



PUBLIC SKILLS
AUSTRALIA



Federal, State/ Territory & Local Government

Workforce Plan 2024

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ABOUT PUBLIC SKILLS AUSTRALIA

Public Skills Australia is the Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) for the Public Safety and Government industry, which includes Correctional Services, Defence, Federal, State/Territory and Local Government, Fire and Emergency Services and Police.

As the JSC for Public Safety and Government, we promote the importance of a well-trained, effective and efficient Public Safety and Government workforce. We work closely with industry employers and employee organisations, to identify and mitigate workforce challenges and support future skilling.

Public Skills Australia is committed to:

- conducting consultation with our key industry-sectors and their representatives,
- undertaking data analysis, research and employing strategic foresight tools to understand current workforce challenges and develop future workforce plans,
- developing quality training products to strengthen the Public Safety and Government training packages,
- advocating for the needs of our industry-sectors.

This Workforce Plan explores the workforce challenges and requirements of the Government industry-sector. Organisations within this industry-sector play a vital role in maintaining critical services which support the Australian public. The public service is made up of a dedicated and diverse workforce cutting across a range of different industry roles. This Workforce Plan identifies key findings to support Government employees across all levels of Government – Federal, State/Territory and Local.



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Public Skills Australia acknowledges the contributions of industry representatives, who gave their valuable time and effort to contribute to this Workforce Plan. We further acknowledge the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations who provide the funding for workforce planning under the Jobs and Skills Council program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Skills Australia successfully delivered an Initial Workforce Plan for Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. JSCs are required to build upon the Initial Workforce Plan and deliver an updated and more comprehensive Workforce Plan in 2024.

Workforce Plan 2024: Federal, State/Territory and Local Government provides a high-level snapshot of the Government industry-sector, its workforce and identified workforce challenges. The plan highlights industry insights gathered from consultation efforts. Through research and consultation, nine megatrends were consistently identified as impacting the Public Safety and Government workforce.



Expansion of core duties



Recruitment and retention



Technological development



Public trust and perceptions



Demographic shifts



Competition for labour



Diversity and inclusion



Career pathways



Climate change

Public Skills Australia further identified four workforce challenges specific to the Government industry-sector.

National Skills Shortages:

National skills shortages are an acknowledged challenge across the Australian labour market.

The Government sector represents a microcosm of the broader workforce and the industry-sector is not exempt from this challenge.

PSP Public Sector Training Package Enrolments:

The utilisation of the PSP Training Package is not fully understood. In some contexts, it is used to upskill employees, and in others it is utilised as an entry pathway to the Government workforce or as part of onboarding.

Low enrolments in the LGA Local Government Training Package:

The utility and value of the LGA Training Package in supporting Local Government workforces is not well understood, with uptake also impacted by accessibility challenges.

Attracting and Developing Regional and Remote Workforces:

Due to the disparate nature of the industry-sector, attraction of staff to regional locations is a challenge, coupled with the availability of local housing, and accessing local training facilities.

In the development of future Workforce Plans, Public Skills Australia will seek to conduct further research and analysis to develop and implement strategies that may address the identified challenges.

METHODOLOGY

This Workforce Plan is supported by a mix of Federal Government data, industry-sector data and insights from industry-sector consultation. Federal Government data are mostly derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA). Industry-sector data are largely obtained from publicly accessible sources, such as annual reports. Industry-sector consultation was undertaken directly with employee, employer and government representatives. Due to the complexity of large-scale workforce data, accurate data cannot be derived from a single source only. As such, multiple data sources are preferred, however, this can magnify data discrepancies. Where possible, this Workforce Plan prioritises the data source, or combination of data sources, that provide the most accurate representation of the workforce possible.

Federal Government Data

Federal Government datasets, such as those from the ABS and JSA, are helpful for understanding high-level and overarching aspects of the entire Public Safety and Government workforces. ABS data used throughout this Workforce Plan includes National Census data, occupation classification information and other labour force and general population survey insights. Importantly, JSA provides an Employment and Education & Training Data Placemat directly to JSCs to inform their workforce planning. Informative and relevant data provided by JSA have been summarised in the Public Safety and Government Industry Snapshot and are supported by the industry-sector specific data detailed in this Workforce Plan. It requires noting that all employment data presented in the Public Safety and Government Industry Snapshot do not include volunteers.

Industry Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with employee, employer and government representatives. Public Skills Australia leveraged established relationships and governance arrangements to:

- invite participation in direct consultation,
- identify additional stakeholders,
- verify and validate research and data findings,
- seek feedback on the Workforce Plan.



A range of consultation methods were utilised to support effective engagement. This included in-person stakeholder meetings, online presentations and written review and feedback from Public Skills Australia governance group members. Consultation plans were designed around previously identified and emergent workforce challenges, as well as possible strategies to support the workforce. Insights generated from consultations were deductively mapped to the identified challenges and validated by multiple Public Skills Australia researchers and are presented in the Industry Insights breakout boxes across this Workforce Plan. Insights were further reviewed and validated by members of the Public Skills Australia's subcommittees, Industry Advisory Group and Public Skills Australia Board. Further information on this engagement is contained in the Consultation Plan section of this Workforce Plan.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND GOVERNMENT INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Public Safety and Government is the fifth largest employing industry in Australia (Figure 1). As of November 2023, there were just under 823,000 individuals employed in the industry.¹ This number has grown steadily year-on-year since 1985 (Figure 2). New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland are the largest employing states for occupations within the industry (Figure 3), with 31.1 per cent, 26.1 per cent and 22.1 per cent of the total employment percentage, respectively. The top 10 employing occupations are presented in Table 1.

