys students who undertook nationally recognised VET in the previous calendar year. The NCVER's VET student outcomes collection presents a summary of the results and survey data specifically relating to the outcomes of Australian students who completed their VET in Australia in the previous calendar year.¹⁰⁵ Professional statistical experts are employed by the NCVER to manage, analyse and prepare data for public dissemination. These experts are also responsible for verifying data for publication. For the 2025 survey, data was collected between June and August. Students who undertook a VET qualification, program or subject in 2024 were eligible to receive an invitation by mail, email or telephone call to take part. This outcome is directly based on the responses to the question 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your training?' The 3 sub-measures are calculated as follows: a) Number of VET graduates who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall quality of their training, over the total number of VET graduates. b) Number of First Nations VET graduates who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall quality of their training, over the total number of First Nations VET graduates. c) Number of female VET graduates who were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall quality of their training, over the total number of female VET graduates.
Source	NCVER National Student Outcomes Survey
Contributing program	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability
Key activity	Enhance the quality of vocational education and training (VET)

¹⁰⁵ In 2025, international onshore students were not included in the survey. (NCVER, 'VET student outcomes – NCVER Collection', NCVER website, n.d., accessed 27 March 2026. <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/student-outcomes/vet-student-outcomes>)

Table 2.5: Proportion of VET graduates satisfied with the training overall

Graduates	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All graduates	86.8%	88.1%	88.4%	89.1%	88.9%	89.0%	89.5%	89.3%
First Nations graduates	90.4%	90.7%	91.2%	91.3%	91.5%	91.2%	91.4%	91.3%
Female graduates	86.0%	87.5%	88.4%	89.0%	88.8%	88.9%	89.4%	89.3%

Figure 2.12: Proportion of VET graduates satisfied with the training overall



Source: NCVER, National Student Outcomes Survey, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Note: The target of this measure has undergone minor change in recent reporting years. In 2018 it was 'at least 85%'. During 2019 and 2020 the target was '85%'. In 2021 the target was changed to '85% or higher'. From 2022 onwards, cohort targets, comprising 'All graduates', 'First Nations graduates' and 'Female graduates', all set at '85% or higher', were introduced.

Measure SK002	Proportion of VET graduates who are employed or enrolled in further study after training ⁹⁹
Target	a) All graduates: 80% or higher b) First Nations graduates: 80% or higher c) Female graduates: 80% or higher
Result rating	a) All graduates: Achieved b) First Nations graduates: Achieved within the margin of error c) Female graduates: Achieved
Result value	a) All graduates: 84.5% ¹⁰⁶ b) First Nations graduates: 80.1% ¹⁰⁷ c) Female graduates: 84.2% ¹⁰⁸
Analysis	Of the 186,642 VET graduates who responded to the 2025 National Student Outcomes Survey, 178,347 responded to a question seeking their post-training employment and further study status. Of VET graduates overall, the proportion who responded that they were employed or in further study after training was 84.5%. This is a decrease from the 85.4% of VET graduates who responded in this way to the same survey question in the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey.¹⁰⁴ Of First Nations VET graduates who responded to the question (6,904), the proportion who responded that they were employed or in further study after training was 80.1%. This is a decrease from the 81.8% of First Nations graduates who responded in this way to the same question in the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey.¹⁰⁴ Of female VET graduates who responded to the question (102,462), the proportion who were employed or in further study after training was 84.2%. This is a decrease from 85.3% of female graduates who responded to the same question in the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey.¹⁰⁴ Although lower than the 2024 results, the 2025 results are consistent with those from previous years (as shown in Figure 2.13). These 2025 decreases in employment after training can be related to overall employment conditions in Australia. Australia's VET system is a complex, shared responsibility between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, with each level of government holding different levers that influence student outcomes. DEWR has access to levers that are indirect but system wide: ▪ Funding shapes access and affordability. ▪ Regulation affects quality and consistency. ▪ Data informs continuous improvement and accountability. In 2024 and 2025, the periods covered by this outcome, the Commonwealth provided funding for programs targeting students from priority groups. These programs included SEE, Free TAFE and incentives and programs supporting apprentices and trainees. Benefits of such support include removal of barriers to training via affordability and reducing financial stress, as well as access to courses aligned with labour market demand, both of which can improve relevance, student engagement and completion rates, with a flow-on positive effect on satisfaction rates and the likelihood of students being employed or in further study after training. With the establishment of the Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence from 1 July 2026, the department aims to improve outcomes for First Nations learners through high-quality, culturally responsive training and stronger pathways into employment through collaboration between governments, First Nations learners, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and First Nations-led training providers. The VET Policy Partnership will also support this work by providing a forum for governments and First Nations representatives to work together on shared national priorities that contribute to better VET outcomes for First Nations people.

¹⁰⁶ The margin of error for all graduates as calculated by the NCVER is ± 0.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

¹⁰⁷ The margin of error for First Nations graduates as calculated by the NCVER is ± 0.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

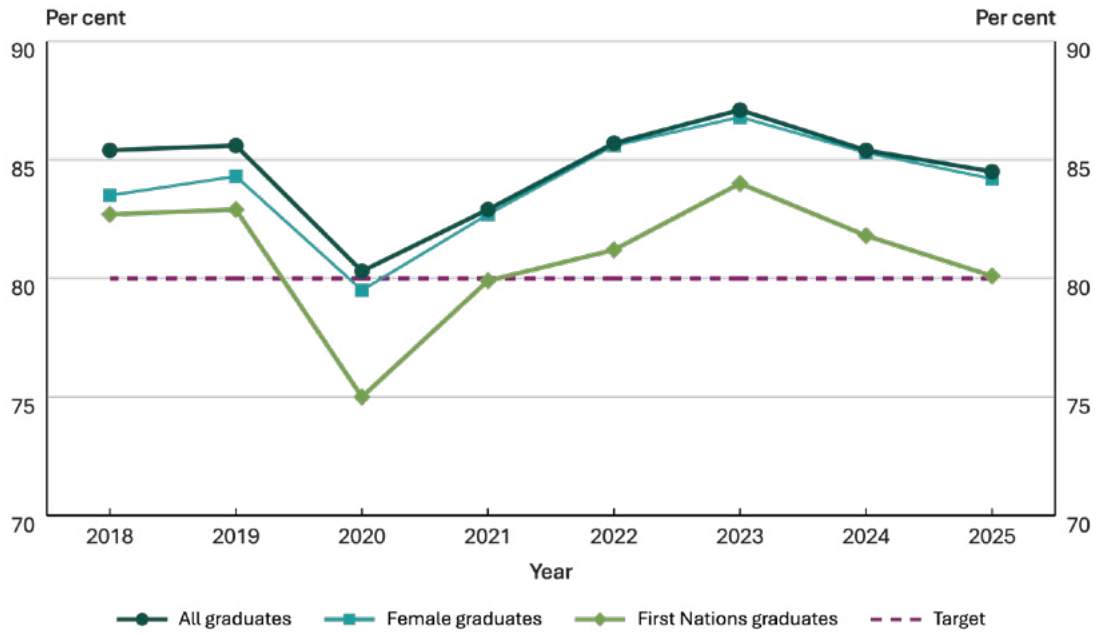
¹⁰⁸ The margin of error for female graduates as calculated by the NCVER is ± 0.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Measure SK002	Proportion of VET graduates who are employed or enrolled in further study after training ⁹⁹
Methodology	For the 2025 National Student Outcomes Survey, data was collected by NCVET between June and August. Students who undertook a VET qualification, program or subject in 2024 were eligible to receive an invitation by mail, email or telephone call to take part. For the 2025 survey, data was collected between June and August. Only a sample of the population of students who undertook a VET qualification, program or subject in 2024 were eligible to receive an invitation by mail, email or telephone call to take part. This performance measure is based on the 2024 National Student Outcomes Survey and results are derived from the following survey questions: - Did you have a job of any kind on 30th May 2025? - Have you commenced another course or further study since undertaking the training? The 3 sub-measures are calculated as follows: a) Numerator: Number of VET graduates who had a labour force status of 'employed' or were enrolled in further study at the time of the survey Over Denominator: The total number of VET graduates. b) Numerator: Number of First Nations VET graduates who had a labour force status of 'employed' or were enrolled in further study at the time of the survey Over Denominator: The total number of First Nations VET graduates. c) Numerator: Number of female VET graduates who had a labour force status of 'employed' or were enrolled in further study at the time of the survey Over Denominator: The total number of female VET graduates.
Source	NCVER National Student Outcomes Survey
Contributing program	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability
Key activity	Enhance the quality of vocational education and training (VET)

Table 2.6: Proportion of VET graduates employed or in further study after training

Graduates	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All graduates	85.4%	85.6%	80.3%	82.9%	85.7%	87.1%	85.4%	84.5%
First Nations graduates	82.7%	82.9%	75.0%	79.9%	81.2%	84.0%	81.8%	80.1%
Female graduates	83.5%	84.3%	79.5%	82.7%	85.6%	86.8%	85.3%	84.2%

Figure 2.13: Proportion of VET graduates employed or in further study after training



Source: NCVER, National Student Outcomes Survey, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Note: The target of this measure has undergone minor change in recent reporting years. In 2018, it was ‘at least 80%’. During 2019 and 2020, the target was ‘80%’. In 2021, the target was changed to ‘80% or higher’. From 2022 onwards, cohort targets, comprising ‘All graduates’, ‘First Nations graduates’ and ‘Female graduates’, all set at ‘80% or higher’, were introduced.

Measure SK004 Proportion of employers using nationally recognised training	
Target	50% or higher
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	57.0% ¹⁰⁹
Analysis	The Survey of Employers' Use and Views of the VET System is carried out every 2 years, with the most recent survey running from March to August 2025. Employers are asked about their use of accredited training, including if they have used nationally recognised training, have had apprentices/trainees, or have had jobs that require a vocational qualification in the previous 12 months. In 2025, 57.0% of employers used accredited training. A total of 3,414 employers indicated that they used accredited training, which corresponded to a weighted total of 569,384 employers in Australia using accredited training. This is an increase from 56.8% of employers using accredited training in 2023.¹¹⁰ The relatively large increase in employers using accredited training since 2021 was probably due to new training needs as employers adapted to changing economic and social conditions, including those coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. The relatively steady use of accredited training over recent years indicates that the right measures were put in place to meet employers' VET needs. Over recent years, the department has supported initiatives to strengthen industry engagement in the VET system, designed industry-relevant training products and streamlined and simplified existing national qualifications to make the VET system more relevant to industry and employer needs. The department has also supported employees through Free TAFE for students to gain qualifications and through incentives and programs supporting apprentices and trainees.
Methodology	The NCVER is responsible for facilitating the 2025 Survey of Employers' Use and Views of the VET System, which is a biennial survey that collects information on the various ways employers meet their skill needs and their satisfaction with the training. This measure is calculated by dividing the: Numerator: Number of businesses with employees that, in the previous 12 months, have used nationally recognised training, have had apprentices/trainees, or have had jobs that require a vocational qualification <u>Over</u> Denominator: The total number of businesses with employees.
Source	NCVER, Survey of Employers' Use and Views of the VET System (SEUV)
Contributing program	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability
Key activity	Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills

¹⁰⁹ The margin of error as calculated by the NCVER is ± 1.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

¹¹⁰ NCVER, 'Employers' use and views of the VET system 2023', VOCEDplus website, 2023, accessed 27 March 2026. <https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv:98191>

Figure 2.14: Proportion of employers using accredited training



Source: NCVER, Survey of Employers' Use and Views of the VET System, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023 and 2025.

Note: The 2017 SEUV results were reported against a target of '53%', introduced in 2018–19. Since the 2019–20 reporting year the target has been set at 50% or higher.

Measure SK005	Proportion of participants assessed in the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program who show language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills improvements ¹¹¹
Target	80% or higher
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	82.1%
Analysis	According to the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, around 3 million adult Australians have low literacy and/or numeracy skills, which can impact on a person's ability to participate in education and training, secure work, and engage in society more broadly.¹¹² The SEE Program provides free foundation skills training for all Australians aged 15 years and over seeking to improve their English language, literacy, numeracy and digital (LLND) skills, enabling them to actively participate in the economy and society. The SEE Program is delivered by a national network of training providers and assisted over 32,000 participants in 2025–26. This performance measure helps to determine whether participants receiving training in the SEE Program are developing the LLND skills they need to achieve their goals, secure sustainable employment, undertake further education and training and better engage in society. The methodology has been revised to reflect new program settings in place since 1 July 2024 under the redesigned SEE Program. Key changes to the program included expanded eligibility for general SEE services, the introduction of workplace-based training projects, and establishing a separate stream of grant funding to support whole of community skills training delivery to First Nations people (SEE First Nations). Consultation on SEE provider key performance indicators (KPIs) during 2024–25 informed both the provider KPIs and this performance measure. This measure now includes components of general SEE services and workplace-based training projects, which are combined into a single percentage score. SEE First Nations is not included in this measure. For participants in general SEE services, progression is assessed against the ACSF and Digital Literacy Skills Framework (DLSF), which provide a consistent approach to measuring foundation skills development. For workplace-based training projects, progression can be demonstrated through ACSF/DLSF improvement, completion of a unit of competency, or completion of a non-accredited training module, recognising that workplace-based training projects are more targeted and often shorter in duration. For 2025–26, 82.1% of participants included in the measure showed LLND skills improvements. This exceeded the performance target of 80.0%, demonstrating that most SEE participants achieved measurable improvements in their LLND skills. While the result exceeded the target, it is lower than the 2024–25 result of 84.9% (noting, however, that the revised methodology limits the comparability of results across years). As the program-level measure is now aligned with the corresponding provider KPIs, performance is expected to strengthen over time, and improvement in results was observed during 2025–26.
Methodology	For general SEE services: the proportion of participants who demonstrate progression against the ACSF or DLSF at a rate of at least one indicator for every 200 hours of training, out of all participants who exited the program after 6 months and completed at least 200 hours of training. For workplace-based training projects: the proportion of participants who complete at least one comparable unit of competency or one non-accredited training module; or achieve a reported ACSF or DLSF increase, out of all participants who complete a project.
Source	Workforce Australia Online for Providers IT system

¹¹¹ This performance measure also contributes to the key activity 'Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET'. The performance measure text and methodology have been updated to reflect changes since the commencement of the redesigned SEE Program and subsequent changes to provider arrangements. SEE First Nations is not included in this measure.

¹¹² OECD, *Building skills for all in Australia: policy insights from the Survey of Adult Skills*, OECD Skills Studies, Paris, 29 September 2017, accessed 13 August 2026. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/building-skills-for-all-in-australia_9789264281110-en.html

Measure SK005	Proportion of participants assessed in the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program who show language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills improvements ¹¹³
Contributing program	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability
Key activity	Improve language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy (LLND) skills for target groups

Measure SK007	Proportion of units of study successfully completed by VET Student Loans (VSL) students
Target	75% or higher ¹¹³
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	85.4%
Analysis	The Australian Government, in collaboration with the state and territory governments, provides a range of activities and policies to promote economic growth and productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training. The VSL program assists eligible students enrolled with VSL approved course providers in VSL approved courses to pay their tuition fees through income contingent loans. The VSL program complements other programs like SEE (SK005 on page 63 refers) and Free TAFE in assisting to remove barriers to undertaking VET. VSL approved courses include VET courses at the diploma qualification level and above. They are linked to state and territory skills lists; are in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and agriculture subjects; or are tied to occupational licensing requirements. The department subjects course providers, also known as registered training organisations (RTOs), to an extensive approval and re-approval process, to support the approval of high-quality RTOs to provide VSL approved courses. Further, the department monitors VSL approved RTOs and their compliance with requirements, further strengthening the integrity of the VSL program and protecting Commonwealth expenditure. This measure is an indicator of successful delivery of learning activities by VSL approved RTOs, and of students gaining increased skills and qualifications they need for employment or further training opportunities. The unit of study completion rate for the 2025 calendar year is 85.4%. As presented in Figure 2.15, this has remained relatively stable between the 2021 and 2025 calendar years, with results averaging around 85% in recent years and the 2025 result in line with the 2024 result of 85.1%.¹¹⁴ This indicates that the measure has consistently achieved its target since the 2021–22 reporting period.

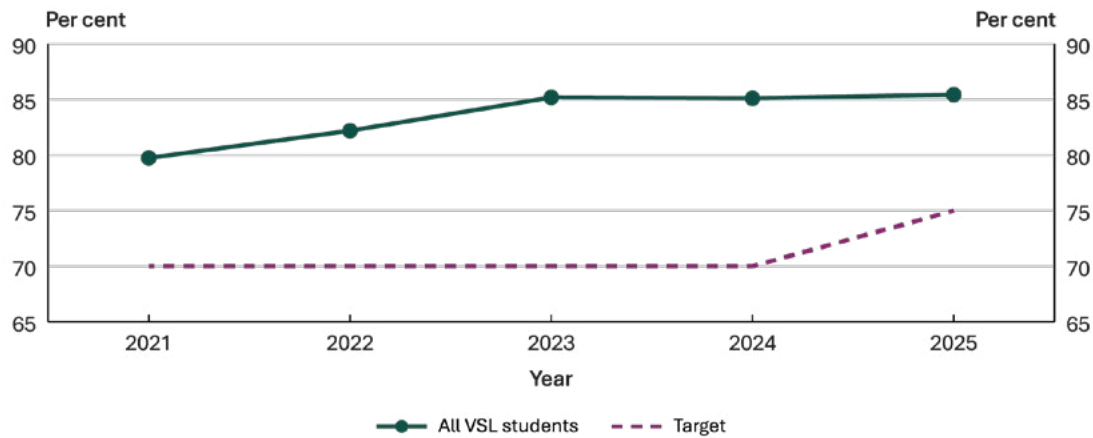
¹¹³ The original target of 70%, as set for the 2021–22 reporting period, was increased to 75% for the 2025–26 reporting period.

¹¹⁴ This unit of study completion rate should not be compared with course completion rates in the broader VET sector.

Measure SK007	Proportion of units of study successfully completed by VET Student Loans (VSL) students
	VSL students continue to achieve strong units of study completion rates. To maintain these outcomes, the department will: ▪ continue its focus on approving/re-approving only high-quality RTOs – i.e. course providers in a sound financial position with acceptable student completion rates – for participation in the VSL program, ensuring quality outcomes for students ▪ continue to set and monitor appropriate course fee limits to support students to avoid taking out excessive loans for the study being undertaken ▪ monitor VSL approved RTOs, including their data reporting, financial performance outcomes and student outcomes, to reduce risk to students and the department ▪ initiate VSL approved RTO discussions, performance reviews and compliance action as required. Further information relating to the VSL program is available at dewr.gov.au.
Methodology	The unit of study completion rate measures the proportion of reported equivalent full-time study load (EFTSL) units of study that were successfully completed in the reporting period. The results are determined by calculating the passed EFTSL units of study over the total number of EFTSL units of study attempted in the preceding calendar year. The calculation is: $\frac{\text{Passed EFTSL in calendar year}}{\text{Attempted EFTSL in calendar year}}^{115}$ The term 'Attempted' is determined by the sum of EFTSL units of study reported with the following outcomes: ▪ Passed ▪ Failed ▪ Withdrawn ▪ Medical Withdrawn. The data used for this performance measure is sourced from the Tertiary Collection of Student Information system (TCSI). The process involves the following: ▪ RTOs report student, course and enrolment data into TCSI. ▪ RTOs report unit outcomes from a predefined list of values. EFTSL is calculated by the RTO based on guidance in the VSL approved provider manual. ▪ RTOs update the unit of study outcome within 14 days of the outcome being known. ▪ Once reported to TCSI, a copy is transferred to the VSLConnect system. ▪ The data is extracted and analysed by a VSL data analyst for reporting against the performance measure. Further information on the unit of study status code is available at TCSIsupport.gov.au.
Source	DEWR program administrative data, interfacing with TCSI
Contributing program	2.2 – VET Student Loans
Key activity	Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET

¹¹⁵ The calculation excludes ongoing units and units reported as not undertaken due to recognition of prior learning (RPL).

Figure 2.15: Units of study completion rates (actual versus target), 2021 to 2025¹¹³



Source: DEWR internal systems.

Note: From 2021 to 2024, the target was '70% or higher'. In 2025, a target of '75% or higher' was introduced.

Measure SK009	Proportion of students who report that financial barriers to training were removed by participation in the VSL program
Target	80% or higher ¹¹⁶
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	92.8%
Analysis	The VSL program assists eligible students enrolled with VSL approved course providers in VSL approved courses to pay their tuition fees through income contingent loans. Compulsory repayments of these loans are made through the income tax system and only commence when a student's income exceeds the minimum repayment threshold. The program is designed to provide financial support to students undertaking approved courses that address workplace and industry needs and create better opportunities for employment or further skills and training. During the 2025–26 reporting period, 92.8% of survey respondents agreed that they would not have undertaken training without access to a VET student loan. This is based on a response rate of 99.9%. This is in line with the 2024–25 figure of 93.12%, as presented in Figure 2.16. In addition to the VSL program, the department undertakes a range of activities and administers programs that assist in removing barriers to undertaking VET, including SEE (SK005 on page 63 refers) and Free TAFE. To achieve this result into the future, the department will continue to: ▪ monitor, analyse and evaluate students' responses to this question ▪ encourage VSL approved RTOs to discuss with students the option of applying for a VET student loan in cases where a student would otherwise miss out due to financial constraint ▪ work closely with external stakeholders to prevent vulnerable students from being targeted with any loan for a course that they might have been eligible for in other programs like Free TAFE.
Methodology	The measure is calculated using the proportion of students who say they would not have undertaken training without access to the VSL program. Students who receive a VET student loan to study an approved course are required to complete electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (e-CAF) progression checks. As part of their first e-CAF progression for each course enrolment, students are asked the question relating to this measure. The response is mandatory and the choice is binary, 'Agree' and 'Disagree'.¹¹⁷ A response of 'Agree' is recorded as 1 and 'Disagree' is recorded as 2 in the e-CAF database. The calculation is: $\frac{\text{Number of 'Agree' responses}}{\text{Total responses}}^{118}$
Source	Student e-CAF survey results
Contributing program	2.2 – VET Student Loans
Key activity	Reduce barriers to undertaking quality VET

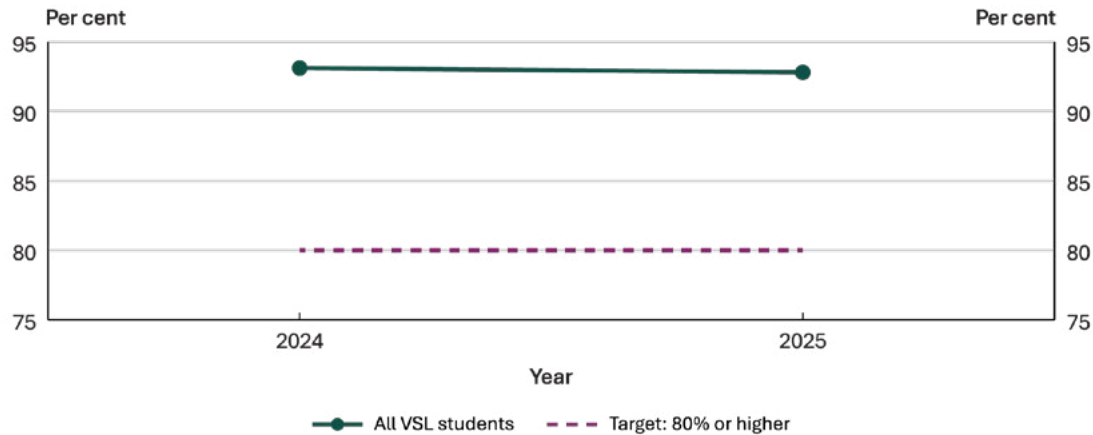
¹¹⁶ The 2025–26 reporting period is the first year for which this measure has a formal target. Consequently, the 80% target establishes a baseline for current and future monitoring of the measure.

¹¹⁷ The response rate for 2025–26 is 99.9% because either:

- a small proportion of students choose not to access VSL after submitting an initial e-CAF. In these scenarios an e-CAF progression is still issued to the student, who may choose not to complete the survey
- a student may submit their e-CAF after the requested due date for response.

¹¹⁸ Total responses = sum of ('Agree' and 'Disagree').

Figure 2.16: Proportion of students who report that financial barriers to training were removed by participation in the VSL program (actual versus target), 2024–25 and 2025–26



Source: DEWR internal systems.

Measure SK010	Support to the Nuclear-powered Submarine Program is provided through engagement and advice on workforce and training ¹¹⁹
Target	No target ¹²⁰
Result rating	Not applicable – no target set for 2025–26
Result value	Not applicable
Analysis	DEWR’s Defence Skills and Workforce Taskforce provides expert advice to government on how to optimise use of the VET system for the nuclear-powered submarine (NPS) enterprise workforce. The taskforce supports the NPS program through facilitation, policy advice and engagement with the Australian Submarine Agency (ASA) and other agencies involved in the whole-of-government effort. There are practical limitations to objectively measuring the performance of the taskforce. DEWR’s performance is intrinsically linked with that of the nationwide AUKUS (Pillar One – Nuclear-powered submarine capability) enterprise and hence will probably not be measurable for several years, as the NPS program extends for decades. The AUKUS Optimal Pathway spans multiple phases, across hosting and maintaining, acquiring and building conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines.

¹¹⁹ The advice and support provided by the department to the ASA assists its decision-making on program design and workforce arrangements. The ASA 2025–26 Annual Report sets out ASA’s responsibilities for enabling the necessary workforce arrangements for the NPS program and reports on its performance in achieving its purpose. Performance measures and targets related to those responsibilities sit outside the portfolio responsibilities of DEWR.

¹²⁰ The advice and support provided to the broader Nuclear-powered Submarine Program is driven by requests from the Defence portfolio, and it is not practicable to set a target for this measure.

Measure SK010	Support to the Nuclear-powered Submarine Program is provided through engagement and advice on workforce and training ¹¹⁹
	Throughout 2025–26 the taskforce has supported the NPS program on skills and training workforce initiatives such as: ▪ developing frameworks and standards for recognising and recording suitably qualified and experienced personnel, including those with experience at US and UK NPS manufacturing venues ▪ advising ASA on industry strategy implementation plans and other developing strategies to build an NPS industrial workforce supply line that meets forecast skills demand ▪ participating in a working group that advises the TAFE Defence Industry Centre of Excellence on needs and priorities for developing training courses for workers in a nuclear environment ▪ working on future options for the skills system to support the functional operations of an NPS Skills and Training Academy campus in Adelaide ▪ engaging with JSA and JSCs on ways to improve defence industry workforce planning strategies and datasets ▪ supporting the design and implementation of pilot programs to extend defence industry career pathway training offerings, such as non-traditional traineeships and apprenticeships ▪ facilitating internal consultations regarding existing and developing DEWR skills and workforce programs' fitness for purpose for the NPS enterprise. Note: Funding was approved in the 2026–27 Budget for DEWR to continue supporting the NPS Program until 30 June 2028.
Methodology	Performance is demonstrated using information on engagement and advice activities that have been undertaken under this program during 2025–26, supported by departmental attendance and correspondence records. ¹²¹
Source	Internal departmental records
Contributing program	2.3 – Nuclear-powered Submarine Program
Key activity	Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills

¹²¹ There are no administered funds under this measure. Staff within the taskforce in 2025–26 were retained under departmental funding. Activities reported reflect relevant key instances of departmental officers engaging and providing advice.

Measure SK011	Proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations ¹²²
Target	Maintain or increase compared to previous year
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	4.9 percentage point increase
Analysis	The Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System targets government support to encourage commencements in priority occupations identified on the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List.¹²³ By directing financial incentives to both apprentices and employers in these identified areas, the system promotes initial uptake while also supporting retention and successful completion of apprenticeships in occupations critical to Australia's workforce needs. The incentive system, introduced on 1 July 2022, replaced earlier arrangements under the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program and temporary COVID-19 measures, which ceased on 30 June 2022. It introduced a more targeted approach, with higher incentives for priority occupations and reduced overall payments. From 1 July 2024, incentives for non-priority occupations were removed, further strengthening this focus. These changes have contributed to a rebalancing of apprenticeship activity. Growth has continued in priority occupations, while reduced activity has been concentrated in non-priority, predominantly non-trade occupations. Between July–December 2024 and July–December 2025, total apprenticeship commencements increased by 7.3% (from 53,415 to 57,305), driven by a 15.3% rise in priority occupation commencements (from 34,860 to 40,185).¹²⁴ As Figure 2.17 shows, the share of priority occupation commencements increased from 65.3% in July–December 2024 to 70.1% in July–December 2025 (up 4.9 percentage points). These results suggest that reforms to apprenticeship incentives are contributing to increased uptake in priority occupations and better alignment of apprenticeship commencements with national workforce priorities. These outcomes are also influenced by broader economic conditions, employer demand and state and territory training arrangements within the federated Australian Apprenticeships system. Measuring commencements provides a timely and direct indicator of current program activity and uptake. While the number of commencements does not represent the number of Australian Apprentices who graduate, it is a lead indicator of completions and shows how many individuals are entering apprenticeship pathways, which is influenced by Commonwealth initiatives in the current financial year. The share of completions in priority occupations increased from 63.3% in July–December 2024 to 70.0% in July–December 2025 (up 6.7 percentage points). However, this reflects the cumulative impact of decisions and circumstances over several years. Trade apprenticeships typically take 3 to 4 years to complete, and non-trade traineeships take 12–18 months.
Methodology	The NCVER collects data on all persons employed under a training contract and includes both apprentices and trainees. Data is collected from state training authorities on training activity in apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia, including information on training rates and duration of training. Information is collected from the apprenticeship/traineeship training contract completed by the employer and employee. ¹²⁵

¹²² Commencements provide the most appropriate measure of performance, as there is a good understanding of likely completions based on commencements. This performance measure allows for timely changes to settings to best impact apprenticeship outcomes. The typical duration of a trade Australian Apprenticeship is 4 years; for a non-trade Australian Apprenticeship it is 12–18 months.

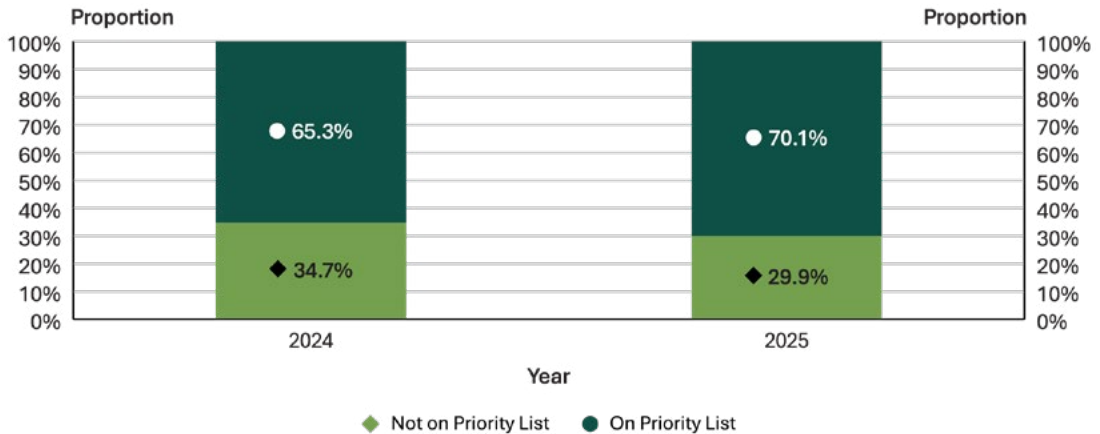
¹²³ The Priority List is updated on 1 January each year and underpins eligibility to access financial supports through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System. There are revisions throughout the year to account for changes to qualifications during the calendar year. The current and previous Australian Apprenticeships Priority Lists are available at [dewr.gov.au](https://www.dewr.gov.au).

¹²⁴ Data for the 2025 December quarter is the latest official dataset available for reporting on this measure. The full 2025–26 year data will not be available until December 2026. The NCVER reviews data for 7 quarters after release; therefore, historical numbers may vary slightly in different releases. Reviewed data, as well as further granular commencement and completion data, are available at ncver.edu.au.

¹²⁵ For further information on the NCVER's National Apprentice and Trainee Collection, please visit ncver.edu.au.

Measure SK011	Proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations ¹²²
	To derive the proportion of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations in the first 6 months of a financial year, the following formula is used: Numerator: Apprenticeship commencements from 1 July – 31 December that are undertaken for a qualification listed on the Priority List. ¹²⁶ Over Denominator: Total number of apprenticeship commencements from 1 July – 31 December. ¹²⁷ To determine the department's performance for the 2025–26 reporting period, commencements in priority occupations as a proportion of total commencements from 1 July – 31 December 2025 were compared against 1 July – 31 December 2024.
Source	NCVER, Australian vocational education and training statistics: Apprentices and trainees 2025: December quarter ¹²⁷ DEWR Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 15 October 2025 ¹²⁸ DEWR Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 15 October 2024 ¹²⁹
Contributing program	2.1 – Building Skills and Capability
Key activity	Respond to national future skills needs through access to VET graduates with the required skills

Figure 2.17: Percentage of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations, July–December



Source:

NCVER, Australian vocational education and training statistics: Apprentices and trainees 2025: December quarter.

DEWR, Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 15 October 2025.

DEWR, Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 15 October 2024.

Note:

Figure 2.17 presents apprenticeship commencement proportions at one decimal place. Any discrepancies in the differences between the 2024 and 2025 commencement proportions in Figure 2.17 and the performance measure result of 4.9 percentage points are due to rounding.

¹²⁶ The Priority List is updated on 1 January each year and underpins eligibility to access financial supports through the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System. There are revisions throughout the year to account for changes to qualifications during the calendar year. The current and previous Australian Apprenticeships Priority Lists are available at [dewr.gov.au](https://www.dewr.gov.au).

¹²⁷ Data for the 2025 December quarter is the latest official dataset available for reporting on this measure. The full 2025–26 data will not be available until December 2026. The NCVER reviews data for 7 quarters after release; therefore, historical numbers may vary slightly in different releases. Reviewed data, as well as further granular commencement and completion data, are available at ncver.edu.au (NCVER, Adelaide, data extracted from VOCSTATS on 22 June 2026).

¹²⁸ DEWR, 'Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 15 October 2025', DEWR website, 17 October 2025, accessed 30 June 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/skills-support-individuals/resources/australian-apprenticeships-priority-list-15-october-2025>

¹²⁹ DEWR, 'Australian Apprenticeships Priority List – 15 October 2024', DEWR website, 15 October 2024, accessed 30 June 2026. <https://www.dewr.gov.au/skills-support-individuals/resources/australian-apprenticeships-priority-list-15-october-2024>

Outcome 3

Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces

Measure WR001	Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely
Target	100%
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	100%
Analysis	The department met its timeliness target for the Australian Government's submission to the Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review, and supply of economic data on enterprise bargaining activities to support macroeconomic forecasting and analysis via the quarterly Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining reports in 2025–26: - June 2025 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report published on 25 September 2025¹³⁰ - September 2025 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report published on 23 December 2025¹³¹ - December 2025 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report published on 24 March 2026¹³² - March 2026 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report published on 29 June 2026¹³³ - Australian Government's submission to the 2026 Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review submitted on 26 March 2026.¹³⁴ These 2 publicly available sets of economic data and analysis support the effective operation of the workplace relations system by supplying relevant and timely information. They also support other agencies and participants in the workplace relations system, such as employers and employee associations, to understand the current and predicted future health of the workplace relations system and factor this into their operations. Failure to deliver the Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining reports would mean that macroeconomic analysis of the Australian labour market would be missing information about current labour market conditions and projected future wage increases of around a third of the Australian workforce, diminishing its accuracy and effectiveness. Failure to lodge the Australian Government's Annual Wage Review submission on time would result in the Fair Work Commission deliberating on issues that impact a substantial proportion of the Australian workforce, either directly for minimum wage workers or through flow-on effects to modern award adjustments, without knowing the Australian Government's position or having access to detailed economic data necessary to understand the impacts of past, and project impacts of future, wage review decisions.

¹³⁰ As publication of each quarterly report is not due until the end of the following quarter, we publish and assess the quarter 4 report in the following financial year. DEWR, 'Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining – June quarter 2025', DEWR website, 25 September 2025, accessed 25 August 2026.

<https://www.dewr.gov.au/enterprise-agreements-data/resources/trends-federal-enterprise-bargaining-june-quarter-2025>

¹³¹ DEWR, 'Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining – September quarter 2025', DEWR website, 23 December 2025, accessed 25 August 2026.

<https://www.dewr.gov.au/enterprise-agreements-data/resources/trends-federal-enterprise-bargaining-september-quarter-2025>

¹³² DEWR, 'Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining – December quarter 2025', DEWR website, 24 March 2026, accessed 25 August 2026.

<https://www.dewr.gov.au/enterprise-agreements-data/resources/trends-federal-enterprise-bargaining-december-quarter-2025>

¹³³ DEWR, 'Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining – March quarter 2026', DEWR website, 29 June 2026, accessed 25 August 2026.

<https://www.dewr.gov.au/enterprise-agreements-data/resources/trends-federal-enterprise-bargaining-march-quarter-2026>

¹³⁴ Fair Work Commission (FWC), 'Australian Government Initial Submission', FWC website, 26 March 2026, accessed 25 August 2026.

<https://www.fwc.gov.au/hearings-decisions/major-cases/annual-wage-reviews/annual-wage-review-2026>

Measure WR001	Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely
Methodology	Timeliness is assessed on compliance with the following deadlines: - the Australian Government's submission to the Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review submitted by the deadline set by the Fair Work Commission at the start of each Annual Wage Review process. For the 2025–26 process, the deadline for lodging initial submissions was 27 March 2026 - each quarterly Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining report published on the department's website prior to the end of the subsequent quarter. As each of these publications is publicly available, their publication date (for Trends in Federal Enterprise Bargaining reports) and submission date (for the Australian Government's submission) are readily accessible on the DEWR and Fair Work Commission websites.¹³⁵
Source	DEWR administrative data
Contributing program	3.1 – Workplace Support
Key activity	Promote fair, productive and safe workplaces through policy advice and programs

Table 2.7: Events used to calculate WR001 – Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely

Event	Due date	Date completed	Target (%)
Australian Government's submission to the 2026 Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review	27/03/2026	26/03/2026	20
Publication of June 2025 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report	30/09/2025	25/09/2025	20
Publication of September 2025 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report	31/12/2025	23/12/2025	20
Publication of December 2025 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report	31/03/2026	24/03/2026	20
Publication of March 2026 quarter Trends in Enterprise Bargaining report	30/06/2026	29/06/2026	20
Total (%)			100

¹³⁵ This measure is unweighted. That is, each of the 5 deliverables is weighted evenly (20%) in determining whether the target of 100% is met.

