

NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission: APS Employee Census 2024 Action Plan



The annual APS Employee Census is a survey which is used to collect confidential attitude and opinion information from APS employees about their workplace. The Commission gains valuable insights from the results and is committed to taking action to improve our working environment. We use the results to inform agency initiatives and monitor the implementation of actions. We also work with leaders across the Commission to understand and respond to their divisional results.

Our successes

Flexible Working

We demonstrated a significant increase in employee engagement driven by fostering a workplace where staff feel a strong sense of belonging, trust and respect. Maintaining a flexible, inclusive and impact driven workplace, will continue to be a priority.

Pride and Purpose

Our employees believe in the work we are doing as an agency and feel pride in their role within the Commission. As shown in the engagement results, our people are committed to going the extra mile to make an impact in their role. We will continue to improve the culture within our agency to better support our people.

Workload Management

Our employees noticed a clear change in support and resources dedicated to ensuring workloads are properly managed and monitored. Despite significant improvement, it is critical that the Commission continues to support employees to manage stress and workloads, and this will continue to be a focus throughout the next FY.

Our areas of focus

Leadership

To position the Commission to meet the challenges of the future we need to ensure that our Leaders are well supported to make good decisions and to engage, encourage and invest their staff. Ensure decisions are delegated to levels that match complexity and authority.

Key themes

- Ability to work as a team, specifically within SES.
- Transparency and communication from leadership.
- Promoting an appropriate delegation and authorising environment, build capability and confidence of leaders.
- We will continue to provide leaders with development opportunities to ensure our leaders can best support our people.

Wellbeing and WHS

We must continue to improve the support offerings to our people and encourage safe work practices across all divisions. Our employees feel that the Commission cares about their wellbeing, but that this could be improved through better management of workloads.

Key themes

- Clarity and support on policies and procedures.
- Promotion of wellbeing and safety at work.
- Uplift capability to support the wellbeing and mental health across our teams.

Communication and Change

We are committed to structuring clear and effective channels of communication across the Commission. Our employees feel that our internal communication, how we communicate and how transparent we are with our communication could be improved. We acknowledge that effective Communication is vital, for a positive workplace.

Key themes

- Internal communication across the Commission and from leadership (specifically SES)
- We will ensure our communication channels are up to date, utilised well and support transparency across the Commission.
- We will encourage leadership at all levels to prioritise clear, consistent communication with teams.

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Key Initiatives for FY2024-2025

Leadership

The Commission has a number of initiatives already in the works to address leadership development. Enhancing leadership development will remain a focus for a number of years, as it will take time to grow and shape our current and future leaders. The activities that will be rolled out, are specifically designed to uplift the capability of new and existing leaders, to bring out the best in our people.

Continued action in 2024-2025:

- Refreshing Fundamentals of Leadership and Supervision courses for all supervisors.
- APS Optimal Management Structure, designed to support leaders to create management structures that operate effectively and enable appropriate delegation powers across the Commission.
- Coaching Framework: enhancing leadership coaching skills, designed to equip leaders with the necessary skills to become more effective coaches.
- Senior Management mentoring program: an opportunity to support our staff at all levels to progress their careers within the Commission.
- Revised governance and decision-making committees: Staffing Committee, Finance Committee and Senior Leadership Group (SLG). This initiative is intended to foster a more cohesive and collaborative approach, with a focus on improving communication, teamwork and overall effectiveness.

Wellbeing and WHS

The Commission's appetite for risks associated to the health and wellbeing of our people is paramount. In responding to the Comcare notice and the feedback received directly from our staff, the Commission has undertaken a wide range of activities to identify, mitigate and manage risk. The health and wellbeing of our people remains paramount to ensure we can continue to support people living with disability.

Continued action in 2024-2025:

- Employee networks established with key senior sponsor to advocate and drive change within the Commission.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework: designed to support the development of workplace environments that foster overall wellbeing.
- Psychosocial Risk Management and Workplace Sexual Harassment training provided to all Executive Level officers, evidencing a commitment to ensuring our workplace is psychologically safe.
- Psychosocial Health and Wellbeing training, to equip individuals and support mental health and wellbeing - providing employees and leaders with the skills and knowledge to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health challenges.

Communication and Change

How we manage change and communicate effectively continues to be a challenge across the Commission. We recognise the large amount of work underway and the need to prioritise and deliver change in a measured and sequenced manner. There have been several improvements to how we govern change however this will continue throughout the coming year.

Continued action in 2024-2025:

- Intranet redesign project to ensure it is the easiest, friendliest and most exciting site it can be.
- Review and enhancement to the Commission's Onboarding suite, designed to streamline the onboarding process and improve user experience for new employees and their hiring managers.
- Continued enhancements to accessibility resources, ensuring that our services are accessible to everyone.
- Open communication through regular updates from the Commissioner and SES, maintaining transparency and fostering trust within the workforce.
- ePMO function – alignment of projects and programmes of work to strategy, ensuring standardised management of projects, processes and reporting.
- Modifications to committee structures that will enhance communication channels.

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Key Initiatives for FY2024-2025 cont.

- Monthly Leader Sessions to support our people managers, covering a range of key HR topics such as performance management, HR policy WHS and wellbeing.

- Targeted support and specialised training for divisions within the Commission that are at high risk of experiencing vicarious trauma, with tools and resources made available to manage and mitigate secondary trauma effectively.
- Refreshed Wellbeing training: designed to update and reinforce the knowledge and practices that promote wellbeing in the workplace. Ensuring training is completed on a consistent basis by all staff.
- To support and safeguard our people, updates to our People Policies will take place ensuring alignment to our 2024 Enterprise Agreement.

- Facilitating communication and change through various communication channels such as Town Halls, Office Huddles and intranet news articles. By fostering effective communication, it will encourage open dialogue, promote transparency, build community and gather insights.