Figure 1: Total individuals employed in each industry²

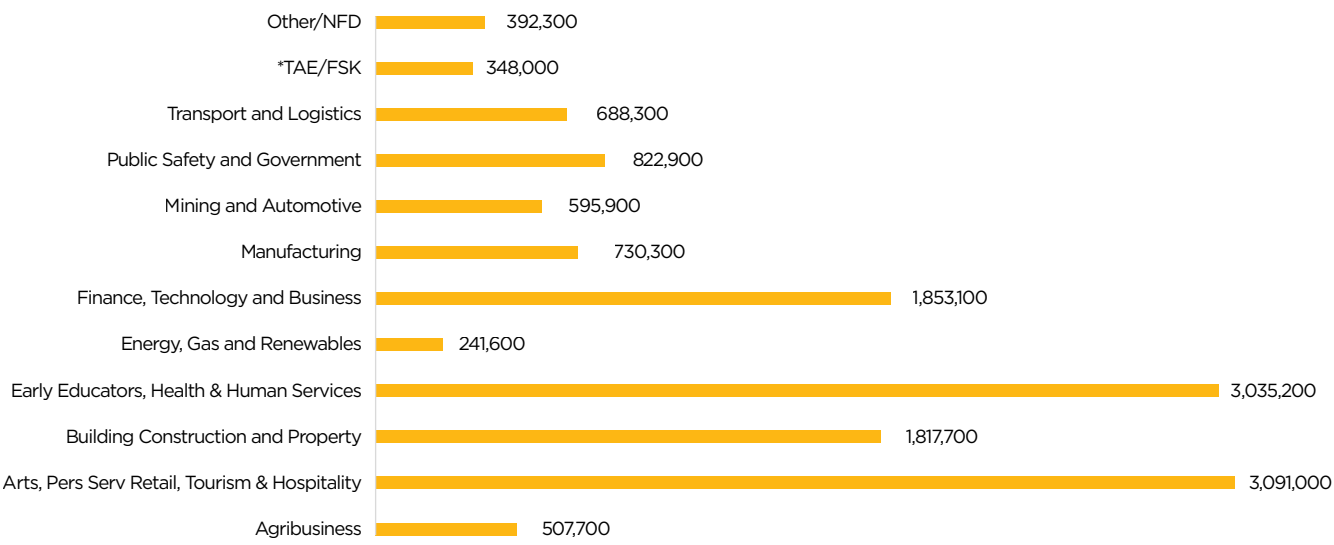
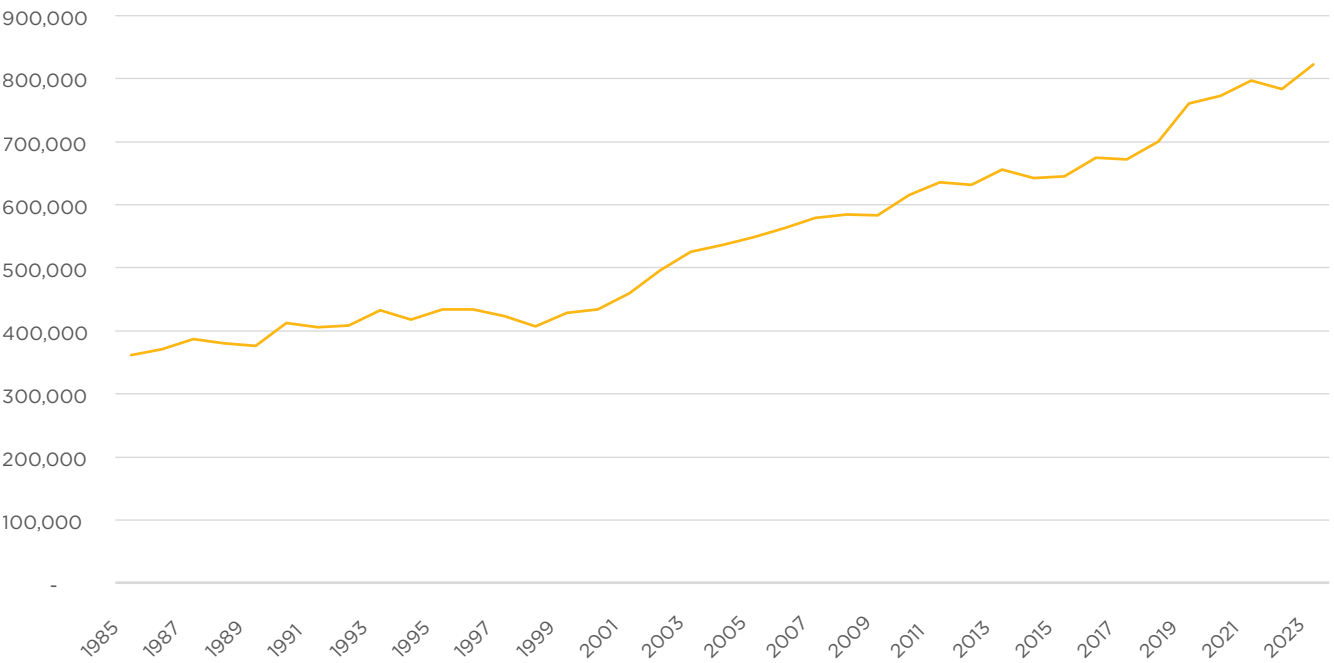


Figure 2: Total number of individuals employed in the Public Safety and Government industry from 1985 to 2023³



¹Employment data presented in this snapshot does not include volunteers.
²Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023 [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024.
³ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023 [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024.

Figure 3: Total number of individuals employed in Public Safety and Government industry by State/Territory in 2023⁴

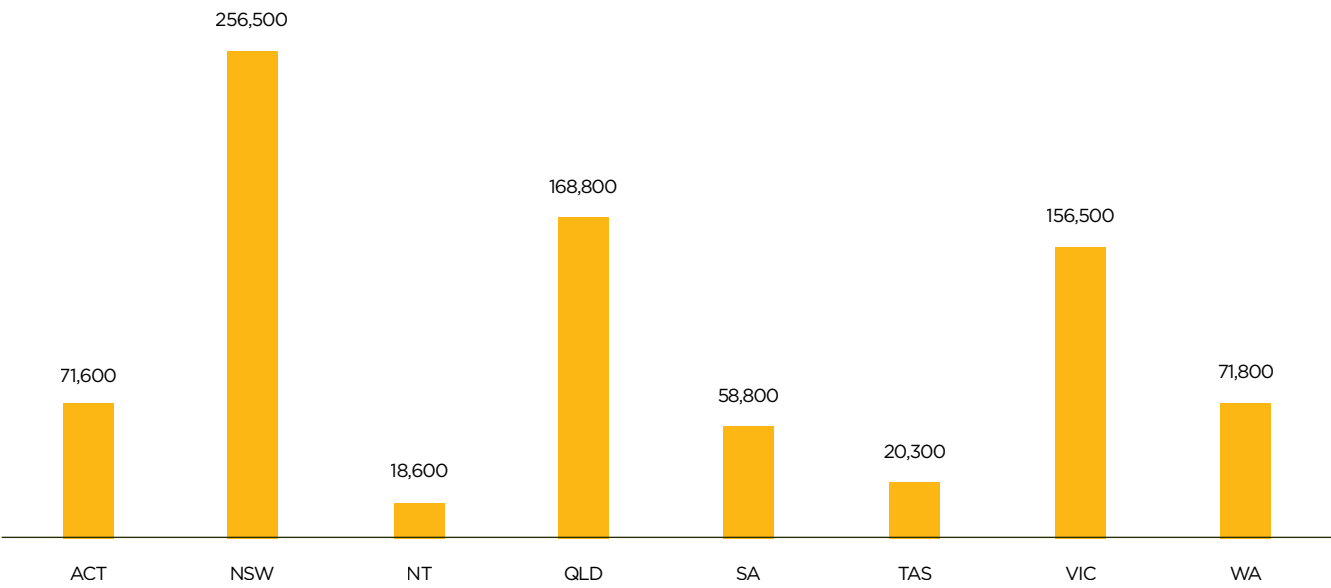


Table 1: Top 10 employing occupations in the Public Safety and Government industry⁵

ANZSCO	Occupation	%
4413	Police	8.4
5311	General Clerks	4.9
5995	Inspectors and Regulatory Officers	4.5
5111	Contract, Program and Project Administrators	4.0
1324	Policy and Planning Managers	3.2
4421	Prison Officers	2.7
4411	Defence Force Members - Other Ranks	2.3
5412	Information Officers	2.2
2249	Other Information and Organisation Professionals	2.1
8999	Other Miscellaneous Labourers	2.1

⁴ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023 [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024.
⁵Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023 [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024.



A comparison between the Public Safety and Government and national workforces on median weekly earnings, median age, proportion of workforce who are female and proportion of workforce who are First Nations people is presented in Table 2.⁶

Table 2: Demographic comparison between the Public Safety and Government industry and national workforces⁷

	National	Public Safety and Government Industry
Median weekly earnings	\$1,300	\$1,656
Median age	38	42
Proportion who are female	47.6%	52.1%
Proportion who are First Nations people	2.2%	3.4%

The Public Safety and Government industry workforce is currently projected to experience a 4.7% increase in employment across the next five years and an 8.8% increase in employment over the next ten years.⁸ These projections provide a useful insight into overall labour market trends, however any forecasting needs to take into consideration the unique drivers in the Public Safety and Government industry. These drivers may include changes in crime rates, bushfires, natural disasters and other large-scale

emergencies. Further, there are several national political and economic influences and constraints, such as government budgets and political commitments, that could impact the industry. Lastly, international and geopolitical factors such as conflict and international deployment, along with emerging infrastructure needs (e.g., AUKUS nuclear submarine program, new correctional facilities), may also impact labour market growth projections in this industry.