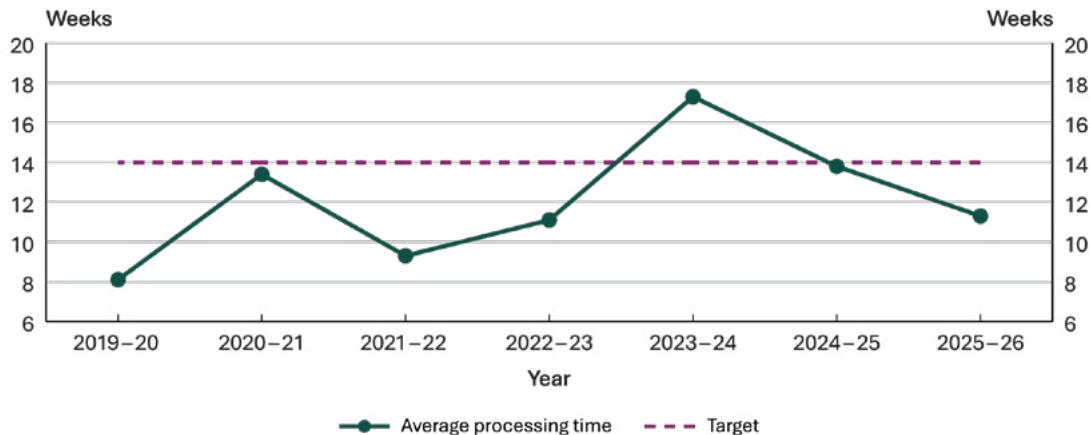
Measure WR002	Average processing time for initial effective claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program ¹³⁶
Target	14 weeks or less
Result rating	Achieved
Result value	11.3 weeks
Analysis	The timeliness of Fair Entitlements Guarantee (FEG) payments is a key indicator of the department's contribution to supporting workers through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces. The FEG provides a legislative safety net for employees who lose their employment due to the insolvency of their employer, covering certain unpaid employment entitlements. Delivering accurate and timely payments helps provide financial certainty to affected workers and supports the department's role in maintaining workplace protections. Measuring timeliness serves as an indicator of the efficiency of FEG claim processing. The time it takes to finalise a claim varies based on the governing instruments that apply, the availability of supporting evidence, insolvency practitioner responsiveness, and the size of insolvency events. In addition, under the <i>Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012</i>, payments cannot be made where a dividend is expected to be declared within 16 weeks. The target of an average processing time of 14 weeks reflects the department's ongoing focus on reducing claim processing times. Measurement against initial effective claims is used for this measure because it provides a more accurate indication of the department's claim processing performance. It excludes ineffective claims that cannot proceed to assessment and claims already assessed and undergoing a review process, neither of which reflects the time taken to process FEG claims. When considered alongside WR003 – Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct (page 76 refers) – this measure provides an overview of program performance by showing how timely and accurate the department is in paying outstanding entitlements to eligible FEG claimants. In 2025–26 the department achieved an average processing time of 11.3 weeks, exceeding the target of 14 weeks and improving on the 13.8 weeks achieved in 2024–25. As a result, claimants received decisions and payments an average of 2.5 weeks sooner than in 2024–25, providing earlier access to financial assistance following employer insolvency. Key contributors to the improved result included process improvements, continued early engagement in large insolvency events, and targeted use of overtime to address workflow pressures.
Methodology	Claims are managed in the eFEG system, which continuously records all relevant information relating to each claim including lodgement, processing and payments. Claims that are made 'effective' are processed through the respective stages and are recorded by the system. Data is collected continuously and reported internally on a monthly basis. The 14-week average timeframe to process a claim is measured by determining the period (in weeks) between the date when an initial claim is made 'effective' and the date when a decision is made by the decision-maker in relation to that initial claim. All initial effective claims are included in the average 14-week performance measure result calculation to produce an accurate average processing time.

¹³⁶ This is a proxy measure of efficiency. Combining performance measures WR002 and WR003 on the timeliness and accuracy of the FEG program provides a better understanding of the performance of the program. An initial claim is only considered 'effective' if it meets the following criteria:

- It is made on an approved FEG claim form.
- It contains all the mandatory information and is accompanied by mandatory documents (i.e., citizenship or residency status, name change).
- It is made before the end of 12 months after the later of the insolvency event or the end of the person's employment or, if the employer is or was bankrupt, the claim is made before the discharge of the employer's bankruptcy.
- The person has not made a previous claim under GEERS, which is a precursor program to FEG (connected with the current claim).

Measure WR002	Average processing time for initial effective claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program ¹³⁶
	The processed month is drawn from the decision-maker approved date, and the average time to process is then calculated using the sum of the days to process each initial effective claim divided by the number of effective claims processed within the period, reflected in weeks (by dividing the result by 7 days).
Source	eFEG system (Angular-based, cloud-hosted system)
Contributing program	3.1 – Workplace Support
Key activity	Support the protection of workers' entitlements

Figure 2.18: Average processing time for initial effective claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program



Source: eFEG system.

Note: In 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22, the FEG program was administered by the Attorney-General's Department (AGD). Information on the performance of the FEG program can be found in the AGD's past annual reports at [ag.gov.au](https://www.ag.gov.au).

DEWR took responsibility for the FEG program in 2022.

The target of this measure has undergone change across reporting years. In 2019-20, the target was 'average processing time of claims is 14 weeks'. In 2020-21, it was 'average processing time for all initial claims is 14 weeks'. In 2021-22, the target was updated to 'average processing time for all claims is 14 weeks'. From 2022-23 onwards, a target of '14 weeks or less' was introduced. In 2024-25, the performance measure title was also updated to read as 'Average processing time for initial effective claims under the FEG program'.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ This was not a change to the methodology, but rather clarification that only 'initial effective claims' are being used to measure the result.

Measure WR003	Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct ¹³⁸
Target	95% or higher
Result rating	Achieved within the margin of error
Result value	96.5% ¹³⁹
Analysis	The accuracy of FEG payments is a key indicator of the department's contribution to supporting workers through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces. The FEG provides a legislative safety net for employees who lose their employment due to the insolvency of their employer, by covering certain unpaid employment entitlements. Delivering accurate and timely payments helps provide financial certainty to affected workers and supports the department's role in maintaining workplace protections. The accuracy of FEG claim decisions is important to ensure claimants receive the correct payments they are entitled to under the <i>Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012</i>. Measuring the proportion of correct FEG payments is a proxy for measuring the accuracy of FEG claim processing. When considered alongside WR002 – Average processing time for initial effective claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program (page 74 refers) – this measure provides an overview of program performance by showing how timely and accurate the department is in paying outstanding entitlements to eligible FEG claimants. Claim volumes in 2025–26 remained broadly consistent with 2024–25, providing a comparable operating environment. The number of claims finalised in 2025–26 (17,989) was a slight increase (0.91%) compared with 2024–25 (17,826). This volume of claims placed sustained pressure on ensuring claims are assessed and payments are made in a timely manner. In 2025–26 the department achieved this performance measure within the margin of error. Testing of a sample of 480 claims resulted in an accuracy rate of 96.5% ± 1.7 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. This compares with an accuracy rate of 95.6% ± 1.8 percentage points in 2024–25 using the same confidence level. While the increase is modest and the confidence intervals overlap, the result indicates that payment accuracy remained consistently high. The observed accuracy rate of 96.5% exceeded the target of 95%. However, because the lower bound of the 95% confidence interval (94.8%) falls marginally below the target, the result is assessed as achieved within the margin of error. This reflects the statistical confidence interval applied to the sample result rather than any material decline in payment accuracy. Analysis of accuracy testing results provides the department with opportunities to maintain the accuracy of FEG claim payments. In 2025–26, the common causes of errors related to the interpretation of governing instruments and ensuring relevant information is consistently considered during claim assessment. The department uses such insights to inform capability development, including guidance materials, training and quality assurance processes. The department will continue to monitor accuracy testing results in 2026–27 to identify any emerging trends and implement targeted improvements where required to support ongoing delivery of accurate FEG payments.

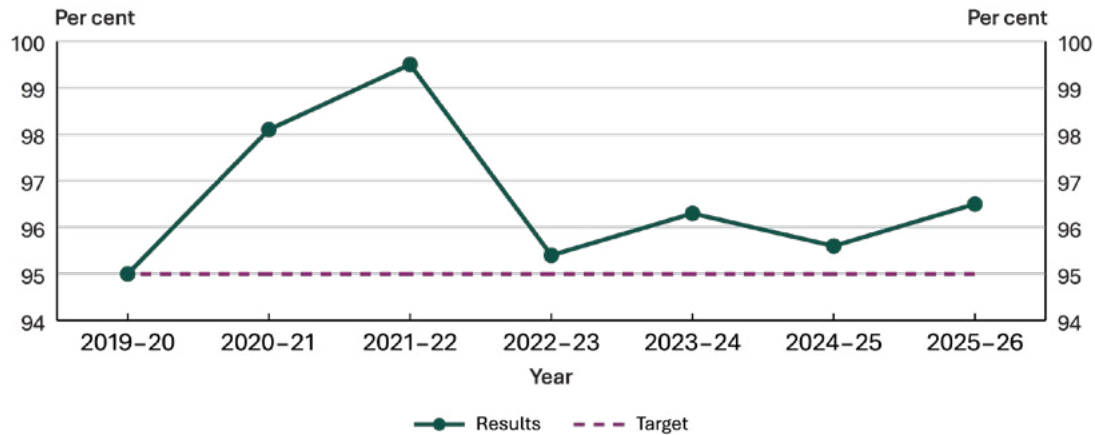
¹³⁸ This is considered a proxy measure of effectiveness.

¹³⁹ The margin of error is ± 1.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Measure WR003	Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct ¹³⁸
Methodology	To ensure results are provided to claim assessors in a timely manner and to prevent recurrent practices resulting in inaccurate claim assessment decisions, a random sample of 40 FEG claim decisions are assessed for accuracy each month by the FEG Compliance team. Over the course of 2025–26, the result of these monthly assessments (a total of 480 reviewed claim decisions) provides an annual estimate of FEG claim payment accuracy.¹³⁸ To calculate the proportion of claim payments made under the FEG program that are correct, the number of accurate claim decisions is divided by the total number of reviews conducted over the year and then multiplied by 100 to express it as a percentage. This percentage represents the accuracy score against the target. Once a monthly random sample is generated, a testing officer assesses each claim against 27 criteria in 4 broad categories: ▪ determining eligibility ▪ case administration ▪ governing instruments ▪ claim assessment. Only information available to the claim assessor and decision-maker at the time of the claim decision is considered relevant evidence when determining decision accuracy. When examining a claim decision against the test criteria, the testing officer considers whether: ▪ the evidence shows a certain fact was readily identifiable ▪ there was sufficient evidence to justify the decision (having regard to approaches outlined in FEG procedures) ▪ if appropriate, the error would result in a material inaccuracy of the claim decision, considering the quantum impact of the error. For a claim decision to be determined to be inaccurate, the monetary impact for a particular entitlement must be: 1. more than ± 10% of what the claimant was entitled to receive, and 2. more than ± \$200 of what the claimant was entitled to receive.¹⁴⁰ Where the monetary impact of a particular entitlement is less than \$200, the error represents a minor finding. In all other instances the error represents a non-compliance. Where there are no identifiable compliance issues or material errors, the claim decision is determined to be fully compliant.
Source	eFEG system (Angular-based, cloud-hosted system)
Contributing program	3.1 – Workplace Support
Key activity	Support the protection of workers' entitlements

¹⁴⁰ Inaccuracies and non-compliance issues are documented in Claim Accuracy Reports. These are internal written reports that document identified inaccuracy and/or non-compliance issues and outline the follow-up rectification actions required. For example, a Claim Accuracy Report that identifies an inaccuracy may include a follow-up action for the department to undertake an internal review to rectify a payment error.

Figure 2.19: Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct



Source: eFEG system.

Note: In 2019–20, 2020–21 and 2021–22, the FEG program was administered by the AGD. Information on the performance of the FEG program can be found in the AGD’s past annual reports at ag.gov.au.

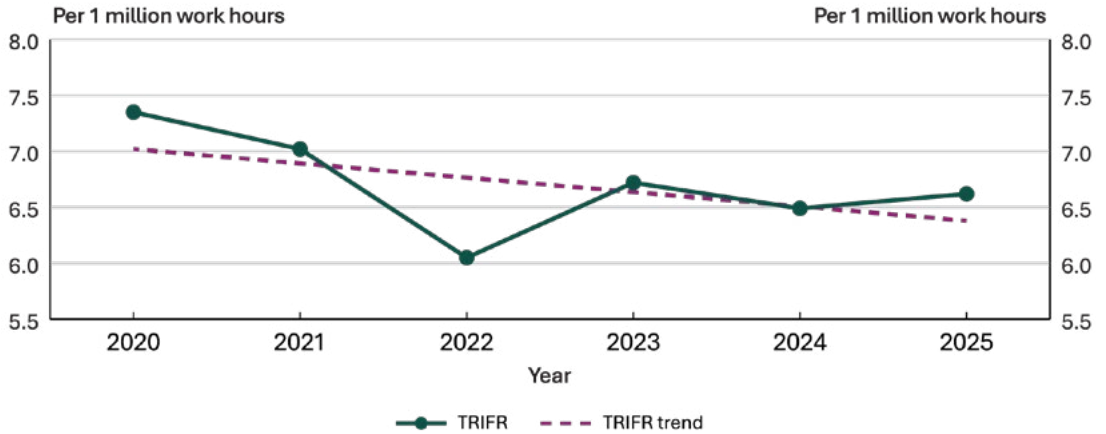
DEWR took responsibility for the FEG program in 2022. The current target of this measure is ‘95% or higher’.

The target of this measure has undergone change across reporting years. In 2019–20, the target was ‘95 per cent of FEG payments are correct’. In 2020–21 and 2021–22, the target was ‘95% of claim payments are correct’. From 2022–23 onwards, a target of ‘95% or higher’ was introduced.

Measure WR004	Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) collectively reported by companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme
Target	Rate is lower than the previous calendar year
Result rating	Not achieved
Result value	6.62 injuries per million hours of work
Analysis	The TRIFR for all companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme increased this reporting period to 6.62 injuries per 1 million work hours as compared with 6.49 injuries per 1 million work hours last reporting period. This is a 2% increase in the TRIFR between 2024 and 2025. The increase has been caused by a rise in minor injuries in 2025, with the Medically Treated Injury Frequency Rate (MTIFR) increasing by 0.22, from 4.94 injuries per 1 million work hours to 5.16 injuries per 1 million work hours. The number of more serious injuries fell, with the Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) decreasing by 0.08, from 1.55 injuries per 1 million work hours to 1.47 injuries per 1 million work hours. As TRIFR is an aggregate measure that applies equal weighting across injury types, the increase in lower-severity injuries outweighed improvements in higher-severity outcomes, resulting in a higher overall TRIFR. The result suggests that while the overall injury rates were affected by an increase in lower-severity injuries, the scheme continues to support stronger safety performance. Newly accredited companies also contributed to the increased TRIFR. The 66 companies accredited in 2025 collectively had a TRIFR of 12.59 (almost twice the rate for all accredited companies). However, this impact was modest. Excluding them from the overall TRIFR calculation yields a result of 6.54 instead of 6.62. This performance measure is a stretch measure deliberately designed to be challenging to achieve, given that it requires year-on-year improvements in the TRIFR of accredited companies. Prior to the year-end increase, provisional analysis of data for the first 2 quarters of 2025 indicated a TRIFR of 6.42, which was slightly below the 2024 result of 6.49 injuries per million hours worked. The final 2025 result reflects a softened trend during the second half of the year. When looking across years, the TRIFR for accredited companies remains in decline over the 2020–2024 period, decreasing from 7.35 injuries per 1 million work hours in 2020 to 6.49 injuries per 1 million work hours in 2024 (as shown in Figure 2.20). The TRIFR of accredited companies is also affected by factors other than the actions of the Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner (OFSC). Companies unilaterally take action to reduce the frequency of injuries to workers. State and territory work health and safety regulators also enforce legislation aimed at reducing the rate of injuries at workplaces, including those of accredited companies. It is not possible to apportion the impact of these factors on the TRIFR of accredited companies. The OFSC continues to apply a risk-based monitoring and assurance approach across the accreditation lifecycle. This includes using injury and hours worked data to undertake more granular analysis by construction type, project size and other risk factors to identify emerging trends, and targeting regulatory effort towards higher-risk projects or companies. The OFSC has refined its regulatory approach to place greater focus on high-risk building work and areas with the greatest potential safety impact. This has included the establishment of a Serious Incidents, Fatalities and Compliance team, enabling the OFSC to strengthen its responsive compliance activities following high-risk incidents and adverse audit outcomes.

Measure WR004	Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) collectively reported by companies accredited under the Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme
Methodology	Accredited companies report to the OFSC twice annually on the aggregate number of safety incidents that have occurred on their sites and on the number of work hours performed.¹⁴¹ The collective TRIFR for accredited companies is calculated by dividing:¹⁴² Numerator: The total number of safety incidents that have occurred on accredited companies' sites Over Denominator: The total number of work hours performed by accredited companies. The result is then multiplied by 1 million to give a TRIFR per 1 million work hours.
Source	Scheme Tracking and Accreditation Reporting system (data from accredited companies)
Contributing program	3.1 – Workplace Support
Key activity	Promote fair, productive and safe workplaces through policy advice and programs

Figure 2.20: Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rates, 2020–2025



Source: Scheme Tracking and Accreditation Reporting system (data from accredited companies).

Note: Historically, accredited companies have demonstrated a declining trend in TRIFR over the long term. However, due to the aggregated nature of the data, annual performance can vary, reflecting year-to-year fluctuations. Accordingly, the stretch objective for this measure is to deliver sustained year-on-year improvement in TRIFR.

¹⁴¹ This result is based on data reported by 98.8% of the total expected reporting population in 2025 (977 of 989 expected reports). A small number of reports were not available or could not be finalised at the time of reporting. Due to the reporting timeframes for accredited companies, this target is measured over the calendar year rather than the financial year. The safety incident and hours worked data is reported by accredited companies for their Work Health and Safety Accreditation Scheme projects and non-scheme projects valued at \$4 million or more. Accredited companies reported through an online portal into the Scheme Tracking and Accreditation Reporting database.

¹⁴² The collective TRIFR includes civil, commercial and residential construction activity.

Corrections to previously published annual performance statements

Table 2.8: Corrections to the 2024–25 performance reporting on investment per employment outcome (EM011)

Incorrect reporting	Correct reporting	Reason for change	Page number in 2024–25 Annual Report
The result value and rating for EM011 for the 2024–25 reporting year were incorrectly reported. The result was incorrectly reported as \$3,575 and ‘not achieved’ (against a target of \$3,500 or lower per employment outcome). The variable expenditure for 2024–25, as illustrated in Figure 2.7: ‘Variable expenditure and estimated number of employed participants’ on page 48 was incorrectly reported to be \$1,076 million. The associated quarterly values and rating were incorrect and should be disregarded.	The correct result value for the 2024–25 reporting year is \$3,479 and the result rating is ‘achieved’ (against a target of \$3,500 or lower per employment outcome). The correct variable expenditure figure is \$1,047 million.	The investment per employment outcome result has been calculated using an adjusted numerator figure to only include provider-serviced job seekers. The adjusted numerator excludes expenditure components related to digitally serviced job seekers.	Result rating, 28, 29, 46 Result value, 46 Figure 2.7, 48



Highlight: Shaping new global standards for decent work in the platform economy

In 2025–26 the department helped drive a landmark global agreement on work in the gig economy, establishing the first binding international labour standard for this evolving area of work.

At the 114th International Labour Conference (ILC) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), held in Geneva in early June 2026, member states adopted **Convention No. 193 on Decent Work in the Platform Economy**. This marked the culmination of almost 4 years of international negotiations.

The department played a leading role throughout the process, including during negotiations at the 2025 and 2026 ILCs and through formal responses to the ILO on draft texts.

Convention No. 193 establishes an international baseline of protections for gig workers, covering:

- fundamental principles and rights at work
- work health and safety
- pay and remuneration
- social protection
- worker data protection
- the use of automated decision-making systems.

The department drew extensively on Australia's pioneering approach to regulating digital platform work through the employee-like worker framework introduced into the *Fair Work Act 2009* in 2024. This framework enables the Fair Work Commission to establish binding minimum standards and resolve deactivation disputes for eligible platform workers, while preserving the flexibility valued by workers and the business models that underpin digital labour platforms.

Working closely with Australia's social partners to the ILO, the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the department helped shape an international standard that balances worker protections with innovation, fair competition and sustainable economic growth.

In a highly contested environment, the department's technical expertise, strong tripartite relationships and pragmatic approach enabled it to build consensus across the international community, influence the final text and secure a landmark convention.

While Convention No. 193 is only binding on the countries that ratify it, its significance extends beyond formal ratification. By establishing internationally agreed principles for the regulation of platform work, it will shape policy development, regulatory approaches and stakeholder expectations across the globe. Over time, this will promote greater consistency and contribute to a more level playing field for workers and businesses operating in the platform economy.

As digital labour markets continue to evolve, Convention No. 193 demonstrates how targeted international engagement can help shape the future of work in ways that are both principled and practical, delivering lasting benefits for workers, businesses and economies worldwide.



Management and accountability

Corporate governance	84
Corporate and business planning	92
Risk management	94
Our people	95
Information and communications technology	99
Financial performance	100
External scrutiny	106
Disability reporting	109
Gender equality reporting	110

Corporate governance

Governance framework

The department's governance framework (Figure 3.1) supports the Secretary as the accountable authority to manage the affairs of the department through a tiered committee model.

During 2025–26 the Executive Board agreed on a new departmental governance framework to strengthen strategic oversight, accountability, decision-making and delivery across the department. The revised framework clarifies governance responsibilities and streamlines the department's governance committee structure to support the department's priorities and obligations.

The Executive Board and First Nations Executive Board remain the department's primary governance bodies. The Executive Board is responsible for setting the longer-term strategy of the department, ensuring the delivery of the Australian Government's objectives and ensuring compliance with the department's legal and financial obligations. The First Nations Executive Board, which first met in March 2025, provides strategic oversight for the department with respect to First Nations impacts of all internal and external policies, programs and initiatives.

Three subcommittees report to the Executive Board to advise on core activities and assist the Secretary in decision-making and oversight:

- Finance and Governance Committee
- People, Safety and Culture Committee
- Priority and Implementation Committee.

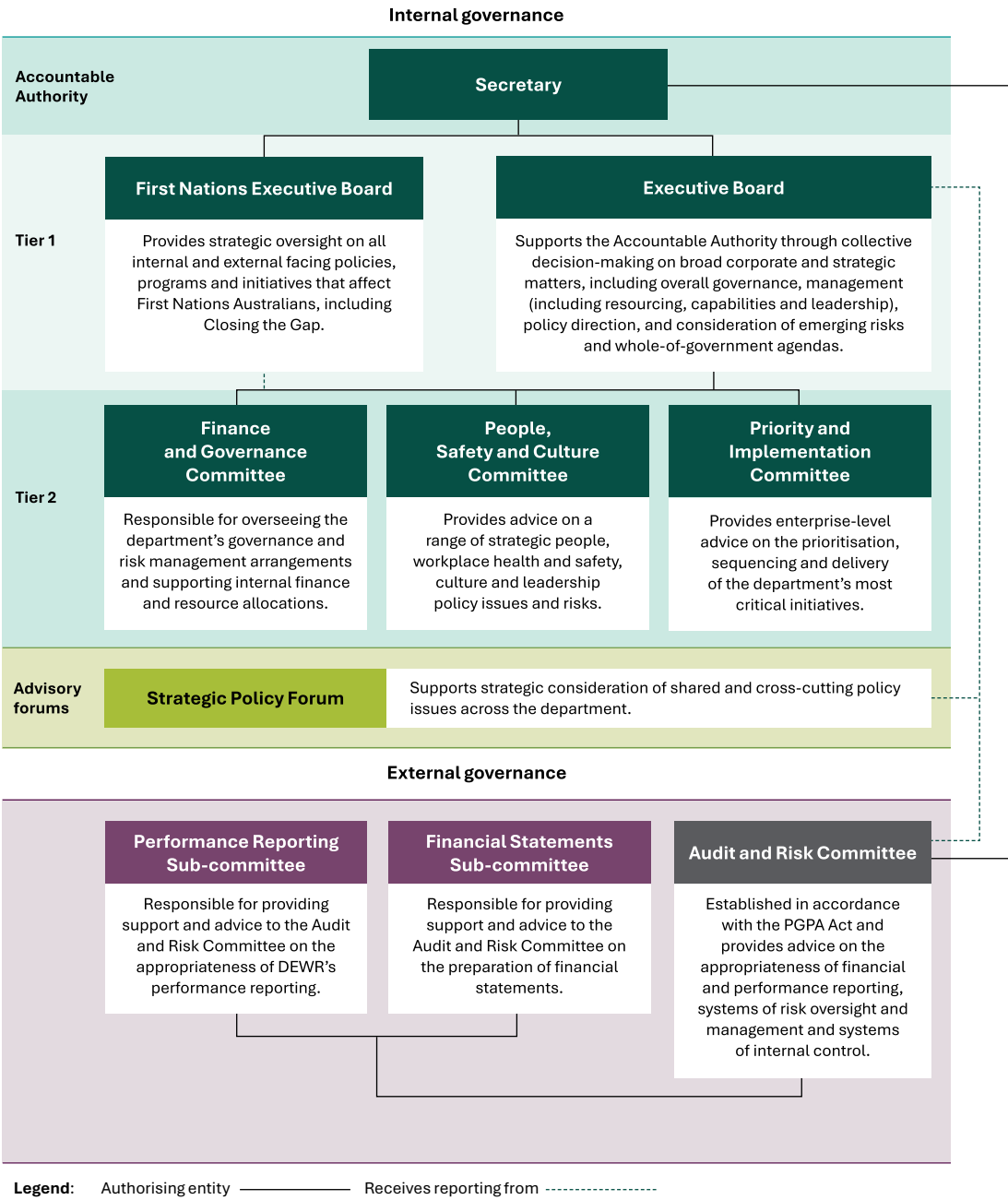
A Strategic Policy Forum was established in 2025–26 to support strategic consideration of shared and cross-cutting policy issues across the department. The forum brings together Executive Board members and Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 2 officers to discuss, test and align thinking on complex policy matters that cut across organisational and portfolio boundaries. It supports Executive Board deliberations and does not make formal decisions or replace existing governance or accountability arrangements.

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is a statutory requirement under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). It provides advice on the appropriateness of financial and performance reporting, systems of risk oversight and management, and systems of internal control. The committee has no executive powers in relation to the operations of the department, and functions in an oversight and review capacity.

Each group – Corporate and Enabling Services; Employment and Workforce; Skills and Training; and Workplace Relations – also has internal governance arrangements in place to manage policy and program deliverables.

Figure 3.1 shows DEWR's governance framework as at 30 June 2026.

Figure 3.1: Departmental governance framework, 2025–26



Audit and Risk Committee

The ARC provides independent advice to the Secretary on the department's:

- financial reporting
- performance reporting
- systems of risk oversight and management
- systems of internal control.

The ARC's roles and responsibilities are set out in section 45 of the PGPA Act and section 17 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule), and in the [ARC's charter](#).

The ARC met 9 times during the year – 4 standalone meetings, one joint meeting with the Financial Statements Sub-committee and 4 joint meetings with the Performance Reporting Sub-committee (PRSC). Table 3.1 provides details of the ARC members' roles on the committee, remuneration (inclusive of GST), qualifications and experience.

Also attending the ARC were, as at 30 June 2026:

- as senior advisor:
 - › Deputy Secretary, Corporate and Enabling Services Group (Chief Operating Officer)
- as advisors:
 - › Assistant Secretary, Quality Assurance and Risk Management Branch, Employment and Workforce Group
 - › First Assistant Secretary, Safety and Industry Policy, Workplace Relations Group, representing the Workplace Relations Group
 - › Acting First Assistant Secretary, Industry Partnership, Quality and Integrity Division, Skills and Training Group
 - › First Nations Advisor
- as observers:
 - › Chief Financial Officer
 - › Chief Information Officer
 - › Chief Risk Officer (who also fills the role of General Counsel)
 - › Chief Internal Auditor
 - › representatives from the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).

The ARC has 2 subcommittees: the Financial Statements Sub-committee and the Performance Reporting Sub-committee. These subcommittees assist the ARC to meet its financial and performance reporting obligations under the PGPA Rule.

The department's Risk Committee provided the ARC with regular reporting on the implementation of the Enterprise Risk Management Strategy, including strategic risks and risk culture initiatives. On 1 May 2026, the Risk Committee was discontinued and responsibility for oversight of the department's enterprise risk management framework transferred to the Finance and Governance Committee. These arrangements supported the ARC in fulfilling its responsibilities under the PGPA Act to review the department's risk oversight and management arrangements.

Table 3.1: Audit and Risk Committee member details

Member name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience	Number of meetings attended	Total number of meetings held	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.)	Additional information (including role on committee)
Ms Elizabeth Montano BA LLB (UNSW) FAICD	▪ Bachelor of Arts majoring in industrial relations and Bachelor of Laws ▪ Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors ▪ Chair and member of various Commonwealth and New South Wales government boards and audit committees for over 20 years ▪ Former Commonwealth CEO, SES officer and financial services senior solicitor and consultant at Mallesons, Solicitors ▪ As the former CEO of the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), was the first woman to lead a Commonwealth law enforcement/regulatory agency ▪ Appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for significant services to law enforcement, regulation and governance in the 2026 Australia Day Honours List	9	9	\$94,110.86	Committee Chair Ms Montano attended all ARC and joint ARC/sub-committee meetings that she was contracted to attend. Remuneration includes attendance at ARC, joint ARC/sub-committee meetings, briefings to the Secretary, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Board, and other interactions with the department.

Member name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience	Number of meetings attended	Total number of meetings held	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.)	Additional information (including role on committee)
Mr Tim Youngberry FCPA FCA CPFA	▪ Bachelor of Business (major in accounting) ▪ Fellow, CPA Australia; Fellow, Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand; Member, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (UK) ▪ Member of International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (2010–2015) ▪ Held senior positions – including CFO – in large Commonwealth entities and has worked with the National Australia Bank, Ernst and Young, the ANAO and the Department of Finance	8	9	\$41,063.40	Committee Member FSSC Chair Mr Youngberry attended all ARC meetings and 4 out of 5 joint ARC/sub-committee meetings that he was contracted to attend. Remuneration includes attendance at ARC, joint ARC/sub-committee meetings and relevant sub-committee meetings.
Mr Jeff Lamond PSM BEc	▪ Bachelor of Economics (ANU) with majors in economics and accounting, Graduate Diploma in Legal Studies ▪ Held senior positions, including as APS Merit Protection Commissioner and as internal ombudsman in 2 agencies ▪ Held roles as chair of Commonwealth audit and risk committees and financial statement subcommittees for large and small government entities ▪ Experience in the government sector including employment, values and ethics and personnel ▪ Awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding public service for his work on the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i>	2	2	\$5,760.90	Committee Member (until August 2025) PRSC Chair (until August 2025) Mr Lamond's attendance and remuneration was for all joint ARC/sub-committee meetings that he was contracted to attend.

Member name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience	Number of meetings attended	Total number of meetings held	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.)	Additional information (including role on committee)
Mr Nick Baker	▪ Bachelor of Arts in Computing Studies, University of Canberra ▪ Fellow, Australian Society of CPAs (FCPA) and Member, Australian Computer Society (MACS) ▪ Extensive experience in public sector governance, risk and assurance, including: › major internal audit and special assignments for central and line agencies (e.g. Department of Finance, Department of Defence, Department of Veterans' Affairs) › financial reform consultancies, preparation of government financial statements and formal accounting advice › Budget estimates, cost accounting and business case development for government reforms › ICT consulting, information security audit and control, and project governance reviews ▪ Senior roles at a global advisory firm, including Senior Partner and Global Head Government Finance & Treasury	4	4	\$30,000.00	Committee member (from October 2025) PRSC Chair (from October 2025) Mr Baker attended 3 ARC meetings and 1 joint ARC/sub-committee meeting that he was contracted to attend. Remuneration includes attendance at ARC, joint ARC/sub-committee meetings and relevant sub-committee meetings.

Member name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience	Number of meetings attended	Total number of meetings held	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.)	Additional information (including role on committee)
Ms Alexandra Spark GAICD FCA BComm	▪ Bachelor of Commerce (UNSW); Fellow, Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand; Graduate, Australian Institute of Company Directors ▪ 25-year career as a financial statement auditor and advisor on governance, risk management and performance measurement matters ▪ CA Risk Specialist (awarded by the Chartered Accountants of Australia & New Zealand with the Australian Graduate School of Management) ▪ Provided advice to public sector boards, committees, senior executives and leadership teams ▪ Led several reviews of risk management policy, framework and practice	7	9	\$36,865.51	Committee Member Risk Committee Chair (until its discontinuation in May 2026) Ms Spark attended all ARC meetings and 3 out of 5 joint ARC/sub-committee meetings that she was contracted to attend. Remuneration includes attendance at ARC, joint ARC/sub-committee meetings and relevant supporting committee meetings.

Integrity, fraud and corruption control

The department manages fraud and corruption in accordance with the PGPA Rule and the Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control Framework. Through its own Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and broader Integrity Framework, the department maintains a comprehensive approach to preventing, detecting, investigating and responding to fraud and corruption risks across its programs, operations and interests. All reasonable measures were taken throughout 2025–26 to appropriately deal with instances of fraud and corruption related to the department.

The department's fraud, corruption and integrity functions are centralised within the Fraud and Integrity team, which provides strategic oversight of the Integrity Framework and drives initiatives to strengthen organisational integrity maturity. The team supports business areas to identify, manage and respond to fraud and corruption risks, assesses allegations of fraud and corruption and undertakes appropriate action, including criminal investigations where warranted.

During 2025–26 the department continued to enhance its fraud, corruption and integrity arrangements through a range of targeted initiatives. These included testing and strengthening fraud and corruption controls, uplifting risk management systems to improve the identification, monitoring and treatment of fraud and corruption risks, delivering tailored training and awareness activities, and enhancing the maturity of organisational integrity. Improvements were also made to the visibility, analysis and reporting of integrity-related risks to support informed decision-making by senior executives.

The department maintains an anonymous reporting mechanism that enables staff, service providers and members of the public to confidentially report suspected fraud and corruption and engage in ongoing anonymous communication with investigators. The department also strengthened its intelligence-sharing capability through active participation in the multi-agency Fraud Fusion Taskforce and engagement with the National Anti-Corruption Commission.

Promoting a strong integrity culture remains a priority. The department continued to support staff to understand their responsibilities, obligations and protections relating to fraud, corruption and integrity. Mandatory awareness training was provided through online learning and tailored face-to-face and virtual sessions, covering both departmental and program-specific risks. Guidance on broader integrity matters, including real and apparent conflicts of interest, was also strengthened to further support ethical decision-making, transparency and accountability across the department.

Significant non-compliance with the finance law

Section 83 of the Constitution

Section 83 of the Constitution provides that no amount may be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) except under appropriation made by law.

The department has primary responsibility for administering legislation related to skills, employment and workplace relations. During 2025–26, the department made payments totalling \$1.128 billion under Special Appropriations and administered six pieces of legislation containing statutory payment requirements (see Financial Statement Note G1.4). Payments under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016* and *Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Act 2014* are administered through the Service Delivery Office. Grant payments are also made on the department's behalf through grants hubs operated by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources and the Department of Social Services.

As the department relies on other entities to process payments and administer controls, some reliance is placed on external control frameworks. Combined with the complexity of the relevant legislation, the risk of a section 83 breach cannot be fully eliminated. Administrative errors or overpayments may result in a breach, even where subsequent recovery action is taken.

The department remains committed to minimising the risk and impact of unintended section 83 breaches through ongoing review of legislation, new policy proposals, business rules and payment processes.

Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave) Administration Act 1992

Errors in the collection, recording or administration of Coal Long Service Leave Scheme amounts could result in receipts or payments occurring other than in accordance with legislative authority and give rise to a potential section 83 breach.

While the Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation (Coal LSL) administers levy collections and scheme payments, the department retains responsibility for the legislative framework and statutory appropriation arrangements through which monies are received into and paid from the CRF. The department facilitates these transactions based on information provided by Coal LSL and therefore relies on Coal LSL's administration and control processes to support compliance with section 83.

During 2025–26, the department implemented improvements arising from a review of Coal LSL-related procedures undertaken in 2024–25, including a shared risk management plan and an ongoing assurance framework. Although controls have been strengthened, some residual risk remains due to the department's reliance on Coal LSL's administration and control processes.

Corporate and business planning

Planning and performance reporting framework

DEWR's performance planning, monitoring and reporting framework is underpinned by the Commonwealth Performance Framework and the legislative requirements of the PGPA Act and PGPA Rule.

In 2025–26 we continued to strengthen our performance framework through the ongoing refinement of performance tools, guidance materials and structured processes. These improvements supported transparent, accurate and meaningful reporting, while fostering a strong and consistent performance culture across the department. Regular reporting to the Executive Board, supported by appropriate assurance mechanisms, contributed to effective oversight and informed decision-making.

Corporate plan

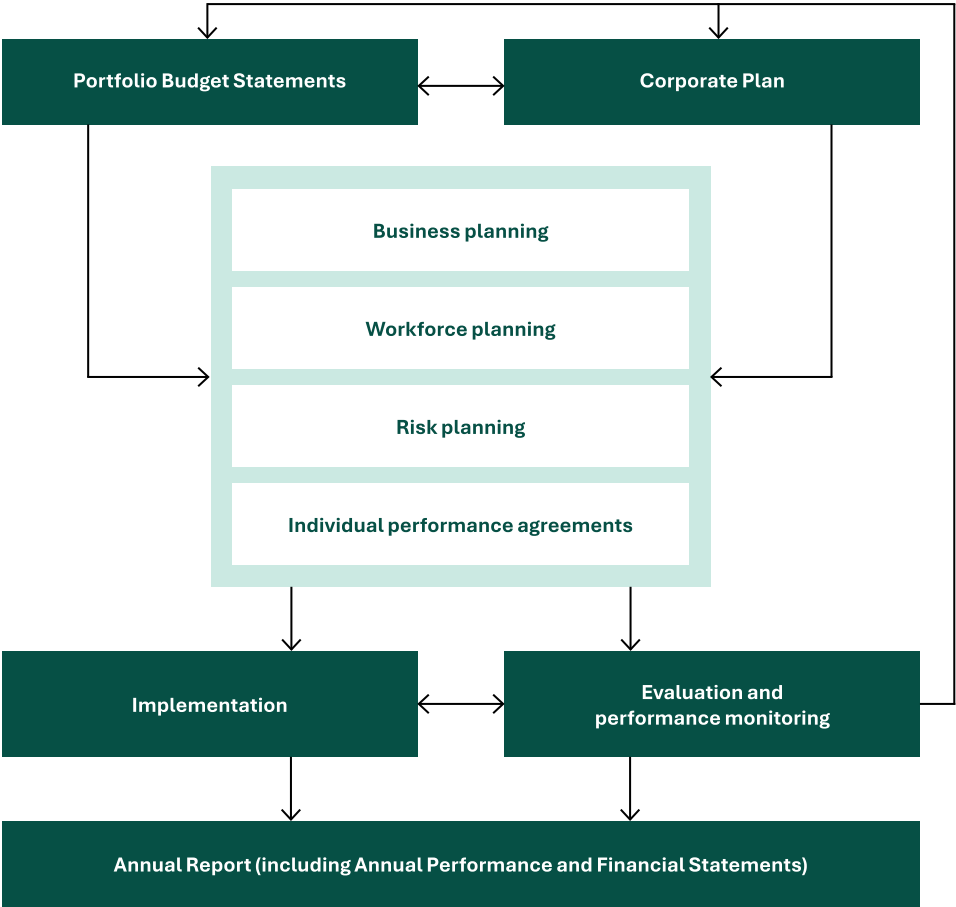
Our 2025–26 Corporate Plan outlined the department's purpose, key activities and performance measures. Consistent with the Commonwealth Performance Framework, a clear line of sight is maintained between the planned performance set out in the 2025–26 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS), the 2025–26 Corporate Plan and the results presented in the annual performance statements (Part 2 of this report). This alignment supports transparency and accountability for the department's performance.

Integrated planning

DEWR's integrated planning approach aligns business, workforce and risk planning activities, while recognising the connection between individual performance agreements and the department's overarching purpose. This coordinated approach supports transparency and accountability and promotes shared responsibility for achieving results and delivering on our strategic objectives.

Figure 3.2 illustrates the relationship between the key products that form the annual planning and performance reporting cycle.

Figure 3.2: Annual planning cycle



Risk management

The department's approach to risk management is governed by its Accountable Authority Instructions for Risk Management, its Enterprise Risk Management Strategy, and its Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework. The department's approach ensured compliance with section 16 of the PGPA Act and the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy.

The Executive Board and Audit and Risk Committee provided strategic oversight of the department's risk management arrangements, including systems of internal control and the ongoing effectiveness of the Enterprise Risk Management Strategy.

The Risk Committee provided oversight of the department's operational risk resources, risk systems and reviews. In May 2026, the Risk Committee was discontinued and risk management oversight was transitioned to the Finance and Governance Committee under revised governance arrangements.

The Chief Risk Officer (CRO) championed a positive risk culture by reinforcing the department's risk appetite, tolerance, assessment and escalation frameworks as part of daily operations and by normalising risk discussions in governance settings.

The Enterprise Risk team supported the CRO and actively engaged with innovation through the development of automated strategic and operational risk dashboards, providing consistent, real-time visibility of our risks. The team also furthered risk capability through tailored risk preparedness and risk realisation workshops and training. Short, focused risk 'microbite' recordings were made available to staff to increase understanding on specific areas of risk literacy.

The Enterprise Risk team received a Commonwealth Award for Excellence in Risk Management in recognition of its successful transformation of the department's enterprise risk management from compliance focused to capability driven.

The department engaged with its internal and external stakeholders throughout the year to ensure that shared risks and governance arrangements were managed collaboratively, including those shared with First Nations people.