⁶First Nations people will be used as preferred terminology inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. When citing a data source (i.e., annual reports, ABS data, and the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services) the terminology of the data source will be used to maintain accurate data representation.
⁷ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023 [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024.
⁸Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), Employment Projections, JSA website, n.d., accessed 1 May 2024.

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT LANDSCAPE

Federal, State/Territory and Local Government departments and organisations are pivotal in delivering services to the Australian public. These three tiers of Government, while distinct in their functions and jurisdictions, collectively shape the civic and public service delivery landscape of Australia. Government staff (referred to here as public sector employees) are responsible for delivering essential public services, and overseeing the physical, economic, and social wellbeing of its citizens. Departments and organisations develop and maintain partnerships with the private sector, academia, and civil society to enhance innovative capabilities, address complex challenges, and stimulate economic growth.⁹

Federal, State/Territory and Local Government departments and organisations are predominantly funded through taxation (e.g. rates for Local Government). State/Territory and Local Government departments and organisations also receive funding from grants provided by the Federal Government. This limited funding model can make attracting and retaining staff challenging as competitive salary options are less flexible than in the private sector. This is particularly challenging during labour shortages when competition with the private sector is high.

The Government workforce represents a microcosm of the broader Australian labour market, spanning health, information technology (IT), business administration, policy, education and training, safety and security, regulatory oversight, logistics, waste management, manufacturing, and environmental management. Federal, State/Territory and Local Government workforces are often supported by a significant contract or labour-hire contingent.¹⁰ This use of contractors has become common to delivering efficient services (i.e. IT services, accounting, policy analysis). This span of Government and the contract and labour hire contingency makes it challenging to ‘collect’ data aligned to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), which is not designed to classify all roles within Government as an industry-sector.

⁹Parliamentary Education Office, *Three Levels of Government: Governing Australia*, Parliamentary Education Office website, n.d., accessed 13 February 2024.
¹⁰Victorian Public Sector Commission, *Age, Disability and Education*, VPSC website, 2023, accessed 30 April;
Local Government Procurement (LGP), *The Contingent Workforce*, LGP website, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024.

SCOPE OF WORKFORCE PLANNING

The Federal, State/Territory and Local Government industry-sector is comprised of a total workforce of approximately 2,430,000 public sector employees, which makes the public sector a major employer in the Australian labour market.¹¹ The scope of public sector employment is broad, and encompasses a range of administrative, health, education and operational roles. For the purpose of this Workforce Plan, a portion of this workforce (from industries such as Aged Care, Teaching and Nursing) fall outside the scope of Public Skills Australia’s remit and are supported by other JSCs. Public Skills Australia has authored four other Workforce Plans for the following public safety workforces: Defence, Police, Fire and Emergency Services, and Correctional Services.

The scope of this Workforce Plan extends specifically to public service roles relating to the administration and regulation of Federal, State/Territory and Local Governments. The main employers of staff within the scope of this Workforce Plan include Federal and State/Territory departments and statutory bodies, and Local Governments. Due to the breadth of skills involved in public administration, the scope of occupations employed by these Government bodies will overlap with the in-scope industry-sectors that fall within the remit of other JSCs. Where relevant, this Workforce Plan will highlight opportunities for cross-JSC collaboration.

While not an exhaustive list, the below occupation groupings classified by the Australia and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) are indicative of the types of roles that fall within the scope of this Workforce Plan:

- General Clerk
- Contract, Program and Project Administrators
- Inspectors and Regulatory Officers
- Intelligence and Policy Analysts
- Human Resource Managers
- Information Officers

¹¹Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Public Sector Employment and Earnings*, ABS website, 2023, accessed 2 May 2024.

Figure 4: National Overview of the Government industry-sector

Federal Government ¹²	State/Territory Government ¹³	Local Government ¹⁴
- Primarily Staffed by Australian Public Service (APS) workers. - Responsible to the Australian Government through their respective portfolio minister. - Responsible for a broad range of administrative, legal, economic, and health functions.	- Primarily staffed by State/Territory public service employees. - Are responsible to their respective State/Territory parliament or legislative assembly through their respective portfolio minister. - Wield significant authority in the implementation and operations of education, health care, transport and justice.	- Comprised of 537 councils, municipalities and shires across Australia. - Work closely with State/Territory government as well as locally elected officials (councillors) - Manage and maintain vital services for their communities, including local infrastructures, waste, water, town planning, libraries, recreational and support services.

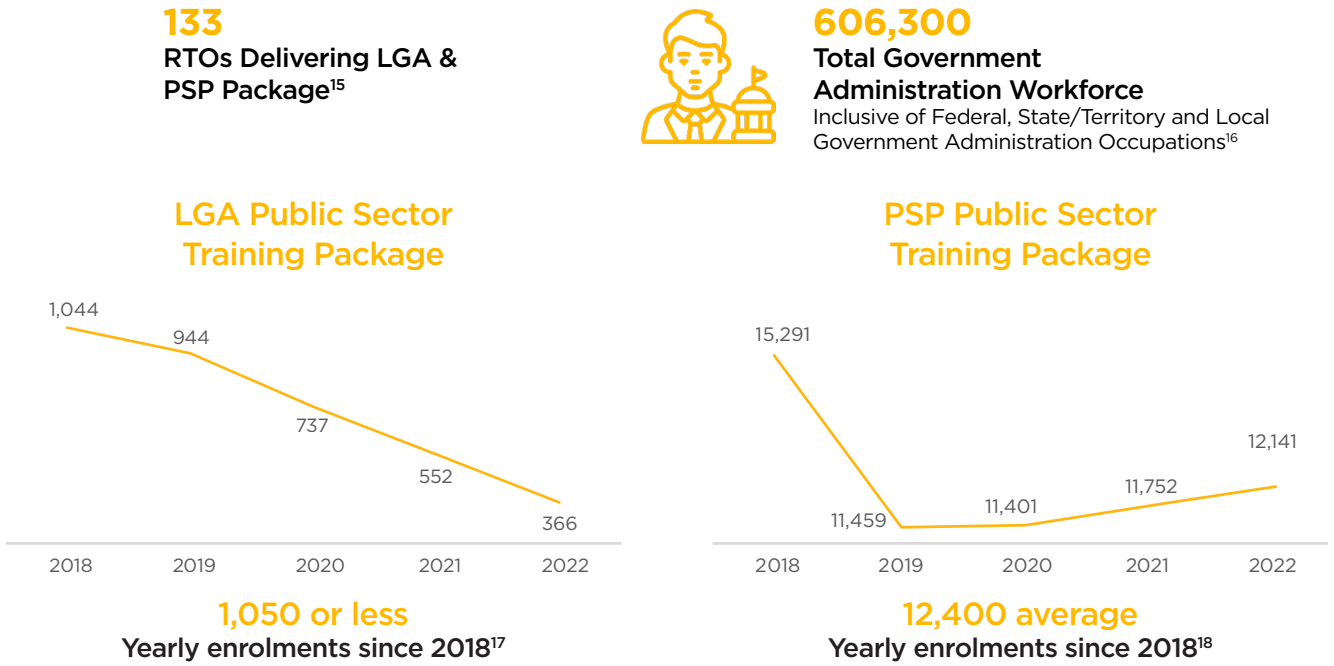


Figure 5: Federal Government overview

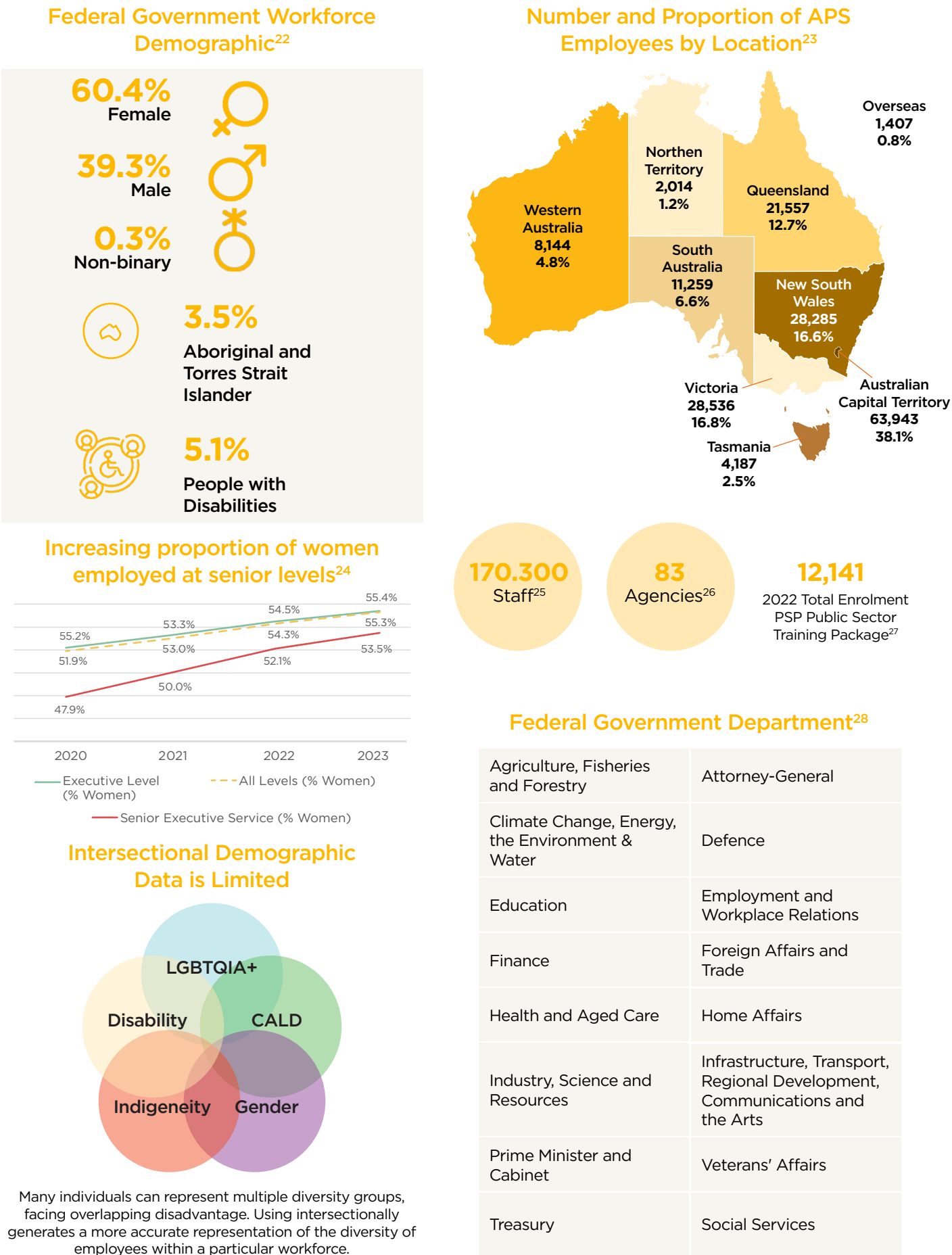
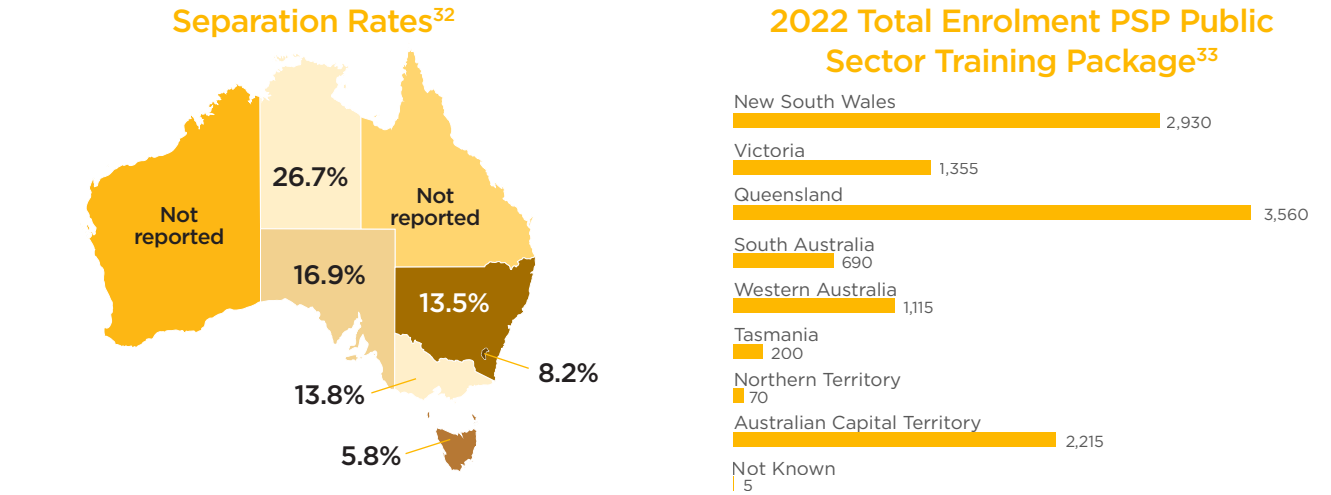
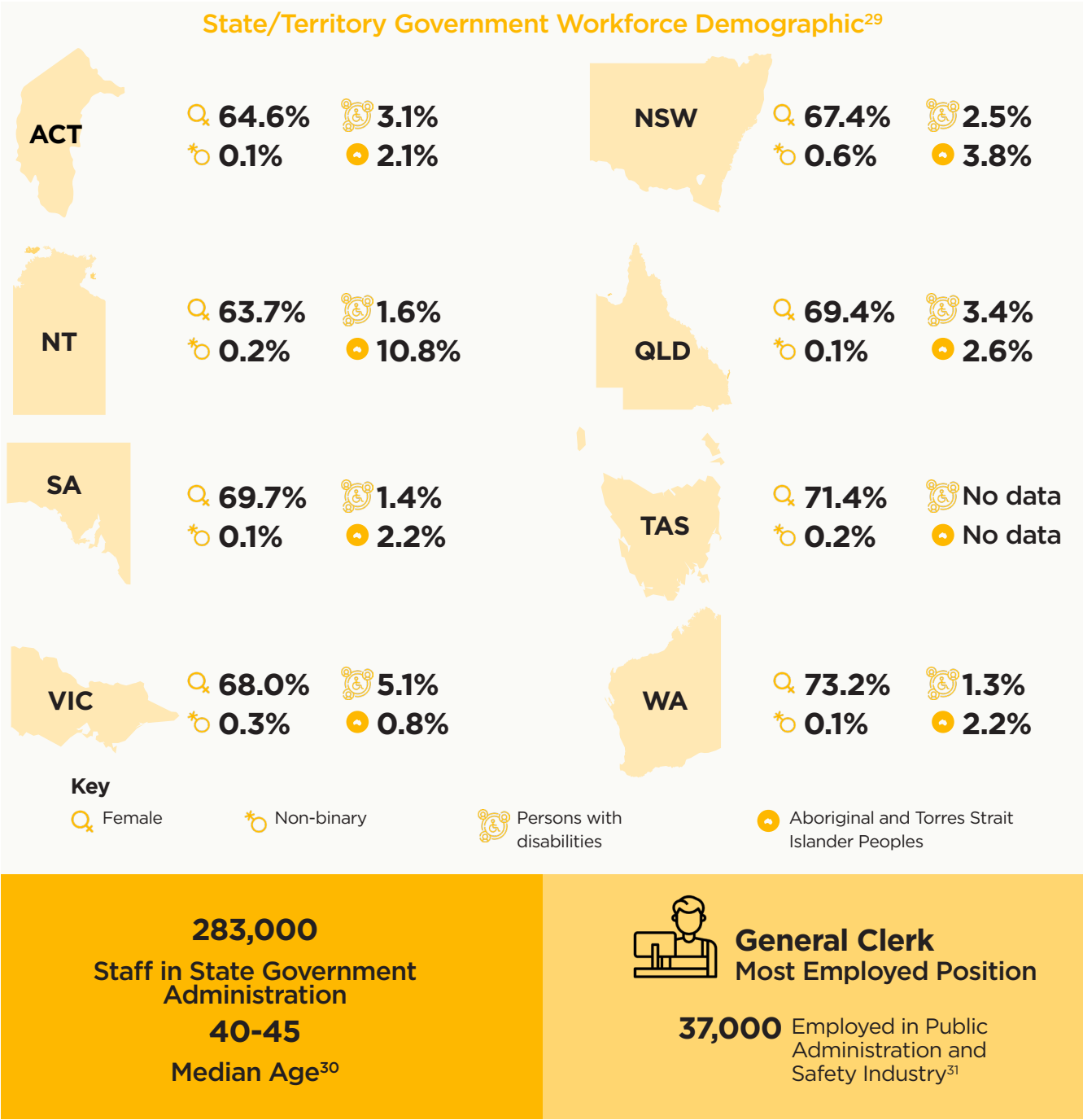