Our people

In 2025–26 we made significant progress in building an inclusive, adaptable and high-performing workforce, strengthening our ability to deliver on the department’s priorities and respond to future challenges. We renewed our focus on clarifying priorities and decision-making accountabilities, and increased efforts to strengthen collaboration across business areas to provide more joined-up advice and services.

We launched our Reconciliation Action Plan, reflecting a collaborative effort across the department to foster a more inclusive and equitable workplace. We expanded capability development offerings through targeted initiatives such as the DEWR Manager 101 program and our annual Capability Catalogue. Together, these efforts increased opportunities for staff and managers to develop the knowledge and skills needed to respond to emerging challenges.

Throughout the year, we continued implementation of our People Strategy 2024–27 and Strategic Workforce Plan 2023–26, ensuring the department has the frameworks, policy settings, skills and expertise needed to deliver on the Australian Government’s priorities for the communities we serve, now and into the future.

Diversity and inclusion

Embracing diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging strengthens the department’s workforce and supports better outcomes for the Australian community. During 2025–26 the department continued to implement its Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2024–27, an intersectional plan supporting employees with disability, employees who are carers, First Nations employees, culturally and linguistically diverse employees, neurodivergent employees, LGBTQIA+ employees, and actions to improve gender equity.

Key initiatives delivered under the plan in 2025–26 included:

- launch of the department’s Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2025–2027
- delivery of the department’s inaugural First Nations Employee Network Symposium, supporting connection, engagement and cultural safety for First Nations employees
- enhancing inclusive recruitment approaches, including improving guidance for the use of disability and First Nations affirmative measures in recruitment
- undertaking a self-assessment against the Carer-Inclusive Workplace Initiative
- membership of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme
- releasing a Gender Affirmation Guide.

The department maintained engagement with peak diversity organisations, including the Australian Disability Network, the Diversity Council Australia, Pride in Diversity, and the Australian Breastfeeding Association. The department also supported employee diversity networks to allow staff and allies to connect effectively across a range of diversity groups.

Respectful workplaces

The department is committed to fostering workplaces that are safe, respectful, inclusive, culturally safe and psychologically safe. During 2025–26 the department continued to strengthen its workplace behaviour framework, commencing development of a new Respectful Workplace Policy and a supporting Managing Workplace Behaviour Concerns Procedure following a review of the current Managing Workplace Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy.

The new framework is intended to provide a more contemporary, practical and integrated approach to preventing and responding to workplace behaviour concerns. It strengthens expectations relating to respectful conduct, inclusion, cultural safety, psychosocial risk management, positive duty obligations, accountability and proportionality, and improves alignment with the APS Values, APS Employment Principles and APS Code of Conduct.

Employee experience and engagement

The [2025 APS Employee Census](#) provided an opportunity to measure progress against previous results and better understand employee experiences across the department. The results demonstrated continued improvement across all 6 APS Census indices, with the greatest improvements recorded in innovation, communication and change, and employee wellbeing. Employees also reported positive perceptions of the department's flexible work arrangements, inclusive workplace culture and commitment to delivering outcomes for the Australian public.

The department's [2025–27 Census Action Plan](#) builds on these strengths while addressing opportunities identified in the census. The action plan focuses on setting and communicating priorities, transforming ways of working, empowering people, and managing and maintaining wellbeing, with initiatives aimed at improving workload sustainability, strengthening innovation and capability, and supporting a safe, inclusive and high-performing workforce.

Future APS Employee Census results and other employee feedback mechanisms will continue to inform the department's people and culture priorities, helping to track progress, identify emerging issues and opportunities, and measure the impact of initiatives designed to improve employee engagement and experience.

Workforce capability

In 2025–26 the department continued to invest in workforce capability to support current priorities and prepare for future workforce needs. A key focus was the introduction of the 2025–26 Capability Catalogue, providing a coordinated, department-wide approach to learning and development aligned to priorities. The catalogue increased visibility of learning opportunities and focused investment on practical capability areas including leadership, management, communication, data and digital capability, and essential workplace skills.

The department launched the Manager 101 program, establishing a structured approach to building capability for managers. Manager 101 provides practical support to help managers navigate their leadership responsibilities and build confidence in managing people and performance. The program includes a dedicated Manager 101 portal, regular information sessions, targeted learning opportunities and practical resources covering topics such as performance management, difficult conversations, and decision-making.

The department delivered its flagship mentoring program, Amplify, connecting employees across business areas through structured mentoring relationships. Amplify provides opportunities for employees to learn from the experience of colleagues, broaden professional networks and support individual capability and career development. Feedback from participants continued to demonstrate the value of mentoring in building confidence, leadership capability and organisational connections.

Entry-level programs are an important talent pipeline essential to building a skilled workforce for the APS. In 2025–26, 34 graduates were engaged across the department under the Australian Government Graduate Program. Digital capability continues to be in high demand, with 13 graduates placed in digital specialised areas.

The department remained committed to First Nations programs. In 2025–26, 4 Indigenous Apprenticeships Program participants were engaged across the department. This whole-of-government program provides a tailored pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enter the APS, undertake study and access meaningful, ongoing employment.

The department further developed the Murra Program pilot initiative. Designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students, the program provides opportunities to develop skills and experience within the APS as well as supporting career development and pathway options.

In 2025–26 the department administered the Australian Government Apprenticeship Program. Building on the foundation established in previous years, the program offers an entry point into the APS, with structured development pathways for individuals from diverse backgrounds and at different life stages.

Terms and conditions of employment

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027 commenced on 16 April 2024 and included 3 remuneration increases. The third and final remuneration increase provided for under the agreement took effect on 12 March 2026. The agreement also progressively increases paid parental leave entitlements for secondary caregivers, with entitlements increasing to 14 weeks from 1 March 2026 and a further increase to 18 weeks scheduled for 28 February 2027.

The department uses individual flexibility arrangements to vary the terms and conditions of employment, including remuneration and other entitlements, of a limited number of non-SES employees to secure expertise and specialist skills that are critical to business needs. This flexibility enables the department to acquire and retain talent across the sector and remain competitive in a tight labour market.

Non-salary benefits provided to employees

We offer a range of non-salary benefits to employees, including:

- support for learning and development opportunities, including study leave and financial assistance for eligible studies
- initiatives that promote staff wellbeing, including access to annual influenza vaccinations, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for employees and their families, and the Before Blue mental health coaching program
- flexible working arrangements, including working from home, part-time arrangements and flex time
- a range of leave options, including purchased leave of up to 8 weeks per year; cultural, ceremonial and NAIDOC Week leave; and miscellaneous leave to support ad hoc arrangements, such as gender affirmation leave, representative sport leave and disability-related leave
- paid parental leave provisions for primary and secondary caregivers
- annual closedown arrangements between Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Work health and safety

In 2025–26 we continued to foster a workplace culture that prioritises the physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing of our people in accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act) and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*. Through ongoing consultation, communication and risk management activities, we worked to identify, assess and control workplace hazards while promoting a positive and proactive safety culture.

Our Statement of Commitment to Health, Safety and Wellbeing continued to guide the department's approach to creating safe, respectful and inclusive workplaces. Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) continued to play an important role in supporting work health and safety outcomes across the department, supported by the HSR network and the departmental WHS Committee.

During the year, the department strengthened its integrated approach to prevention, wellbeing and injury management through the incorporation of an early intervention function within the broader work health and safety framework. This enhanced the department's capacity to support employees through early identification of workplace concerns and timely intervention measures.

The department also enhanced its approach to work health and safety through continuous improvement initiatives and ongoing efforts to support the physical and psychological wellbeing of employees.

A review of the department's Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS) was completed during the year to identify opportunities to strengthen governance, assurance and risk management arrangements.

A WHSMS uplift program commenced following the review and is progressing through consultation activities, with a focus on continuous improvement and alignment with contemporary best practice.

A key focus during the year was uplifting assurance arrangements. This included implementation of all recommendations arising from an internal audit of the department's support for staff wellbeing. The final audit closure report was presented to and accepted by the Audit and Risk Committee in March 2026.

As part of Comcare's Regional Engagement Program 2025–26 Risk Management Program, the department participated in a proactive inspection between January and February 2026. The inspection monitored compliance with the WHS Act and the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011. No instances of non-compliance with legislative requirements were identified.

The department continued to support employee health and wellbeing through a range of preventative initiatives. Under the annual influenza vaccination program, 1,069 employees received a vaccination at work, and a further 1,008 employees accessed vaccination reimbursement vouchers. The department also facilitated 218 workstation assessments to support employees to work safely and effectively in their work environments.

Notifiable incidents

In 2025–26, 3 notifiable incidents were reported to Comcare in accordance with Section 38 of the WHS Act.

Workers' compensation performance

During 2025–26 there were 13 new workers' compensation claims accepted. The department's premium rate for the financial year was 0.27% of payroll costs, which compares favourably to the average scheme rate of 0.98%.

Strategic Commissioning Framework

The department operates in line with the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework. In 2025–26 the department added customer advice and support, and information governance and knowledge functions to its agency-specific core work list.

Core work is done in house in most cases, and any outsourcing of core work is minimal and aligns with the limited circumstances permitted under the framework. At 30 June 2026, 96 external workers were performing core work, down from 142 on 30 June 2025.

Information and communications technology

The department's technology capability is delivered by 2 divisions: one focused on enterprise infrastructure, platforms and services, and the other on business application development.

The Enterprise Technology Division, managed by the Chief Information Officer, provides information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure, end-user computing, cybersecurity, and technology enablement. The Digital Experience and Solutions Division, managed by the Chief Digital Officer, develops and supports a range of employment, skills, and workplace relations business and program applications.

Our ICT ecosystem continued to support our policy and program work with technology investment guided by key strategies with governance committee support. Our Digital Investment Plan guides our ICT direction and supports digital service delivery to our users. We continue to advance our strategic goals to transform our digital experience: delivering connected client-centric services; modernising and securing our digital ecosystem; using data to drive better outcomes; and enabling our workforce with the right tools.

In 2025–26 the department continued to invest in ICT infrastructure across on-premises data centres and public cloud networks in accordance with the Australian Government Secure Cloud Strategy. We continued modernising our business application hosting environment, leveraging modern cloud approaches to develop and support externally facing business systems that support clients across employment, skills and workplace relations areas.

To protect users and the data entrusted to the department, we continued to invest in and strengthen the security of our ICT network, systems and data holdings by focusing on implementing the Australian Cyber Security Centre's Essential Eight mitigation strategies and the requirements of the Protective Security Policy Framework. We developed systems in a secure and compliant way, with privacy, accessibility and inclusion guiding our design-led approaches.

Under memorandum of understanding arrangements, we continued to use our ICT capability to deliver and share ICT services with other Australian Government agencies. This included desktop and mobile computing support, application and website development, hosting services, and a security-classified segregated PROTECTED environment. We continued to promote digital literacy across DEWR and partner agencies.

In line with the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy for the Australian Public Service, the department is taking a proactive approach to AI, recognising its potential to improve productivity and citizen experience while ensuring safety and responsible usage. This approach is led by the newly appointed Chief AI Officer and the AI Accountable Official. The department continues to adopt emerging technologies, developing foundational proofs of concept and embedding governance structures to support and drive innovation. We realised early productivity benefits of AI and continue to embed a process of safe and ethical innovation. We have provided all staff with access to AI tools to support their day-to-day productivity and partnered with our users to plan AI solutions that deliver better program outcomes for the community. At the centre of this approach is a focus on ensuring all AI usage is governed appropriately and is ethical and legal.

The department continued to align with, and be an active participant in, the development of whole-of-government direction and strategies, including the Data and Digital Government Strategy, the Australian Government Architecture, the Australian Cyber Security Strategy, the Policy for the responsible use of AI in government and the APS AI Plan.

Financial performance

The department's financial statements are presented in Part 4 of this report, along with the Auditor-General's unmodified audit opinion. A summary of financial performance for departmental and administered activities is provided below.

Purchasing

The department is committed to achieving value for money and conducting procurement activities in a manner that is consistent with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs), the PGPA Act, and supporting procurement policy frameworks. The department maintains a range of policies, procedures, guidance materials and assurance mechanisms to support officials undertaking procurement activities and to promote compliance with legislative and policy requirements.

During 2025–26, the department monitored procurement activities through ongoing assurance and compliance activities including procurement reviews, management oversight and targeted quality assurance processes. These activities identified a small number of instances of non-compliance with procurement requirements, primarily relating to administrative and reporting obligations. No systemic issues affecting the department's procurement framework were identified during the reporting period. Where non-compliance was identified, corrective action was undertaken, including rectification of records, targeted engagement with business areas and reinforcement of procurement guidance and training materials.

The department continued to strengthen procurement and contract management capability through the provision of advice and support to staff, delivery of training and awareness activities, and ongoing improvements to procurement guidance, templates and processes. These activities are intended to promote consistency, support informed decision-making and reduce the likelihood of future non-compliance.

The department was not subject to any adverse findings under the *Government Procurement (Judicial Review) Act 2018* during 2025–26.

In accordance with reporting requirements, the department continues to publish procurement information on AusTender (www.tenders.gov.au) and monitors compliance with reporting timeframes.

During 2025–26, the department undertook procurements through a range of procurement methods, including open tender, panel arrangements and limited tender processes where permitted under the CPRs. Information on procurement reporting timeliness, the use of limited tenders above the relevant procurement threshold, panel procurements and limited tender procurements involving a single approached supplier is reported in accordance with Department of Finance requirements and based on AusTender data for the reporting period.

Overall, the department considers its procurement framework to be effective in supporting compliance with the CPRs and facilitating accountable, transparent and value-for-money procurement outcomes. The department will continue to monitor procurement performance and implement improvements to strengthen procurement capability, governance and compliance.

Procurement initiatives to support small and medium sized enterprises

The department supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and medium enterprise (SME) and small enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website www.finance.gov.au.

The department's activities to support SMEs include:

- complying with the Commonwealth Procurement Framework
- mandatory use of the Commonwealth Contracting Suite for all low-risk procurements valued under \$200,000 (GST inc.)
- implementing the Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP), noting that many Indigenous businesses are also SMEs
- complying with the government's Supplier Pay On-Time or Pay Interest Policy
- using credit cards for procurements valued below \$10,000 (GST inc.).

The department recognises the importance of ensuring small businesses are paid on time. Further information on payment times can be found at www.dewr.gov.au. Electronic invoicing arrangements continue to support small businesses to reduce their administration, create savings and improve the timeliness of payment.

Indigenous Procurement Policy

The department supports the goals of the IPP and is committed to growing its engagement with Indigenous enterprises. For 2025–26 the department had in place with Indigenous enterprises:

- 285 contracts
- contracts with a total value of \$51.17 million.

This result exceeded by \$11.63 million the Commonwealth First Nations procurement target set for the department by the National Indigenous Australians Agency. The department's 2025–26 target was \$39.54 million.

Reporting on the number and value of contracts the department (including its portfolio agencies) has with Indigenous providers is 'point-in-time reporting'. Contract variations and contractor mandatory minimum Indigenous participation requirements are reported across the life of each contract but recorded against the financial year in which the contract was first reported.

Australian Skills Guarantee

The Australian Skills Guarantee (Skills Guarantee), introduced on 1 July 2024, leverages the Australian Government's significant purchasing power to help address skills shortages and gender segregation in the construction and ICT sectors.

The Skills Guarantee Procurement Connected Policy sets national targets for apprentices, women apprentices, learning workers and women learning workers engaged on eligible Australian Government-funded projects. Targets apply to procurements for major construction and information and communications technology (ICT) projects worth \$10 million or more.

On 1 October 2025, new set targets for learning workers and women learning workers engaged on major ICT projects were introduced. The new ICT targets require a minimum of 5% of all estimated labour hours to be undertaken by learning workers and at least 10% of learning worker labour hours to be undertaken by women, with the women's target increasing by 2 percentage points annually until 2030. The introduction of these targets followed the release of a discussion paper and a comprehensive consultation process, with stakeholders expressing support for a more standardised approach to setting ICT targets. Under the previous arrangements, targets for ICT projects were negotiated individually for each project.

At the end of 2025–26, there were 26 Skills Guarantee projects in progress, comprising 22 construction projects and 4 ICT projects, with a further 18 projects in earlier stages of establishment. The total value of these projects was over \$2 billion, and more than 48,000 labour hours had been completed.

During 2025–26 the department continued to support the implementation of the Skills Guarantee across Australian Government agencies. The department worked closely with stakeholders to apply the Skills Guarantee requirements across eligible major construction and ICT procurements. Implementation progress has been consistent with expectations, recognising that agencies need time to embed new policies connected with procurement and familiarise suppliers with their reporting obligations. Progress has also been influenced by the complexity and longer timeframes associated with high-value procurements, as well as other administrative factors.

Two years after its introduction, the Skills Guarantee has transitioned from an implementation phase to a business-as-usual operating model. Awareness and understanding of the policy have increased across Australian Government agencies, and both agencies and suppliers are increasingly equipped to meet Skills Guarantee obligations.

Reportable consultancy contracts

The department engaged consultants to provide independent, specialist advice and services, having regard to:

- the skills and resources required to undertake the work
- the skills and resources available within the department
- the relative cost-effectiveness of engaging external expertise.

Decisions to engage consultants were made in accordance with the PGPA Act, the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and relevant departmental procurement policies and procedures.

Consultants were generally procured through the mandatory Management Advisory Services panel or limited tender. Consultant engagements were typically undertaken to:

- investigate or diagnose a specific issue or problem
- conduct research, reviews, evaluations or assessments
- provide independent advice, expert information or innovative solutions to support departmental decision-making.

As shown in Table 3.2, during 2025–26, 24 new reportable consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$2.55 million (GST inc.). In addition, 22 ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were entered into during a previous reporting period, involving total actual expenditure of \$2.51 million (GST inc.).

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website www.tenders.gov.au.

Table 3.2: Expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts, 2025–26

Reportable consultancy contracts	Number	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	24	2,551.7
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	22	2,510.1
Total	46	5,061.8

Table 3.3: Organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure

Name of organisation	Organisation ABN	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
Kordamentha Pty Ltd	36 220 576 038	772.9
NOUS Group Pty Ltd	66 086 210 344	495.9
Whereto Research Based Consulting Pty Ltd	65 605 178 603	431.0
Grosvenor Performance Group Pty Ltd	47 105 237 590	398.3
BDO Services Pty Ltd	45 134 242 434	381.2
KPMG	51 194 660 183	352.7
The Trustee for Dandolo Partners Unit Trust	48 757 017 061	334.7
Australian Government Actuary	92 802 414 793	275.0
The Trustee for Coolamon Advisors Unit Trust	18 904 562 875	270.9

Reportable non-consultancy contracts

As shown in Table 3.4, during 2025–26, 832 new reportable non-consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$126.27 million (GST inc.). In addition, 1,667 ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts were entered into during a previous reporting period, involving total actual expenditure of \$2,746.29 million (GST inc.).

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts (contracts entered into by the department, excluding consultancy contracts). Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website www.tenders.gov.au.

Table 3.4: Expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts, 2025–26

Reportable non-consultancy contracts	Number	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	832	126,272.9
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	1,667	2,746,285.7
Total	2,499	2,872,558.6

Table 3.5: Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure

Name of organisation	Organisation ABN	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
Serendipity (WA) Pty Ltd	64 062 160 614	232,590.1
Workskil Australia Ltd	28 167 872 424	142,728.7
Asuria People Services Pty Limited	81 132 914 633	99,099.2
Atwork Australia Pty Ltd	29 009 452 153	96,225.7
MAX Solutions Pty Ltd	51 067 092 737	94,281.2

Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) access clauses

The department entered into 12 contracts during the reporting period valued at or above \$100,000 (GST inc.) that did not include an appropriate Auditor-General access clause. These contracts and the reasons for not including access clauses are shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Contracts without standard Auditor-General access, 2025–26

Name of contractor	Purpose	Total contract value \$ (GST inc.)	Reason for not including access clause
EBSCO Australia	Library or documentation services	105,055.50	Standard industry practice to enter into supplier terms and conditions
Sovren Group, Inc	Software maintenance and support	105,248.00	Standard industry practice to enter into supplier terms and conditions
Bullhorn International Inc	Software maintenance and support	105,248.00	Standard industry practice to enter into supplier terms and conditions
Commonwealth Superannuation	Maintenance or support fees	166,958.00	Standard industry practice to enter into supplier terms and conditions
Ventia (Broadspectrum)	Building construction and support and maintenance and repair services	2,310,000.00	Standard industry practice to enter into supplier terms and conditions
RSM Australia	Public administration and finance services (insolvency services)	111,041.70	Administrative oversight
Alvarez & Marsal Australia	Public administration and finance services (insolvency services)	572,184.80	Administrative oversight
Olvera Advisors Pty Limited	Public administration and finance services (insolvency services)	151,951.80	Administrative oversight
Mcgrath Nicol & Partners	Public administration and finance services (insolvency services)	190,078.90	Administrative oversight
Deloitte SRT Pty Ltd	Public administration and finance services (insolvency services)	430,251.80	Administrative oversight
BDO Business Recovery and Insolvency (Qld) Pty Ltd ¹	Public administration and finance services (insolvency services)	166,980.00	Administrative oversight
KPMG ¹	Public administration and finance services (insolvency services)	749,740.20	Administrative oversight

¹ Contracts entered during 2024–25 financial year but not previously reported.

Exempt contracts

During 2025–26 the department had 29 contracts valued at or greater than \$10,000 (GST inc.) that were exempt from being published on AusTender on the basis that it would disclose exempt matters under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. The total value of these contracts was \$3.52 million (GST inc.).

Grants

Information on grants awarded by the department during 2025–26 is available at the GrantConnect website (www.grants.gov.au).

Advertising and marketing

In 2025–26 the department conducted the Parent Pathways campaign and undertook developmental work for a foundation skills campaign.

Further information on the Parent Pathways campaign is available at www.dewr.gov.au/parentpathways.

The annual Campaign Advertising by Australian Government Departments and Entities Report, prepared by the Department of Finance, provides details of campaigns where expenditure was greater than \$250,000 (excluding GST).

Tables 3.7 to 3.9 list payments of \$17,300 or more (GST inclusive) to advertising agencies and to market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising organisations, as required under section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

Table 3.7: Payments to advertising agencies, 2025–26

Organisation	Service provided	Total paid in \$ (GST inc.)
Clemenger BBDO Melbourne Pty Ltd	Development of draft creative material for Foundation Skills campaign	30,744.19

Table 3.8: Payments to market research and polling organisations, 2025–26

Organisation	Service provided	Total paid in \$ (GST inc.)
Whereto Research	Research services to inform Foundation Skills campaign	209,682

Table 3.9: Payments to media advertising organisations, 2025–26

Organisation	Service provided	Total paid in \$ (GST inc.)
Universal McCann	Advertising for Key Apprenticeship Program	144,999.99
Universal McCann	Advertising for Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program	102,941.07
Universal McCann	Advertising for Parent Pathways Service	29,699.99
Universal McCann	Advertising for the Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) Program	32,548.84

External scrutiny

Reports by the Auditor-General

In 2025–26 the Auditor-General tabled the *Implementation of Ethical Frameworks by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations* performance audit report.

The audit found:

- DEWR has largely effective strategies and frameworks that have the potential to support its staff to comply with the Australian Government sector ethical framework.
- DEWR has messaging in place within its Corporate Plan 2024–25 to set the tone from the top. It has developed an Integrity Framework, and the DEWR executive issue regular communication on ethical matters.
- Assurance and oversight primarily occurs through reporting to DEWR's governance forums.

The audit contained 2 recommendations for the department: to ensure the outcomes of our Integrity Framework and People Strategy are measurable, and to establish baselines and metrics for integrity-related reporting. The department agreed to both recommendations.

Reviews by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit

The department did not make any submissions to inquiries conducted by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit throughout the 2025–26 financial year.

Reporting to parliamentary committees

The department has processes in place to provide submissions and/or evidence to parliamentary committee inquiries. We monitor these inquiries and provide biannual reports on them to our Audit and Risk Committee.

The department provided submissions, evidence and Australian Government responses to the following parliamentary committee inquiries in 2025–26.

Table 3.10: Submissions, evidence and tabled Australian Government responses to parliamentary committee inquiries, 2025–26

Committee	Inquiry
Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment	- Fair Work Amendment (Right to Work from Home) Bill 2025 - Australian university graduates - Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave) Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 - Universities Accord (Australian Tertiary Education Commission) Bill 2025 and Universities Accord (Australian Tertiary Education Commission) (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2025 - Education Legislation Amendment (Integrity and Other Measures) Bill 2025 - Fair Work Amendment (Protecting Penalty and Overtime Rates) Bill 2025 - Wage theft - Free TAFE Bill 2024 [Provisions]
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications	Artificial intelligence and data centres
Senate Select Committee on Productivity in Australia	Productivity in Australia
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Workplace Relations, Skills and Training	Operation and adequacy of the National Employment Standards
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education	Factors driving educational attainment
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport	Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability
Former House of Representatives committee Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training	- Digital Transformation of Workplaces - Perceptions and Status of Vocational Education and Training
Joint Standing Committee on Migration	Value of skilled migration to Australia

Judicial decisions

In 2025–26 there were no decisions of any court that had, or may have had, a significant impact on the operations of the department.

Decisions of administrative tribunals

In 2025–26 there were no decisions of administrative tribunals that had, or may have had, a significant impact on the operations of the department.

Decisions by the Australian Information Commissioner

In 2025–26 the Australian Information Commissioner (AIC) finalised their review of one departmental freedom of information (FOI) decision. The AIC decided not to continue to undertake an Information Commissioner (IC) review of the department's FOI decision.

Reports on the operations of the entity by the Commonwealth Ombudsman

In 2025–26 there were 2 reports finalised by the Commonwealth Ombudsman on the operations of the department.

In August 2025 the Commonwealth Ombudsman published the report *Automation in the Targeted Compliance Framework: when the law is changed but the system isn't*. The report examined the Targeted Compliance Framework administered by the department and the cancellation of social security participation payments under section 42AF(2) of the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999*. The department accepted all recommendations in the report.

In December 2025 the Commonwealth Ombudsman published a second report on the Targeted Compliance Framework, *Fairness in the Targeted Compliance Framework: when decisions are made beyond your control*. The department accepted all recommendations in the second report, as they pertain to the department.

Information Publication Scheme

The department is required to publish a range of information about its operations and programs in accordance with the Information Publication Scheme (IPS) in Part II of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act). The department is also required to publish its [IPS Plan](#) on its website. The IPS Plan sets out how the department complies with its IPS obligations. The department meets its IPS obligations.

International Labour Organization

Australia has been a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since it was founded in 1919. DEWR has primary responsibility for the Australian Government's engagement with the ILO.

Under the ILO Constitution, compliance by ILO member states with conventions they have ratified is subject to scrutiny under the ILO's supervisory system. To support this external scrutiny, DEWR submitted 17 reports on the application of ratified instruments in Australia over the course of 2025–26.

DEWR also coordinates consideration of new international labour standards adopted by the ILO and arranges for these instruments to be brought before the parliament. The submission report for the ILO's Biological Hazards in the Working Environment Convention, 2025 (No. 192) and Biological Hazards in the Working Environment Recommendation, 2025 (No. 209) was tabled in the House of Representatives on 12 March 2026 and the Senate on 24 March 2026.

Australia is required to report on the tripartite (employers, workers and government) consultations concerning international labour standards in accordance with obligations under the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144), which it ratified in June 1979.

The International Labour Affairs Committee is a subcommittee of Australia's National Workplace Relations Consultative Council. It was established in 1978 under section 12(1) of the *National Labour Consultative Council Act 1977*. It considers matters of substance relating to the ILO and other relevant international bodies. The committee met 3 times during the reporting period, on 11 November 2025, 13 March 2026 and 21 May 2026.

The department also has regular direct consultations with the representative employer and worker organisations, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Australian Council of Trade Unions, on matters relevant to the ILO. Notably this includes consultation on the recent standard-setting process the ILO undertook on the platform economy.

Disability reporting

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (the Strategy) provides the national framework for advancing inclusion and participation for people with disability.

Guided by the Strategy and the department's Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2024–27, DEWR promotes accessibility, equity and inclusion through its policies, programs and workplace practices. Information on the Strategy and progress against its outcomes is available on Australia's Disability Strategy Hub.

Disability representation and workforce participation continue to be reported through the Australian Public Service Commission's State of the Service Report and APS Statistical Bulletin. The department uses workforce data and employee feedback to identify opportunities to strengthen disability inclusion, improve employee experience and support a workforce that reflects the diversity of the Australian community. These reports are available through the Australian Public Service Commission.

The department is committed to creating a workplace where people with disability can participate fully, contribute their skills and experience, and thrive. Through initiatives including affirmative measures (disability) recruitment, accessibility improvements and employee-led engagement through the Dis/Ability and Carers Network, the department continues to reduce barriers and strengthen inclusion across the employee lifecycle.

This year, the department committed to the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program and achieved accreditation as a Carer Inclusive Workplace, reflecting its ongoing focus on accessibility, inclusion and support for employees with disability and caring responsibilities. The department continues to embed inclusive practices across its policies, systems and ways of working, enabling all employees to access opportunities, contribute their perspectives and perform at their best.

Gender equality reporting

In line with commitments made under *Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality*, Australian Government departments have committed to report on their efforts to achieve gender equality and build gender analysis capability in their annual reports. As part of this initiative, this annual report includes case studies to demonstrate how the department is working towards the ambition of a better, gender equal Australia for everyone.

Supporting the government's gender equality agenda

The Australian Government's vision for gender equality is an Australia where people are safe, are treated with respect, have choices, and have access to resources and equal outcomes regardless of gender. In 2025–26 the department continued to support reforms and initiatives aimed at addressing structural barriers to women's economic security, workforce participation and career progression.

The national gender pay gap remained at 11.5%, the equal lowest level on record and down from 14.1% in May 2022. However, there remains an ongoing need to address the structural drivers of gender inequality, including occupational segregation, caring responsibilities and the historical undervaluation of work performed in female-dominated industries.

Supporting parents and carers

The department continued to support workplace relations reforms that improve workforce participation and economic security for parents and carers. During 2025–26, additional protections for employer-funded paid parental leave were introduced as part of the *Fair Work Amendment (Baby Priya's) Act 2025*. These changes introduced a new principle in the Fair Work Act that, unless employers and employees have expressly agreed otherwise, employer-funded paid parental leave must not be cancelled because a child is stillborn or dies. The reforms provide greater certainty for grieving parents and ensure consistency with government-funded paid parental leave and unpaid parental leave entitlements.

Stewarding the Australian Government's engagement with the Fair Work Commission's gender-based undervaluation priority awards review

In 2025–26 the department continued its stewardship role leading Commonwealth engagement in the Fair Work Commission's gender-based undervaluation priority awards review. This review was initiated following reforms that placed gender equality at the heart of the *Fair Work Act 2009* and strengthened the Commission's ability to identify and address gender-based undervaluation of work.

During the year, the Commission finalised decisions for the 5 priority awards under review: awards covering early childhood education and care workers, health professionals, social and community services workers, pharmacists and Aboriginal community-controlled health services employees.

Grant program to advance gender equality in gender-segregated industries, occupations and workplaces

In 2025–26 the department continued delivery of the Advancing Gender Equality in Gender Segregated Industries grant program. Building on the pilot program established in March 2025, the Australian Government committed an additional \$28.5 million to extend the program to 2027–28. All 11 pilot grant recipients received further funding to expand and build on their projects.

Underpinned by a tripartite ethos, the program is supporting employer organisations and state and territory Trades and Labour Councils to trial practical, industry-led approaches to addressing gender segregation and improving workplace equality. During 2025–26, projects continued to deliver initiatives including leadership programs for women in male-dominated industries, workplace flexibility initiatives, workplace culture and safety programs, audits of workplace amenities and facilities, and support for women-led small businesses.

Gender segregation remains a key driver of workforce inequality and skills shortages, with many occupations experiencing shortages also having highly gender-segregated workforces. By supporting evidence-based and industry-led solutions, the program is helping to identify practical approaches to creating more inclusive workplaces and improving economic opportunities for women across the Australian labour market.

Women's participation in the construction industry

The department continues to support the Australian Government's commitment to increasing women's participation in gender-segregated industries, including in the construction industry.

On 22 September 2025 the National Construction Industry Forum (NCIF) endorsed its Blueprint for the Future, which makes 44 recommendations including 9 priority recommendations. The NCIF has commenced work on priority recommendation 4.4, which aims to explore structural barriers to women's participation in the construction industry. Work is underway to map the barriers and identify relevant initiatives, with the aim of finalising the NCIF's advice to government in early 2027. Complementing this work, the NCIF has also progressed work on recommendation 2.1, development of a Joint Construction Industry Charter. The charter will set out clear shared goals and behavioural expectations for all industry participants, including behaviours to improve workplace culture and safety. The charter is expected to be finalised and endorsed in the second half of 2026.

Supporting women's economic participation through Parent Pathways

Parent Pathways contributed to the advancement of women's economic independence by supporting 36,900 parents and carers during 2025–26, with women representing 97% of the caseload. Parent Pathways has a strong focus on increasing women's workforce participation and economic security by enabling participants to build their confidence and capability and to progress towards achieving their personal, education, training and future employment goals. The service supported a diverse range of women who often experience additional barriers to employment and financial security, including First Nations women (20% of the caseload), culturally and linguistically diverse women (26%) and single parents (70%).

Parent Pathways addressed practical barriers that can limit women's participation in education and work. In 2025–26, more than \$23 million was committed to support access to childcare, transport, technology, training and other participation-related costs. This assistance enabled parents and carers to engage in activities aligned with their goals while continuing to meet their caring responsibilities. Between November 2024 and June 2026, more than 16,800 participants started an education activity, providing evidence of increased engagement in skills development and future workforce participation.

Family and domestic violence e-learning modules

Women experiencing family and domestic violence (FDV) often face complex barriers to education, employment and economic participation, while also carrying primary responsibility for the care, safety and wellbeing of themselves and their children. Priority Area 1 of the government's Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality and the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032 highlights that FDV is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality. FDV can undermine women's safety, economic security, independence and participation.

During 2025–26, 5,440 women supported through the Parent Pathways program disclosed experiences of FDV. As disclosures are voluntary, these figures are likely to understate the prevalence of violence experienced by Parent Pathways participants. The department engaged Lifeline to develop and deliver FDV training, through online, facilitated webinars, to ensure Parent Pathways is better equipped to recognise indicators of violence, respond safely and appropriately to disclosures and connect participants with specialist support services. All Parent Pathway mentors are required to complete the FDV training in addition to meeting relevant qualification or lived experience requirements.

To further strengthen frontline responses in line with the government's commitments, a new FDV e-learning module was developed by Lifeline in 2025–26 for rollout to both Parent Pathways mentors and Workforce Australia providers. This will provide ongoing training and support consistent, trauma-informed service delivery that promotes participant safety and pathways to economic independence. The training module also recognises that experiences of violence can differ across individuals and communities, and supports responses that are inclusive of diverse participant experiences.

Supporting PALM workers' safety

In 2025–26, DEWR strengthened PALM worker-centred welfare and wellbeing by establishing a body of work to deliver bystander training for PALM scheme workers to identify and detect gender-based violence. This will enhance worker safety, raise awareness of gender-based violence, and support behaviour change through multi-channel and in-language educational content. This initiative will be delivered in 2026.

The department established a PALM Health Consultative Group – a forum with state and local health authorities to proactively address emerging health issues (including sexual health) among PALM workers. This forum will be used to implement the onshore HIV response plan for PALM worker and to develop referral pathway mapping and service linkage approaches for health services in Australia.

Supporting these initiatives is, for the first time, the inclusion of sex-disaggregated data in PALM scheme data reporting. This provides demographic insights on gender equity and diversity in the PALM scheme, including:

- identifying disparities and vulnerabilities between genders, enabling targeted and equitable interventions
- providing evidence to inform policy responses in areas of growing focus such as sexual and reproductive health, HIV, and gender-based violence
- supporting the evaluation and refinement of program settings and interventions, ensuring gender-responsive support beyond the current areas of focus.

National Skills Agreement

The 2024–2028 National Skills Agreement (NSA) is investing \$12.6 billion over 5 years in the vocational education and training (VET) system. Gender equality is one of the NSA's shared national priorities, supporting governments to work collaboratively to address critical skills and workforce challenges.

Through a National Skills Plan, which outlines shared ambitions and key focus areas for the national priorities, all governments have committed to work towards reducing gender segregation in VET and gender-imbalanced workplaces. Governments have also committed to supporting flexible education and training and delivery for students balancing care and employment responsibilities with their learning goals. In addition, governments will work towards embedding gender equality across the skills sector, and building a VET sector that is safe, inclusive and free from gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence, including for women who face additional barriers due to disability, cultural background, socio-economic status and geographical location.

Under the NSA, the Australian Government provides funding to states and territories to deliver specific policy initiatives aligned with the VET reform agenda. Consistent with the NSA's identification of gender equality as a national priority and women as a priority cohort, jurisdictions' agreed implementation plans demonstrate a clear focus on gender equity. This is particularly apparent in the expansion and piloting of interventions designed to improve VET outcomes, including completions. Women are identified as a priority cohort for completion support, particularly within apprenticeships, traineeships and male-dominated industries. Most plans focus on increasing participation, retention and completion among women through broader student support and apprenticeship reforms. The main approaches include expanding wraparound support, increasing mentoring and pastoral care, improving apprenticeship support and retention, supporting participation in non-traditional trades and strengthening career information and pathway advice. Jurisdictions will provide 6-monthly performance reports on initiatives until December 2028 and will also evaluate implementation and delivery, which will help build the evidence base on best practice for successful outcomes.

National Gender Equality Mapping Project

In 2025–26 the department completed the National Gender Equality Mapping Project to develop a comprehensive picture of initiatives supporting gender equality across the VET system. The project supports implementation of the National Skills Agreement, which identifies gender equality as a national priority, by providing a shared evidence base to inform future policy discussions and action across jurisdictions.

Findings highlighted significant activity across the VET system to increase participation in gender-segregated industries and occupations, improve access to learner supports, strengthen pathways into training and employment, and promote more inclusive training and workplace cultures. The project improved understanding of existing initiatives and provided an evidence base to support ongoing efforts to advance gender equality within the national VET system.

Free TAFE

The Australian Government, in partnership with state and territory governments, is delivering \$1.5 billion in joint funding for Free TAFE places across Australia over 2023 to 2026. Places are offered in fields of study in high demand and of national and state priority and are targeted to cohorts who typically face barriers to education and training.

Free TAFE focuses on a number of priority groups, including women facing economic insecurity and women undertaking study in non-traditional fields.

Commencing on 1 January 2023 and continuing through 31 March 2026, Free TAFE supported more than 814,000 enrolments nationally. Women accounted for almost 62% of enrolments, with more than 502,200 enrolments. This demonstrates the program's role in improving access to training and skills development for women, particularly those who face barriers to education and training.

The Australian Government has made Free TAFE a permanent feature of the national VET system, investing over \$1.6 billion to 2034–35 to support at least 100,000 Free TAFE and VET places every year from 2027, underpinned by the *Free TAFE Act 2025*.

Jobs and Skills Councils

In 2025–26 the department supported Jobs and Skills Councils in leading initiatives to improve workforce diversity and inclusion in historically male-dominated industries. Industry Skills Australia commenced projects to better understand workforce diversity, skills needs and barriers to participation in the transport and logistics sector, and to examine pathways to improve equity in maritime leadership and increase opportunities for women, First Nations people and other under-represented groups in technical and leadership roles. The Future Skills Organisation and Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance also began developing nationally recognised training resources to promote safe, respectful and inclusive workplaces, including contributing to a new elective Unit of Competency for Safe and Respectful Workplaces and updated work health and safety training products.

The Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance launched its Make It ManuFACTuring campaign to promote manufacturing careers, challenge gender stereotypes and encourage greater participation in the sector. BuildSkills also identified women as a priority workforce cohort through its 2025–26 Workforce Plan and supporting research, which highlighted increased female participation as an opportunity to address workforce shortages in the housing and construction sectors. Together, these initiatives support evidence-based approaches to reducing occupational gender segregation, improving workplace culture and expanding opportunities for women and other under-represented groups.

Building Women's Careers

The Building Women's Careers program continues to grow, with over 170 partners now involved in project partnerships across Australia. This increasing engagement across business, employers and workers is seeing real commitment to structural and cultural change.