Figure 6: State/Territory Government overview



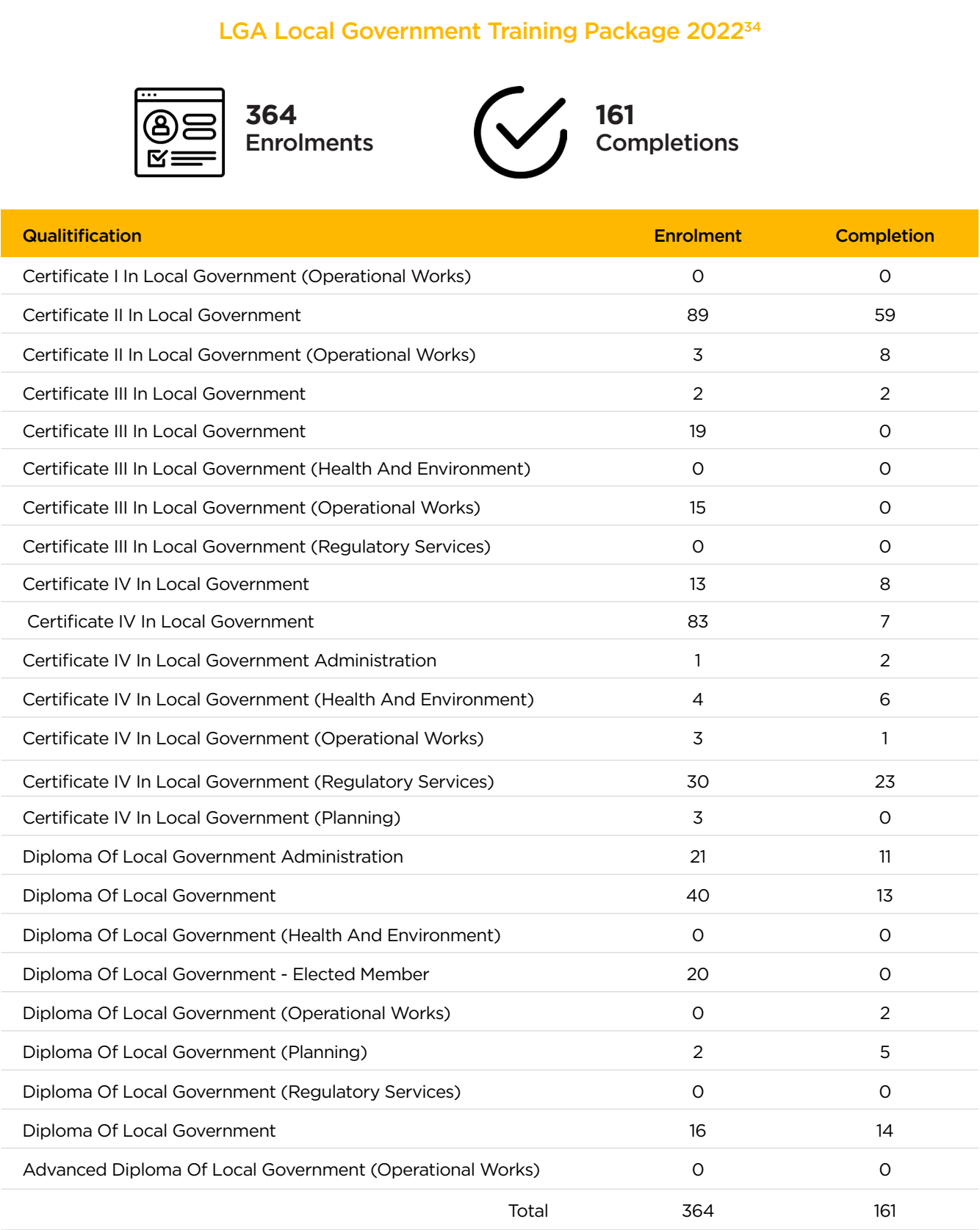
²⁹Compiled from State/Territory State of Sector Reports 2022-2023 (Appendix B)
³⁰Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), *Labour Market Insights-Public Administration and Safety*, JSA website, n.d., accessed 15 January 2024.
³¹JSA, *Labour Market Insights-Public Administration and Safety*, JSA website, n.d., accessed 15 January 2024.
³²Compiled from State/Territory State of Sector Reports 2022-2023 (Appendix B)
³³National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 15 January 2024

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LANDSCAPE

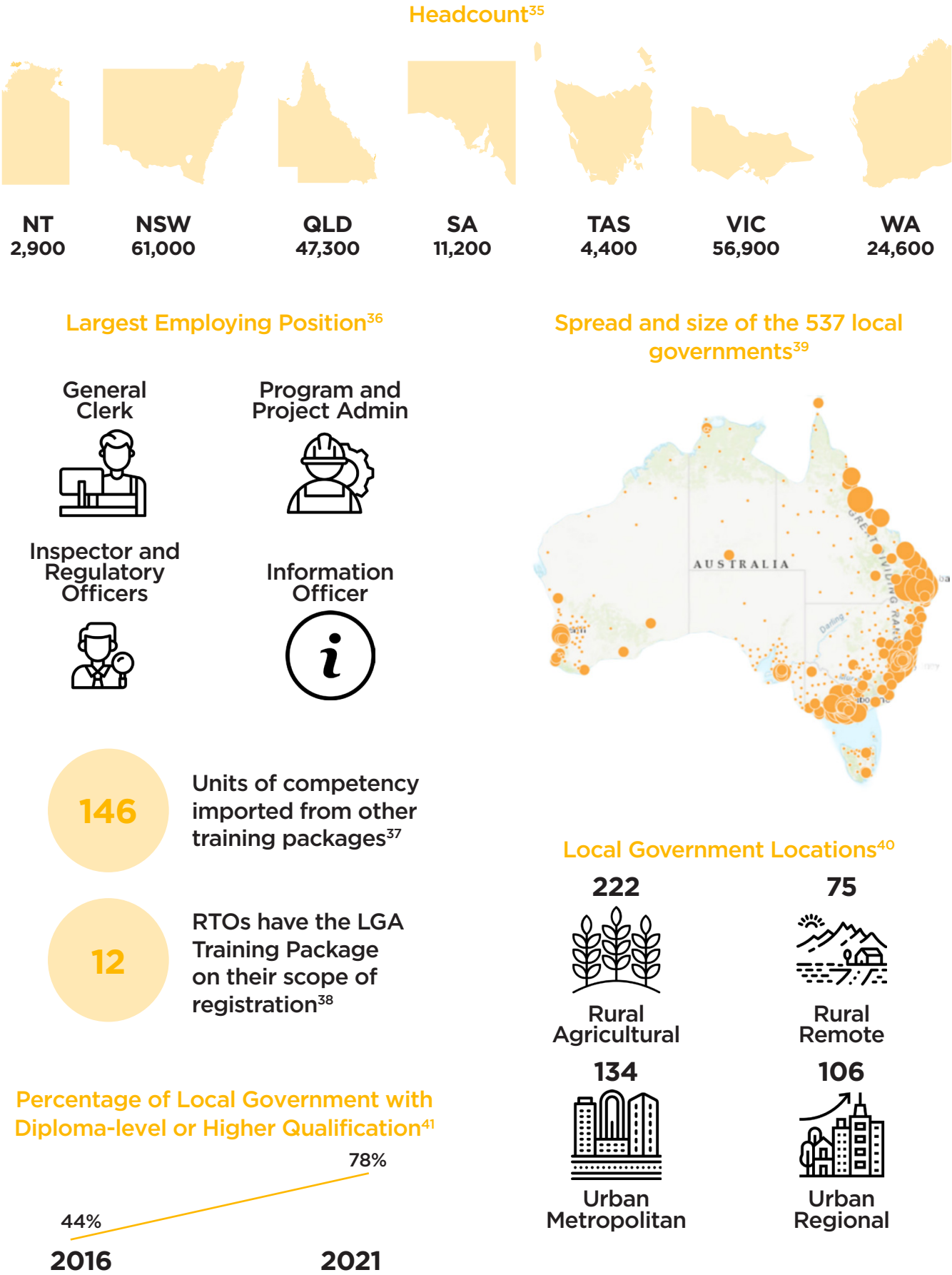
Local Governments play a significant role in building and maintaining cohesive and effective communities. The table below provides a snapshot of the core roles and duties of Local Governments (Table 5).

Table 5: The role of Local Governments

Infrastructure	Essential Services
Maintains essential infrastructure such as local roads, footpaths and signage.	Maintains essential services such as waste and water management and sanitation services.
Planning and Development	Community Services, Health and Cultural Institutions
Manages land use, planning, and development to ensure appropriate growth and sustainable urbanisation.	Provides and maintains community services such as recreational, aged-care and childcare facilities; public halls; community centres, libraries, immunisations, food inspections and social programs to enhance community wellbeing.
Regulation and By-Laws	Environmental Management
Enforces local regulations, by-laws, and ordinances related to zoning, building codes, pet control, and public health.	Monitors and manages sustainability measures, including parkland, coastal, river and wetland management.
Local Economic Development	Emergency Preparedness, Response and Support
Fosters local economic growth by promoting regional businesses and attracting investment.	Collaborates with emergency services to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters and other emergencies.



³⁴National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), *Total VET students and courses 2022: VOCSTATS* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 15 January 2024.



CROSS-INDUSTRY MEGATRENDS

Across all Public Safety and Government industry-sectors, nine cross-industry megatrends have consistently been identified as impacting the workforce (Figure 8). Cross-industry megatrends are often interrelated and may amplify or compound other trends. Future workforce planning may look to map these interdependencies.

Figure 8:

Identified cross-industry megatrends

Competition for Labour	Demographic Shifts	Recruitment and Retention
Career Pathways	Expansion of Core Duties	Diversity and Inclusivity
Climate Change	Technological Development	Public Trust and Perceptions

MEGATREND 1: COMPETITION FOR LABOUR

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Competition for labour is a complex and multifaceted challenge for Australia’s labour force. The Public Safety and Government industry often attracts applicants who are committed to public service and the safety of Australian communities. This means that its industry-sectors find themselves competing for labour not only with the private sector but at times also with each other.

The Local Government industry-sector is particularly vulnerable to competition for labour due to the high number of councils located in regional and remote Australia as well as the wide range of occupations they employ. The applicant pool in these regional and remote areas is far shallower than in urban areas, and therefore competition for suitable employees in these areas presents a greater challenge.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Local Government councils are seeking staff from the international market through skilled migration programs. However, it was noted by Local Government employers that this approach requires significant time to navigate.

Within the Local Government industry-sector a strong focus on ‘growing your own’, or attraction and development of local talent, has also emerged. This focus was noted to negate retention challenges often associated with staff who are not embedded in community, though also requires commitment from employers to develop employees.

MEGATREND 2: DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Demographic shifts are likely to pose a significant challenge for the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. Population growth is also likely to place increased demands on Public Safety and Government industry-sectors as more services will be required (often in increasingly dense areas). As highlighted in the *2023 Intergenerational Report*, the population of people who are 65 years and older in Australia is expected to double across the next 40 years.⁴²

The age of the Federal and State/Territory workforces sit above the national workforce average of 40, with an average of 43.1 for Federal Government, and between 40 to 45 for State/Territory Governments.⁴³ The average age of the APS workforce, however, saw a modest decline in 2023, indicating an increase in younger employees entering this workforce. This may align with efforts to build a multigenerational APS workforce by the implementation of strategies to develop and promote a compelling employee value proposition.⁴⁴

While an aging workforce may denote higher levels of experience and expertise, a strategic approach is required to manage future skills shortages and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills. Targeted recruitment of younger staff and opportunities for mentorship will likely be required to minimise the impact of impending retirements. Some evidence suggests a younger demographic is choosing to enter the Government workforce; for example, in Western Australia there has been a marked increase in employees under 24 years old joining.⁴⁵ The articulation of clearer pathways through the VET system into Government roles may also improve the representation of younger people and mitigate the effects of an aging workforce, along with graduate programs that are currently being offered at a Federal Government level as well as across all States and Territories.

⁴²Commonwealth of Australia, *2023 Intergenerational Report: Australia's future to 2063*, The Treasury, Australian Government, 2023.
⁴³Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Age (AGEP) by Labour Force Status (LFSP) [Census TableBuilder], accessed 15 January 2024; Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023* [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024; Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), *APS Employment Release Tables – 30 June 2023* [data set], apsc.gov.au, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024; State/Territory State of Sector reports (Appendix B).
⁴⁴APSC, *Capability Review of the Australian Public Service Commission*, APSC website, 2023, accessed 14 February 2024.
⁴⁵Government of Western Australia, *State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2022-23*, Public Sector Commission, Government of Western Australia, 2023.