Central to the program's impact is an ongoing collaborative approach, reflected and shared through a bi-monthly community of practice that showcases work underway and provides a forum to share learning, opportunities and challenges. This opportunity for project partners to build trust and engagement and share lessons, experiences and practices in real time is invaluable. Projects are independently joining forces to deliver shared outcomes, such as sharing employer engagement strategies and male allyship training resources and delivery.



Highlight: Assuring the integrity of government programs and services

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is committed to maintaining the integrity of its programs and services through strong governance, sound administrative practices and decision-making that is consistent with legislative and policy requirements.

Throughout 2025–26, the department progressed a range of initiatives to strengthen assurance mechanisms, improve administrative processes and support the lawful, fair and consistent delivery of government programs. This work focused on strengthening oversight, embedding robust controls, and enhancing staff capability to support high-quality decision-making.

An example of this work was the Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF) Integrity Assurance Program. Under the *Social Security (Administration) Act 1999*, the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is responsible for administering mutual obligations and the TCF, which applies to eligible income support recipients required to meet participation requirements.

The program addressed areas where aspects of the TCF had not operated consistently with legislative requirements and policy settings. This included responding to issues identified in the Commonwealth Ombudsman's reports *Automation in the Targeted Compliance Framework: when the law is changed but the system isn't* (Report One) and *Fairness in the Targeted Compliance Framework: when decisions are made beyond your control* (Report Two) and the independent assurance review.

Priority work under the program included:

- establishing and building assurance over the TCF, implementing system repair and improvements, and providing assurance that decision-making under the TCF is operating in accordance with the legislative framework
- developing and embedding training and tools to strengthen decision-making integrity.

The department also reviewed decisions that resulted in the cancellation of social security participation payments due to persistent mutual obligation failures between 8 April 2022 and 4 July 2024. As part of this process, compensation was provided to over 600 affected individuals where unlawful payment cancellation decisions were identified. The department is also implementing new safeguards in relation to decisions under the TCF that may reduce or cancel a person's social security payment. Once these are implemented, a job seeker's individual circumstances will be comprehensively considered before any decision is made to reduce or cancel their income support payment for mutual obligation failures, where required by law.

4

Financial statements

Independent auditor's report	116
Certification of financial statements	119
Financial statements	120



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2026:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2026 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to and forming part of the financial statements, comprising material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and their delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Key audit matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgement, were of most significance in my audit of the financial statements of the current period. These matters were addressed in the context of my audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

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Key audit matter**Accuracy of 'Workforce Australia' supplier expenses**

Refer to Note D1.3 'Supplier'

I focused on the Workforce Australia component of the suppliers expense balance as a key audit matter. This is an employment service delivered by the department that includes an online service and a network of providers to deliver personalised support for Australians in finding and keeping a job, changing jobs or creating their own job. The department establishes provider agreements for delivering these services. Implementation of reforms and related payment arrangements create risks for the accuracy of payments.

During 2025–26 the Entity recognised supplier expenses of \$2.3 billion. Workforce Australia expenditure represents a significant portion of this balance.

How the audit addressed the matter

To audit the accuracy of Workforce Australia expenses, I performed the following procedures:

- evaluated the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of key information technology systems and controls relevant to the accuracy of Workforce Australia expenses. This included assessing whether related expenses are accurately reflected in the financial management information system;
- assessed the accuracy of payment rates applied within business systems by agreeing a sample to respective agreements and jobseeker details; and
- tested a sample of Workforce Australia payments, including agreeing payments to the approved provider agreements.

Key audit matter**Valuation of the vocational student and Australian apprenticeship support loans receivables**

Refer to Note F1.2 'Trade and Other Receivables'

I focused on the Entity's vocational student and Australian apprenticeship support loan receivables as a key audit matter due to the valuation of these receivables involving significant and complex judgments about the timing and recoverability of the related debts.

These judgments include assumptions about discount factors, future employment and salary rates and future collectability of repayments that contain a significant degree of uncertainty and are influenced by the economic environment.

These receivables are subject to actuarial assessment and rely on the completeness and accuracy of taxation data and information provided from education providers.

For the year ended 30 June 2026, the Entity recognised vocational student and Australian apprenticeship support loan receivables of \$2.7 billion and \$696.1 million respectively.

How the audit addressed the matter

To audit the valuation of vocational student and Australian apprenticeship support loan receivables, I performed the following procedures:

- evaluated the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of management's controls relating to the valuation process, including data reconciliations and the Entity's review and approval of the estimates;
- evaluated the reasonableness of the Entity's actuarial methodology. This included considering the work and findings of the external actuarial expert engaged by the Entity; and
- assessed the reasonableness of key actuarial assumptions by comparing them with accepted industry benchmarks for discount rates and salary growth rates in a range of occupations.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Secretary of the Department is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the rules made under the Act. The Secretary of the Department is also responsible for such internal control as the Secretary of the Department determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Secretary of the Department is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Secretary of the Department is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

From the matters communicated with the Accountable Authority, I determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. I describe these matters in my auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, I determine that a matter should not be communicated in my report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Australian National Audit Office



Fiona Sheppard
Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra
21 September 2026

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Signed 

Simon Duggan PSM
 Secretary

17 September 2026

Signed 

Ben Sladic FCA
 Chief Financial Officer

17 September 2026

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Departmental Primary Statements	121
Administered Schedules	126
Notes to the Financial Statements	131
A. About This Report	131
B. Departmental Operating Result Reconciliation	134
B1: Net Cash Appropriation Arrangements	134
C. Departmental Financial Performance	135
C1: Expenses	135
C2: Income	136
D. Administered Financial Performance	138
D1: Expenses	138
D2: Income	139
E. Departmental Financial Position	141
E1: Financial Assets	141
E2: Non-financial Assets	142
E3: Payables	146
E4: Interest Bearing Liabilities	146
F. Assets and Liabilities Administered on behalf of Government	147
F1: Administered - Financial Assets	147
F2: Payables	150
G. Funding	151
G1: Appropriations	151
G2: Special Accounts	155
G3: Regulatory Charging	156
H. People and Relationships	158
H1: Employee Provisions	158
H2: Key management personnel remuneration (KMP)	158
H3: Related party disclosures	159
I. Managing Uncertainties	160
I1: Contingent Assets and Liabilities	160
I2: Financial Instruments	161
I3: Fair Value	164
J. Other Information	165
J1: Current/Non-current distinction for Assets and Liabilities	165

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
for the year ended 30 June 2026

Departmental Primary Statements

		2026	2025	Original Budget ¹
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	2026 \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	C1.1	602,891	581,532	467,745
Suppliers	C1.2	259,173	309,805	320,179
Depreciation and amortisation	E2.1	157,896	213,514	149,841
Write-down of non-financial assets	E2.1	26,615	-	-
Interest on lease liabilities		7,762	2,320	2,688
Losses from asset sales		-	8,301	-
Net loss on lease derecognised		82	-	-
Impairment loss on financial assets		576	-	-
Total expenses		1,054,995	1,115,472	940,453
Own-Source Income				
Own-source revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers ¹	C2.1	129,223	129,992	71,112
Resources received free of charge	C2.2	1,910	1,889	2,433
Total own-source revenue		131,133	131,881	73,545
Gains				
Gain from sale of assets		663	-	-
Other gains		3	13,155	-
Net gain on reversal of lease derecognised		-	245	-
Reversal of impairment on financial assets		-	623	-
Total gains		666	14,023	-
Total own-source income		131,799	145,904	73,545
Net cost of services		(923,196)	(969,568)	(866,908)
Revenue from Government	C2.3	796,501	822,047	776,860
Deficit on continuing operations		(126,695)	(147,521)	(90,048)
Total comprehensive loss	B1	(126,695)	(147,521)	(90,048)

¹ Budget reported in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements published on 25 March 2025.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 30 June 2026

		2026	2025	Original Budget ¹
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	2026 \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	E1.1	5,163	6,235	11,748
Trade and other receivables	E1.2	294,365	333,799	266,782
Total financial assets		299,528	340,034	278,530
Non-financial assets				
Buildings ²	E2.1	210,555	227,618	210,486
Leasehold improvements	E2.1	33,063	29,230	-
Infrastructure, plant and equipment ³	E2.1	33,402	42,777	57,672
Computer software	E2.1	284,945	290,595	370,269
Prepayments		26,580	39,271	42,453
Total non-financial assets		588,545	629,491	680,880
Total assets		888,073	969,525	959,410
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Supplier payables		35,759	57,571	42,636
Other payables	E3.1	30,954	30,546	26,486
Total payables		66,713	88,117	69,122
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases	E4.1	234,376	244,041	204,371
Total interest bearing liabilities		234,376	244,041	204,371
Provisions				
Employee provisions	H1.1	163,540	163,185	144,780
Total provisions		163,540	163,185	144,780
Total liabilities		464,629	495,343	418,273
Net assets		423,444	474,182	541,137
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		987,527	911,570	990,279
Reserves		3,717	3,717	3,717
Accumulated deficit		(567,800)	(441,105)	(452,859)
Total equity		423,444	474,182	541,137

¹ Budget reported in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements published on 25 March 2025.

² Right-of-use (ROU) assets are included in the 'Buildings' line item.

³ Right-of-use (ROU) motor vehicle assets are included in the 'Infrastructure, plant and equipment' line item.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ 2026 \$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		911,570	744,452	911,571
Adjusted opening balance		911,570	744,452	911,571
Contributions by owners				
Equity injection - appropriations ²		24,776	69,831	24,527
Departmental capital budget ³		51,181	97,287	54,181
Total transactions with owners		75,957	167,118	78,708
Closing balance as at 30 June		987,527	911,570	990,279
ACCUMULATED DEFICIT				
Contributions by owners				
Balance carried forward from previous period		(441,105)	(293,584)	(362,811)
Adjusted opening balance		(441,105)	(293,584)	(362,811)
Comprehensive income				
Deficit on continuing operations		(126,695)	(147,521)	(90,048)
Total comprehensive income		(126,695)	(147,521)	(90,048)
Closing balance as at 30 June		(567,800)	(441,105)	(452,859)
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVES				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		3,717	3,717	3,717
Adjusted opening balance		3,717	3,717	3,717
Closing balance as at 30 June		3,717	3,717	3,717
Total equity as at 30 June		423,444	474,182	541,137

Accounting policy

Equity Injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental Capital Budgets are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

Restructuring of Administrative Arrangements

Net assets received from or relinquished to another Government entity under a restructuring of administrative arrangements are adjusted at their book value directly against contributed equity.

¹ Budget reported in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements published on 25 March 2025.

² \$3.717 million equity injection quarantined under section 51 as at 30 June 2026.

³ \$11.515 million departmental capital budget quarantined under section 51 as at 30 June 2026.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
CASH FLOW STATEMENT
for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ 2026 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Appropriations		980,896	944,397	776,610
Sale of goods and rendering of services		130,778	140,344	71,112
GST received		41,738	47,537	31,743
Special Account receipts		6,008	5,914	-
Other		1,432	3,355	-
Total cash received		1,160,852	1,141,547	879,465
Cash used				
Employee benefits		603,446	554,019	468,088
Suppliers		274,928	284,222	317,430
Section 74 receipts transferred to the OPA		184,400	205,832	80
GST paid ²		40,824	47,630	31,743
Interest payments on lease liabilities		7,762	2,320	2,688
Total cash used		1,111,360	1,094,023	820,029
Net cash from operating activities		49,492	47,524	59,436
INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Proceeds from sales of infrastructure, plant and equipment		752	-	-
Total cash received		752	-	-
Cash used				
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		7,706	12,726	86,274
Purchase of leasehold improvements		11,150	17,269	-
Purchase/development of intangibles		89,291	144,972	-
Total cash used		108,147	174,967	86,274
Net cash used by investing activities		(107,395)	(174,967)	(86,274)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Contributed equity ³		5,069	7,500	86,276
Contributed equity - equity injection		27,096	63,947	-
Contributed equity - departmental capital budget		80,815	113,832	-
Total cash received		112,980	185,379	86,276
Cash used				
Principal payments of lease liabilities		56,149	63,449	59,438
Total cash used		56,149	63,449	59,438
Net cash from financing activities		56,831	121,930	26,838
Net increase in cash held		(1,072)	(5,513)	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		6,235	11,748	11,748
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	E1.1	5,163	6,235	11,748

¹ Budget reported in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements published on 25 March 2025.

² GST paid to suppliers, per AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows and Primary Reporting and Information Management Aid (PRIMA).

³ Student Identifiers Special Account transferred from Department of Education.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY for the year ended 30 June 2026

Commentary for significant variances between the Department's original budget estimates, as published in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements on 25 March 2025, and the final outcome in the 2025-2026 financial statements is presented below. Significant variances are those relevant to an analysis of the Department's performance, not merely numerical differences between actual amounts and budget. Unless otherwise individually significant, no additional commentary has been included.

Departmental financial result

In 2025-26, the Department reported an operating deficit on continuing operations of \$126.7 million, against a budgeted deficit of \$90.0 million. After adjusting for unfunded depreciation and amortisation and principal repayments of leased assets, the Department reported a net cash operating deficit of \$24.9 million, compared with an approved deficit of \$15.2 million. The higher than budgeted deficit was driven by \$26.6 million of impairment expenses recognised under AASB 136.

Total expenses were \$114.5 million higher than budget, mainly due to higher employee expenses associated with delivering Government priorities and additional activities, together with depreciation, amortisation and impairment expenses relating to non-financial assets. Supplier expenses were lower than budget, primarily due to lower expenditure in contractors and consultants, accommodation-related costs, low-value and short-term leases.

Total own-source income was \$57.6 million higher than budget, mainly due to increased projects and services provided on behalf of other entities, including the Department of Education.

Revenue from Government was \$19.6 million higher than budget, primarily reflecting funding received through additional current year measures in the 2025-26 MYEFO process.

Departmental financial position

Cash and cash equivalents mainly reflect the balance of the Unique Student Identifier Special Account (\$4.1 million), which is held in the Official Public Account and reported as a cash equivalent.

Trade and other receivables were \$27.6 million higher than budget, mainly due to higher appropriation receivables and amounts receivable for services provided on behalf of other entities.

Non-financial assets were \$92.3 million lower than budget, mainly due to computer software being \$85.3 million lower than budget.

Supplier payables were \$6.9 million lower than budget, while other payables were \$4.5 million higher than budget due to increased year-end accruals, including wages, salaries and superannuation.

Employee provisions were \$18.8 million higher than budget due to actuarial adjustments to employee leave balances.

Departmental statement of changes in equity

As at 30 June 2026, the Department's equity was \$117.7 million lower than budget, mainly due to the operating deficit being \$36.6 million greater than budget and lower than budgeted non-financial assets.

Departmental cash flow statement

Variances in the statements of comprehensive income and schedule of assets and liabilities were also reflected in the cash flow statement. The underlying causes are identical.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
ADMINISTERED SCHEDULE OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
for the year ended 30 June 2026

Administered Schedules

		2026	2025	Original Budget ¹
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	2026 \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Grants	D1.1	285,741	236,090	234,404
Personal benefits	D1.2	755,492	564,838	849,586
Supplier	D1.3	2,266,645	2,095,220	2,400,372
Subsidies	D1.4	1,093,919	1,193,162	1,035,475
Impairment loss on financial assets		10,243	(9,626)	215,925
Payment to Corporate Commonwealth Entity - Comcare		6,030	6,679	56,279
Fair value losses	D1.5	1,948,735	155,551	-
Total expenses		6,366,805	4,241,914	4,792,041
Income				
Revenue				
Taxation revenue				
Levies - Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding)		282,021	269,131	269,534
Total taxation revenue		282,021	269,131	269,534
Non-taxation revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers	D2.1	76,609	80,878	-
Interest	D2.2	153,169	207,124	96,759
Other	D2.3	81,642	54,680	272,763
Total non-taxation revenue		311,420	342,682	369,522
Total revenue		593,441	611,813	639,056
Gains				
Fair value gains	D2.4	-	13,154	6,691
Total gains		-	13,154	6,691
Total income		593,441	624,967	645,747
Net cost of services		(5,773,364)	(3,616,947)	(4,146,294)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Change in asset revaluation reserve		6,501	140,562	-
Total other comprehensive income		6,501	140,562	-
Total comprehensive loss		(5,766,863)	(3,476,385)	(4,146,294)

¹ Budget reported in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements published on 25 March 2025.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
ADMINISTERED SCHEDULE OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
As at 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ 2026 \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	F1.1	10,182	12,198	16,943
Trade and other receivables	F1.2	3,460,780	4,923,141	3,237,098
Equity accounted investments	F1.3	519,592	513,091	539,097
Total financial assets		3,990,554	5,448,430	3,793,138
Non-financial assets				
Prepayments		7,377	7,403	7,715
Total non-financial assets		7,377	7,403	7,715
Total assets administered on behalf of Government		3,997,931	5,455,833	3,800,853
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Personal benefits		3,320	2,903	2,489
Suppliers		65,246	65,264	132,796
Subsidies		40,801	38,701	36,004
Grants		15,531	7,105	15,162
Other payables	F2.1	2,164,660	2,101,527	2,095,422
Total payables		2,289,558	2,215,500	2,281,873
Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government		2,289,558	2,215,500	2,281,873
Net assets		1,708,373	3,240,333	1,518,980

¹ Budget reported in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements published on 25 March 2025.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
ADMINISTERED RECONCILIATION SCHEDULE
for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July	3,240,333	2,763,645
Net cost of services		
Income	593,441	624,967
Expenses		
Other than Corporate Commonwealth Entities	(6,360,775)	(4,235,235)
Payments to Corporate Commonwealth Entities	(6,030)	(6,679)
Other comprehensive income		
Revaluations transferred to reserves	6,501	140,562
Transfers (to) from the Australian Government		
Appropriation transfers from the OPA		
Annual appropriations		
Payments to entities other than Corporate Commonwealth Entities	3,732,095	3,556,124
Payments to Corporate Commonwealth Entities	6,030	6,679
GST	226,339	207,390
Special appropriations (unlimited)		
Payments to entities other than Corporate Commonwealth Entities	1,128,139	1,017,704
Special accounts	10,278	6,199
Appropriation transfers to the OPA		
Transfers to the OPA	(639,024)	(627,847)
GST transferred to OPA	(220,699)	(206,975)
Special appropriation receipts	(8,255)	(7,017)
Other movements	-	816
Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June	1,708,373	3,240,333

Administered Cash Transfers to and from the Official Public Account

Revenue collected by the Department for use by the Government rather than the Department is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. Conversely, cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under Parliamentary appropriation on behalf of Government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the Department on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the Schedule of Administered Cash Flows and in the Administered Reconciliation Schedule.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
ADMINISTERED CASH FLOW STATEMENT
for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Notes	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000	Original Budget ¹ 2026 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Interest		744	280	142,622
GST refunds		220,699	210,862	240,037
Levies - Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation		282,021	269,131	269,534
Other revenue		132,383	152,038	204,854
Total cash received		635,847	632,311	857,047
Cash used				
Suppliers		2,268,626	2,161,397	2,400,372
Subsidies		1,091,901	1,190,476	1,035,475
Personal benefits		737,794	548,971	849,586
Grants		277,315	244,147	234,404
Payments to Corporate Commonwealth Entities		6,030	6,679	56,279
GST paid		225,372	209,553	240,037
Total cash used		4,607,038	4,361,223	4,816,153
Net cash used by operating activities		(3,971,191)	(3,728,912)	(3,959,106)
INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Repayments of loans		200,826	203,047	238,977
Total cash received		200,826	203,047	238,977
Cash used				
Loans provided		468,580	425,563	547,289
Total cash used		468,580	425,563	547,289
Net cash used by investing activities		(267,754)	(222,516)	(308,312)
Net decrease in cash held		(4,238,945)	(3,951,428)	(4,267,418)
Cash from the Official Public Account				
Appropriations		4,875,239	4,581,795	5,120,629
GST appropriations		226,339	207,390	-
Corporate Commonwealth Entities		6,030	6,679	-
Special accounts		10,278	6,199	-
Total cash from the Official Public Account		5,117,886	4,802,063	5,120,629
Cash to the Official Public Account				
Administered Receipts		(652,003)	(631,929)	(852,059)
Return of GST appropriations		(220,699)	(210,862)	-
Special accounts - transferred in		(6,008)	(5,914)	-
Special accounts		(2,247)	(1,103)	-
Total cash to the Official Public Account		(880,957)	(849,808)	(852,059)
Net Cash transferred from the Official Public Account		4,236,929	3,952,255	4,268,570
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(2,016)	827	1,152
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		12,198	11,371	15,791
Cash at the end of the reporting period	F1.1	10,182	12,198	16,943

¹ Budget reported in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements published on 25 March 2025.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations BUDGET VARIANCES COMMENTARY for the year ended 30 June 2026

Administered Budget Variance Commentary

Commentary for significant variances between the Department's original budget estimates, as published in the 2025-2026 Portfolio Budget Statements on 25 March 2025, and the final outcome in the 2025-2026 financial statements is presented below. Major variances are those relevant to an analysis of the Department's administered performance, not merely on numerical differences between actual amounts and budget. Unless otherwise individually significant, no additional commentary has been included.

Administered schedule of comprehensive income

In 2025-2026 the Department administered \$6.4 billion in expenses on behalf of the Government, primarily comprised of \$1.1 billion (17%) in subsidies paid and \$2.3 billion (36%) in supplier costs.

Personal benefits expenses were under budget, predominantly due to the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives System demand driven program operating with lower than anticipated claim rates across most payment types, the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program receiving less claims for assistance than predicted through baseline modelling and lower than budgeted activity in the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans program.

Supplier costs were slightly under budget due to underspends within the Workforce Australia program from lower-than-expected participation in activities and under-utilisation of some capped and non-demand driven programs and services.

Subsidies were slightly higher than budget due to higher than forecast demand for Apprenticeship Programs.

The majority of payments to corporate Commonwealth entities (Comcare) reported in the Portfolio Budget Statements were subsequently appropriated to DEWR directly, with only \$6.03 million subsequently appropriated for payment to corporate Commonwealth entities. Other payments made to Comcare were appropriated directly to the Department and recorded as Grants to Australian Government entities.

Variation to budget for the write down and impairment of assets and fair value losses reflect the impact of the actuarial adjustments from the Australian Government Actuary on Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans and Vocational Student Loans. The result has also been influenced by policy changes, including the one-off 20% reduction in eligible loan balances (\$694.16 million for Vocational Student Loans and \$197.58 million for Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans) and the move to a marginal repayment system from 1 July 2025 (\$382.25 million for Vocational Student Loans and \$63.74 million for Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans), which have impacted the fair value and recoverability assumptions applied to these loan assets.

Administered schedule of assets and liabilities

As at 30 June 2026, assets administered on behalf of Government totalled \$4 billion compared to an original budget of \$3.8 billion. Administered assets are primarily comprised of loans provided under the Vocational Student Loans (VSL) and Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans (AASL) programs, with a minority consisting of investments in Comcare and the Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave) scheme.

The variance to the original budget is primarily a result of variations in the actuarial assessment of fair value of the VSL and AASL loans, including the 2025-2026 actuarial adjustment which was not reflected in the budget.

Administered cash flow statement

Variances in the Administered schedule of comprehensive income and Administered schedule of assets and liabilities are also reflected in the Administered cash flow statement.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Notes to the Financial Statements

A. About This Report

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (the Department) is an Australian Government controlled not-for-profit entity. The Department's purpose is to support people to have safe, secure and well-paid work with the skills for a sustainable future. The Department is structured to meet the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs.
- Outcome 2: Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.
- Outcome 3: Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces.

The Department supports its Ministers through expert, evidence-based policy advice and the design and delivery of quality and sustainable policies and programs.

The Department conducts the following administered activities on behalf of the Government:

- Employment Services:
 - Help job seekers find and keep a job,
 - Deliver high-quality and efficient services,
 - Support target groups to improve their work readiness and find employment,
 - Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme.
- Building Skills and Capability:
 - Enhance the quality of vocational education and training,
 - Respond to national future skills needs through access to VSL graduates with the required skills,
 - Reduce barriers to undertaking quality vocational education and training,
 - Maintain the Unique Student Identifier registry.
- Vocational Student Loans: Reduce barriers to undertaking quality vocational education and training.
- Workplace Relations and Support:
 - Fair Entitlements Guarantee program,
 - Coal Mining Industry Long Service Leave Corporation,
 - Comcare.

The continued existence of the Department in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on Government policy and on continuing funding by Parliament for the Department's administration and programs.

Activities contributing toward these outcomes are classified as either departmental or administered. Departmental activities involve the use of assets, liabilities, income and expenses controlled or incurred by the Department. Administered activities involve the management or oversight by the Department, on behalf of the Government, of items controlled or incurred by the Government.

The Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (PGPA) Act 2013*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR) and the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – including simplified disclosures for Tier 2 Entities under AASB 1060 issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period. Fair value measurement of non-financial assets are reported in accordance with Tier 1 disclosures under AASB 1053 Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

General disclosures to the financial statements are to one decimal place, except where appropriate to two or three decimal places to support disclosures.

Reporting of Administered activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes.

Unless otherwise stated, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

Tier 1 reporting requirements have been applied to administered disclosures in respect of AASB 7 *Financial Instruments: Disclosure* and AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*.

Significant Accounting Judgements and Estimates

During the 2025-2026 financial year, the Department has made the following judgements and estimates that had an impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements:

- Employee Provisions (H1)
- Non-financial Assets (E2)
- Workforce Australia and Transition to Work accruals (D1.3 and D1.4)
- Vocational Student Loans (includes both Vocational Student Loans (VSL) and VET FEE-HELP (VFH)) (D1.5, D2.2, D2.4, and F1.2 and F1.4)
- Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans (D1.2, D1.5, D2.2, F1.2 and F1.4).

New Australian Accounting Standards

The following new and amending standards were issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board prior to the signing of the statement by the accountable authority and chief financial officer, which may have a material impact on the entity's financial statements for future reporting period(s):

Standard/ Interpretation	Application date for the Department ¹	Nature of impending change/s in accounting policy and likely impact on initial application
AASB 2023-5 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Lack of Exchangeability	1 January 2025	No material impact. DEWR has no holdings, obligations or transactions denominated in currencies subject to exchangeability restrictions, so no recognition, measurement or additional disclosure impact arises.
AASB 2024-4 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Effective Date of Amendments to AASB 10 and AASB 128 [deferral of equity accounting-related amendments]	1 January 2025	No material impact. The amendment defers mandatory application of the AASB 2014-10 equity accounting amendments to periods beginning on or after 1 January 2028. DEWR's treatment of controlled and associated entities is unchanged.
AASB 2026-1 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosures about Uncertainties in the Financial Statements	1 July 2025	No recognition or measurement impact is expected; disclosure wording may be refined where necessary. DEWR will confirm its disclosures on impairment assumptions and provisions remain consistent with the examples which were added for AASB 136 and AASB 137.

¹ The expected initial application date is when the accounting standard becomes operative at the beginning of the reporting period.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Other new, revised, and amending standards and interpretations that were issued prior to the sign-off date and applicable to current or future reporting periods have been assessed as not having a material impact on the financial statements.

Taxation

The Department is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Shared Service Arrangements

The Department has established a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Finance, Service Delivery Office, for the provision of shared services arrangements. The Department receives core transactional services from the Department of Finance. The Department also receives grant hub support from the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) and payment support from Services Australia.

Events after the Reporting Period

Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation

Subsequent to 30 June 2026, the Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave) Legislation Amendment Act 2026 received Royal Assent on 6 July 2026. The amendments introduce an Unpaid Levy Payment Arrangement for employers with historical unpaid levy obligations and revise the calculation of penalties applicable to late levy payments. In relation to the unpaid levy obligations, these debts arose in the context of litigation that clarified long-standing disputes regarding employee eligibility under the Scheme. The Department has assessed these legislative amendments and determined that as there is nil impact, they do not require adjustment to the amounts recognised in the financial statements as at 30 June 2026. The impact for future financial reporting periods cannot be reliably estimated at this point in time.

Subsequent to 30 June 2026, Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation (Coal LSL) finalised its review of the application of the Saving Qualifying Service provisions under the Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave) Administration Act 1992. The review resulted in a revised interpretation and an estimated increase in Coal LSL's provision for reimbursements at 30 June 2026. Consistent with the valuation of the Department's equity-accounted investment in Coal LSL, the carrying value of the investment at 30 June 2026 has been adjusted to reflect this estimate.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

B. Departmental Operating Result Reconciliation

B1: Net Cash Appropriation Arrangements

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
Total comprehensive loss - as per the Statement of Comprehensive Income	(126,695)	(147,521)
Plus: depreciation/amortisation of assets funded through appropriations (departmental capital budget funding and/or equity injections)	98,709	154,315
Plus: depreciation of right-of-use assets ¹	59,187	59,199
Less: lease principal repayments ²	<u>(56,149)</u>	<u>(63,449)</u>
Net Cash Operating Surplus/(Loss)³	<u>(24,948)</u>	<u>2,544</u>

¹ The inclusion of depreciation/amortisation expenses related to Right-of-Use (ROU) leased assets and the lease liability principal repayment amount reflects the impact of AASB 16 Leases, which does not directly reflect a change in appropriation arrangements.

² This is the total amount of principal lease repayments that occurred during 2025-2026.

³ The Department incurred a net cash operating loss during 2025-26 of \$24.9 million against the approved loss of \$15.2 million. The higher than budgeted deficit was driven by \$26.6 million of impairment expenses recognised under AASB 136.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

C. Departmental Financial Performance

C1: Expenses

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
C1.1: Employee benefits		
Salaries and wages	411,509	397,902
Leave and other entitlements	87,049	94,060
Superannuation:		
Defined benefit plans	27,890	25,395
Defined contribution plans	61,436	57,375
Separations and redundancies	12,911	5,275
Other	2,096	1,525
Total employee benefits	602,891	581,532

The accounting policies for employee benefits are described in note H1.1.

C1.2: Supplier

Goods and services supplied or rendered

Consultants and contractors	126,485	155,354
IT services	78,606	71,630
Property operating expenses	7,628	25,435
Managed services	23,179	23,409
Travel	4,376	7,466
Audit fees	900	1,000
Resources received free of charge ¹	1,010	889
Other	15,316	23,326
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	257,500	308,509

Goods supplied	18,415	30,969
Services rendered	239,085	277,540
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	257,500	308,509

Other supplier expenses

Workers compensation expenses	1,673	1,296
Total other supplier expenses	1,673	1,296
Total supplier expenses	259,173	309,805

The Department does not recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of assets that have a lease term of 12 months or less or leases of low-value assets (less than \$10,000). The Department recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

¹ Refer to note C2.2 for further details.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

C2: Income

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>C2.1: Revenue from contracts with customers</u>		
Rendering of services	129,223	129,992
Total revenue from contract with customers	129,223	129,992

Revenue from the sale of goods and services is recognised when control has been transferred to the buyer.

The Department recognises revenue when performance obligations are required by an enforceable contract and are sufficiently specific to enable the Department to identify when they have been satisfied. The majority of the Departmental revenues are specified in legally enforceable contracts or Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) where it is reasonable to expect that parties will act on their obligations and there are consequences for non-performance.

Revenue from contracts with customers is recognised either:

- At a point in time, where the ownership or control of the goods or services is passed to the customer at a specific time; or
- Over time where the services are provided and consumed simultaneously, or the Department has an enforceable right to payment for performance completed to date. Contract liabilities associated with contracts recognised over time are recorded as unearned income. Unearned income comprises payments received from other government agencies to deliver services under MoUs, refer note E3.1.

The principal activities from which the Department generates its revenue include:

- Revenue from services - such as Trades Recognition Australia, audio visual services and the National Customer Service line. Trades Recognition Australia revenue is received and recognised at the point in time when an application is lodged. Audio visual services revenue is recognised once the services specified in the individual agreements are satisfied. The remaining service revenue is received in advance and recognised over the period to which it relates.
- Services provided to other Government departments, including corporate, property and IT services. These agreements are primarily MoUs, which include terms that are sufficiently specific as to the services to be provided, with revenue recognised at the point in time when those requirements have been satisfied. For agreements with fixed annual fees where the services are provided across the period, the revenue is recognised over the relevant period.
- Rental income is received from hosting Australian Skills Quality Authority in Perth; however, as the value is immaterial it is no longer required to be disclosed separately.

C2.2: Resources received free of charge

Australian Taxation Office collection of revenues on behalf of the department	1,010	831
Australian National Audit Office financial statement audit fees	900	1,000
Other	-	58
Total resources received free of charge	1,910	1,889

Resources received free of charge (RRFOC) are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined, and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. RRFOC are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

Other RRFOC include incidental transactions and events outside of ordinary operations such as contributions of assets at no cost or for nominal consideration recognised at their fair value when the asset qualifies for recognition and reversals of provisions.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

C2.3: Revenue from Government

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
Appropriations		
Departmental appropriations	792,317	818,277
Special Account	4,184	3,770
Total revenue from Government	796,501	822,047

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as Revenue from Government when the Department gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Appropriated amounts that are designated as equity injections (less any formal reductions) and the departmental capital budget are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

D. Administered Financial Performance

D1: Expenses

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>D1.1: Grants</u>		
Grants		
Australian Government entities (related entities)	78,473	59,880
Not-for-profit organisations	196,325	157,843
Private sector	10,943	18,367
Total grants	285,741	236,090

The Department administers a number of grant and subsidy schemes on behalf of the Government. Grant and subsidy liabilities are recognised to the extent that:

- the services required to be performed by the grantee have been performed; or
- the grant eligibility criteria have been satisfied, but payments due have not been made.

D1.2: Personal benefits

<i>Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012</i> payments	307,910	259,981
Labour market assistance to job seekers and industry	101,061	96,442
Vocational and industry training	329,240	192,962
Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans discount	17,281	15,453
Total personal benefits	755,492	564,838

The Department administers personal benefit programs on behalf of the Government that provide entitlements to individuals. Payments are determined in accordance with the *Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012* and funding agreements for the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme under Workforce Australia. The Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans discount represents the value of the discount that applies on successful completion of the apprenticeship as assessed by the Australian Government Actuary on new debt.

D1.3: Supplier

Services rendered		
Provider services	1,696,082	1,537,842
Vocational and industry training	564,084	550,849
Other	6,479	6,529
Total services rendered	2,266,645	2,095,220
Total supplier expenses	2,266,645	2,095,220

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026	2025
<u>D1.4: Subsidies</u>	\$'000	\$'000
Vocational and industry training	725,204	843,030
Coal Mining Industry (LSL Funding) Corporation	280,845	267,982
Labour market assistance to job seekers and industry	87,870	82,150
Total subsidies	1,093,919	1,193,162

The Workforce Australia and Transition to Work accruals for Supplier and Subsidies expense, including training, relocation, career transition assistance and provider charges, representing payments to providers that the Department is liable for in the 2025-26 year but has not yet paid, have been reviewed by an independent actuary.

D1.5: Fair value losses

Vocational Student Loans	375,368	61,614
Australian Apprenticeship Support loans	272,808	32,530
VET Fee Help Loans	1,237,426	61,407
Comcare Payable	63,133	-
Total fair value losses	1,948,735	155,551

As at 30 June 2026, the Australian Government Actuary estimated the fair value of the Vocational Student Loans to be \$2.69 billion, applying an interest rate of between 4.95% and 5.06% depending upon age of debt and Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans to be \$696.06 million (Note F1.2 refers), applying an interest rate of 4.82%.

The decrease of the estimated fair value of the loan programs is largely driven by the application of two new policy changes – 20% reduction to outstanding debt from 1 June 2025 (\$694.16 million for Vocational Student Loans and \$197.58 million for Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans) and the move to a marginal repayment system from 1 July 2025 (\$382.25 million for Vocational Student Loans and \$63.74 million for Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans). The net movement of new loans and repayments made during 2025-2026, unwinding of the concessional loan discount and actuarial impairment / fair value adjustments have also been incorporated.

This note should be read in conjunction with notes D2.4 and F1.2.

D2: Income

	2026	2025
<u>D2.1: Revenue from contracts with customers</u>	\$'000	\$'000
Rendering of services	76,609	80,878
Total revenue from contracts with customers	76,609	80,878

All administered revenues relate to ordinary activities performed by the Department on behalf of the Australian Government. Administered revenue recognised is primarily from Trades Recognition Australia assessments. Trades Recognition Australia revenue is recognised when applications are received, in 2025-2026 this was \$76.5 million (2024-2025: \$81.5 million).

D2.2: Interest

Vocational Student Loans	34,488	38,398
Australian Apprenticeship Support loans	34,251	33,159
VET Fee Help Loans	83,686	135,288
Other	744	279
Total interest	153,169	207,124

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026	2025
<u>D2.3: Other revenue</u>	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012 recoveries</i>	53,630	31,871
Refunds of prior year payments	9,598	7,902
Other	<u>18,414</u>	<u>14,907</u>
Total other revenue	<u>81,642</u>	<u>54,680</u>

Refunds of prior year payments and other revenue are recognised under AASB 1058. Refunds of prior year payments may include items such as repayments of grants that were not spent by the grantee. These amounts are recognised when received, however are then returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

D2.4: Fair value gains

Comcare Payable	<u>-</u>	<u>13,154</u>
Total fair value gains	<u>-</u>	<u>13,154</u>

This note should be read in conjunction with notes D1.5 and F1.2.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

E. Departmental Financial Position

E1: Financial Assets

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
E1.1: Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand or on deposit	1,108	953
Cash held in the OPA - special account	4,055	5,282
Total cash and cash equivalents	5,163	6,235

Cash and cash equivalents are recognised at their nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, demand deposits in bank accounts, and cash in special accounts.

E1.2: Trade and Other Receivables

Goods and services receivable		
Goods and services	40,111	41,922
Total goods and services receivable	40,111	41,922
Appropriations receivable		
Operating annual appropriations	226,352	230,532
Departmental capital budget	13,608	43,242
Equity injections	11,369	13,688
Total appropriations receivable	251,329	287,462
Other receivables		
Net GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	3,692	4,606
Total other receivables	3,692	4,606
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	295,132	333,990
Less expected credit loss	(767)	(191)
Total trade and other receivables (net)	294,365	333,799

Note E1.2: Accounting policy

All trade receivables are expected to be recovered in less than 12 months. Credit terms for goods and services are 30 days (2024-2025: 30 days). Receivables are held for the purpose of collecting contractual cash flows and measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method adjusted for any loss allowance.

Goods and services receivables are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period based on Expected Credit Losses, using the general approach which measures the loss allowance based on an amount equal to lifetime expected credit losses.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

E2: Non-financial Assets

E2.1: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of buildings, lease improvements, infrastructure, plant and equipment and computer software

	Buildings \$'000	Leasehold infrastructure, plant improvements and equipment \$'000	Computer software \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2025				
Gross book value	470,239	43,958	780,549	1,358,264
Accumulated depreciation, impairment and amortisation	(242,621)	(14,728)	(489,954)	(769,044)
Net value as at 1 July 2025	227,618	29,230	290,595	590,220
Additions				
By purchase	-	11,150	-	18,766
By development	-	-	89,290	89,290
Right-of-use assets	15,188	-	-	15,213
Remeasurement of right-of-use assets	32,928	-	-	33,018
Reclassification	-	-	549	-
Impairments - Gross Value	-	-	(26,945)	(27,054)
Impairments - Accumulated Depreciation	-	(109)	6,832	6,832
Write-down and impairment recognised in net cost of services	-	(109)	(20,113)	(20,222)
Impairments ROU - Gross Value	(18,640)	-	-	(18,720)
Impairments ROU - Accumulated Depreciation	12,247	-	80	12,327
Impairments on right-of-use assets recognised in net cost of services	(6,393)	-	-	(6,393)
Depreciation and amortisation	-	(7,208)	(75,376)	(98,709)
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	(58,786)	-	(401)	(59,187)
Other movements	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	(31)	(31)
Net value as at 30 June 2026	210,555	33,063	284,945	561,965
Net value as at 30 June 2026 represented by				
Gross book value	499,715	54,999	843,443	1,468,474
Accumulated depreciation, impairment and amortisation	(289,160)	(21,936)	(558,498)	(906,509)
Net value as at 30 June 2026	210,555	33,063	284,945	561,965
Carrying amount of right-of-use assets	210,555	-	429	210,984

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note E2: Accounting Policy

Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of non-financial assets are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than the asset capitalisation thresholds. All desktops and laptop assets are capitalised regardless of value. Other purchases below the threshold are expensed in the year of acquisition other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total.