MEGATREND 3: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Recruiting and retaining new employees is a significant challenge across all industry-sectors in Public Safety and Government and is examined in further detail in Figure 9.

Figure 9 Recruitment and retention challenges across the Public Safety and Government industry

Recruitment	
Competitive salaries and flexible working conditions	Attractiveness of higher education
Competitive labour markets or low volume of workers in specific fields	Perceptions of the industry
Retention	
Australia's sustained economic growth	Changes to workforce profiles in turn altering employees' expectations of the workforce
Increasing demand and scope of public safety work	Staff wellbeing

This megatrend has been acknowledged in the Federal APS where, despite the stable rate of separations, the retention of employees has impacted on the preservation of knowledge and the capability of employees to perform their roles.⁴⁶ *The Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) Capability Review Report* indicates that there is a need for internal capability building, particularly in the areas of people management, strategic human resources (e.g. talent management or anticipating future workforce needs) and skill development.⁴⁷ Research conducted by the APSC highlights a lack of public awareness of employment opportunities within the APS. In a 2023 survey into public perceptions of the APS as an employer, the most common reason for respondents not seeking APS employment was a lack of awareness of the service as an employer.⁴⁸ Across all levels of Government, strategic planning and resource allocation must consider the impact and cost of employee turnover.

⁴⁶Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), *APS Employment Release Tables – 30 June 2023* [data set], apsc.gov.au, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024.
⁴⁷APSC, *Capability Review of the Australian Public Service Commission*, APSC website, 2023, accessed 14 February 2024.
⁴⁸APSC, *State of the Service Report 2022-23*, APSC, Australian Government, 2023.

MEGATREND 4: CAREER PATHWAYS

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Clearly defined career pathways are crucial to support employee value propositions and to retain staff. Career pathways may include:

- structured and connected personal development plans that enable candidates to enter an industry, develop core skills, and achieve training goals, and
- clearly defined educational pathways to support candidates into promotional pathways or move laterally into specialised roles.

Career pathways into the public service are increasing for those who hold higher education qualifications, with many university graduates entering the public service through graduate programs. Whilst this provides a useful recruitment pipeline for the Federal, State/Territory and Local Government industry-sector, the use of VET may not be considered by many as an important entry pathway. Instead, VET is often used to upskill public service workers in specialised roles. An example of this is the wide uptake of the *Certificate IV in Government Investigations* across law enforcement, regulatory and other government agencies.⁴⁹ The Certificate has the highest enrolment numbers out of all Public Sector Training Package (PSP) qualifications, accounting for 26% of all total PSP enrolments in 2022.⁵⁰ In these agencies, the Certificate IV is not generally an entry pathway, but rather provides additional development for investigative and regulatory roles.

⁴⁹National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 15 January 2024.

⁵⁰NCVER, *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 15 January 2024.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Since 2018, the PSP Training Package has experienced a 20.6 per cent reduction in enrolments and 32.8 per cent reduction in completions.⁵¹ Consultation with industry-sector representatives revealed that the PSP is used by employers in a variety of ways, both as an entry pathway but also strategically by State/Territory and Federal Government agencies to upskill employees in an area of technical competency. Public Skills Australia will undertake further consultation to fully understand the nuances in the utilisation of the PSP Training Package.

A Federal Government representative noted that the PSP Training Package is utilised in Department-level traineeships and cadetship programs.

The recently announced Australian Government Apprenticeship Program, beginning in October 2024, will be the first to utilise the PSP Training Package as part of a direct entry program into the Federal Government workforce.

A Local Government representative noted that they are working with a state level association to develop micro-credentials to build skills and capabilities across local government and enhance forward planning.

⁵¹National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 15 January 2024.

MEGATREND 5: EXPANSION OF CORE DUTIES

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Expanding core duties is a challenge affecting all Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. The expansion of core duties and responsibilities (or ‘role creep’) refers to the gradual and unintended expansion of responsibilities and tasks beyond the original scope of a role or rank. In a professional context, it often occurs when additional duties and responsibilities are assigned to an individual or a team without a corresponding adjustment in resources, time, or compensation. For employees, this can result in increased workloads and responsibilities and may contribute to employee attrition and separation. Expansion of core duties and responsibilities may be driven by:

- budgetary restrictions and the challenge to ‘do more with less’,
- increasing government or community expectations,
- workforce reductions,
- emerging evidence and changing understandings of effective practices, and
- technological advancements.

For Government workforces, the expansion of core duties is inextricably linked to social, political and climate related change.⁵²

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Local Government representatives noted an increase in responsibility for preparation, response and recovery around weather-related events including an increase in the creation of roles for emergency resilience officers.

Representatives also noted that available funding and budget allocations have become stagnant across Local Governments, despite cost of living, COVID recovery and natural disasters (i.e. flooding) impacting on local communities. These factors are being considered by the recently announced *National Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability*.⁵³

⁵²Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), *Capability Review of the Australian Public Service Commission*, APSC website, 2023, accessed 14 February 2024.

⁵³Parliament of Australia, *New inquiry - Australia's local government sustainability*, Australian Government, 2024, accessed 2 April 2024.

MEGATREND 6: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Public Safety and Government industry-sectors have made significant strides towards fostering inclusive and equitable practices in recruiting First Nations peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse individuals, women, gender-diverse people, and people with disabilities; however, representation remains an ongoing challenge.⁵⁴

Gender

The Federal Government has adopted several approaches to enhance gender equality in the workplace. These include undertaking a gender impact assessment (i.e. policy analysis), strengthening discrimination laws and examining what drives the gender pay gap. Current data on demographics suggest these efforts have resulted in positive outcomes as gender parity is evident across almost all APS levels.⁵⁵

First Nations Peoples

Engagement of First Nations peoples remains an area of focus. First Nations peoples’ participation in the Federal Government workforce increased marginally in the past 10 years from 2.9 to 3.5 per cent.⁵⁶ The APS has instigated several measures to increase the recruitment, retention and progression of First Nations peoples, including affirmative measures to increase Senior Executive Service (SES) level representation, traineeships and apprenticeships and First Nations networks.⁵⁷ Despite these efforts, 85 per cent of First Nations peoples are currently employed at APS Level 6 or below while only 0.9 per cent are employed in a senior executive position.⁵⁸ First Nations participation in the Federal Government workforce can provide cultural knowledge that is critical to the First Nations community, and this data demonstrates that under-representation of First Nations people in Federal Government leadership positions remains a significant issue despite strategic efforts.

First Nations workforce participation in each State/Territory Government matches or exceeds First Nations employment in their State/Territory wide workforce, barring two exceptions. In the Northern Territory Government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation (10.8%) is lower than the Territory wide proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employed persons (13.7%).⁵⁹ In the Queensland Government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation (2.6%) is also lower than the Statewide proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employed persons (3.4%).⁶⁰ Attention is required to align the proportional workforce participation rates of Northern Territory and Queensland Governments with other State/Territories, as well as the federal APS.

⁵⁴Gender-diverse refers to individuals who do not identify as male or female, for example non-binary.

⁵⁵Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), *Realising the benefits for all—APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26*, APSC, 2021.

⁵⁶Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), *APS Employment Release Tables – 30 June 2023* [data set], apsc.gov.au, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024.

⁵⁷APSC, *APS Employment Database interactive interface (APSEDIi)* [data set], apsc.gov.au, 2023, accessed 29 March 2024; APSC, *APS Employment Release Tables – 30 June 2023* [data set], apsc.gov.au, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024.

⁵⁸APSC, *APS Employment Database interactive interface (APSEDIi)* [data set], apsc.gov.au, 2023, accessed 29 March 2024.