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located. This is particularly relevant to the restoration provisions in property leases taken up by the Department where there exists an obligation to restore the property to its original condition. These costs are included in the value of the Department's leasehold improvements with a corresponding provision for the 'restoration' recognised.

The asset thresholds and useful lives for leasehold improvements, infrastructure, plant and equipment and computer software are unchanged from the 2024-2025 year:

Asset class	2026 Useful life	2026 Threshold
Leasehold improvements	Lease term	\$50,000
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	3-25 years	\$5,000
Bulk IT assets	4 years	\$50,000
Computer software	2-15 years	\$200,000
Buildings (right of use assets)	Lease term	\$10,000 annual value and more than 12 months.
Motor Vehicles	Lease term	\$10,000 annual value and more than 12 months.

Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment as at 30 June 2026. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs of disposal and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if the Department were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the above mentioned useful lives.

Leasehold improvements

There are no leased properties that the Department manages that are due to expire within the next 12 months that have leasehold improvement assets. All leasehold improvements are assessed for indicators of impairment with nil identified.

Infrastructure, plant and equipment

No material amounts of infrastructure, plant and equipment are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months. All infrastructure, plant and equipment are assessed for indicators of impairment.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Intangibles

The Department's intangibles comprise of purchased and internally developed software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated depreciation or accumulated impairment losses. No material amounts of computer software are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

All computer software assets were reviewed for indicators of impairment, and derecognised where indicators of impairment exist.

Lease Right of Use (ROU) Assets

Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise the initial lease liability amount, initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. These assets are accounted for by the Department as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright, but included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, property, plant and equipment (excluding ROU assets) are carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets do not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depends upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets. This volatility is assessed before the end of each reporting period.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reverses a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reverse a previous revaluation increment for that class.

In 2025-2026, the Department engaged JLL Pty Ltd to undertake an asset materiality review of the Leasehold Improvements and Property, Plant & Equipment asset classes as at 31 March 2026 for the financial year 2025-2026. The Department is of the opinion that there are no material differences between the carrying amounts and fair values for the assets under consideration as at 31 March 2026.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

E2.2: Fair value measurements, valuation techniques and input used

Fair value is a market based, rather than entity specific, measurement. The objective in all cases is to estimate the price at which an orderly transaction to sell the asset would take place between market participants under current market conditions at the measurement date. Where possible the assets are valued based upon observable inputs, such as quoted prices in active markets or other market transactions or information. Where this information is not available valuation techniques rely upon unobservable inputs. The different levels of the fair value hierarchy are defined below.

Level 1: Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets.

Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within level 1 that are observable for the asset, either directly or indirectly.

Level 3: Unobservable inputs for the asset.

An analysis of the fair value of non-financial assets by level is provided below.

Fair value measurement as at 30 June

	2026 ¹ \$'000	2025 ¹ \$'000	Level	Valuation technique ¹	Inputs used
Non-financial assets					
Leasehold improvements	31,287	13,394	3	Depreciated replacement cost	Replacement cost new Useful life and consumed economic benefit / obsolescence of asset
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	-	2	Market	Adjusted market transactions
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	715	3	Market	Adjusted market transactions
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	29,573	27,801	3	Depreciated replacement cost	Replacement cost new Useful life and consumed economic benefit / obsolescence of asset
Total	60,860	41,910			
Assets not measured at fair value in the Statement of Financial Position					
Leasehold improvements - AUC	1,776	15,836			
Infrastructure, plant and equipment - AUC	3,829	14,976			
Total	5,605	30,812			

Contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets

As at 30 June 2026, DEWR has contractual commitments of \$5.1 million for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets.

¹ 2026 and 2025 figures represent the carrying value of assets as no revaluation occurred during the financial year.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

E3: Payables

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
E3.1: Other payables		
Wages and salaries	18,846	16,803
Unearned revenue from contracts with customers	6,933	5,946
Separations and redundancies	2,049	4,808
Superannuation	2,876	2,580
Other employee benefits	250	409
Total other payables	30,954	30,546

E4: Interest Bearing Liabilities

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
E4.1: Leases		
Lease Liabilities - Building	233,944	243,319
Lease Liabilities - Plant and equipment	432	722
Total leases	234,376	244,041

Total cash outflow for leases, including principal payments, interest payments, and payments for short-term and low-value leases, for the year ended 30 June 2026 was \$74.3 million (2024-25: \$35.9 million; restated 2024-2025 amount is \$71.6 million. Last year's amount was based on lease liability movements rather than cash outflow).

Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows

Within 1 year	63,950	60,165
Between 1 to 5 years	227,568	172,390
More than 5 years	24,939	29,619
Total leases	316,457	262,174

For all new contracts entered into, the Department considers whether the contract is, or contains, a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'.

Once it has been determined that a contract is, or contains a lease, the lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if that rate is readily determinable, or the Department's incremental borrowing rate.

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification to the lease. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset or profit and loss depending on the nature of the reassessment or modification.

The Department has a large and geographically dispersed building lease portfolio.

The majority of the lease liability balance relates to commercial properties which are typically long term and contain extension options. Where practicable, the Department seeks to include extension options in new leases to provide operational flexibility. The extension options held are exercisable only by the Department and not by the lessors. The Department assesses whether it is reasonably certain to exercise the extension options at the inception of the lease, and where it is reasonably certain, the option period is included as part of the lease term. The Department in its capacity as lessee has no lease arrangements with below market terms.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

F. Assets and Liabilities Administered on behalf of Government

F1: Administered - Financial Assets

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>F1.1: Cash and cash equivalents</u>		
Cash on hand or on deposit	17	11
Cash held in the OPA - special accounts	10,165	12,187
Total cash and cash equivalents	10,182	12,198

Cash and cash equivalents are recognised at their nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents include demand deposits in bank accounts, and cash in special accounts. No cash amounts are held in trust.

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000

F1.2: Trade and Other Receivables

Goods and services receivable		
Goods and services receivable	140,564	136,118
Total goods and services receivable	140,564	136,118

Advances and loans

Vocational Student Loans	2,689,174	3,968,116
Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans	696,056	899,818
Total advances and loans	3,385,230	4,867,934

Other receivables

Personal benefits receivable	96	15
GST receivable	17,934	13,260
Total other receivables	18,030	13,275
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	3,543,824	5,017,327

Less impairment loss

Goods and services receivable	(83,044)	(94,186)
Total impairment loss	(83,044)	(94,186)
Total trade and other receivables (net)	3,460,780	4,923,141

Where receivables are not subject to concessional treatment, they are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Gains and losses due to impairment, derecognition and amortisation are recognised through profit or loss.

In the determination of the fair value of loans, consideration is given to: projections of future income of debtors; pattern and timing of repayments; changes in legislation; the recoverability of concessional debt; yield curve for discounting future cash flows and future income levels which has been concluded as highly uncertain and will evolve over time. Only measures that have been legislated are incorporated into the estimates for financial statement reporting purposes.

Vocational Student Loans are an income contingent loan program to eligible students undertaking vocational education and training in eligible courses. It is administered under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016*.

Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans are an income contingent loan program to eligible students undertaking vocational education and training in eligible courses. It is administered under the *Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Act 2014*.

The Australian Taxation Office collects repayment of these debts through the tax system.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Australian Government Actuary has developed a microsimulation model to provide estimates of a number of financial measures related to these loans, including an estimate of the debt that is not expected to be repaid. Significant judgements, estimates and assumptions are re-evaluated for each reporting period in light of historical experience, new loan schemes and changes to reasonable expectations of future events.

During 2025-26, the Australian Government implemented measures impacting Vocational Student Loans (VSL), VET FEE-HELP Loans and Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans (AASL), including a 20 per cent reduction in eligible outstanding loan balances from 1 June 2025 and the introduction of a marginal repayment system from 1 July 2025. These legislative changes have been incorporated into the Department's estimation methodology as at 30 June 2026. Accordingly, the valuation of VSL, VET FEE-HELP and AASL receivables reflects the estimated impact of the debt reduction measure and revised repayment arrangements on future cash flows, repayment behaviour and debt recoverability.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>F1.3: Equity accounted investments</u>		
Investments in associates:		
Comcare	10,732	13,313
Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation	<u>508,860</u>	<u>499,778</u>
Total equity accounted investments	<u>519,592</u>	<u>513,091</u>

The principal activities of each of the entity's administered investments were as follows:

- Comcare - A work health and safety regulator, a scheme manager, a claims manager and an insurer.
- Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding) Corporation - To regulate and manage long service leave entitlements on behalf of employees and employers

Administered investments are measured at their fair value as at 30 June 2026. Fair value has been taken to be the Australian Government's proportional interest in the net assets of the entities.

Movements between years are recognised at fair value through other comprehensive income. In 2025-2026 the increase was \$6.5 million (2024-2025: \$140.6 million).

F1.4: Concessional loans

Vocational Student Loans

Nominal value	5,637,491	7,144,917
Unexpired discount	(738,966)	(583,841)
Impairment	<u>(2,209,351)</u>	<u>(2,592,960)</u>
Carrying amount	<u>2,689,174</u>	<u>3,968,116</u>

Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans

Nominal value	956,900	1,130,118
Unexpired discount	(77,700)	(59,000)
Impairment	<u>(183,144)</u>	<u>(171,300)</u>
Carrying amount	<u>696,056</u>	<u>899,818</u>
Total concessional loans	<u>3,385,230</u>	<u>4,867,934</u>

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

F2: Payables

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
F2.1: Other payables		
Comcare payables ^{1,2}	<u>2,164,660</u>	<u>2,101,527</u>
Total other	<u>2,164,660</u>	<u>2,101,527</u>

Comcare as a corporate Commonwealth entity administers a range of compensation schemes on behalf of the Commonwealth and is indemnified for claims incurred by the Commonwealth. The amount recognised is consistent with the amount reported as a receivable by Comcare following assessment of outstanding claims by an actuary.

¹ The amount payable by the Commonwealth to Comcare for:

- workers' compensation claims resulting from injuries that occurred prior to 1 July 1989, referred to as 'pre premium' claims;
- workers' compensation claims resulting from injuries that have occurred since 1 July 1989, referred to as 'premium' claims; and
- the management of asbestos-related personal injury common law disease claims against the Commonwealth.

² Comcare payables are non-current in nature and recognised at fair value.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

G. Funding

G1: Appropriations

Annual Appropriations for 2026				
	Annual Appropriation \$'000	Adjustments to appropriation - s74 receipts ⁵ \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2026 (current and prior years) ⁶ \$'000
Departmental				Variance⁷ \$'000
Ordinary annual services ¹	792,317	184,400	976,717	(980,741)
Capital Budget ²	59,020	-	59,020	(80,815)
Other services				(21,795)
Equity injections ³	24,776	-	24,776	(27,096)
Total departmental	876,113	184,400	1,060,513	(1,088,652)
Administered				(28,139)
Ordinary annual services				
Administered items ⁴	4,091,123	12,785	4,103,908	(3,744,834)
Other services				359,074
Payments to Corporate Commonwealth Entities	6,030	-	6,030	(6,030)
Total administered	4,097,153	12,785	4,109,938	(3,750,864)
				359,074

¹ Adjustments to appropriations include GST related receipts retained under section 74 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPS Act).

² Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No. 1, 3 & 5) and Supply Acts (No. 1, 3 & 5). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts but are disclosed in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

³ Equity injections are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No. 2, 4 & 6) and Supply Acts (No. 2, 4 & 6). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts.

⁴ Consistent with the treatment in previous years, repayment of amounts funded under Administered Appropriation Acts (No. 1, 3 & 5) are recorded as section 74 receipts, including repayments by recipients or payments returned by recipient banks.

⁵ The section 74 amount includes \$41.7 million GST received.

⁶ The total amount of appropriation applied in 2026 includes \$40.8 million of GST paid.

⁷ The departmental variance is made up of movements in cash, net GST paid and appropriations receivable. The administered variance represents the movement in the balance of appropriations, Section 75 transfers of prior year appropriations, quarantines applied to current year appropriations, and cash spent from the balance of prior year appropriations.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Annual Appropriations for 2025

	Annual Appropriation \$'000	Adjustments to appropriation - s74 receipts \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2025 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance \$'000
Departmental					
Ordinary annual services ¹	821,882	205,832	1,027,714	(944,153)	83,561
Capital Budget	100,963	-	100,963	(113,932)	(12,969)
Other services					
Equity injections	69,831	-	69,831	(63,947)	5,884
Total departmental	992,676	205,832	1,198,508	(1,122,032)	76,476
Administered					
Ordinary annual services					
Administered items ⁴	3,971,071	6,099	3,977,170	(3,556,068)	421,102
Other services					
Payments to corporate Commonwealth entities	6,679	-	6,679	(6,679)	-
Total administered	3,977,750	6,099	3,983,849	(3,562,747)	421,102

¹ Adjustments to appropriations include GST related receipts retained under section 74 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act). In 2024-25, the entity has changed the presentation of appropriations disclosed in the appropriation note to include GST amounts retained under section 74 of the PGPA Act. In prior years, retainable GST under section 74 of the PGPA Act was excluded from the appropriation note.

² Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No. 1, 3 & 5). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts but are disclosed in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

³ Equity injections are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No. 2, 4 & 6). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts but are disclosed in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

⁴ Consistent with the treatment in previous years, repayment of amounts funded under Administered Appropriation Acts (No. 1, 3 & 5) are recorded as s74 receipts, including repayments by recipients or payments returned by recipient banks.

⁵ The Section 74 amount includes \$47.0 million GST received.

⁶ The total amount of appropriation applied in 2025 includes \$47.6 million of GST paid.

⁷ The departmental variance is made up of movements in cash, net GST paid and appropriations receivable. The administered variance represents the movement in the balance of appropriations, Section 75 transfers of prior year appropriations, quarantines applied to current year appropriations, and cash spent from the balance of prior year appropriations.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
G1.2: Departmental - Unspent annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')		
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2022-23¹</i>	-	322
<i>Supply Act (No. 2) Equity Injection 2022-23¹</i>	-	2,721
<i>Supply Act (No. 3) 2022-23¹</i>	-	149
<i>Supply Act (No. 4) Equity Injection 2022-23¹</i>	-	2,674
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2023-24²</i>	11,900	12,102
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 4) Equity Injection 2023-24³</i>	3,717	3,717
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2024-25</i>	1,429	129,771
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) Departmental Capital Budget 2024-25⁴</i>	3,676	46,146
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 2) Equity Injection 2024-25</i>	-	13,688
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2024-25⁵</i>	3,605	104,163
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 3) Departmental Capital Budget 2024-25</i>	-	771
<i>Supply Act (No. 1) 2025-26</i>	-	-
<i>Supply Act (No. 1) Departmental Capital Budget 2025-26⁶</i>	12,236	-
<i>Supply Act (No. 2) Equity Injection 2025-26</i>	830	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2025-26</i>	124,174	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 1) Departmental Capital Budget 2025-26⁷</i>	7,613	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 2) Equity Injection 2025-26</i>	10,289	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2025-26</i>	97,851	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 3) Departmental Capital Budget 2025-26</i>	1,598	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 5) 2025-26</i>	2,898	-
<i>Appropriation Act (No. 6) Equity Injection 2025-26</i>	249	-
<i>Cash at bank</i>	1,108	953
Total unspent annual appropriations	283,173	317,177

There have been no unspent appropriations lapsed as at 30 June 2026.

The following amounts have been reduced by permanent quarantine under s51 of the PGPA Act which constitutes a permanent loss of control. They are included in this note, but do not form part of the appropriation receivable balance at Note E1.2:

¹This appropriation was repealed on 1 July 2025.

²This appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$11.900 million that was reappropriated into 2024-25 budgets.

³This appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$3.717 million, but legally available at 30 June 2026.

⁴This appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$3.676 million, but legally available at 30 June 2026.

⁵This appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$3.605 million, but legally available at 30 June 2026.

⁶This appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$0.226 million, but legally available at 30 June 2026.

⁷This appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$7.613 million, but legally available at 30 June 2026.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
G1.3: Administered - Unspent annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')		
Supply Act (No. 1) 2022-23 ¹	-	113
Supply Act (No. 3) 2022-23 ¹	-	170,600
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2022-23 ¹	-	16,353
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2022-23 ¹	-	380,837
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2023-24 ²	325,525	334,129
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2023-24 ³	133,162	133,431
Appropriation Act (No. 5) 2023-24	42,425	42,425
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2024-25 ⁴	356,848	356,848
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2024-25	58,155	58,155
Supply Act (No. 1) 2025-26	1,222	-
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2025-26 ⁵	204,130	-
Appropriation Act (No. 3) 2025-26	141,296	-
Appropriation Act (No. 5) 2025-26	21,293	-
Cash at bank	17	11
Total unspent annual appropriations	1,284,073	1,492,902

¹ This appropriation was repealed on 1 July 2025.

² The balance of appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$193.825 million; legally available at 30 June 2026.

³ The balance of appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$73.948 million; legally available at 30 June 2026.

⁴ The balance of appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$216.911 million; legally available at 30 June 2026.

⁵ The balance of appropriation includes a quarantine amount of \$133.8 million (with \$133.3 million quarantined under section 51 of the PGPA Act and \$0.5 million quarantined for administrative reasons); legally available at 30 June 2026.

	Appropriation applied	
	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
G1.4: Special appropriations applied ('recoverable GST exclusive')		
Authority		
Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans 2014, section 104	196,314	187,953
VET Student Loans Act 2016, section 115	272,515	241,796
Asbestos-related Claims (Management of Commonwealth Liabilities) Act 2005	42,321	31,086
Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave) Administration Act 1992	278,661	267,666
Fair Entitlements Guarantee Act 2012	313,835	264,222
Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988	24,493	24,980
Higher Education Support Act 2003	-	-
Total special appropriations applied	1,128,139	1,017,703

Payments made under s77 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 were \$40,013 (8 transactions).

Services Australia spends money from the CRF on behalf of the Department from Appropriation Acts 1, 3 and 5.

G1.5: Disclosure by agent in relation to annual and special appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

The Department had drawing rights for the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) administered annual appropriation for the community development program; payments were \$352.96 million (2024-2025: \$388.62 million; restated 2024-2025 amount is \$353.71 million as GST inclusive amount was reported last year).

The Department had drawing rights for the Department of Finance (DoF) administered annual appropriation for the Parliamentary Injury Compensation Scheme program; payments were \$0.88 million (2024-2025: \$0.5 million).

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

G2: Special Accounts

G2.1: Special Accounts ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

	Student Identifiers Special Account ¹ 2026 \$'000	Student Identifiers Special Account ¹ 2025 \$'000	VSL Tuition Protection Fund 2026 \$'000	VSL Tuition Protection Fund 2025 \$'000
Balance as at 1 July (represented by cash held in the OPA) made up of:				
Departmental cash held in the OPA	5,282	11,039	-	-
Administered cash held in the OPA	-	-	12,187	11,369
Balance as at 1 July	5,282	11,039	12,187	11,369
Increases				
Departmental				
Appropriation credited to special account	2,526	2,532	-	-
Receipts	11,077	7,500	-	-
Total Departmental increases	13,603	10,032	-	-
Administered				
Appropriation credited to special account	6,008	5,914	-	-
Receipts	-	-	2,247	1,103
Total Administered increases	6,008	5,914	2,247	1,103
Total increases	19,611	15,946	2,247	1,103
Available for payments	24,893	26,985	14,434	12,472
Decreases				
Departmental				
Payments made	(14,830)	(15,790)	-	-
Total Departmental decreases	(14,830)	(15,790)	-	-
Administered				
Payments made	(6,008)	(5,914)	(4,269)	(285)
Total Administered decreases	(6,008)	(5,914)	(4,269)	(285)
Total decreases	(20,838)	(21,704)	(4,269)	(285)
Balance represented by:				
Departmental cash held in the OPA	4,055	5,282	-	-
Administered cash held in the OPA ³	-	-	10,165	12,187
Balance as at 30 June	4,055	5,282	10,165	12,187

¹ Expenditure associated with administered appropriations in the Student Identifiers Special account was paid from departmental bank accounts. There were consequently no administered cash flow events arising from Student Identifiers Special account expenditure.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Special Account	Establishing Instrument	Purpose
Student Identifiers Special Account (combined departmental and administered special account)	<i>Student Identifiers Act 2014</i> ; subsection 48(1). This account was established under the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> section 80.	For paying or discharging the costs, expenses and other obligations incurred by the Commonwealth in the performance of the Registrar's functions, paying any remuneration and allowances payable to any person under the Act and meeting the expenses of administering the account.
VET Student Loans (VSL) Tuition Protection Fund Special Account	<i>Education Legislation Amendment (Tuition Protection and Other Measures) Act 2019</i> , section 66J, commenced 1 January 2020. This account was established under the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> section 80.	The purposes of the VSL Tuition Protection Fund are as follows: a) making payments in connection with tuition protection; b) paying or discharging the costs, expenses and other obligations incurred by the Commonwealth in the performance of the VSL Tuition Protection Director's functions, including in managing the VSL Tuition Protection Fund; c) paying any remuneration and allowances payable to the VSL Tuition Protection Director; d) paying any remuneration and allowances payable to the members of the VSL Tuition Protection Fund Advisory Board; e) paying any amount that is required or permitted to be repaid; and f) reducing the balance of the Fund (and therefore the available appropriation for the Fund) without making a real or notional payment.

G3: Regulatory Charging

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
G3.1: Regulatory charging summary		
Amounts applied		
Annual appropriation	33,740	32,516
Total amounts applied	33,740	32,516
Expenses		
Employee benefits	30,552	29,638
Supplier	3,188	2,878
Total expenses	33,740	32,516

The Department undertakes departmental regulatory charging activities relating to:

- Certain programs managed by Trades Recognition Australia (See www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au for further information); and
- VSL Program (See <https://www.dewr.gov.au/vet-student-loans> for further information)

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
G3.2: Administered - Regulatory Charging		
Expenses		
Suppliers	47,561	73,151
Total expenses	47,561	73,151
External revenue		
Cost recovery	77,473	82,621
Total external revenue	77,473	82,621

The Department undertakes administered regulatory charging activities relating to:

- Certain programs managed by Trades Recognition Australia (See www.tradesrecognitionaustralia.gov.au for further information); and
- VSL Program (See www.studyassist.gov.au/vet-students/vet-student-loans for further information)

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

H. People and Relationships

H1: Employee Provisions

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
H1.1: Employee provisions		
Annual and long service leave provisions	163,540	163,185
Total employee provisions	163,540	163,185

As required by AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*, the estimate of future cash outflows takes into account estimated attrition, probability factors, future salary rates and ancillary costs. In 2025-2026, the Australian Government Actuary undertook an assessment of leave provisions taking into account the likely tenure of existing staff, patterns of leave claims and payouts, future salary movements and discount rates.

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits expected to be paid within 12 months of the end of reporting period are measured at the one-year Commonwealth Government bond rate of 4.50%. Liabilities for long term employee benefits are discounted using the 10-year Commonwealth Government bond rate of 4.75%.

Employees of the Department are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap) or other elected defined contribution schemes. The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered financial statements. The Department makes employer contributions to defined benefit superannuation schemes at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. The Department accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans. The payable for superannuation recognised at 30 June 2026 represents outstanding contributions owed by the Department to the superannuation schemes.

H2: Key management personnel remuneration (KMP)

H2.1: KMP remuneration for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

Key management personnel (KMP) are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Department. The Department has determined the KMP to be the Portfolio Ministers, the Secretary, and the Deputy Secretaries. Other senior executives may at times act in one of these positions for a short period of time during the year. These officers are not reported as KMP unless they have acted in the position for more than three consecutive months or exercised significant decision-making authority over the Department's financial position, financial performance, or operations during the acting period.

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
Short-term employee benefits ¹	2,716	2,487
Post-employment benefits ²	432	392
Other long-term employee benefits ³	46	88
Termination benefits ⁴	829	-
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses	4,023	2,967

¹ Short-term benefits include base salary, Annual leave, motor vehicle allowances, other allowance and reportable fringe benefits.

² Post-employment benefits are superannuation contributions.

³ Other long-term benefits include long service leave and others.

⁴ Termination benefits were paid to one KMP upon cessation of employment.

The above table includes the remuneration of eight officers who occupied five KMP positions during the reporting period. This comprised three officers who held KMP positions for the full year and five officers who held KMP positions for the part year due to staff leave and turnover during the year (2024-25: five officers occupying five KMP positions). Remuneration and benefits relating to the Portfolio Minister are excluded from this disclosure, as they are determined by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by the Department.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

H3: Related party disclosures

The Department is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties to the Department are KMP as described in note H2, their close family members and organisations they or their close family member control, including the Portfolio Ministers and other Australian Government Entities.

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as members of the public. Transactions not requested or recorded where they reflect transactions that may be undertaken with the Agency under the same terms and conditions as any other member of the public. Such transactions include the payment or refund of Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans or participation in the Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programs.

Transactions with entities where KMP have an interest

During 2025-2026, there have been nil related party transactions with entities where the Department's KMPs have an interest (2024-2025: Nil).

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

I. Managing Uncertainties

I1: Contingent Assets and Liabilities

I1.1: Departmental contingent assets and liabilities

Departmental contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the statement of financial position. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of an asset or liability or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

Quantifiable contingencies

As at 30 June 2026, there are no departmental quantifiable contingent assets or liabilities.

Unquantifiable contingencies

As at 30 June 2026, there are no departmental unquantifiable contingent assets or liabilities.

I1.2: Administered contingent assets and liabilities

Administered contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the administered schedule of assets and liabilities. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of an asset or liability or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

Quantifiable contingencies

As at 30 June 2026, there is one administered quantifiable contingent asset amounting to \$0.8 million, in respect of litigation matters with Industry Specialist Mentoring for Australian Apprentices (ISMAA) program providers.

Unquantifiable contingencies

Vocational FEE-HELP payments:

There is a potential financial risk to the Commonwealth if compliance actions lead to the remission of student loan debts, but the Commonwealth is unable to recover the associated payments from education providers or tuition assurance operators due to provider closures.

The Government continues to pursue compliance action, where permitted under legislation, to recover VET FEE-HELP payments from providers that inappropriately enrolled students in units and courses resulting in VET FEE-HELP debts. The total value of this contingent asset remains unquantifiable.

Fair Entitlement Guarantee Scheme (FEG):

Where appropriate, the Commonwealth provides indemnities for legal costs incurred by, or awarded against, liquidators in the pursuit of debt recovery under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee (FEG) scheme. A financial risk to the Commonwealth may arise in the event of an adverse costs order issued by the courts, or if legal costs cannot be recovered.

There are currently three contingent liabilities arising from court judgments against the liquidator that are expected to result in material costs to the Commonwealth. However, the total value of these contingencies remains unquantifiable.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

I2: Financial Instruments

Financial assets

The Department classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- a) financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;
- b) financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income; and
- c) financial assets measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on both the entity's business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when the entity becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'. As other financial liabilities, supplier and grant payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
<u>I2.1: Categories of Financial instruments</u>		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	5,163	6,235
Goods and services receivable	40,111	41,922
Total financial assets at amortised cost	45,274	48,157
Total financial assets	45,274	48,157
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Supplier payables	35,759	57,571
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	35,759	57,571
Total financial liabilities	35,759	57,571

The Department has adopted the simplified approach for measuring the impairment loss allowance for these financial assets. This approach measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses. Any amounts written off have been recognised as a reduction to the financial asset.

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

All payables are expected to be settled within 12 months except where indicated.

I2.2: Net Gains or Losses on Financial Assets

Financial assets at amortised cost		
Gains on receivables - goods and services	-	623
Losses on receivables - goods and services	(576)	-
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets at amortised cost	(576)	623
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets	(576)	623

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
<u>I2.3: Categories of financial instruments</u>		
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Cash	10,182	12,198
Goods and services receivable	57,520	41,932
Total financial assets at amortised cost	67,702	54,130
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income		
Investments	519,592	513,091
Total financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	519,592	513,091
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss (designated)		
Concessional loans		
Vocational Student Loans	2,689,174	3,968,116
Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans	696,056	899,818
Total financial assets at fair value through profit or loss (designated)	3,385,230	4,867,934
Total financial assets	3,972,524	5,435,155
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Supplier payables	65,246	65,264
Grants payable	15,531	7,105
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	80,777	72,369
Financial liabilities at fair value through other comprehensive income		
Comcare payable	2,164,660	2,101,527
Total financial liabilities through other comprehensive income	2,164,660	2,101,527
Total financial liabilities	2,245,437	2,173,896
<u>I2.4: Net gains or losses on financial assets</u>		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Write-down and impairment / reversal	(10,243)	9,626
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets at amortised cost	(10,243)	9,626
Investments in equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income (designated)		
Gains/(losses) recognised in equity	6,501	140,562
Net gains/(losses) on investments in equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income (designated)	6,501	140,562
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss		
Interest revenue	153,169	207,124
Loan fee revenue	-	-
Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan discount	(17,281)	(15,453)
Fair value gains/(losses)	(1,948,735)	(142,397)
Net gains/(losses) at fair value through profit or loss	(1,812,847)	49,274
Net gains/(losses) on financial assets	(1,816,589)	199,462

The financial assets measured at amortised cost are impaired according to AASB 9, wherein the lifetime expected credit losses are measured using the simplified approach.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
<u>I2.5: Financial instruments designated at fair value through profit or loss</u>		
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Fair value changes due to credit risk		
During the period	(92,340)	(64,895)
Prior periods	<u>(2,099,279)</u>	<u>(2,804,256)</u>
Cumulative change	<u>(2,191,619)</u>	<u>(2,869,151)</u>

I2.6: Credit risk

The financial assets measured at amortised cost are not exposed to a high level of credit risk and the Department manages this risk by applying debt recovery policies and procedures. The risk of default on payments has been assessed and an impairment provision brought to account. Note F1.2 refers.

The financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income represent the Government's proportional interest in the net assets of the entities which are not exposed to a high level of credit risk. Note F1.3 refers.

The financial assets at fair value through profit or loss are subject to annual fair value actuarial assessments which take into account the future income projections, pattern and timing of repayments and debt not expected to be repaid. Note F1.2 and F1.4 refer.

I2.7: Liquidity risk

The Department is exposed to minimal liquidity risk and is appropriated funding from the Australian Government. The Department manages its budgeted funds to ensure it has adequate funds to meet payments as they fall due. In addition, the Department has policies in place to ensure timely payments are made when due and has no past experience of default.

I2.8: Market risk

The value of concessional loans held at fair value, such as the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans and the Vocational Student Loans are also impacted by changes in market interest rates. For example, if the interest rates were to increase by 0.1%, the fair value of these loans would decrease by approximately 1%. However, interest rate changes will have no impact on the future cash flows or principal amounts at maturity.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

I3: Fair Value

I3.1: Fair value measurement of level 3 financial instruments

Fair value measurement as at 30 June

	2026	2025			
	\$'000	\$'000	Level ²	Valuation technique ³	Inputs used
Financial assets					
Concessional loans					
Vocational Student Loans	2,689,174	3,968,116	3	Loan conditions	Discounted Future Cash Flows
Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans	696,056	899,818	3	Loan conditions	Discounted Future Cash Flows
Investments	519,592	513,091	3	Net assets of the entity	Net assets of the entity
Total¹	3,904,822	5,381,025			

¹The carrying value of these assets equals the fair value.

²There has been no transfer between levels during the period.

³The methods and valuation techniques used for the purpose of measuring fair value of assets in 2026 are consistent with previous years.

I3.2: Movement in level 3 fair value measurement

	Financial assets			
	Concessional loans		Investments	
	2026	2025	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 1 July	4,867,934	4,609,577	513,091	372,529
Total gains/(losses) recognised in net cost of services	(1,578,564)	321,459	-	-
Total gains/(losses) recognised in comprehensive income	-	-	6,501	140,562
Total restructure recognised	-	-	-	-
Issues	505,215	464,836	-	-
Settlements	(409,355)	(527,938)	-	-
As at 30 June	3,385,230	4,867,934	519,592	513,091

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

J. Other Information

J1: Current/Non-current distinction for Assets and Liabilities

	2026 \$'000	2025 \$'000
J1.1: Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities		
Assets expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months		
Cash and cash equivalents	5,163	6,235
Trade and other receivables	294,365	333,799
Prepayments	22,798	31,954
Total no more than 12 months	322,326	371,988
More than 12 months		
Leasehold improvements	33,063	29,230
Buildings	210,555	227,618
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	33,402	42,777
Computer software	284,945	290,595
Prepayments	3,782	7,317
Total more than 12 months	565,747	597,537
Total assets	888,073	969,525
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	35,759	57,571
Other payables	30,954	30,546
Leases	47,760	60,165
Employee provisions	66,820	65,974
Total no more than 12 months	181,293	214,256
More than 12 months		
Leases	186,616	183,876
Employee provisions	96,720	97,211
Total more than 12 months	283,336	281,087
Total liabilities	464,629	495,343

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

J1.2: Administered - Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

	2026	2025
	\$'000	\$'000
Assets expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months		
Cash and cash equivalents	10,182	12,198
Trade and other receivables	566,856	681,450
Prepayments	7,377	7,403
Total no more than 12 months	584,415	701,051
More than 12 months		
Trade and other receivables	2,893,924	4,241,691
Equity accounted investments	519,592	513,091
Total more than 12 months	3,413,516	4,754,782
Total assets	3,997,931	5,455,833
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	65,246	65,264
Subsidies	40,801	38,701
Grants	15,531	7,105
Personal benefits	3,320	2,903
Total no more than 12 months	124,898	113,973
More than 12 months		
Other payables	2,164,660	2,101,527
Total more than 12 months	2,164,660	2,101,527
Total liabilities	2,289,558	2,215,500



Highlight: National Skills Agreement and joint stewardship model

During 2025–26 the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) continued to drive implementation of the 2024–2028 National Skills Agreement (NSA), working in partnership with states and territories to strengthen Australia’s vocational education and training (VET) system and improve outcomes for learners, employers and communities.

This year we focused on building the foundation for long-term reform. In particular, DEWR supported progress on more than 60 implementation plans and advancing major initiatives across priority areas including:

- establishing 20 TAFE Centres of Excellence across all states and territories to strengthen the capability and capacity of the VET system and provide high-quality, responsive skills training for critical and emerging industries, including supporting the transition to a net zero economy, sustaining essential care and support services, strengthening digital and technological capability, delivering housing supply, and enhancing manufacturing and defence sovereign capability
- establishing a National TAFE Network including the publication of the Network’s 2026 Annual Workplan, which consists of 17 projects with a focus on developing high-quality teaching and learning resources, strengthening workforce capability, enhancing access for cohorts facing structural barriers to training, improving the recognition of prior skills, and fostering innovation
- finalising the Enhanced VET Data and Evidence initiative bilateral implementation plans with states and territories, to improve access to accurate, timely and high-quality VET data through measures including implementation of the VET Data Streamlining program and the transition to the new VET Information Standard
- refreshing the National Code of Good Practice for Australian Apprenticeships through the Improved Completions initiative, strengthening expectations and guidance for apprentices, employers and other stakeholders, supporting improved apprenticeship experiences and outcomes
- finalising VET workforce bilateral implementation plans with states and territories that deliver a mix of scalable programs and targeted initiatives to address local VET workforce shortages and strengthen teaching quality, including responses to the VET Workforce Blueprint.

These reforms are helping to build a more responsive, inclusive and evidence-informed skills system. They support better access to training, particularly for priority cohorts and communities facing barriers to education and employment, while helping to meet current and future workforce needs.

National Skills Agreement – joint stewardship model

Another key achievement was the continued embedding of the NSA’s joint stewardship model. This model represents a significant shift in how governments work together, with a stronger focus on shared national priorities, agreed outcomes and flexibility for jurisdictions to respond to local needs.

Governments worked collectively through the National Skills Plan and Jurisdictional Action Plans, supported by a shared ‘Balanced Scorecard’ to monitor progress. In December 2025, the government published the National Skills Plan 2025–26 Update, outlining shared national ambitions and early reform achievements. The update highlighted progress in addressing workforce challenges, improving access to training and building the capability needed to support Australia’s future skills needs.

In March 2026 the Australian Government Jurisdictional Action Plan 2025–2026 Update was published. It captured key elements of the stewardship framework established under the NSA and built on commitments in the National Skills Plan.

Together, these activities demonstrate DEWR’s leadership in delivering long-term skills reform and strengthening partnerships with states and territories.

5

Appendices

Appendix A – Agency resource statement and expenses for outcomes	170
Appendix B – Workforce statistics	176
Appendix C – Annual Child Safety Statement	192
Appendix D – Activities funded to assist people to obtain and maintain paid work	194
Appendix E – Commonwealth Climate Disclosure	198
Appendix F – Annual Report of the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans program	199
Appendix G – Annual Report of the Student Identifiers Registrar	202
Appendix H – Annual Report of Jobs and Skills Australia	204
Appendix I – Corrigendum	222

Appendix A – Agency resource statement and expenses for outcomes

Table A.1: Agency resource statement, 2025–26

	Current available appropriation (a) \$'000	Payments made (b) \$'000	Balance remaining (a)–(b) \$'000
Departmental			
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services	1,035,737	788,260	247,478
Prior year appropriations available – ordinary annual services	293,906	273,297	20,609
Annual appropriations – other services – non-operating	24,776	13,407	11,369
Prior year appropriations available – other services – non-operating	17,405	13,688	3,717
Total departmental annual appropriations (c)	1,371,824	1,088,652	283,172
Total departmental special appropriations (d)	–	–	–
Opening balance – special accounts	5,282	5,282	–
Special account receipts	13,603	9,548	4,055
Total special accounts (e)	18,885	14,830	4,055
less departmental appropriations drawn from annual/special appropriations and credited to special accounts (f)	2,526	2,526	–
Total departmental resourcing (c+d+e-f)	1,388,183	1,100,956	287,227
Administered			
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services	4,103,908	3,735,961	367,947
Prior year appropriations available – ordinary annual services	924,999	8,873	916,126
Annual appropriations – other services – specific payments to states, ACT, NT and local government	6,030	6,030	–
Total administered annual appropriations (g)	5,034,936	3,750,864	1,284,073
Total administered special appropriations (h)	1,128,139	1,128,139	–
Opening balance – special accounts	12,187	4,269	7,918
Special account receipts	8,255	6,008	2,247

	Current available appropriation (a) \$'000	Payments made (b) \$'000	Balance remaining (a)–(b) \$'000
Total special accounts receipts (i)	20,442	10,277	10,165
less administered appropriations drawn from annual/special appropriations and credited to special accounts (j)	6,008	6,008	–
less payments to corporate entities from annual/special appropriations (k)	6,030	6,030	–
Total administered resourcing (g+h+i-j-k)	6,171,479	4,877,242	1,294,238
Total resourcing and payments for DEWR	7,559,663	5,978,198	1,581,465

Table A.2: Expenses for Outcome 1, 2025–26

Outcome 1: Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs.	Budget* 2025–26 \$'000 (a)	Actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000 (b)	Variation 2025–26 \$'000 (a)–(b)
Program 1.1: Employment Services			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1, 3 and 5)	2,007,321	1,913,508	93,813
Special appropriations	30	–	30
Administered total	2,007,351	1,913,508	93,843
Outcome 1 totals by appropriation type			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1, 3 and 5)	2,007,321	1,913,508	93,813
Special appropriations	30	–	30
Administered total	2,007,351	1,913,508	93,843

Outcome 1: Foster a productive and competitive labour market through policies and programs that assist job seekers into work, including secure work, and meet employer and industry needs.	Budget* 2025–26 \$'000 (a)	Actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000 (b)	Variation 2025–26 \$'000 (a)–(b)
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation	398,940	423,799	(24,859)
s74 external revenue ¹	68,751	67,866	885
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year ²	110,386	76,383	34,003
Departmental total	578,077	568,048	10,029
Total expenses for Outcome 1	2,585,428	2,481,556	103,872

	Budget 2025–26	Actual 2025–26	Variation 2025–26
Average staffing level (number)	2,318	2,282	36

* Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2025–26 budget at Additional Estimates.

¹ Estimated expenses incurred in relation to receipts retained under section 74 of the *PGPA Act 2013*.

² Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year are made up of depreciation expenses, amortisation expenses, make good expenses, audit fees, and other resources received free of charge.

Table A.3: Expenses for Outcome 2, 2025–26

Outcome 2: Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training.	Budget* 2025–26 \$'000 (a)	Actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000 (b)	Variation 2025–26 \$'000 (a)–(b)
Program 2.1: Building Skills and Capability			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1, 3 and 5)	1,854,329	1,724,756	129,573
Special appropriations	298,937	290,098	8,839
Special accounts	6,008	6,008	–
Administered total	2,159,274	2,020,862	138,412
Total expenses for Program 2.1	2,159,274	2,020,862	138,412

Program 2.2: VET Student Loans			
Administered expenses			
Special appropriations	1,274,818	1,620,435	(345,617)
Special accounts	3,853	243	3,610
Administered total	1,278,671	1,620,678	(342,007)
Total expenses for Program 2.2	1,278,671	1,620,678	(342,007)
Outcome 2 totals by appropriation type			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1, 3 and 5)	1,854,329	1,724,756	129,573
Special appropriations	1,573,755	1,910,533	(336,778)
Special accounts	9,861	6,251	3,610
Administered total	3,437,945	3,641,540	(203,595)
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation	253,332	247,549	5,783
s74 external revenue ¹	51,091	50,433	658
Special accounts	2,526	8,822	(6,296)
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year ²	43,672	30,220	13,452
Departmental total	350,621	337,024	13,597
Total expenses for Outcome 2	3,788,566	3,978,564	(189,998)

	Budget 2025–26	Actual 2025–26	Variation 2025–26
Average staffing level (number)	1,380	1,359	21

* Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2025–26 budget at Additional Estimates.

¹ Estimated expenses incurred in relation to receipts retained under section 74 of the *PGPA Act 2013*.

² Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year are made up of depreciation expenses, amortisation expenses, make good expenses, audit fees, and other resources received free of charge.

Table A.4: Expenses for Outcome 3, 2025–26

Outcome 3: Facilitate jobs growth, including secure work, through policies and programs that promote fair, productive and safe workplaces.	Budget* 2025–26 \$'000 (a)	Actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000 (b)	Variation 2025–26 \$'000 (a)–(b)
Program 3.1: Workplace Support			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1, 3 and 5)	89,108	80,544	8,564
Special appropriations	546,162	595,235	(49,073)
Administered total	635,270	675,779	(40,509)
Total expenses for Program 3.1	635,270	675,779	(40,509)
Program 3.2: Workers' Compensation Payments			
Administered expenses			
Special appropriations	62,029	129,948	(67,919)
Payments to corporate entities	6,030	6,030	–
Administered total	68,059	135,978	(67,919)
Total expenses for Program 3.2	68,059	135,978	(67,919)
Outcome 3 totals by appropriation type			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act Nos. 1, 3 and 5)	89,108	80,544	8,564
Special appropriations	608,191	725,183	(116,992)
Payments to corporate entities	6,030	6,030	–
Administered total	703,329	811,757	(108,428)
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation	78,081	129,783	(51,702)
s74 external revenue ¹	11,066	10,924	142
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year ²	13,318	9,216	4,102
Departmental total	102,465	149,923	(47,458)
Total expenses for Outcome 3	805,794	961,680	(155,886)

	Budget 2025–26	Actual 2025–26	Variation 2025–26
Average staffing level (number)	441	434	7

* Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2025–26 budget at Additional Estimates.

¹ Estimated expenses incurred in relation to receipts retained under section 74 of the *PGPA Act 2013*.

² Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year are made up of depreciation expenses, amortisation expenses, make good expenses, audit fees, and other resources received free of charge.

Appendix B – Workforce statistics

The following definitions and caveats apply to the workforce statistics content.

Headcount – the number of employees directly employed by the organisation at a point in time.

Inclusions – all employees paid through SAP payroll and employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*, regardless of leave status.

Exclusions – Secretary, inactive staff, contractors, public office holders, committee/board members, casual and locally engaged staff.

Table B.1: All ongoing employees 2025–26

	Man/Male			Woman/Female		
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total
NSW	132	6	138	146	28	174
Qld	140	15	155	259	47	306
SA	118	6	124	190	60	250
Tas	19	3	22	34	13	47
Vic	158	4	162	208	31	239
WA	41	–	41	52	17	69
ACT	933	58	991	1,139	222	1,361
NT	3	–	3	14	2	16
External Territories	–	–	–	–	–	–
Overseas	–	–	–	2	–	2
Total	1,544	92	1,636	2,044	420	2,464

Note: Actual work location at 30 June 2026.

Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	313
–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	2	463
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	374
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	69
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	2	403
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	110
–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	3	2,355
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	19
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
–	–	–	–	–	–	7	1	8	4,108

Table B.2: All non-ongoing employees 2025–26

	Man/Male			Woman/Female		
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total
NSW	2	–	2	5	–	5
Qld	1	–	1	6	–	6
SA	1	2	3	3	6	9
Tas	–	–	–	2	–	2
Vic	2	–	2	4	3	7
WA	2	–	2	2	1	3
ACT	13	4	17	19	13	32
NT	–	–	–	–	–	–
External Territories	–	–	–	–	–	–
Overseas	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	21	6	27	41	23	64

Note: Actual work location at 30 June 2026.

Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	7
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	13
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	9
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	49
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	92

Table B.3: Australian Public Service Act ongoing employees 2025–26

	Man/Male			Woman/Female		
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total
SES 3	1	–	1	4	–	4
SES 2	10	–	10	16	–	16
SES 1	32	1	33	69	7	76
EL 2	178	4	182	263	33	296
EL 1	517	24	541	640	141	781
APS 6	383	19	402	540	121	661
APS 5	256	16	272	304	53	357
APS 4	128	12	140	173	39	212
APS 3	38	5	43	31	21	52
APS 2	1	11	12	4	5	9
APS 1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	1,544	92	1,636	2,044	420	2,464

Note: Actual classification at 30 June 2026.

Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	26
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	109
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	479
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	1,323
–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	2	1,065
–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	3	632
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	353
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	95
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	21
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	7	1	8	4,108

Table B.4: Australian Public Service Act non-ongoing employees 2025–26

	Man/Male			Woman/Female		
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total
SES 3	–	–	–	–	–	–
SES 2	–	–	–	–	–	–
SES 1	–	–	–	–	–	–
EL 2	–	–	–	3	–	3
EL 1	4	1	5	8	4	12
APS 6	5	–	5	6	1	7
APS 5	4	–	4	10	1	11
APS 4	3	–	3	3	2	5
APS 3	5	5	10	9	15	24
APS 2	–	–	–	2	–	2
APS 1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	21	6	27	41	23	64

Note: Actual classification at 30 June 2026.

Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	17
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	12
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	15
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	35
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	92

Table B.5: Australian Public Service Act employees by full-time and part-time status 2025–26

	Ongoing			Non-ongoing			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total ongoing	Full time	Part time	Total non-ongoing	
SES 3	5	–	5	–	–	–	5
SES 2	26	–	26	–	–	–	26
SES 1	101	8	109	–	–	–	109
EL 2	442	37	479	3	–	3	482
EL 1	1,158	165	1,323	12	5	17	1,340
APS 6	925	140	1,065	11	1	12	1,077
APS 5	563	69	632	14	1	15	647
APS 4	301	52	353	6	2	8	361
APS 3	69	26	95	15	20	35	130
APS 2	5	16	21	2	–	2	23
APS 1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	3,595	513	4,108	63	29	92	4,200

Note: Actual classification at 30 June 2026.

Table B.6: Australian Public Service Act employment type by location 2025–26

	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Total
NSW	313	7	320
Qld	463	7	470
SA	374	13	387
Tas	69	2	71
Vic	403	9	412
WA	110	5	115
ACT	2,355	49	2,404
NT	19	–	19
External Territories	–	–	–
Overseas	2	–	2
Total	4,108	92	4,200

Note: Actual work location at 30 June 2026.

Table B.7: Australian Public Service Act First Nations employment 2025–26

	Total
Ongoing	108
Non-ongoing	10
Total	118

Note: At 30 June 2026.

Table B.8: Australian Public Service Act employment arrangements 2025–26

	SES	Non-SES	Total
Individual s24(1) determination	106	–	106
Enterprise Agreement	–	4,094	4,094
Individual Flexibility Arrangement	–	57	57
Total	106	4,151	4,257

Note: At 30 June 2026. Employees on an Individual Flexibility Arrangement (IFA) are also included in the Enterprise Agreement total. IFAs are enabled under clauses 10–15 of the DEWR Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027. Individuals may have multiple arrangements in place.

Table B.9: Australian Public Service Act employment salary ranges by classification level (minimum/maximum) 2025–26

	Minimum salary \$	Maximum salary \$
SES 3	420,000	443,443
SES 2	306,487	349,734
SES 1	237,531	293,099
EL 2 including Principal Government Lawyer	152,362	187,464
EL 1 including Senior Government Lawyer	129,477	158,609
APS 6	105,295	115,786
APS 5	93,660	100,132
APS 4	84,828	90,720
APS 3	77,983	81,225
APS 2	69,828	74,413
APS 1	59,452	65,006
Other	–	–
Minimum/maximum range	59,452	443,443

Note: Cadets undertaking full-time study will be paid 57% of the minimum salary that would be payable to the cadets if they were performing practical training. Figures reflect the salary ranges at 30 June 2026.

Table B.10: Australian Public Service Act employment performance pay by classification level 2025–26
The department did not have arrangements for performance pay during 2025–26.

Table B.11: Information about remuneration for key management personnel 2025–26

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits
		Base salary	Bonuses	Other benefits and allowances	Superannuation contributions
Natalie James	Secretary	403,265	–	38,147	66,974
Simon Duggan PSM	Secretary	332,781	–	1,983	31,285
Tania Rishniw	Deputy Secretary	517,612	–	4,947	78,722
Gregory Manning	Deputy Secretary	427,311	–	4,947	78,613
Anna Faithfull	Deputy Secretary	430,647	–	4,947	65,207
Catherine Rule	Deputy Secretary	296,853	–	3,530	56,050
Deborah Jenkins	Deputy Secretary	163,061	–	6,811	40,184
Lisa Schofield PSM	A/g Deputy Secretary	77,822	–	1,024	14,713
Totals		2,649,352	–	66,336	431,748

Notes:

Total remuneration is calculated on an accrual basis in accordance with *AASB 119 Employee Benefits*. There will be a difference between the total remuneration included on an individual's annual payment summary and the remuneration disclosed in the table. There will also be differences between the table and the Remuneration Tribunal determination.

The full term for key management personnel is 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Base salary includes salary paid and accrued, salary paid while on leave, annual leave accrued and temporary performance allowance (including payment of temporary performance allowance while acting Secretary).

Other benefits and allowances include monetary and non-monetary benefits such as provision of a car park.

Accumulation superannuation schemes (PSSap and private funds) include employer superannuation contribution amounts. Defined benefit schemes (CSS and PSS) include the relevant Notional Employer Contribution Rate and Employer Productivity Superannuation Contribution.

Long service leave comprises the amount of leave accrued and taken in the period. It is subject to on-costs and discount factors in line with AASB 119.

Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration	Term as KMP
Long service leave	Other long-term benefits			
-52,658	–	828,980	1,284,708	Part year term
7,033	–	–	373,082	Part year term
17,646	–	–	618,927	Full term
15,909	–	–	526,780	Full term
10,361	–	–	511,162	Full term
7,900	–	–	364,333	Part year term
37,784	–	–	247,840	Part year term
2,361	–	–	95,920	Part year term
46,336	–	828,980	4,022,752	

Table B.12: Information about remuneration for senior executives 2025–26

Total remuneration bands	Number of senior executives	Short-term benefits		
		Average base salary	Average bonuses	Average other benefits and allowances
\$0–\$220,000	31	119,190	–	1,218
\$220,001–\$245,000	10	186,853	–	1,954
\$245,001–\$270,000	9	219,021	–	3,363
\$270,001–\$295,000	31	230,547	–	2,164
\$295,001–\$320,000	19	249,053	–	2,219
\$320,001–\$345,000	8	271,914	–	2,151
\$345,001–\$370,000	13	283,137	–	2,359
\$370,001–\$395,000	9	316,366	–	10,495
\$395,001–\$420,000	4	325,630	–	5,096
\$420,001–\$445,000	3	310,262	–	47,013
\$495,001–\$520,000	2	243,054	–	58,900

Notes:
This table includes all substantive SES employed by the department during the period and employees acting in SES positions for at least 3 continuous months.

Total remuneration is calculated on an accrual basis in accordance with *AASB 119 Employee Benefits*. This means there is a difference between the total remuneration included on an individual’s annual payment summary and the remuneration disclosed in this table.

Base salary includes salary paid and accrued, salary paid while on leave, annual leave accrued and temporary performance allowances.

Other benefits and allowances include monetary benefits and non-monetary benefits such as provision of a car park, overseas posting allowances and departmental FBT. Accumulation superannuation schemes (for example, PSSap and super choice) include employer superannuation contribution amounts. Defined benefit schemes (for example, CSS and PSS) include the relevant Notional Employer Contribution Rate and Employer Productivity Superannuation Contribution.

Long service leave comprises the amount of leave accrued and taken for the period. It is subject to on-costs and discount factors in line with AASB 119.

Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration	
Average superannuation contributions	Average long service leave	Average other long-term benefits	Average termination benefits	total remuneration	Average
21,222	-5,318	–	6,301		142,611
33,143	-10,400	–	20,058		231,608
37,202	2,276	–	–		261,861
38,797	5,594	–	5,872		282,915
43,849	9,757	–	–		304,878
46,159	10,148	–	–		330,372
49,179	8,677	–	11,049		354,401
53,655	-244	–	–		380,271
54,270	14,273	–	–		399,269
56,535	10,535	–	–		424,345
61,114	6,655	–	135,437		505,160

Table B.13: Information about remuneration for other highly paid staff 2025–26

Total remuneration bands	Number of other highly paid staff	Short-term benefits		
		Average base salary	Average bonuses	Average other benefits and allowances
\$265,000–\$270,000	1	43,618	–	–
\$270,001–\$295,000	10	94,743	–	260
\$295,001–\$320,000	3	102,814	–	3,744
\$320,001–\$345,000	3	117,646	–	200
\$345,001–\$370,000	3	253,767	–	67
\$545,001–\$570,000	1	515,468	–	–

Notes:

This table includes holders of public office who are paid by the department.

Total remuneration is calculated on an accrual basis in accordance with *AASB 119 Employee Benefits*. This means there is a difference between the total remuneration included on an individual’s annual payment summary and the remuneration disclosed in this table.

Base salary includes salary paid and accrued, salary paid while on leave, annual leave accrued and temporary performance allowances.

Accumulation superannuation schemes (PSSap and super choice) include employer superannuation contribution amounts.

Defined benefit schemes (for example, CSS and PSS) include the relevant Notional Employer Contribution Rate and Employer Productivity Superannuation Contribution.

Long service leave comprises the amount of leave accrued and taken for the period. It is subject to on-costs and discount factors in line with AASB 119.

Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration	
Average superannuation contributions	Average long service leave	Average other long-term benefits	Average termination benefits	Average total remuneration	Average
5,116	-7,519	–	225,801		267,016
18,390	-2,659	–	172,057		282,791
19,057	853	–	177,459		301,038
21,544	-932	–	188,685		327,142
27,674	5,337	–	70,234		357,079
30,000	10,386	–	–		555,854

Appendix C – Annual Child Safety Statement

The department continues its commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by promoting and modelling a culture that upholds the rights, interests and needs of children and does not permit or tolerate child abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The department recognises the shared responsibility of all employees to keep children and young people safe and commits to protecting and safeguarding children and young people by:

- creating and enforcing policies and procedures that prioritise the protection of children and young people
- ensuring all employees are aware of and have access to policies, procedures and guidance
- creating conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people
- regularly assessing the risks through the lens of child safety and managing incidents appropriately and effectively
- ensuring compliance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework
- adopting and implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Department's interaction with children and young people

The department's operations may directly or indirectly involve children in limited settings. These include:

- events and exhibitions, both on-site and off, where children and young people may visit
- video recording or photography of children and young people at educational institutions, departmental or portfolio-related events, or pre-arranged locations for promotional products
- frontline service delivery programs where children and young people may come into contact with departmental officers or contracted service providers through programs such as the Parent Pathways service, the Local Jobs program, the National Customer Service Line and Australian Apprenticeships
- site visits to locations where children or young people may be present (for example, childcare centres)
- receiving a complaint that may directly or indirectly involve a child or young person through the department's complaints mechanisms.

Annual risk assessment and mitigation

The department completes a risk assessment annually to determine the overall level of risk for the department. It is currently assessed as low.

We continue to provide robust measures to mitigate risks to children and young people who interact with, or are otherwise impacted by, the department's operations.

Compliance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

There are 4 requirements under the Child Safe Framework:

1. Undertake risk assessments annually in relation to activities of the entity, to identify the level of responsibility for, and contact with, children, evaluate risks to child safety, and put in place appropriate strategies to manage identified risks.
2. Establish and maintain a system of training and compliance, to make staff aware of, and compliant with, the Framework and relevant legislation.
3. Adopt and implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
4. Publish an annual statement of compliance with the framework, including an overview of the entity's child safety risk assessment (conducted under Requirement 1).

The department demonstrates compliance by:

- developing and reviewing enterprise-wide risk assessments and ensuring all divisions assess child safety risks as part of their divisional plans
- providing a training package developed by the National Office for Child Safety for all departmental staff to complete as part of mandatory training

- implementing and monitoring additional compliance measures for staff undertaking child-related work, including further child safety training and a mandatory requirement to obtain a valid Working with Children Check/Working with Vulnerable People Check before commencing child-related work
- maintaining the DEWR Child Safe Policy, which details the department's commitment to child safety, the responsibilities of staff, and the promotion of child safe behaviours by staff and in funding arrangements with third parties
- collating child safe material and resources on the department's internal website to support staff implementing child safe processes and practices in their work areas.

The department is committed to exercising continuous efforts to be a child safe organisation.

Appendix D – Activities funded to assist people to obtain and maintain paid work

This appendix provides information about employment programs supported, whether in full or in part, by section 1062A of the *Social Security Act 1991* (Cth) from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Table D.1: Total amounts paid under arrangements or grants, 2025–26

Program	Total actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000
Outcome 1 (Employment and Workforce) Programs	
Workforce Australia	1,387,345
Workforce Australia	1,175,211
Work for the Dole	5,049
Harvest Trail Services and Harvest Trail Information Service	1
Launch Into Work	881
Workforce Australia – Self-Employment Assistance	163,174
Norfolk Island Employment Services	377
Broome Employment Services	1,668
Yarrabah Employment Services	767
Employability Skills Training	28,264
Career Transition Assistance	6,486
Real Jobs, Real Wages	312
WorkFoundations	5,156
Labour Market Support Stream	–
Relocation Assistance to Take Up a Job	–
Local Jobs Program	20,807
Local Jobs Program	20,807
ParentsNext	(14)
ParentsNext	(14)

Program	Total actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000
Supporting Worker Transition Through Energy System Changes	477
Supporting Workforce Transition Services	477
Transition to Work	391,844
Workforce Australia – Transition to Work	391,725
Employability Skills Training	119
Y Careers	4,250
Y Careers	4,250
Reconnection, Employment and Learning Program	5,701
National Indigenous Employment and Training Alliance	500
Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) Program	5,201
Parent Pathways	99,325
Parent Pathways	99,325
Subtotal Outcome 1	1,909,736
Outcome 2 (Skills and Training) Programs	
Australian Apprenticeship Support Services	198,471
Australian Apprenticeship Support Services	198,471
Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program	108,262
Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program	78,786
Coronavirus Economic Response – Assistance for Apprentices and Trainees	29,476
Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System	952,878
Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System	952,878
National Training System – Commonwealth Own Purpose Expenditure Program	37,298
National Training System – Commonwealth Own Purpose Expenditure Program	34,982
Reading Writing Hotline	1,192
Australian Training Awards	1,124
Jobs and Skills Councils	111,107
VET System Improvements ¹	111,107

Program	Total actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000
Building Women's Careers	19,260
Building Women's Careers ²	19,260
Industry Workforce Training Program	2,457
Australian Training Awards	165
WorldSkills Australia	2,075
Adult Learners Week	217
Skilling the Clean Energy Workforce Program	–
Closing the Gap	6,021
Closing the Gap	1,566
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Registered Training Organisations (RTO) Community of Practice	455
Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence (ICOVE)	4,000
Aboriginal Community Controlled Trainer and Assessor Workforce Program	–
Remote Training Hubs Network	1,065
Remote Training Hubs Network	1,065
Skills For Education and Employment Program	197,058
Skills For Education and Employment Program	197,058
Skills Communication Campaign³	(77)
Fee-Free TAFE advertising campaign	(36)
Communications to encourage VET pathways	(39)
Skilling the Clean Energy Workforce Program	(3)
Commonwealth Prac Payment	8,248
Commonwealth Prac Payment (for VET students)	8,248
Subtotal Outcome 2	1,642,047

Program	Total actual expenses 2025–26 \$'000
Outcome 3 (Workplace Relations) Programs	
Advancing Gender Equality in Gender Segregated Industries	20,892
Advancing Gender Equality in Gender Segregated Industries	20,892
Subtotal Outcome 3	20,892
Total	3,572,676

¹ During 2025–26, the department identified that Jobs and Skills Councils was inadvertently omitted from disclosures required under section 1062D of the *Social Security Act 1991*. Prior-year information has been restated to include Jobs and Skills Councils under VET System Improvements for the relevant reporting periods as below:
2024–2025: \$115,061,936
2023–2024: \$94,792,367.

² The program area identified that \$10,000 of expenditure included in the Building Women’s Careers Program disclosure was incorrectly allocated to the program. No adjustment has been made to the disclosed figure.

³ All amounts reported relate to advertising credits issued by the government’s media agency following reconciliation of prior campaign activity.

Appendix E – Commonwealth Climate Disclosure

Commonwealth Climate Disclosure is the government’s policy for Commonwealth entities to publicly disclose their exposure to climate-related risks and opportunities, and the actions taken to manage them.

Our Climate Disclosure Report has been prepared in accordance with reporting provisions and is available on our website and the [Transparency Portal](#).

DEWR is committed to the achievement of the Australian Government’s Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy. Our strategies, targets and progress to date are detailed in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Emission Reduction Plan. This plan is updated annually and is available on our website at www.dewr.gov.au/about-department/resources/dewr-emission-reduction-plan.

Appendix F – Annual Report of the Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans program

Overview

The Australian Government’s Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans (AASL) program (formerly the Trade Support Loans program) provides eligible Australian Apprentices with access to an income contingent loan over the course of their Australian Apprenticeship to assist with the costs of living, learning and completing an apprenticeship in a priority occupation. The program supports Australia’s skills needs by assisting apprentices to complete qualifications in occupations experiencing skill shortages.

Eligibility and payment requirements are established under the *Australian Apprenticeships Support Loans Act 2014*, Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Rules 2023 and program guidelines. To receive a loan, apprentices must be Australian residents, undertake a qualifying apprenticeship, provide a Tax File Number and meet ongoing eligibility requirements.

Qualifying apprenticeships are those leading to a Certificate III, IV, Diploma or Advanced Diploma qualification in the Australian Qualifications Framework that is listed on the National Register of Vocational Education and Training and linked to an occupation on the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List.

Australian Apprentices who successfully complete their Australian Apprenticeship receive a 20% discount on their outstanding loan balance.

In 2025–26, pursuant to the *Universities Accord (Cutting Student Debt by 20 Per Cent) Act 2025*, the department also worked with the Australian Taxation Office to apply a one-off 20% reduction to AASL debts. Under these changes, all Australian Apprentices with an outstanding AASL debt as at 1 June 2025 benefited from a 20% reduction to their debt.

Operation of the program

DEWR delivers the AASL program jointly with contracted Apprentice Connect Australia providers and the Australian Taxation Office.

Eligible Australian Apprentices can apply for an AASL through the Apprenticeships Data Management System (ADMS), with assistance available from Apprentice Connect Australia providers. Applications are assessed and approved by Commonwealth contract officers within Apprentice Connect Australia providers under delegated authority from the Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan payment rates

The AASL lifetime limit was \$25,983 for 2025–26. The corresponding yearly and monthly instalment rates for 2025–26 are shown in Table F.1.

Table F.1: Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan payment rates, 2025–26

Apprentice year	Proportion of lifetime limit	Yearly rate (\$)	Monthly instalment rate (\$)
First	40%	\$10,394	\$866.17
Second	30%	\$7,795	\$649.58
Third	20%	\$5,197	\$433.08
Fourth	10%	\$2,598	\$216.50

Performance information

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2026, DEWR:

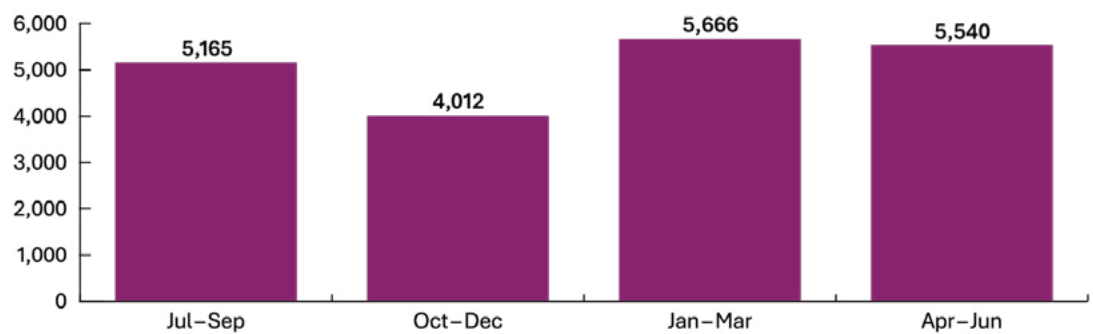
- approved 228,535 AASL applications
- processed \$2.2 billion in payments to eligible Australian Apprentices.

In 2025–26, DEWR:

- approved 30,257 AASL applications
- applied a completion discount for 14,859 Australian Apprentices who successfully completed.

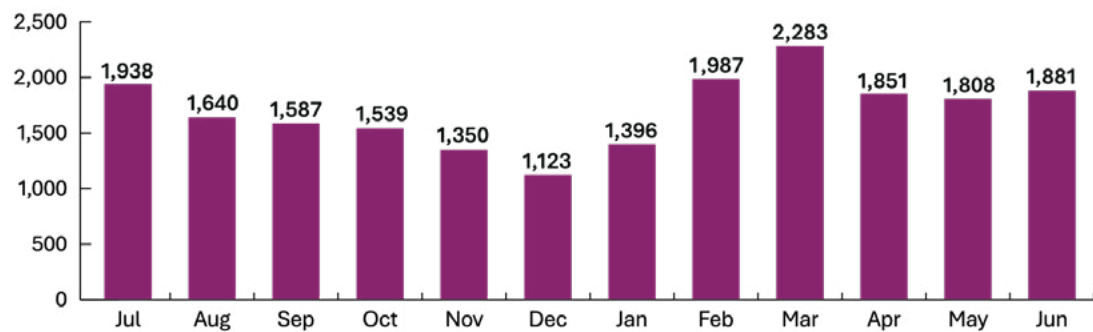
Figures F.1 to F.5 provide additional detail on program performance in 2025–26. Data is sourced from ADMS as at 1 July 2026.

Figure F.1: Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by quarter, 2025–26



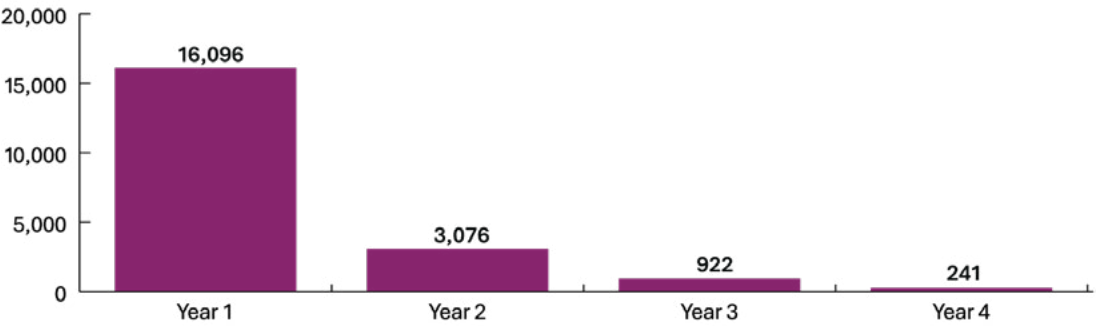
Data source: ADMS as at 1 July 2026.

Figure F.2: Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by month, 2025–26



Data source: ADMS as at 1 July 2026.

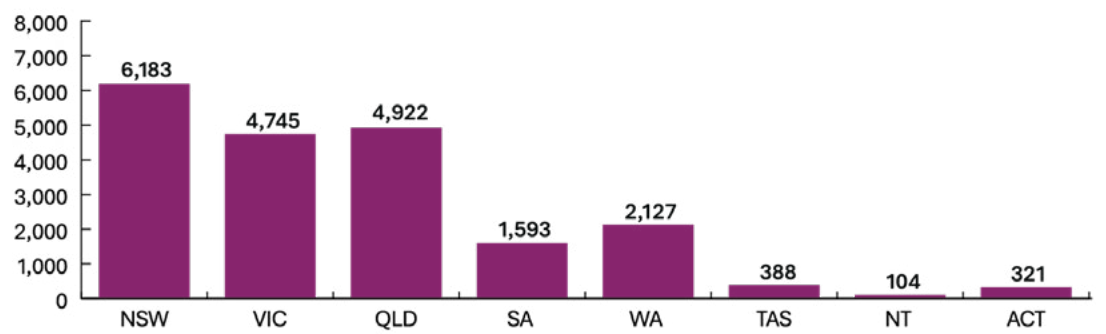
Figure F.3: Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by apprenticeship stage, 2025–26



Data source: ADMS as at 1 July 2026.

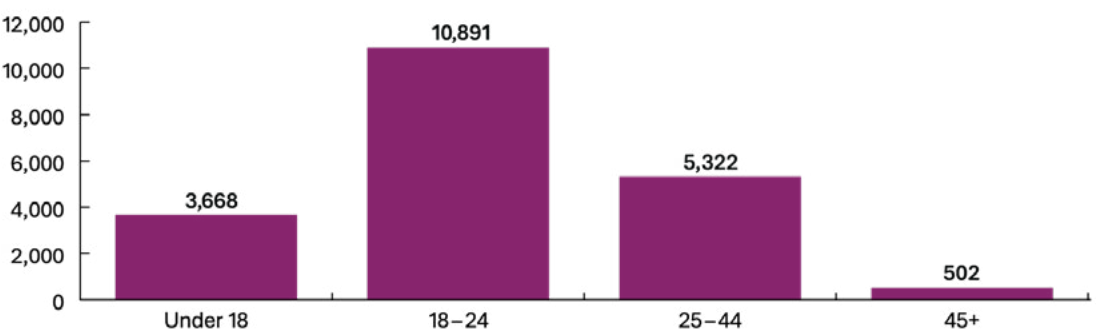
Note: The equivalent table in the 2024–25 Annual Report contained a minor error, where the x-axis (horizontal) labels were incorrectly labelled as ‘Jul–Sep’, ‘Oct–Dec’, ‘Jan–Mar’ and ‘Apr–Jun’. These should have been labelled as ‘Year 1’, ‘Year 2’, ‘Year 3’ and ‘Year 4’ respectively.

Figure F.4: Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by apprenticeship state/territory, 2025–26



Data source: ADMS as at 1 July 2026.

Figure F.5: Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by apprenticeship age category, 2025–26



Data source: ADMS as at 1 July 2026.

Appendix G – Annual Report of the Student Identifiers Registrar

This report on the operations of the Student Identifiers Registrar is prepared in accordance with section 51 of the *Student Identifiers Act 2014* (SI Act).

Unique Student Identifier

The Unique Student Identifier (USI) is a randomly generated alpha-numerical identifier assigned to vocational education and training (VET) and higher education students in Australia.

A USI is needed where a student is:

- studying nationally recognised VET, including seeking a VET student loan
- seeking Commonwealth financial assistance for higher education (for example, Higher Education Loan Program or Commonwealth Supported Place enrolment)
- graduating from higher education.

The USI is a linkage key enabling the collection of data about students' VET and higher education. This provides an important foundation for understanding VET and higher education performance, informing targeted policymaking, research and compliance activity.

Student Identifiers Registrar

The Student Identifiers Registrar is a statutory office holder established under section 31 of the SI Act. The Registrar is responsible for administering the USI initiative as per functions set out in section 32 of the Act.

At 30 June 2026 Ms Vivianne Johnson was the Acting Registrar. She commenced on 20 September 2025 following Mr Craig Ward concluding as the Registrar on 19 September 2025.

In 2025–26 the Registrar was assisted by the Office of the Student Identifiers Registrar (OSIR). OSIR comprised Department of Employment and Workplace Relations employees made available by the Secretary.

Our overarching purpose in administering the USI initiative is to provide a simple, secure and trusted service linking the education and training journey for all.

Robust and secure technology

The USI Registry system provided the core technology that enabled the USI initiative. Over 17.6 million USIs were maintained in 2025–26, including 1 million USIs created in the period. Over 3,700 organisations accessed the system to support their student administration.

With this volume of data and access, as well as ongoing technology change within our operating environment, we prioritised the privacy and security of the USI Registry. Platform migration was delivered in October 2025. Other system enhancements included strengthening multi-factor authentication in April 2026, and account recovery and notifications functionality in June 2026.

We also maintained the [USI website](http://www.usi.gov.au) (www.usi.gov.au) as a primary channel to access the USI Registry system and USI initiative information. The website had over 14.6 million visits in the period.

Strengthened governance and continuous improvement

Over 2025–26 we strengthened USI governance arrangements through the review of key policies and procedures. This included the Registrar making a new SI Act delegation instrument in November 2025 to support ongoing clarity of decision-making as part of business-as-usual operations. We also formalised a data governance framework in June 2026, aligning with the departmental and whole of Australian Government frameworks.

On 1 April 2026 the Minister for Skills and Training and the Minister for Education provided the Registrar with their Statement of Expectations (SOE). The Registrar responded to the ministers with a Statement of Intent (SOI) on 29 April 2026. These documents provided clarity as to how the government agenda relates to the Registrar's statutory role and regulatory function under the SI Act.

The Registrar was subject to agency obligations under the *Privacy Act 1988* and *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. Information on ongoing arrangements is at the [USI website](http://www.usi.gov.au). Work commenced in 2025–26 to review these as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

Quality service delivery

In our service delivery we aimed to be efficient and effective and to support the customer experience. Self-service through the USI Registry system represented over 13.8 million transactions, demonstrating the need for user-friendly and accessible operations.

Access to authenticated USI VET transcripts related to around 2.8 million transactions, an increase from 2024–25. This free service helped students back up or prove their VET completion, including by sharing transcripts through the system with education and training providers and with employers.

Beyond the USI Registry system's automated processes, we were available when customers needed our assistance. The USI contact centre actioned over 52,000 customer enquiries and handled over 165,000 customer calls. This was a decrease from 2024–25, reflecting efforts to improve the customer experience and further enable self-service.

Risk-based and data-driven regulation and compliance

Work commenced in 2025–26 to review the Registrar's approach to regulatory compliance, particularly with regard to the new SOE and SOI. Consistent with regulator best practice principles, we also dedicated effort to supporting the regulatory activities of other government entities such as the Australian Skills Quality Authority. This included responding to over 40 data requests in accordance with the SI Act and other legislation.

Information about the Registrar's regulatory function was published in the Australian Government regulator stocktake in June 2026. This content is available on the [Department of Finance's website](https://finance.gov.au) (finance.gov.au).

Strategic and operational collaboration

The Registrar was a member of governance forums supporting inter-government and cross-jurisdictional activities relevant to the USI initiative such as the VET Data Access Committee.

We contributed to important work on national data insights, including the Person Level Integrated Data Asset in December 2025 and the National Student Outcomes Survey in May 2026.

Day to day we worked closely with DEWR's VET policy partner functions and corporate and enabling services that support OSIR operations.

We prioritised collaboration with the Department of Education in relation to higher education policy and implementation of the USI for school students, led by that department.

We also maintained other operational stakeholder relationships and business continuity. This included the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, whose data is used for USI VET transcripts, and Services Australia, where individuals can link their USI to their myGov account to access government services through a single platform.

Professional culture – delivering with integrity

Our people are primarily based in Adelaide, including the USI contact centre. In working together, we drew upon our diverse capability and perspectives.

Integrity was the common driver for how we went about our work in 2025–26. This approach also meant there was accountability and transparency in the use of USI funding through the Student Identifiers Special Account.

We further integrated our operations with the broader department. To embed this professional, connected culture, an Acting General Manager of OSIR commenced in October 2025 and new processes were adopted to ensure our business and risk planning had a clear line of sight to the enterprise level.

In 2025–26 the Registrar, assisted by OSIR, contributed to the government agenda through our administration of the USI initiative. At 30 June 2026 we look forward to continuing to deliver on this for government and the community.

Vivianne Johnson

Acting Student Identifiers Registrar

Appendix H – Annual Report of Jobs and Skills Australia

About JSA

Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) operates under the *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*, with its primary functions to:

- provide advice to the Minister for Skills and Training and to the Secretary on Australia's current and emerging labour market, workforce needs and priorities, and current, emerging and future skills and training needs (including apprenticeships)
- produce labour market, workforce and skills reports to support government policy development and program delivery.

JSA is a secondary statutory body within DEWR, comprising the Commissioner, 2 Deputy Commissioners and staff made available by the Secretary to support the delivery of JSA's legislative functions. Professor Barney Glover AO served as Commissioner throughout 2025–26, supported by Deputy Commissioners Ms Megan Lilly and Mr Trevor Gauld, providing leadership across JSA's research, engagement and advisory functions. On 28 May 2026, it was announced that Professor Glover had been appointed the Chief Commissioner of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) for a 5-year term commencing 1 July 2026.

The Ministerial Advisory Board (MAB), chaired by Ms Cath Bowtell, continued to provide independent and strategic advice to the Minister for Skills and Training and the JSA Commissioners. The MAB supports JSA's legislated functions, contributes to the development of annual work plans and helps ensure JSA's advice reflects a broad range of perspectives from governments, employers, unions, industry, education and training providers, and the wider community.

JSA contributes to the Portfolio Budget Statement outcome of **promoting growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality skills and training**. JSA's purpose is **activating the potential of all individuals to meet present and future skills needs within an inclusive labour market and a productive economy**.

Review of the *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*

The independent review of the *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*, conducted by Dr Michele Bruniges, was tabled in parliament on 5 March 2026. The review examined JSA's functions, governance and funding arrangements to assess whether the organisation is operating as intended and remains fit for purpose in a rapidly changing labour market and skills environment.

The review found JSA is widely regarded as a trusted and authoritative source of labour market and skills analysis, with its data and insights increasingly informing major government reforms and workforce planning initiatives. It also identified opportunities to strengthen JSA's impact, including sharpening the distinction between analytical and policy functions, improving the visibility and accessibility of JSA's outputs, enhancing stakeholder engagement, and modernising governance arrangements.

JSA welcomed the review's findings and recommendations, recognising that they will support JSA to continuously improve in delivering on the requirements of the *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*. JSA's **response to the review** is available on the JSA website (www.jobsandskills.gov.au/news/response-jobs-and-skills-australia-act-2022-review).

Two broad themes emerged from the recommendations:

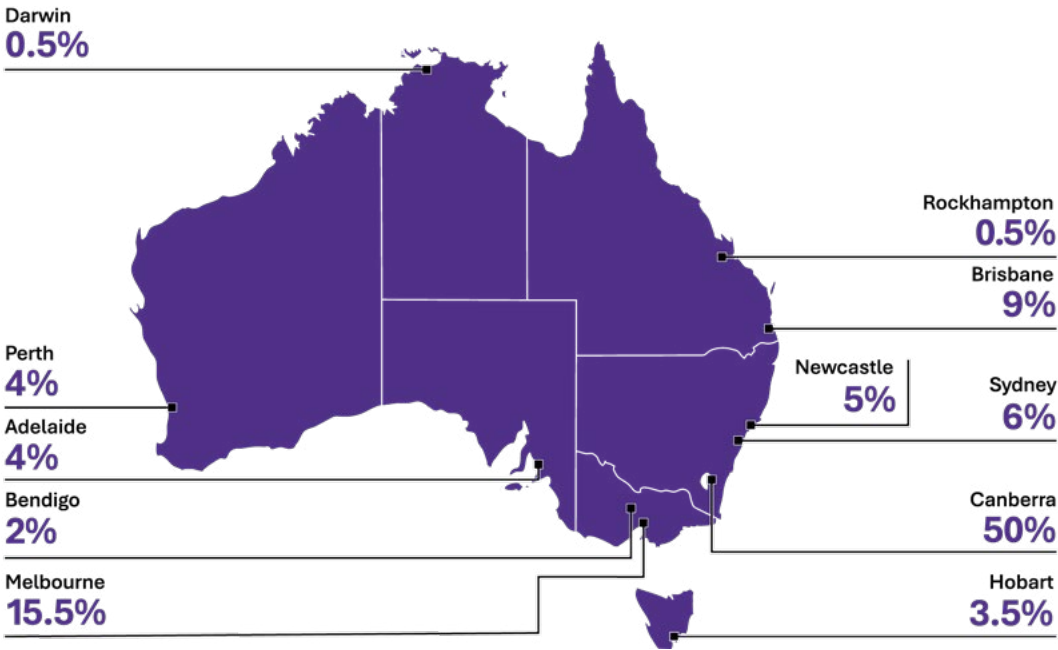
- deepening JSA's strategic impact
- efficiently and effectively working with partners in the jobs and skills ecosystem.

JSA has commenced work to implement improvements, including strengthening data transparency, broadening stakeholder engagement, and refining governance and work planning processes.

Our people

JSA has a diverse workforce of 205 staff (including contractors) located in all states and territories across Australia (see Figure H.1). This national footprint is critical to supporting engagement with stakeholders and partners across urban, regional, rural and remote locations. National recruitment enables JSA to engage talented people across Australia.

Figure H.1: Distribution of JSA staff across Australia



JSA’s values of innovation, collaboration, accuracy, respect and making a difference underpin how JSA operates and engages within the agency, with stakeholders and with the broader community.

JSA strives for an inclusive, positive, productive, respectful and supportive work environment, where continuous learning builds our skills and where professional networks are integral to the organisation’s operations.

Centred around the 3 pillars of people, capabilities and culture, JSA will continue to build and support a workforce that is skilled, inclusive and equipped to deliver on its strategic and annual work plan.

First Nations people bring invaluable knowledge, expertise and strengths to JSA’s workforce. Through the [First Nations Workforce Strategy](#), JSA continues to build a workplace where First Nations people feel valued, heard, respected and empowered to thrive.



Murtu Yayngiliyn First Nations artwork

Recognising JSA's journey of walking together with First Nations people, a visual identity centred around an artwork created by Wiradjuri artist Bec Salcole tells the story of Murtu Yayngiliyn (walking together), reflecting the importance of genuine partnership between government and First Nations communities, guided by the principles of respect, collaboration and shared purpose.

Developed through engagement with JSA's First Nations Cultural Advisory Panel, the artwork tells the story of communities, government and stakeholders working together to improve outcomes for First Nations people. It represents JSA's commitment to co-design, shared decision-making and embedding First Nations perspectives across its work.

Incorporating the artwork into JSA's visual identity and communication materials reinforces its commitment to recognising and respecting First Nations cultures in its operations, stakeholder engagement and public-facing products. The artwork provides an enduring visual representation of JSA's commitment to walking together with First Nations people in support of Australia's current and future workforce and skills priorities.

JSA's performance

During 2025–26, JSA further strengthened its focus on ensuring that its analysis, advice and data contribute to meaningful outcomes across Australia's jobs and skills system.

JSA's **performance and measurement framework** underpins its purpose and achieving the outcomes of the annual work plan. It is centred around 3 operating principles:

- **Quality:** To provide fit-for-purpose advice and analysis on Australia's current emerging and future skill needs.
- **Relevance:** To ensure products are accessible and relevant to their intended audience.
- **Benefit:** To deliver advice and analysis that contributes to decisions that positively impact the drivers of productivity and inclusive economic growth.

Each principle provides an opportunity to check JSA's performance and ensure its work delivers value.

Throughout 2025–26, JSA produced high-quality outputs that were relevant to stakeholders and contributed to decisions that support productivity and inclusive economic growth.

JSA's work influenced policy development, program design, workforce planning and stakeholder decision-making across all levels of government, industry, education and training sectors, and the broader community. Publicly available evidence demonstrates that JSA's research and labour market intelligence have become an important part of Australia's workforce and skills architecture.

JSA's strongest areas of impact are where its analysis directly underpins government policy and program settings. During the year, JSA's evidence and advice informed the operation of the vocational education and training (VET) system and the skilled migration system, and policy development relating to tertiary harmonisation and the establishment of ATEC. JSA's labour market intelligence also contributed to national skills planning, workforce planning for housing and construction, and clean energy workforce reforms.

JSA's influence extends beyond Australian Government policy processes. State and territory governments continued to use JSA data, projections and research to support workforce planning, skills strategies, labour market reporting and clean energy transition planning. JSA products such as the Occupation Shortage List, Employment Projections, Jobs and Skills Atlas, Internet Vacancy Index and Australian Skills Classification are used as shared analytical infrastructure across the national skills system.

JSA's work also contributes to evidence-based decision-making across a range of independent and external organisations. Parliamentary committees, the Productivity Commission, the Parliamentary Budget Office, Jobs and Skills Councils, sector peak bodies and international organisations have drawn on JSA's research and data products to inform inquiries, workforce plans, policy analysis and labour market reporting. During 2025–26, JSA's work was referenced by organisations including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization and the World Bank, demonstrating the growing recognition of JSA's contribution to workforce and skills policy both nationally and internationally.

JSA work plan

The *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022* requires the JSA Commissioner to prepare a work plan for each financial year. In preparing the work plan, the Commissioner must consult with the Minister for Skills and Training and the MAB and may consult with other ministers and stakeholders as appropriate. The Commissioner must also invite public submissions on the work plan.

JSA's annual work plans are focused on providing high-quality advice to underpin Australia's response to current, emerging and future workforce, skills and training needs. Each work plan sets out the outcomes and priorities for the financial year, including major studies, research and analytical projects that support government decision-making and workforce planning.

On 5 December 2025, following extensive consultation, JSA published its 2025–26 Work Plan. The plan was developed through engagement with the MAB, Jobs and Skills Councils, state and territory governments, Commonwealth agencies and a broad range of stakeholders. A public consultation process was also undertaken, providing stakeholders with the opportunity to contribute to the development of JSA's forward work program. The work plan reflects the valuable input received from partners and stakeholders across the skills, education, employment, industry and community sectors.

The 2025–26 Work Plan is guided by the 5 JSA Commissioner outcomes from the 2024–27 Strategic Plan and introduces a sixth area of focus: productivity. Together, these focus areas support the government's economic, workforce and skills reform agenda and provide the framework for JSA's research and advisory work:

- **Current labour market** – building the evidence base to inform and address current and emerging labour market and skills needs.
- **Future labour market** – projecting forward to plan for the opportunities and challenges ahead for Australia's future workforce needs.
- **National skills system** – monitoring, analysing and advising on the effectiveness of the national skills system.
- **Productivity** – supporting a labour market where skills supply and demand are efficiently matched, resulting in higher output and economic growth.
- **Inclusive participation** – broadening employment opportunities by identifying and removing barriers to workforce participation.
- **Activating an informed dialogue** – convening stakeholders across the skills system to provide the best evidence and advice on Australia's current and future workforce and skills needs.

Key highlights and achievements against these outcomes are identified below.

Current labour market

A contemporary skilled workforce is critical to meeting Australia's current and future workforce needs. During 2025–26, JSA continued to provide robust labour market evidence and advice to improve understanding of Australia's workforce and labour market conditions. Through labour market analysis, skills shortage research, migration analysis and workforce monitoring, JSA strengthened the evidence base on current and emerging skills needs, labour market challenges and the role of skilled migration in addressing workforce shortages. This work supported government policy development and program delivery, while improving understanding of how skills shortages, workforce mismatches, migration settings and labour market trends influence productivity, workforce participation and economic outcomes.

Skills shortage and deepening analysis and insights on drivers

JSA released the 2025 Occupation Shortage List (OSL) on 15 October 2025. It showed an easing in labour market pressures, with 29% of occupations in shortage, down from 36% in 2023 and 33% in 2024. The improvement reflects more qualified applicants, higher vacancy fill rates, lower recruitment difficulty rates and softer demand.

Despite the pressure easing, shortages remain in key areas. Nearly half of trade roles and 2 in 5 professional occupations are still in shortage, particularly in health, education and construction. These gaps are weighing on industries that are also experiencing below-average productivity growth, underscoring the importance of workforce solutions for the wider economy.

The data also highlight the role of diversity. Occupations with gender balance or greater inclusion of women, older workers, First Nations people and people with disability are far less likely to face shortages. In contrast, male-dominated roles, especially in the trades, remain persistently difficult to fill.

JSA also released the **Occupation Shortage Drivers (OSD)**. This report builds on the OSL to help identify the primary cause of shortages. Insights include:

- The leading driver is still insufficient qualified applicants, especially in health, teaching and construction.
- For some professions, employers report gaps in employability skills and experience, even in qualified candidates, notably in engineering, science and management.
- Low pay, poor conditions and retention challenges drive many shortages in care and service.

Together, they provide the evidence base to guide government, industry and training providers to inform targeted solutions to shortages in Australia's workforce.

Migration-related advice and analytical insights

During 2025–26, JSA undertook a comprehensive consultation process to inform its 2025 advice to the Australian Government on the Core Skills Occupations List (CSOL). Consultations opened on 25 August 2025 and included stakeholder surveys (covering employers, workers and organisations), public submissions and bilateral meetings. Feedback was sought on skilled occupations in scope for the CSOL, with particular focus on occupations identified through JSA's Migration Labour Market Indicator Model and the transition from the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) to the new Occupation Standard Classification for Australia (OSCA). JSA submitted its final advice to government on 20 October 2025.

The consultations informed JSA's assessment of whether migration is an appropriate mechanism to address workforce needs in skilled occupations. Alongside stakeholder input, and starting with OSL national ratings, the CSOL reflects analysis of migrant labour market outcomes, employer demand, workforce reliance on skilled migrants, domestic education and training pipelines, and market salary data. The consultation process supplemented the evidence base underpinning JSA's advice and helped ensure that Australia's temporary skilled migration settings are aligned with current and emerging labour market needs.

JSA produced 4 editions of the Australian Labour Market for Migrants publication, providing prospective migrants, employers and policymakers with information on labour market conditions and migration-related workforce trends. Alongside regular labour market reporting, the series included analysis of relevant migration and workforce issues through a range of hot-topic publications.

The publications highlighted the continued resilience of the Australian labour market, with the strongest employment growth consistently occurring in Health Care and Social Assistance; Professional, Scientific and Technical Services; and Education and Training.

Enhancing the Jobs and Skills Atlas

During 2025–26, JSA expanded the breadth and currency of information available through the Jobs and Skills Atlas (Atlas), including expanded VET data and the introduction of Training to Occupation Pathways, which provides evidence-based insights into the most common pathways from training into employment. This helps individuals, career practitioners, policymakers and workforce planners better understand how qualifications translate into occupational outcomes and labour market opportunities. Atlas is also transitioning the to OSCA data, ensuring users will benefit from more contemporary and accurate occupational data.

JSA further enhanced the Atlas suite through the continued development of Atlas Pro, which supports workforce and labour market analysis for Jobs and Skills Councils, state and territory governments, and other workforce planning stakeholders. Key enhancements included new labour market indicators, occupation and regional workforce analysis, AI indicators on the potential impacts of AI across occupations and industries, new Jobs and Skills Council occupation pages and a new First Nations data tab to improve access to First Nations labour market and workforce insights. Occupational mobility insights enable users to analyse workforce movement between occupations and better understand career transitions and talent flows across the labour market. These enhancements provide a rich evidence base for workforce planning, skills development and policymaking.

Atlas continued to evolve in response to stakeholder feedback, running over a dozen public masterclasses and workshops and strengthening its role as a trusted source of labour market information.

Labour market analysis

JSA continued to publish a range of labour market data and analysis products throughout the year that provided insights into how the labour market is performing. An overview of JSA's regular releases and data tools is presented in Table H.1.

Table H.1: JSA periodic releases and data tools

Publication	Description	Frequency	Publications
Employment Projections	The annual projections give insights into trends and growth areas in the labour market.	Annual	1
Internet Vacancy Index (IVI)	The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) is a monthly count of online job advertisements compiled by Jobs and Skills Australia. Data are available by occupational groups, skill level groups, state or territory, and regional areas.	Monthly	12
Nowcast of Employment by Region and Occupation (NERO)	NERO provides estimates of employment in 355 occupations across 88 regions in Australia.	Monthly	12
Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS) spotlight reports	Each spotlight focuses on a different/specific topic or area of interest from the REOS.	No fixed frequency	10
Recruitment Insights Report	This report uses REOS data to provide information on key indicators, such as recruitment activity, recruitment difficulty and employers' intentions.	Monthly*	10
VET National Data Asset (VNDA) graduate outcomes reports	These reports explore the economic, employment and further study outcomes for VET graduates following course completion. In 2025–26, JSA released the <i>Pathways to economic mobility and improved equity</i> report.	N/A	1
International Labour Market Update (ILMU)	The ILMU is a quarterly publication providing key labour market data for Australia and selected overseas countries and country groups.	Quarterly	4
Australian Labour Market for Migrants	This publication provides quarterly labour market insights for migrants, employers and policymakers, including hot-topic analyses examining the contribution of migration to meeting Australia's current and emerging workforce needs.	Quarterly	4
Employment region dashboards and profiles	JSA develops a range of resources which provide insights on the labour market and employment conditions across Australia including monthly labour market dashboards, recruitment trends and industry profiles.	Monthly	12
Labour Force Trending	This data is designed to give a view of longer-term changes in industries and occupations.	Quarterly	4
Australian Jobs	JSA provides significant analysis to the annual Australian Jobs report, which supports job seekers navigating the career landscape, employment providers and career advisors through an easy-to-read overview of the Australian labour market.	Annual	1

* The Recruitment Insights Report is not published in January (based on December results) or in February (based on January results), due to substantially smaller sample sizes in these months that mean the monthly data is not sufficiently robust for publication.



OUTCOME CASE STUDY: AUSTRALIAN JOBS 2026

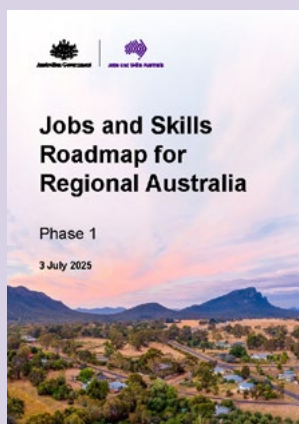
JSA released *Australian Jobs 2026* on 30 June 2026, continuing a publication series that has provided labour market insights and career guidance to Australians for more than 30 years. The publication brings together labour market analysis, education and training information, employment projections, industry and occupation profiles, and regional labour market insights in a single, accessible resource for students, job seekers, careers practitioners, employment service providers and the broader community.

Australian Jobs 2026 highlighted the changing nature of Australia's labour market and the increasing importance of post-school education and lifelong learning. Drawing on JSA's labour market intelligence, the publication provided detailed information on employment trends across industries, occupations and regions, while also helping readers understand the skills, qualifications and pathways associated with different careers. It included analysis of current and emerging workforce opportunities, including the growing importance of digital skills, the impact of generative artificial intelligence on jobs and occupations, and the role of vocational education, apprenticeships and higher education in supporting workforce participation and career development.

The publication also showcased workforce opportunities across Australia's economy through contributions from all 10 Jobs and Skills Councils, providing industry-led insights into career pathways, workforce demand and future skills requirements. By presenting complex labour market information in an accessible format, *Australian Jobs 2026* strengthened public understanding of Australia's labour market and supported informed career, education and training decisions. The publication continues to be a key component of JSA's efforts to build workforce and labour market literacy and improve access to reliable labour market information for all Australians.

Future labour market

During 2025–26, JSA provided advice and analysis on Australia's emerging and future workforce, skills and training needs. Through workforce forecasting, employment projections and long-term labour market analysis, JSA supported government and stakeholders to better understand how jobs, occupations and skill requirements are expected to evolve over time. This work helped inform investment in skills pathways and workforce planning, ensuring the national skills system is better equipped to respond to future opportunities and challenges.



OUTCOME CASE STUDY: JOBS AND SKILLS ROADMAP FOR REGIONAL AUSTRALIA – PHASE 1

On 3 July 2025, JSA released *Jobs and Skills Roadmap for Regional Australia: Phase 1*, a major strategic study that helps shape the future of the regional jobs and skills system. It provides an enduring framework that empowers stakeholders to work collaboratively to enhance the jobs and skills system across regional Australia both now and into the future, recognising that regional Australia is home to around 30% of Australia's working-age population and will play a critical role in meeting Australia's future workforce needs. Developed through extensive engagement with regional stakeholders, the roadmap establishes a foundation for workforce planning, skills development and policy considerations across regional Australia.

The roadmap sets out a clear vision that 'the jobs and skills system in Regional Australia helps realise the aspirations of its people', supported by 5 underpinning principles focused on addressing barriers to participation, developing skills, quality jobs, meeting workforce demand, and improving labour market matching. The study combined quantitative analysis with stakeholder insights to assess how well the regional jobs and skills system is performing and identified significant opportunities to improve workforce participation, skills development and service delivery outcomes across regional communities. The analysis found that while regional Australia benefits from high levels of job satisfaction and strong labour market demand, it continues to face challenges including lower tertiary participation rates, workforce shortages in essential services, persistent recruitment difficulties and barriers to participation for many young people and disadvantaged cohorts.

A key feature of the roadmap was the development of 10 policy design principles to help governments and stakeholders design and deliver policies that better reflect the unique circumstances of regional Australia. The report also identified a range of emerging priorities, including improving access to education and training, strengthening regional workforce planning, enhancing access to essential services, supporting place-based approaches, and improving labour market and skills data. Phase 1 marked the beginning of a broader consultation process, with stakeholder submissions and regional roundtables informing the development of a second report to build on this important work.

Employment projections and supply and demand modelling

In conjunction with its annual Jobs and Skills Report, JSA released its 2025 Employment Projections, providing a long-term outlook for Australia's workforce to support workforce planning, skills investment and policy development. The projections indicate that employment is expected to grow by almost 2 million people over the decade to May 2035, reaching approximately 16.6 million employed Australians. The analysis provides a critical evidence base to help governments, industry, education providers and individuals prepare for future workforce and skills needs.

The projections highlight the continuing structural shift towards service-based industries, with Health Care and Social Assistance expected to record the strongest employment growth over both the 5- and 10-year horizons. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services is also projected to grow strongly, reflecting increasing demand for highly skilled workers across the economy. More broadly, services-related industries are projected to account for around 84% of employment growth over the next decade, driven by demographic change, population growth and evolving workforce requirements.

The report also identified significant changes in the future composition of Australia's workforce. Employment growth is projected to be strongest in professional occupations, managers, and community and personal service workers, while more than 90% of employment growth is expected to occur in occupations requiring post-secondary qualifications. The findings reinforce the importance of ensuring Australia's education, training and workforce systems are equipped to support growing demand for higher-level skills and qualifications, particularly in sectors critical to Australia's future economic growth, productivity and wellbeing.

Providing advice to support implementation of Australia's Migration Strategy and supporting work on better utilisation of migrants' skills

JSA published its inaugural Skills in Demand (SID) Report on 29 May 2026, supporting its role in providing evidence-based advice on the interaction between skilled migration and the labour market. The report examined the early operation of the new SID visa program including the operation of the Specialist Skills, Core Skills and Labour Agreement streams of the SID visa program and their contribution to Australia's workforce needs.

From a future workforce perspective, the report highlighted the importance of maintaining a migration system that is responsive to changing labour market needs and aligned with long-term workforce planning. Analysis found that employer-sponsored temporary skilled migration continues to play a role in meeting demand for workers in occupations important to Australia's future prosperity, including in health, education and trade occupations. The report also reinforced the need for regular reviews of the CSOL to ensure that temporary skilled migration remains aligned with Australia's evolving skills requirements and emerging workforce challenges.

The report found that the new SID visa framework is broadly operating as intended, with the Specialist Skills Stream attracting highly skilled managers and professionals, while the Core Skills Stream continues to support workforce needs across skilled occupations, including in some with persistent shortages. JSA's analysis highlighted how migration can help address workforce constraints and the workforce needs of strategically important occupations and industries. The report also identified opportunities for future analysis on the relationship between migration, labour market demand and workforce planning through the use of integrated datasets and continued tripartite stakeholder engagement.

The findings contribute to a stronger evidence base for ensuring skilled migration settings complement domestic skills development and help Australia prepare for changing labour market demands over the coming decades.

Continuing to support the uptake of recommendations from completed JSA studies

JSA continued to support the uptake and application of findings from its completed studies by working with governments, agencies and stakeholders to ensure evidence generated through its research informed policy development and system reform. Publicly available evidence indicates that recommendations and insights from a number of major JSA studies are increasingly being reflected in government policy processes, workforce planning activities and reform agendas across Australia.

JSA's earlier workforce studies continued to influence national reform efforts. Findings from the VET Workforce Study informed development of the Australian Government's VET Workforce Blueprint, with JSA subsequently tasked with leading foundational actions identified through the Blueprint. Similarly, JSA's clean energy workforce analysis has continued to inform workforce planning and skills strategies across multiple jurisdictions, with state and territory governments incorporating findings from JSA's clean energy studies into renewable energy, skills and workforce development plans.

More broadly, JSA's research and analytical products continued to serve as a shared evidence base for workforce planning and policy development. State and territory governments, Jobs and Skills Councils, parliamentary committees, independent agencies and international organisations continued to draw on JSA studies, projections and labour market intelligence to inform workforce strategies, skills planning and policy reform. This ongoing uptake demonstrates the enduring value of JSA's research program in shaping responses to Australia's long-term workforce, skills and productivity challenges.

The First Nations VET Workforce Research Paper is a focused extension of [JSA's VET Workforce Study](#). Released on 17 March 2026, it brings together insights into accredited training from First Nations voices, national datasets and stakeholders to strengthen understanding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce within VET and what is needed to support its growth.

The paper shows that culturally responsive, First Nations-led approaches are essential for building a strong, sustainable VET workforce that supports community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners. It highlights that self-determination, genuine community engagement, and valuing Indigenous expertise are core enablers of quality training.

Key insights include:

- **Strong growth, ongoing under-representation:** The First Nations VET workforce grew by 18% between 2016 and 2021, outpacing the overall workforce, yet representation remains 2% below the 3.8% population share.
- **Better learner outcomes:** Evidence indicates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners have stronger engagement and better completion outcomes when taught by First Nations educators.
- **National priority and regional impact:** Strengthening the First Nations VET workforce supports Closing the Gap Priority Reforms, builds local workforce pipelines and helps address skills needs, particularly in regional and remote Australia.

National skills system

JSA continued to play an important role in providing evidence-based advice on the effectiveness of Australia's national skills system and its capacity to meet current, emerging and future workforce needs. Through analysis of education, training and employment pathways, and the development of linked data assets, JSA strengthened understanding of how people move through the skills system and into the labour market. This work informed advice to government on improving system performance, enhancing alignment across education, training and migration settings, and supporting a more integrated and responsive national skills system.



OUTCOME CASE STUDY: LIFELONG LEARNING WORKING PAPER SERIES

JSA is committed to advancing understanding of lifelong learning through a series of focused working papers. These papers will extend the conversation beyond initial tertiary study, exploring how learning and skill development evolve throughout working lives. The series examines the current state of adult learning in Australia, identifies key trends in participation and performance, and provides deeper insights into the interactions between the labour market and the skills system to inform workforce planning and policy development.

The first paper in the series, *Forces at work: adult learning and the Australian labour market*, was released in April 2026. The paper examined how technological change, structural shifts in the economy, population ageing and job mobility are increasing the importance of lifelong learning for Australia's future workforce. Drawing on JSA's labour market data and analysis, the study found that the pace of skill change is increasing across most occupations, particularly in technology-intensive fields, and that a 'set and forget' approach to education is increasingly inadequate in a labour market characterised by ongoing change. It also highlighted how structural changes in the economy are creating growing demand for higher-skilled work and stronger foundation skills, while longer working lives are increasing the need for workers to regularly update and deepen their skills throughout their careers.

The study also identified important challenges for Australia's skills system. While the need for adult learning is growing, participation in formal education and training later in life has remained relatively flat or declined in many areas. The paper highlighted the importance of creating more responsive and flexible pathways for skill development, strengthening skills recognition and portability, and ensuring learning opportunities remain accessible throughout working lives. By improving understanding of how skills are developed, maintained and applied across different stages of people's careers, the research contributes to JSA's work to strengthen the evidence base on education, training and employment pathways and support a more integrated, responsive and future-focused national skills system.

Tertiary harmonisation and supporting the establishment of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission

Drawing on JSA's report on tertiary harmonisation, *Opportunity and productivity: towards a Tertiary Harmonisation Roadmap*, JSA continued to provide evidence and strategic policy advice for the development of the ATEC Tertiary Roadmap, including ATEC's *A more joined-up tertiary system* discussion paper, released in June 2026.

JSA's input helped strengthen the strategic framing of ATEC reform by broadening the focus from individual sectors to a whole-of-system perspective, reinforcing the importance of labour market intelligence in tertiary education planning, and highlighting the role of industry engagement in achieving a more connected tertiary system. Through this work, JSA strengthened the alignment between tertiary education policy development and Australia's current and future workforce needs, while reinforcing its role as a strategic partner in national tertiary system reform.

JSA was a key collaborator with ATEC and partner agencies in the Roundtable on Tertiary Education and National Productivity held in August 2025. The roundtable informed the Australian Government's Economic Reform Roundtable and helped elevate tertiary harmonisation as an important component of Australia's long-term productivity and economic reform agenda.

JSA also provided advice to ATEC on the development of tertiary education compacts, supporting policy approaches designed to strengthen alignment across higher education, VET, industry and the labour market.

New insights on VET and higher education student outcomes

JSA is leveraging integrated datasets to produce new insights into the economic and social outcomes of VET and higher education students. By bringing together a range of government administrative datasets, JSA is able to track and analyse the outcomes and performance of the education, skills and training system. This work strengthens understanding of education and employment pathways, supports evidence-based policy development, and improves the ability to assess how effectively Australia's skills system is meeting current and future workforce needs.

On 7 November 2025, JSA released *Higher education outcomes: exploring administrative data*, providing new insights into how graduates transition from study into work and progress through their careers over time. Using linked administrative data from the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA), the report demonstrated the potential of using longitudinal data to better understand graduate outcomes, career pathways and workforce supply. The analysis found that higher education is associated with strong labour market outcomes, with

graduate incomes from employment increasing by 35% in the first 5 years after completion. It also highlighted strong qualification-to-career alignment in education and engineering fields, while showing that graduates in management, commerce and society and culture pursue a diverse range of career pathways. The report marked the beginning of an ongoing program of work to strengthen understanding of graduate outcomes and support a high-quality, inclusive higher education system.

On 26 June 2026, JSA released *Partial VET completion: insights on outcomes and pathways*, drawing on the VET National Data Asset (VNDA) to examine outcomes for more than 900,000 learners who completed part of a VET qualification but did not complete the full qualification. The report found that while full qualification completion remains associated with stronger outcomes, skills acquired through VET can still deliver measurable labour market benefits. Partial completers recorded improved employment and income outcomes, reduced reliance on income support, and strong rates of progression into further training. Nearly one-third returned to further VET study the year of or the year following partial completion, highlighting the role of stackable skills, recurrent upskilling and lifelong learning pathways in supporting workforce participation and capability development. The findings provided new evidence on the value of skills acquisition and flexible learning pathways within Australia's VET system.

Together, these studies demonstrated the growing value of linked administrative data in understanding how Australians move through education, training and employment. The findings strengthened the evidence base on student outcomes, career pathways and workforce participation, supporting advice to government on the performance of Australia's education and training system and its capacity to meet future workforce needs.

Productivity

Improving productivity remains one of Australia's key economic challenges and is fundamental to sustaining living standards, supporting wage growth and creating opportunities for all Australians. During 2025–26, JSA contributed to the national productivity agenda through research and analysis examining the relationship between skills, workforce capability and labour market performance. This work reinforced the importance of ensuring workers possess the skills required by employers and industries, enabling a more efficient allocation of labour and supporting stronger productivity and economic outcomes.

JSA also progressed a broader research program examining labour market efficiency, job quality, workforce mobility and small business participation. These projects aim to strengthen understanding of workforce utilisation, participation and economic performance, while informing policies that support productivity and workforce capability.

A focus of JSA's work has been understanding how skills, qualifications and jobs are matched across the labour

market, and the implications of mismatch for individuals and the economy. This includes examining educational mismatch, labour mobility and workforce transitions, and how these factors influence earnings, career progression and the effective utilisation of skills. By building an evidence base on labour mobility and workforce movement between jobs, occupations and industries, JSA is improving understanding of the role that workforce adaptability and efficient labour allocation play in supporting productivity growth and economic opportunity.

While much of this work will be published in 2026–27, JSA completed an initial analysis of occupational mobility

and labour market efficiency undertaken during 2025–26. The resulting report, *Occupation mobility: labour market efficiency*, was released on 2 July 2026. The report found that occupational mobility is a key feature of a well-functioning labour market, supporting the efficient allocation of labour and helping workers move between roles as workforce needs change. The analysis identified distinct occupational mobility clusters across the labour market, with some occupations acting as gateways that facilitate movement into a wide range of other occupations. The findings highlighted the importance of transferable skills, career pathways and workforce adaptability in supporting labour market efficiency and long-term productivity growth.



OUTCOME CASE STUDY: OUR GenAI TRANSITION – IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK AND SKILLS

During 2025–26, JSA completed its landmark Generative AI Capacity Study, releasing a suite of publications examining the implications of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) for Australia's labour market, workforce and skills system. The study was released across 4 publications: the *Final overarching report* (14 August 2025), *Analysis papers* (2 September 2025), the *Final release* incorporating additional analysis and technical papers (30 September 2025), and a companion *Case studies* compendium. Together, these publications provided one of the most comprehensive Australian examinations of how GenAI may shape future jobs, skills, productivity and workforce participation.

The study found that GenAI has the potential to affect most occupations, but that augmentation of work is likely to be more common than automation. JSA's analysis estimated that only a small share of the workforce is employed in occupations with high automation exposure, while most workers are in occupations where GenAI is more likely to enhance existing tasks and capabilities. The research highlighted

that future labour market outcomes will depend not only on technological capability but also on the extent of adoption, how workplaces adapt, and the effectiveness of workforce and skills responses. The study also identified significant opportunities to improve productivity, help address workforce shortages and support higher-value work, alongside challenges relating to workforce transition, digital inclusion and skills development.

Looking beyond current labour market impacts, the study examined how GenAI could reshape future workforce demand, occupational mobility and skills requirements over coming decades. JSA found that digital literacy, AI capability, critical thinking, communication, adaptability and other human-centred skills are likely to become increasingly important. The analysis highlighted the need for lifelong learning, more responsive education and training systems, stronger industry–education partnerships, and targeted support for workers and cohorts that may face greater challenges during the transition. The study also set out 10 recommendations to support Australia's preparedness for a GenAI-enabled economy, including capability uplift across the skills system, embedding AI-related skills in qualifications, expanding short-form training, and strengthening stewardship of the transition.

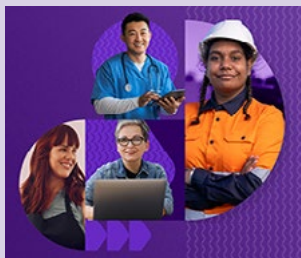
The accompanying *Case studies* compendium provided practical examples of how individuals, organisations and communities are already navigating GenAI adoption. The case studies reinforced that successful implementation is highly context dependent and requires adaptation to local circumstances rather than one-size-fits-all approaches. They highlighted the value of co-design, workforce engagement and human-centred implementation, particularly in complex service environments and for cohorts that may face barriers to digital participation.

Collectively, *Our GenAI transition* strengthened Australia's evidence base on the workforce implications of emerging technologies and provided a foundation for future workforce planning, skills policy and labour market analysis. The study highlighted that realising the productivity benefits of GenAI will depend on effective adoption, workforce capability and responsive skills systems, helping Australia prepare for a more productive and adaptable future workforce.

Inclusive participation

Inclusive participation is essential to both individual wellbeing and Australia's long-term workforce and economic prosperity. During 2025–26, JSA progressed work to better understand and address barriers to labour market participation experienced by a range of cohorts

and communities. Through research, stakeholder engagement and evidence-based policy advice, JSA contributed to improving understanding of how greater workforce participation can help address skills shortages, expand Australia's talent pool and support a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable labour market.



OUTCOME CASE STUDY: GENDER ECONOMIC EQUALITY STUDY

During 2025–26, JSA completed the Gender Economic Equality Study, a major multi-part research program examining the gendered nature of work, pay, jobs, education, skills and training in Australia. Using an intersectional approach, the study explored how gender interacts with factors such as First Nations status, cultural background, migrant status, disability and age to shape labour market and skills outcomes. The study was delivered through 3 reports, a suite of new data dashboards and the development of JSA's Gender Framework, providing one of the most comprehensive analyses of gender economic equality undertaken within Australia's labour market and skills system.

The first report, *New perspectives on old problems: gendered jobs, work and pay*, released in August 2025, introduced the Gender Segregation Intensity Scale (GSIS) alongside new occupational and intersectional gender pay gap data. The report examined how gender shapes Australia's labour market across more than 600 occupations and provided new evidence on the stubborn policy challenge of occupational segregation. It also put forward accumulated 10-year gender pay gaps to better understand the impact of gender inequality and labour market patterns like part-time work across the life course. This was followed by *Education and training divides: gendered skills, pathways and outcomes*, released in September 2025, which found that gendered patterns in education and training remain deeply entrenched, with only around one in 5 fields of education attracting similar numbers of men and women. The report highlighted the strong relationship between gendered study choices, occupational segregation and later labour market outcomes.

The final report, *Speeding up progress towards gender economic equality*, released in October 2025, translated the study's findings into a practical reform agenda. The report identified 10 key actions to address structural barriers within the jobs and skills system, including earlier intervention in education pathways, action to reduce occupational segregation, reforms to VET, and greater focus on the experiences of First Nations women and other priority cohorts.

By strengthening understanding of how gender shapes education, training and labour market outcomes, the Gender Economic Equality Study has enhanced the evidence base available to governments, industry and the community. The study supports more informed policy development and workforce planning, helping to address barriers to participation, improve equity, and unlock the full potential of Australia's workforce.

Establishing a longer-term research program focused on people with disability

Enhancing employment and skills outcomes for people with disability is central to inclusive workforce policy and national reform efforts. People with disability make up a large and diverse population group that have traditionally faced barriers to participation in both the skills system and the labour market. During 2025–26, JSA commenced work to establish a longer-term research program focused on people with disability, including work to establish an advisory panel to co-design the research program and ensure it is informed by lived experience and community perspectives. Co-design is important because it shifts research from being ‘about’ people to being ‘for and with’ them, which increases the likelihood of achieving better outcomes for the groups of people concerned. This work is designed to complement broader disability research and reform efforts by focusing on labour market and skills issues where JSA is uniquely positioned to provide evidence and advice.

While the research program is in the establishment phase, JSA has responded to early strong demand for foundational insights on this cohort and, to begin filling evidence gaps, has released 2 publications focused on people with disability: *Employment and disability in Australia* and *Employer attitudes toward disability inclusion in the Australian workforce*.

Employment and disability in Australia (March 2026) examined labour market outcomes for people with disability, using data from the 2022 ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. The report found that people with disability continue to experience lower workforce participation, higher unemployment and higher rates of underemployment than people without disability. It also identified around 263,000 people with disability who were not employed but appeared potentially ‘job-ready’, highlighting a significant source of untapped workforce capacity. The findings highlighted the importance of transition support, skills development and inclusive employment practices in improving participation and workforce outcomes.

Employer attitudes toward disability inclusion in the Australian workforce (March 2026) drew on responses from more than 2,200 employers through JSA’s Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey. The report found that many employers recognised the benefits of employing people with disability, including positive impacts on workplace culture and access to a broader talent pool.

However, it also identified ongoing barriers, including concerns about job suitability, workplace adjustments and productivity, as well as limited awareness of available supports. The findings highlighted opportunities to strengthen employer confidence and improve disability-inclusive recruitment practices.

These publications started to build the evidence base for JSA’s longer-term disability research program, improving understanding of both the supply-side and demand-side factors influencing labour market outcomes for people with disability. The findings will inform future research, policy advice and workforce planning activities aimed at supporting greater workforce participation, inclusion and economic opportunity for people with disability.

Establishing a longer-term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research program

Improving employment, skills and economic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is central to national reform efforts, including the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to experience structural barriers across education, training and labour market systems, while also bringing significant strengths, knowledge and aspirations that should inform policy development and service design.

During 2025–26, JSA commenced work to establish a longer-term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research program, including the establishment of an Indigenous Cultural Advisory Panel to co-design and guide the program. Co-design is critical to ensuring research priorities, methodologies and findings are informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledge and lived experiences, and are undertaken in a culturally safe and appropriate way.

This work will support a multi-year evidence base on employment, skills and workforce issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, while embedding principles of self-determination, partnership and Indigenous data sovereignty. The program is designed to complement broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy and research initiatives by focusing on labour market and skills issues where JSA is uniquely positioned to provide evidence, insights and advice to support better outcomes.

Murtu Yayngiliyn feasibility study

As at 30 June 2026 the Murtu Yayngiliyn feasibility study has completed its community co-design phase across 5 communities: Thursday Island (QLD), Mutitjulu and Tennant Creek (NT) and Roebourne and Karratha (WA).

The next phase will involve returning to these communities to test and validate the findings from the co-design workshops, refine research methodologies and tools, and assess the feasibility of future implementation. Subject to this work, a public report is expected to be released in early 2027.

As part of this work, JSA is also progressing its first data-sharing agreement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. This will be supported by the development of data management procedures and consent documents designed to embed Indigenous data sovereignty principles and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data governance throughout the research process.

Implementing the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies

In 2025–26, JSA commenced work on the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), an international multi-year research program led by the OECD and conducted in 10-year cycles. It is expected that PIAAC findings will complement those of the Understanding Skills Across Australia study, led by JSA. Together, the findings of both studies will help create an updated national evidence base to assist governments, policymakers and program managers to improve foundation skills access and delivery. The findings will also be of interest to a range of other key stakeholders including academics and researchers, peak bodies, and employers and industry bodies.

JSA's delivery of PIAAC will involve a nationwide survey measuring adults' proficiency in key information-processing skills (literacy, numeracy and problem solving) which represent skills needed for individuals to participate in society and for economies to prosper. The survey also gathers information and data on how adults use their skills at home and at work. By linking adults' skill levels with their education pathways, work histories, job characteristics and social outcomes, the survey will help policymakers identify where skills gaps exist, who is most affected and where policies can make the biggest difference.

Preparations are underway for a field trial of the survey to commence in October 2026. Results from this field trial will inform preparations for the main wave of data collection, due to begin in late 2027.

Foundation skills

Jobs and Skills Australia completed data collection for the Understanding Skills Across Australia (USAA) Foundation Skills Survey, a nationally representative survey that assessed adults' literacy and numeracy skills and collected demographic and geographic information to provide a comprehensive picture of foundation skills proficiency across Australia. JSA also finalised a complementary qualitative study involving selected survey participants, providing deeper insight into individuals' literacy and numeracy journeys across family life, schooling, further education, employment and everyday adult experiences. Together, these activities will support a richer understanding of foundation skills in Australia.

The USAA survey will provide an important national baseline and early indications of adult literacy and numeracy proficiency ahead of the release of results from PIAAC, which will enable Australia to contribute to the international evidence base on foundation skills and participate in cross-national research on literacy and numeracy proficiency.

Activating an informed dialogue

Collaboration and stakeholder engagement remained central to JSA's work throughout 2025–26. JSA continued to draw on the expertise and insights of its tripartite partners and a broad range of stakeholders to inform its advice on workforce, labour market and skills issues. Through consultation, engagement forums, research activities and public reporting, JSA helped facilitate informed discussion on Australia's workforce challenges and opportunities. Robust, effective and collaborative working relationships with key partners and stakeholders have strengthened the delivery of JSA's legislated functions and ensured diverse perspectives were reflected in its analysis, research and advice.

Engagement approach

Engagement is central to the way JSA works. JSA pursues a collaborative, consultative and shared approach that is evidence based. JSA is also committed to developing and harnessing effective relationships with tripartite partners and other key stakeholders. By working with unions, employers, state and territory governments, higher education and training partners, researchers and research organisations, and other key stakeholders JSA aims to activate the potential of all individuals to meet present and future skills needs within an inclusive labour market and a productive economy.

In 2025–26 JSA also strengthened stakeholder engagement through key advisory and governance forums, including establishing the Education and Training Advisory Group (ETAG) the Foundation Skills Steering Committee and the VET Blueprint Project Advisory Group. These forums enabled ongoing collaboration and stakeholder input into JSA's strategic work program.

JSA undertook a range of stakeholder consultations throughout 2025–26, receiving 1,849 submissions across its consultation activities. These consultations helped inform research, analysis and advice, ensuring stakeholder perspectives were incorporated into key workforce, skills and labour market initiatives. Public consultation processes undertaken during the year included:

- **Jobs and Skills Roadmap for Regional Australia, Phase 1** (3 July to 2 October 2025)
- **2025 Core Skills Occupations List (CSOL)** (25 August to 26 September 2025)
- **Building a Better Understanding of the VET Workforce** (16 October to 11 December 2025)
- **Building a System That Puts People and Skills First (National Skills Taxonomy)** (30 October to 5 December 2025)
- **2026 Occupation Shortage List Stakeholder Survey** (20 January to 18 March 2026)
- **2026–27 Work Plan development** (20 April to 8 May 2026).

International engagement

During the year, JSA engaged with a range of international governments, agencies and organisations on workforce, skills and education policy issues. Key engagements included:

- **Canada:** Engagement with the Ontario Fairness Commissioner on practical lessons Australia could draw on to strengthen transparency, accountability and fairness in our own skills and qualifications recognition systems.
- **India:** Participation in the Australia-India Education and Skills Council and meetings with government and industry representatives on skills development, workforce planning and vocational education reform.
- **Ireland:** Collaboration with the Irish Government on foundation skills policy.
- **Japan:** Briefings to Japanese Government and industry representatives, in partnership with BuildSkills Australia, on Australia's workforce planning architecture and skills system.
- **Kenya:** Engagement with the Association of Commonwealth Universities and Kenyan Government officials on artificial intelligence, tertiary education reform, labour market analysis, workforce planning and skilled migration.
- **New Zealand:** Discussions on higher apprenticeship models and vocational education approaches to support workforce development and skills acquisition.
- **Malta:** Presentation to Maltese Government representatives.
- **Malaysia:** Participation on a panel at the Global Skills Forum, and presentation to a visiting Malaysian delegation.

- **Singapore:** Ongoing collaboration with SkillsFuture Singapore and education and training institutions on skills-first approaches, workforce planning, skills taxonomies and vocational education pathways. This included participation in regional skills forums and APEC-related discussions on workforce and skills policy.
- **Taiwan:** Discussions with representatives of the Legislative Yuan on workforce challenges, skills policy and labour market reform.
- **United Kingdom:** Continued engagement with Skills England and the UK Department for Education on skills reform, workforce planning and areas of mutual interest.

Connecting for impact – the Jobs and Skills Report 2025

The Jobs and Skills Report is a requirement under the *Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*, which states that JSA must prepare and give to the Minister for Skills and Training a report on Australia's current, emerging and future skills and training needs and priorities. The report must be tabled in parliament by the minister and published by JSA. On 4 November 2025, JSA released the Jobs and Skills Report 2025, *Connecting for impact: aligning productivity, participation and skills*, which offers clear, evidence-based insights into Australia's evolving workforce.

The report explores how productivity and participation are shaped by shifting skill demands, technological change and structural barriers, identifying where better alignment between education, migration and workforce planning can deliver stronger, fairer outcomes.

JSA highlights the need to unlock inclusive participation and modernise skills pathways. Key findings include:

- Employment and income outcomes improve after partial or full completion of VET training.
- Service industries have driven nearly 90% of employment growth over the past decade.
- GenAI is augmenting, not replacing, work, lifting demand for digital literacy and 'human' skills.

With growing public engagement and global partnerships, JSA's insights are shaping national policy and helping Australia build a more inclusive, productive and future-ready workforce.



OUTCOME CASE STUDY: JSA ROADSHOW 2025

JSA undertook a national roadshow throughout November and December 2025, providing an opportunity to engage directly with stakeholders across the country on workforce challenges, opportunities and future skills needs. The roadshow visited every capital city, as well as Coffs Harbour, with an additional online event held in early December to ensure broader accessibility for those who were unable to attend in person.

The 2025 roadshow attracted more than 1,600 attendees, bringing together representatives from industry, government, education and training providers, unions, community organisations and regional stakeholders. Through presentations, panel discussions and information booths, attendees heard from JSA, state and territory governments, and local experts on current labour market conditions and emerging workforce priorities.

A key feature of the 2025 roadshow was its focus on informed dialogue and stakeholder engagement. At each location it explored themes aligned with JSA's Commissioner outcomes and local workforce priorities, including workforce participation, the clean energy economy, productivity, and future skills needs. Discussions were informed by the findings of the Jobs and Skills Report 2025.

The events provided stakeholders with the opportunity to explore JSA's latest insights, products and research, while also sharing their experiences, challenges and perspectives on Australia's changing labour market. The roadshow created a valuable platform for collaboration and discussion, strengthening relationships with stakeholders and supporting a shared understanding of Australia's current and future workforce needs.

Publishing and communicating JSA's insights and analysis

Making JSA's data, research and insights accessible and widely used is a core part of JSA's role and essential to achieving its purpose. By publishing evidence and analysis, JSA supports better decision-making across governments, industry, education and training providers, researchers and the broader community. JSA is committed to sharing the outcomes of its work with those who contribute to its development, as well as those who can apply the findings to improve Australia's jobs and skills system.

JSA promotes its insights through publications, digital platforms, stakeholder engagement and media activity. Commissioners, Senior Executive Service officers and staff regularly present JSA's work at conferences, forums, webinars and stakeholder events, helping to build understanding of labour market, workforce and skills issues while also providing valuable opportunities to gather stakeholder feedback. During 2025–26 JSA representatives delivered over 150 speeches and presentations across Australia. JSA also released 7 media releases and received over 3,000 media mentions during the year.

JSA measures the reach and impact of its work by monitoring how people access and use its products and services. The JSA website remains the primary channel for publishing labour market and skills information, data and analysis. During 2025–26 the website recorded 7,988,870 views from 1,531,121 users. The Jobs and Skills Atlas continued to grow as a key source of labour market intelligence, recording 1,438,456 views during the year, with monthly views increasing by 13.5% to 131,737 in June 2026, compared to 116,097 in June 2025.

Throughout the year, JSA published 79 periodic releases and 18 reports and other publications focusing on Australia's workforce, skills needs, labour market trends, productivity, migration and workforce participation. JSA also continued to expand access to labour market intelligence through interactive tools, dashboards and data products. The most viewed products on the JSA website during 2025–26 were the OSL (2,024,867), occupation profiles (2,198,636) and Atlas (1,438,456).

JSA’s digital communication channels also continued to grow their reach and engagement. During 2025–26, JSA’s LinkedIn page gained 3,293 new followers, generating 317,982 impressions, 162 comments, 1,076 shares and 6,497 reactions. These channels play an increasingly important role in communicating JSA’s evidence and insights, ensuring labour market information reaches a diverse audience of policymakers, employers, educators, researchers and job seekers.

Figure H.2: JSA online engagement July 2025 – June 2026



To ensure JSA’s work continues to benefit Australia, it must be high quality, relevant, accessible and grounded in open, transparent processes, genuine tripartite collaboration and broad community engagement. Government, industry, business, unions and individuals all have a role in developing and delivering a skilled workforce. JSA is well placed to guide informed conversations about current and future workforce and skills needs and opportunities. By facilitating evidence-based dialogue with tripartite partners and broader stakeholders, JSA supports effective decision-making by policymakers, business leaders and employers, workers and unions, education providers and learners. JSA will continue to convene stakeholders across the skills system to provide the best evidence and advice on Australia’s current and future workforce and skills needs.

JSA’s vision is clear: a labour market where opportunity is shared, skills are recognised, and every Australian has a fair chance to thrive.

Megan Lilly
Acting Commissioner
Jobs and Skills Australia

Appendix I – Corrigendum

Pursuant to section 17AH(1)(e) of the PGPA Act the department is required to report on the correction of material errors in a previous annual report. The department does not have any material errors to report.

6

Indexes

List of requirements	224
Abbreviations and acronyms	230
List of figures and tables	234
Index	236

List of requirements

The table below, as set out in Schedule 2 of the PGPA Rule, is included in accordance with section 17AJ(d), which requires entities to include this table in their annual reports to assist readers in accessing information.

PGPA Rule reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AD(g)	Letter of transmittal		
17AI	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by accountable authority on date final text approved, with statement that the report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the Act and any enabling legislation that specifies additional requirements in relation to the annual report.	Mandatory	iii
17AD(h)	Aids to access		
17AJ(a)	Table of contents (print only).	Mandatory	iv–1
17AJ(b)	Alphabetical index (print only).	Mandatory	236
17AJ(c)	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms.	Mandatory	230
17AJ(d)	List of requirements.	Mandatory	224
17AJ(e)	Details of contact officer.	Mandatory	ii
17AJ(f)	Entity’s website address.	Mandatory	ii
17AJ(g)	Electronic address of report.	Mandatory	ii
17AD(a)	Review by accountable authority		
17AD(a)	A review by the accountable authority of the entity.	Mandatory	4
17AD(b)	Overview of the entity		
17AE(1)(a)(i)	A description of the role and functions of the entity.	Mandatory	13
17AE(1)(a)(ii)	A description of the organisational structure of the entity.	Mandatory	15
17AE(1)(a)(iii)	A description of the outcomes and programmes administered by the entity.	Mandatory	21
17AE(1)(a)(iv)	A description of the purposes of the entity as included in corporate plan.	Mandatory	13
17AE(1)(aa)(i)	Name of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory	13
17AE(1)(aa)(ii)	Position title of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory	13
17AE(1)(aa)(iii)	Period as the accountable authority or member of the accountable authority within the reporting period.	Mandatory	13

PGPA Rule reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AE(1)(b)	An outline of the structure of the portfolio of the entity.	Mandatory	14
17AE(2)	Where the outcomes and programs administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change.	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
17AD(c)	Report on the performance of the entity		
	<i>Annual Performance Statements</i>		
17AD(c)(i); 16F	Annual performance statement in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the Rule.	Mandatory	19
17AD(c)(ii)	Report on financial performance		
17AF(1)(a)	A discussion and analysis of the entity's financial performance.	Mandatory	100
17AF(1)(b)	A table summarising the total resources and total payments of the entity.	Mandatory	170
17AF(2)	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results.	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
17AD(d)	Management and accountability		
	<i>Corporate governance</i>		
17AG(2)(a)	Information on compliance with section 10 (fraud and corruption systems).	Mandatory	91
17AG(2)(b)(i)	A certification by accountable authority that fraud and corruption risk assessments and fraud and corruption control plans have been prepared.	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(b)(ii)	A certification by accountable authority that appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud and corruption that meet the specific needs of the entity are in place.	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(b)(iii)	A certification by accountable authority that all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud and corruption relating to the entity.	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(c)	An outline of structures and processes in place for the entity to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance.	Mandatory	84
17AG(2)(d) – (e)	A statement of significant issues reported to Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to non-compliance with Finance law and action taken to remedy non-compliance.	If applicable, mandatory	n/a

PGPA Rule reference	Description	Requirement	Page
<i>Audit committee</i>			
17AG(2A)(a)	A direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	86
17AG(2A)(b)	The name of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	87–90
17AG(2A)(c)	The qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	87–90
17AG(2A)(d)	Information about the attendance of each member of the entity's audit committee at committee meetings.	Mandatory	87–90
17AG(2A)(e)	The remuneration of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	87–90
<i>External scrutiny</i>			
17AG(3)	Information on the most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response to the scrutiny.	Mandatory	106
17AG(3)(a)	Information on judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity.	If applicable, mandatory	108
17AG(3)(b)	Information on any reports on operations of the entity by the Auditor-General (other than report under section 43 of the Act), a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.	If applicable, mandatory	106
17AG(3)(c)	Information on any capability reviews on the entity that were released during the period.	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
<i>Management of human resources</i>			
17AG(4)(a)	An assessment of the entity's effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives.	Mandatory	95–98
17AG(4)(aa)	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis, including the following: (a) statistics on full-time employees; (b) statistics on part-time employees; (c) statistics on gender; (d) statistics on staff location.	Mandatory	176–191
17AG(4)(b)	Statistics on the entity's APS employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis; including the following: ▪ Statistics on staffing classification level; ▪ Statistics on full-time employees; ▪ Statistics on part-time employees; ▪ Statistics on gender; ▪ Statistics on staff location; ▪ Statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous.	Mandatory	176–191

PGPA Rule reference	Description	Requirement	Page
17AG(4)(c)	Information on any enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> .	Mandatory	97, 185
17AG(4)(c)(i)	Information on the number of SES and non-SES employees covered by agreements etc identified in paragraph 17AG(4)(c).	Mandatory	185
17AG(4)(c)(ii)	The salary ranges available for APS employees by classification level.	Mandatory	185
17AG(4)(c)(iii)	A description of non-salary benefits provided to employees.	Mandatory	97
17AG(4)(d)(i)	Information on the number of employees at each classification level who received performance pay.	If applicable, mandatory	186, n/a
17AG(4)(d)(ii)	Information on aggregate amounts of performance pay at each classification level.	If applicable, mandatory	186, n/a
17AG(4)(d)(iii)	Information on the average amount of performance payment, and range of such payments, at each classification level.	If applicable, mandatory	186, n/a
17AG(4)(d)(iv)	Information on aggregate amount of performance payments.	If applicable, mandatory	186, n/a
Assets management			
17AG(5)	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management where asset management is a significant part of the entity's activities.	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
Purchasing			
17AG(6)	An assessment of entity performance against the <i>Commonwealth Procurement Rules</i> .	Mandatory	100
Reportable consultancy contracts			
17AG(7)(a)	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory	102
17AG(7)(b)	A statement that <i>'During [reporting period], [specified number] new reportable consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million].'</i>	Mandatory	102
17AG(7)(c)	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged.	Mandatory	102
17AG(7)(d)	A statement that <i>'Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.'</i>	Mandatory	102

PGPA Rule reference	Description	Requirement	Page
Reportable non-consultancy contracts			
17AG(7A)(a)	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable non-consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory	103
17AG(7A)(b)	A statement that <i>'Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.'</i>	Mandatory	103
17AD(daa)	<i>Additional information about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts</i>		
17AGA	Additional information, in accordance with section 17AGA, about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts.	Mandatory	102–103
Australian National Audit Office access clauses			
17AG(8)	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than \$100,000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor-General with access to the contractor's premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract.	If applicable, mandatory	104
Exempt contracts			
17AG(9)	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than \$10,000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusTender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters.	If applicable, mandatory	105
Small business			
17AG(10)(a)	A statement that <i>'[Name of entity] supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website.'</i>	Mandatory	100
17AG(10)(b)	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises.	Mandatory	100
17AG(10)(c)	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature – a statement that <i>'[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. Further information on payment times can be found at [entity web address].'</i>	If applicable, mandatory	100

PGPA Rule reference	Description	Requirement	Page
Financial statements			
17AD(e)	Inclusion of the annual financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the Act.	Mandatory	115
Executive remuneration			
17AD(da)	Information about executive remuneration in accordance with Subdivision C of Division 3A of Part 2–3 of the Rule.	Mandatory	186–191
17AD(f)	Other mandatory information		
17AH(1)(a)(i)	If the entity conducted advertising campaigns, a statement that <i>‘During [reporting period], the [name of entity] conducted the following advertising campaigns: [name of advertising campaigns undertaken]. Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at [address of entity’s website] and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance’s website.’</i>	If applicable, mandatory	105
17AH(1)(a)(ii)	If the entity did not conduct advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect.	If applicable, mandatory	n/a
17AH(1)(b)	A statement that <i>‘Information on grants awarded by [name of entity] during [reporting period] is available at [address of entity’s website].’</i>	If applicable, mandatory	105
17AH(1)(c)	Outline of mechanisms of disability reporting, including reference to website for further information.	Mandatory	109
17AH(1)(d)	Website reference to where the entity’s Information Publication Scheme statement pursuant to Part II of FOI Act can be found.	Mandatory	108
17AH(1)(e)	Correction of material errors in previous annual report.	If applicable, mandatory	222, n/a
17AH(2)	Information required by other legislation.	Mandatory	192–221

Abbreviations and acronyms

AASB	Australian Accounting Standards Board
AASL	Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCOs	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACSF	Australian Core Skills Framework
ADMS	Apprenticeships Data Management System
AI	artificial intelligence
AIC	Australian Information Commissioner
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
APS	Australian Public Service
ARC	Audit and Risk Committee
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
ASA	Australian Submarine Agency
ATEC	Australian Tertiary Education Commission
Atlas	Jobs and Skills Atlas
AWR	Annual Wage Review
CPP	Commonwealth Prac Payment
CRO	Chief Risk Officer
CSOL	Core Skills Occupations List
Cth	Commonwealth
DE	Department of Education
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DLSF	Digital Literacy Skills Framework
DSS	Department of Social Services

e-CAF	electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EFTSL	equivalent full-time study load
EL	Executive Level
FBT	fringe benefits tax
FDV	family and domestic violence
FEG	Fair Entitlements Guarantee
FNO	First Nations owned
FOI	freedom of information
FSSC	Financial Statements Sub-Committee
FWC	Fair Work Commission
FWO	Fair Work Ombudsman
GenAI	generative artificial intelligence
GST	goods and services tax
HSRs	Health and Safety Representatives
ICOVE	Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence
ICT	information and communications technology
IFA	Individual Flexibility Arrangement
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEO	investment per employment outcome
IPP	Indigenous Procurement Policy
IPS	Information Publication Scheme
IVI	Internet Vacancy Index
JSA	Jobs and Skills Australia
JSCs	Jobs and Skills Councils
KMP	key management personnel
KPI	key performance indicator
LLND	language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy
MAB	Ministerial Advisory Board
N/A	not applicable

NACCHO	National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
NCIF	National Construction Industry Forum
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
NPS	nuclear-powered submarine
NSA	National Skills Agreement
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFSC	Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner
OSCA	Occupation Standard Classification for Australia
OSL	Occupation Shortage List
OSIR	Office of the Student Identifiers Registrar
PALM scheme	Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme
PALMIS	Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Information System
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statements
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PGPA Rule	Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PRSC	Performance Reporting Sub-Committee
Qld	Queensland
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
REAL Program	Reconnection, Employment and Learning Program
REOS	Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey
RTO	registered training organisation
SA	South Australia
SEE	Skills for Education and Employment
SES	Senior Executive Service
SI Act	<i>Student Identifiers Act 2014</i>
SID Report	Skills in Demand Report

SMEs	small and medium enterprises
SOE	Statement of Expectations
SOI	Statement of Intent
STEM	science, technology, engineering and mathematics
Tas	Tasmania
TCF	Targeted Compliance Framework
TCSI	Tertiary Collection of Student Information
TPS	Tuition Protection Service
TRIFR	Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate
USAA	Understanding Skills Across Australia
USI	Unique Student Identifier
VET	vocational education and training
VETPP	VET Policy Partnership
Vic	Victoria
VNDA	Vocational Education and Training National Data Asset
VSL	VET Student Loans
WA	Western Australia
WHS	work health and safety

List of figures and tables

List of figures

Figure 2.1:	Visual representation of results with sampling error against a hypothetical target of 50	30
Figure 2.2:	Performance measure result summary 2025–26	30
Figure 2.3:	Participant satisfaction with overall quality of service – Workforce Australia Online	37
Figure 2.4:	Participant satisfaction with overall quality of service – Workforce Australia Services and Workforce Australia – Transition to Work	37
Figure 2.5:	Positive outcome rates for Workforce Australia programs	43
Figure 2.6:	Employment and/or study or training rates for Workforce Australia Online	43
Figure 2.7:	Proportion of participants who believed working with their provider improved their chances of getting a job	45
Figure 2.8:	Variable expenditure and estimated number of employed participants	50
Figure 2.9:	PALM scheme employers, direct and labour hire, June 2026	53
Figure 2.10:	PALM scheme workers, short-term and long-term streams, 2025–26	53
Figure 2.11:	Average processing time of PALM scheme decision-ready applications and number of decision-ready applications per quarter	54
Figure 2.12:	Proportion of VET graduates satisfied with the training overall	57
Figure 2.13:	Proportion of VET graduates employed or in further study after training	60
Figure 2.14:	Proportion of employers using accredited training	62
Figure 2.15:	Units of study completion rates (actual versus target), 2021 to 2025 ¹¹³	66
Figure 2.16:	Proportion of students who report that financial barriers to training were removed by participation in the VSL program (actual versus target), 2024–25 and 2025–26	68
Figure 2.17:	Percentage of apprenticeship commencements in priority occupations, July–December	71
Figure 2.18:	Average processing time for initial effective claims under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program	75
Figure 2.19:	Proportion of claim payments made under the Fair Entitlements Guarantee program that are correct	78
Figure 2.20:	Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rates, 2020–2025	80
Figure 3.1:	Departmental governance framework, 2025–26	85
Figure 3.2:	Annual planning cycle	93
Figure F.1:	Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by quarter, 2025–26	200
Figure F.2:	Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by month, 2025–26	200
Figure F.3:	Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by apprenticeship stage, 2025–26	201
Figure F.4:	Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by apprenticeship state/territory, 2025–26	201
Figure F.5:	Number of successful Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan applications received by apprenticeship age category, 2025–26	201
Figure H.1:	Distribution of JSA staff across Australia	205
Figure H.2:	JSA online engagement July 2025 – June 2026	221

List of tables

Table 1.1:	Details of accountable authority during the reporting period, 2025–26	13
Table 2.1:	Outcome 1 performance summary	31
Table 2.2:	Outcome 2 performance summary	32
Table 2.3:	Outcome 3 performance summary	33
Table 2.4:	Proportion of employers who are satisfied with the assistance from Australian Government employment services, May 2024 – May 2026	47
Table 2.5:	Proportion of VET graduates satisfied with the training overall	57
Table 2.6:	Proportion of VET graduates employed or in further study after training	60
Table 2.7:	Events used to calculate WR001 – Proportion of assessed economic data and analysis to support the effective operation of the workplace relations system that is timely	73
Table 2.8:	Corrections to the 2024–25 performance reporting on investment per employment outcome (EM011)	81
Table 3.1:	Audit and Risk Committee member details	87
Table 3.2:	Expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts, 2025–26	102
Table 3.3:	Organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure	102
Table 3.4:	Expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts, 2025–26	103
Table 3.5:	Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure	103
Table 3.6:	Contracts without standard Auditor-General access, 2025–26	104
Table 3.7:	Payments to advertising agencies, 2025–26	105
Table 3.8:	Payments to market research and polling organisations, 2025–26	105
Table 3.9:	Payments to media advertising organisations, 2025–26	105
Table 3.10:	Submissions, evidence and tabled Australian Government responses to parliamentary committee inquiries, 2025–26	107
Table A.1:	Agency resource statement, 2025–26	170
Table A.2:	Expenses for Outcome 1, 2025–26	171
Table A.3:	Expenses for Outcome 2, 2025–26	172
Table A.4:	Expenses for Outcome 3, 2025–26	174
Table B.1:	All ongoing employees 2025–26	176
Table B.2:	All non-ongoing employees 2025–26	178
Table B.3:	Australian Public Service Act ongoing employees 2025–26	180
Table B.4:	Australian Public Service Act non-ongoing employees 2025–26	182
Table B.5:	Australian Public Service Act employees by full-time and part-time status 2025–26	184
Table B.6:	Australian Public Service Act employment type by location 2025–26	184
Table B.7:	Australian Public Service Act First Nations employment 2025–26	185
Table B.8:	Australian Public Service Act employment arrangements 2025–26	185
Table B.9:	Australian Public Service Act employment salary ranges by classification level (minimum/maximum) 2025–26	185
Table B.10:	Australian Public Service Act employment performance pay by classification level 2025–26	186
Table B.11:	Information about remuneration for key management personnel 2025–26	186
Table B.12:	Information about remuneration for senior executives 2025–26	188
Table B.13:	Information about remuneration for other highly paid staff 2025–26	190
Table D.1:	Total amounts paid under arrangements or grants, 2025–26	194
Table F.1:	Australian Apprenticeship Support Loan payment rates, 2025–26	199
Table H.1:	JSA periodic releases and data tools	209

Index

A

- abbreviations and acronyms 230–3
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ACCOs) 9, 11
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples see First Nations Australians
- accountable authority 13
 - statement by 20, 119
- Acknowledgement of Country 2
- administrative tribunals
 - decisions 108
- Advancing Gender Equality in Gender Segregated Industries grant program 110
- advertising and marketing 105
 - advertising agencies, payments to 105
 - market research and polling organisations, payments to 105
 - media advertising organisations, payments to 105
- agency resource statements 170–5
- AI see artificial intelligence (AI)
- analysis 22–9
- Annual Child Safety Statement 192–3
 - annual risk assessment and mitigation 192
 - Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, compliance with 193
 - interaction with children and young people 192
- annual performance statements
 - analysis 22–9
 - corrections to previously published 81
 - purpose, outcomes and programs 21
 - results 30–80
 - statement by accountable authority 20
- annual planning cycle 93
- Annual Wage Review (AWR) 25, 72
- Apprenticeships Data Management System (ADMS) 199
- artificial intelligence (AI) 5, 13, 25
 - AI Accountable Official 99
 - AI Employment and Workplaces Forum 25
 - Chief AI Officer 99
 - GenAI 210, 215, 219,
 - Generative AI Capacity Study 215
 - information and communications technology 99
 - Kenya, engagement with 219
- Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency 14
- Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) 84, 86–90
 - members 86, 87–90
- Auditor-General, reports by 106
- AusTender 100, 102
- Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) 41, 208
- Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Program
 - annual report 199–201
 - governance 199
 - operation 199
 - payment rates 199
 - performance information 200–1
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
 - Job Vacancies Survey 46
 - Labour Force data 22, 38
- Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) 63
- Australian Cyber Security Centre 99
- Australian Cyber Security Strategy 99
- Australian Information Commissioner (AIC)
 - decisions 108
- Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) 86
 - access clauses 104
- Australian Public Service (APS)
 - APS Employee Census 2025 96
 - Strategic Commissioning Framework 98
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) 41, 199
- Australian Skills Guarantee 101
- Australian Skills Quality Authority 14, 27
- Australian Submarine Agency (ASA) 68
- Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) 24, 204, 206, 214

B

Baker, Nick 89
 Before Blue 97
 Booth, Susan 28
 Broome Employment Services 4, 8, 29
 Building the First Nations VET Workforce Program 9
 Building Women's Careers program 113

C

Canada, international engagement with 219
 Capability Catalogue 2025–26 96
 Census Action Plan 2025–27 96
 Chief AI Officer 99
 Chief Digital Officer 99
 Chief Information Officer 99
 Chief Risk Officer (CRO) 86, 94
 child safety
 Annual Child Safety Statement 192–3
 Commonwealth Child Safe Framework,
 compliance with 193
 interaction with children and young people 192
 Climate Disclosure Report 198
 Closing Loopholes Review 28
 Closing the Gap 4, 6, 8–10, 28–9
 employment opportunities 29
 evidence 9–10
 investment 9
 partnerships 10
 skills and training initiatives 29
 transformation 8
 Closing the Gap Bilateral Implementation Plans 9
 Closing the Gap Strategy (2024–2027) 8
 Coal Mining Industry (Long Service Leave Funding)
 Corporation (Coal LSL) 14
 Comcare 14, 28
 notifiable incidents 98
 Commonwealth Climate Disclosure 198
 Commonwealth Fraud and Corruption Control
 Framework 91
 Commonwealth Ombudsman
 reports by 108
 Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) 27, 196
 community engagement 22, 23, 212, 221

contracts
 consultancy 102
 exempt 105
 non-consultancy 103
 Core Skills Occupations List (CSOL) 208, 219
 corporate and business planning 92–3
 annual planning cycle 93
 corporate plan 92
 integrated planning 92
 planning and performance reporting framework 92
 risk management 94
 corporate governance 84–91
 governance framework 84–5
 Corporate Plan 2025–26 92
 corrigendum 222
 corruption control 91

D

Dandenong Pathway to Employment Hub 23
 Department of Education 24, 27, 28, 203
 Department of Employment and Workplace
 Relations (DEWR)
 accountable authority 13
 analysis 22–9
 corporate governance 84–91
 highlights 16
 mission 4, 6, 13
 overview 7
 people see employees; people management
 purpose 13
 roles and functions 13
 structure 15
 Department of Social Services (DSS) 28
 Digital Investment Plan 99
 digital literacy skills 9, 21, 32, 63, 64, 99, 215, 219
 Digital Literacy Skills Framework (DLSF) 63
 Digital Services Contact Centre 22
 disability reporting 109
 diversity and inclusion 95, 216–17
 gender, and see gender equality
 Duggan, Simon 4–5, 13, 15
 statement by accountable authority 20, 119

E

ecologically sustainable development 198

education

- Australian Apprenticeship Support Loans Program 199–201
- priority sectors, supporting 27
- Student Identifiers Registrar 202–3

electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (e-CAF) 67

Emissions Reduction Plan 198

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 97

employees 16–17 *see also* people management

- APS *see* Australian Public Service (APS)
- location, by 16
- non-salary benefits 97
- statistics 17

employment

- APS *see* Australian Public Service (APS)
- increasing job opportunities 4
- participation 22
- programs and initiatives 23
- statistics 4
- terms and conditions 97

Enterprise Technology Division 99

environmental sustainability and performance 198

equivalent full-time study load (EFTSL) 65

Executive Board 6

- corporate governance 84

expenses

- Outcome 1, for 171–2
- Outcome 2, for 172–3
- Outcome 3, for 174–5

external scrutiny 106–8

- Auditor-General, reports by 106
- Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, reviews by 106
- parliamentary committee inquiries 107
- parliamentary committees, reporting to 106

F

Fair Entitlements Guarantee (FEG) 33, 74–8

Fair Work Amendment (Fairer Fuel) Act 2026 26

Fair Work Commission (FWC) 5, 13, 14

- Annual Wage Review 25

fair work legislation 28, 110

Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) 13, 14

Faithfull, Anna 15

family and domestic violence (FDV) 111

finance law

- significant non-compliance with 91

financial performance 100–5

- advertising 105
- ANAO access clauses 104
- Australian Skills Guarantee 101
- consultancy contracts 102
- exempt contracts 105
- grants 105
- Indigenous Procurement Policy 101
- marketing 105
- non-consultancy contracts 103
- procurement initiatives to support small and medium sized enterprises 100
- purchasing 100

financial statements

- administered cash flow statement 129
- administered reconciliation schedule 128
- administered schedule of assets and liabilities 127
- administered schedule of comprehensive income 126
- budget variances commentary 125, 130
- independent auditor's report 116–18
- notes to 120, 131–66
- statement by accountable authority and CFO 119
- statement of cash flows 124
- statement of changes in equity 123
- statement of comprehensive income 121
- statement of financial position 122

First Nations Australians 4, 217

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RTO Community of Practice 9
- Closing the Gap 8–10, 28–9
- Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations 10, 29
- Executive Board 84
- First Nations-owned (FNO) 9, 11
- Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data Implementation Plan 9
- Indigenous Procurement Policy 101
- Murtu Yayngiliyn (artwork) 206

fraud control 91

freedom of information 108

Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth) (FOI Act) 108

Fuel Cost Recovery RTCCO (Fuel Order) 26

functions 13

G

gender equality

- Building Women's Careers program 113
 - family and domestic violence 111
 - Free TAFE 113
 - Gender Economic Equality Study 216
 - gender equality agenda 110
 - grant program 110–11
 - Jobs and Skills Councils 113
 - NSA, and 112
 - PALM, and 112
 - parents and carers 110, 111
 - reporting 110–13
 - undervaluation priority awards review 110
 - women in the construction industry 111
- generative artificial intelligence 210, 215, 219,
- gig economy 82
- Giles, Hon Andrew 12
- global standards 82
- Gorman, Hon Patrick 12
- governance framework 84–5
- grants 105

H

Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) 97

I

- India, international engagement with 219
- Indigenous Australians see First Nations Australians
- Indigenous Centre of Vocational Excellence (ICOVE) 10, 29, 58, 196
- establishment 11
- Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) 100, 101
- Individual Flexibility Arrangement (IFA) 185
- information and communications technology (ICT) 99, 101
- Information Publication Scheme (IPS) 108
- integrated planning 92
- integrity control 91, 114
- international engagement 219
- International Labour Market Update (ILMU) 209
- International Labour Organization (ILO) 5, 26, 108

Convention No. 193 on Decent Work in the Platform Economy 82

Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) 38, 48, 207, 209

investment per employment outcome (IPEO) 48, 49, 81

Ireland, international engagement with 219

J

- James, Natalie 4, 13, 186
- Japan, international engagement with 219
- Job Vacancies Survey 46
- Jobs and Skills Atlas (Atlas) 207, 208, 220
- Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) 5, 13, 15
- annual report 204–21
 - Australian Jobs 2026* 210
 - employment projections 211
 - engagement and informed dialogue 218–21
 - future labour market 210–13
 - inclusive participation 216–18
 - international engagement 219
 - Jobs and Skills Australia Act 2022*, review 204
 - Jobs and Skills Report 219
 - JSA, about 204
 - labour market and skills analysis 207–9
 - lifelong learning working paper series 213
 - migration-related advice and insights 208, 212
 - national roadshow 220
 - NSA, and 213–14
 - Occupation Shortage List (OSL) 207
 - performance 206–7
 - publications 220–1
 - recommendations, uptake of 212–13
 - supply and demand modelling 211–12
 - Understanding Skills Across Australia (USAA) Foundation Skills Survey 218
 - work plan 207
 - workforce 204–5
- Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) 24, 113, 195, 207, 208, 210, 212
- Jobs and Skills Roadmap for Regional Australia: Phase 1* 211
- Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
- reviews by 106
- judicial decisions 108

K

Kenya, international engagement with 219
 Key Apprenticeship Program 5
 key management personnel (KMP)
 remuneration 186

L

Lamond, Jeff 88
 language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy
 (LLND) skills 9, 21, 32, 63, 64
 legislative reviews 28, 110
 letter of transmittal iii
 list of requirements 224–9
 Lived Experience Panel 4, 22

M

Malaysia, international engagement with 219
 Malta, international engagement with 219
 Manning, Greg 15, 186
 marketing *see* advertising and marketing
 Ministerial Advisory Board (MAB) 204
 ministers 12
 mission 4, 6, 13
 Montano, Elizabeth 87
 Murtu Yayngiliyn 206
 feasibility study 9, 218

N

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health
 Organisation (NACCHO) 9
 National Centre for Vocational Education Research
 (NCVER) 27
 National Construction Industry Forum (NCIF) 25, 111
 National Gender Equality Mapping Project 112
 National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) 28, 101
 National Indigenous Employment and Training
 Alliance 10
 National Skills Agreement (NSA) 5, 27, 112, 213–14
 Closing the Gap, and 9
 joint stewardship model 168
 student outcomes, new insights 214

 tertiary harmonisation (JSA report) 214
 National Workplace Relations Consultative Council
 (NWRCC) 25
 New Zealand, international engagement with 219
 non-salary benefits 97
 notifiable incidents 98
 Nowcast of Employment by Region and Occupation
 (NERO) 209
 Nuclear-powered Submarine (NPS) Program 68

O

Occupation Shortage List (OSL) 207, 219
 Occupation Standard Classification for Australia
 (OSCA) 38, 208
 Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner (OFSC) 79
 Office of the Student Identifiers Registrar (OSIR) 202
 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and
 Development (OECD) 207
 outcomes 21
 Outcome 1 expenses 171–2
 Outcome 1 performance summary 31
 Outcome 1 results 34–54
 Outcome 2 expenses 172–3
 Outcome 2 performance summary 32
 Outcome 2 results 55–71
 Outcome 3 expenses 174–5
 Outcome 3 performance summary 33
 Outcome 3 results 72–80

P

Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme 4, 18,
 23
 supporting worker safety 112
 Pacific Australia Labour Mobility Information System
 (PALMIS) 51
 paid work
 assisting people to obtain and maintain 194–7
 Parent Pathways program 4, 23, 105
 Closing the Gap, and 8
 women's economic participation 111
 parental leave 28
 parents and carers, supporting 110
 parliamentary committees
 reporting to 106–7

people 95–8

- diversity and inclusion 95
- experience and engagement 96
- JSA 204–5
- non-salary benefits provided to employees 97
- notifiable incidents 98
- terms and conditions of employment 97
- work health and safety *see* work health and safety
- workers' compensation performance 98
- workforce capability 96
- workplaces, respectful 96

Performance Reporting Sub-committee (PRSC) 86

performance statements

- analysis 22–9
- approach to results 30
- corrections to previously published 81
- purpose, outcomes and programs 21
- results 30–80
- statement by accountable authority 20

planning

- annual planning cycle 93
- integrated planning 92
- planning and performance reporting framework 92

platform economy 5, 26, 108

- establishment of standards 82

portfolio 12

- entities 14

Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) 21, 38, 46, 48, 92, 93

procurement

- Indigenous Procurement Policy 101
- purchasing and 100
- small and medium enterprises 100

productivity 214–15

Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) 218

programs 21

Protective Security Policy Framework 99

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act) iii, 84, 86, 92, 94, 100, 102

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule) 86, 91, 92, 224

purchasing 100

purpose 13, 21

R

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2025–2027 8

Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) Program 9, 29, 195

Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS) 46, 47, 209, 217

Recruitment Insights Report 209

Remote Training Hubs Network 8

reports

- Auditor-General 106
- parliamentary committees 106–7

requirements list 224–9

results

- approach to 30
- Outcome 1 34–54
- Outcome 2 55–71
- Outcome 3 72–80

Rishniw, Tania 13, 15, 186

Rishworth, Hon Amanda 12

risk management 94

roles and functions 13

Rule, Catherine 15, 186

S

Safe Work Australia 14

Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 28, 97

science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) 64

Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Authority 14

Secretary 15

- review 4–5
- statement by accountable authority 20, 119

Secure Cloud Strategy 99

Senior Executive Service (SES) 84, 220

SID visa program 212

Singapore, international engagement with 219

skills and training 27

- First Nations Australians 29

Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) 32, 56, 58, 63, 64, 67

- First Nations Delivery grants 9

SkillsFuture, Singapore 219

Skills in Demand (SID) Report 212
 small and medium enterprises (SMEs), supporting 100
 Spark, Alexandra 90
 Standards for Registered Training Organisations 27
 Strategic Framework 4, 6
 Strategic Policy Forum 84
Student Identifiers Act 2014 202
 Student Identifiers Registrar 13, 15, 202
 annual report 202–3
 authorising legislation 202
 collaboration, strategic and operational 203
 governance 202
 improvement, continuous 202
 professional culture 203
 quality service delivery 203
 risk-based and data-driven regulation 203
Student Identifiers Act 2014 202
 technology 202
 Unique Student Identifier (USI) 202

T

TAFE 5
 Free 27, 113
 Taiwan, international engagement with 219
 Targeted Compliance Framework (TCF) 108, 114
 Integrity Assurance program 26
 technology, information and communications 99
 Tertiary Collection of Student Information system (TCSI) 65
 Thrive Hubs, extension of 23
 Total Recorded Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR) 33, 79,
 80 training see skills and training

U

Understanding Skills Across Australia (USAA) 218
 Unique Student Identifier (USI) 13, 202–3
 United Kingdom, international engagement with 219
 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 207

V

VET National Data Assets (VNDA) 209
 VET Student Loans program 27, 29, 32, 64, 65, 173
 vocational education and training (VET) 4, 9, 11, 13,
 21, 24, 55, 112, 168, 202, 206

W

work, assisting people to obtain and maintain 194–7
 work health and safety (WHS) 97–8
Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act) 97
 Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS) 97
 Worker Transition Advisory Groups 23
 workers' compensation performance 98
 workforce
 capability 5, 24, 96
 participation 22
 programs and initiatives 23
 statistics 17, 176–91
 Workforce Australia
 Closing the Gap, and 8
 participant satisfaction 22
 WorkFoundations pilot 23
 workplace(s)
 inclusive and equitable 95
 respectful 96
 supporting 5, 25–8
 workplace relations 28

Y

Yarrabah Employment Services 8
 Youngberry, Tim 88

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