⁵⁹Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023* [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024; Northern Territory Government, *State of the Service Report 2022–23*, Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, Northern Territory Government, 2023.

⁶⁰ABS, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, November 2023* [data set], ABS website, 2023, accessed 1 May 2024.; State of Queensland, *Queensland Public Sector Workforce Profile March 2023*, Public Sector Commission, State of Queensland, 2023.

The 2023 ALGA Closing the Gap Report published Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation survey data collected in 2022 from Local Governments across Australia.⁶¹ The report highlighted that the overall percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participation was 3.1% nationally. However, this data was skewed heavily toward the Northern Territory, where 50.2% of the workforce identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and where Local Governments are one of the largest employers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in remote and regional areas. Victoria, Tasmania, and South Australia all reported participation rates of 0.6% or below, indicating that the available pathways into Local Government for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are highly varied, and need to be examined in the context of each State/Territory and Local Government Area.

Disability

In 2008 Australia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The purpose of the CRPD is to ‘protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity’.⁶² Embedded in the CRPD are a set of general principles which include, ‘the full and effective participation and inclusion of people with disability in society’.⁶³ This general principle is in part directed towards ensuring people with disability can participate in the national workforce without discrimination. In line with this general principle in the CRPD, it is critical that the Australian government provides people with disabilities with reasonable access to employment in Public Safety and Government industry-sectors.

The Federal Government has adopted several strategies to increase the employment of individuals with a disability, including co-designing and implementing an inclusive recruitment tool (the Affirmative Measures – Disability Recruitment Hub), removing accessibility barriers, and creating the Ability Apprenticeship program. It is hoped that such initiatives, combined with the APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020-2025, will increase representation of people with disabilities working in the Federal Government to 7 per cent by 2025.⁶⁴ At present, 13 agencies, including the APSC, have reached the 7 per cent target, with a further 18 agencies exceeding 5 per cent representation.⁶⁵

Further targeted action is also being investigated or deployed by all levels of Government. Potential action includes:

- timely facilitation of adjustments such as flexible working arrangements or adjustable workstations for people with disabilities already engaged in the workforce,
- Job Access partnerships, mentorship, and career progression pathways,
- disability leave, targeted recruitment and inclusive recruitment practices (such as job portals with enhanced accessibility),
- unconscious bias training, and
- the formation and usage of disability working groups to guide workplace policies and procedures.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

An industry representative noted that **the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program (IAP) is a whole of Australian Government pathway for Indigenous Australians into the APS workforce, through the delivery of VET qualifications alongside placements within an APS role.**

⁶¹Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), Closing the Gap 2023 Annual Report. ALGA, 2023.
⁶²United Nations (UN), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Treaty Series, 2006, accessed 30 April 2024.
⁶³UN, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Treaty Series, 2006, accessed 30 April 2024.
⁶⁴Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25, APSC, 2020.
⁶⁵APSC, Australian Public Service Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25, APSC, 2020.

MEGATREND 7:
CLIMATE CHANGE

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Climate change and weather-related disasters are having a significant influence on every industry-sector, including those overseen by other JSCs. While the effects of climate change may be widespread, the implications for individual industry-sectors vary.

Across the Federal, State/Territory, and Local Government industry-sector there are protocols and arrangements in place that determine to what extent Government agencies will support the response to an increasing number of weather-related events. As climate-related natural disasters increase, the scope of responsibility also increases, potentially overburdening the industry-sector. For example, one local council is reported to have incurred \$350 million dollars in damage to council assets during flooding in 2022.⁶⁶

In March 2024, the Australian Government announced a Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability that will focus on the capacity of local governments to meet changing service delivery obligations and infrastructure requirements, particularly in rural, regional, and remote communities.⁶⁷

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Local Government representatives noted an increased demand for roles such as engineers and the emerging resilience officer role.

Resilience officer roles were created by Local Governments to liaise with public safety agencies on community resilience efforts and provide support during emergency events.

It was noted by a State Government employer body representative that there will be a future need to increase workforce capacity and capability to support Emergency Management Recovery such as the repair to assets damaged by land slips and damage to roads and bridges from repeated flooding/bushfire events.

A Local Government representative noted that Local Governments are increasingly impacted financially by the response to climate-related weather events which may leave them financially vulnerable impacting their viability and functionality.

⁶⁶Lismore City Council, Flood reports and plans, Lismore City Council website, n.d., accessed 20 August 2024.
⁶⁷Parliament of Australia, New inquiry - Australia's local government sustainability, Parliament of Australia website, Australian Government, 2024, accessed 2 April 2024.

MEGATREND 8: TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✓ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

The rapid evolution of technology presents a challenge for Public Safety and Government industry-sectors and most commonly impacts:

- workplace capability and practices (i.e. streamlining processes and enhancing communications),
- response or operational practices, and
- standardised training practices.

Technological development poses a challenge for effective practice, and requires the continual review of workplace training, standards and skills. Federal and State/Territory Governments are in the process of implementing digital solutions such as new communication technologies, augmented/virtual reality, and artificial intelligence (AI) to support a hybrid-work culture.⁶⁸ The aim is to streamline processes and create efficiencies, which will elevate the public sector to an employer of choice to attract and retain skilled staff. These digital solutions are central to the *APS Workforce Strategy 2025* and State/Territory Government workforce plans.⁶⁹

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Rapid technological development poses a growing threat to the industry-sector, in the form of increasing cybercrime incidents. The 2023-2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy aims to ensure that all citizens and businesses are better protected from cyber threats and can bounce back quickly following a cyberattack. An industry-sector representative noted that the technological reforms necessary to deliver this strategy will impact holistically across the Government industry-sector.⁷⁰

⁶⁸New South Wales Public Service Commission (NSW PSC), *Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2025*, NSW PSC, Government of New South Wales, 2022.
⁶⁹Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), *Delivering for Tomorrow: APS Workforce Strategy 2025*, APSC, 2021.
⁷⁰Digital Transformation Agency, *2023-2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy*, Digital Transformation Agency, Australian Government, 2023.

MEGATREND 9: PUBLIC TRUST AND PERCEPTIONS

- ✓ Defence
- ✓ Police
- ✗ Fire and Emergency Services
- ✓ Correctional Services
- ✓ Federal, State/Territory and Local Government

Public Safety and Government industry-sectors are commonly impacted by public trust and community perceptions, which can influence the ability of agencies to effectively undertake their work.

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet reported that, as of June 2022, 61 per cent of Australians agreed that they trust public services, up four percentage points from pre-COVID (June 2019) levels.⁷¹ The report found that people who engaged with public services were more likely to believe that they were reliable and trustworthy than those who did not, and that trust varied considerably by service agency, with the lowest levels of trust at the Federal Government level being reported for Centrelink and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). There is a strong link between membership of underrepresented and marginalised groups, who are more likely to access these services, and levels of distrust with public services. This may be partially reflective of a lack of representation in the public service itself (see Megatrend 6: Diversity and Inclusivity). Specific to regional Australia, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet noted that people in regional Australia trust public services less than

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

An industry-sector representative noted the overt inclusion of flexible work arrangements into the APSC Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027 recognises the important balance between employees personal and working lives. This may improve public perceptions of the Australian Government as an employer of choice.

those in metro areas, which may impact upon the desire for workforce participation in remote and regional areas.⁷²

Allegations of corruption against Federal, State/Territory and Local Government departments and organisations harm the image of this industry-sector. The recent establishment of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) has strengthened oversight of public integrity due to community concern. The NACC's focus on enhancing integrity and preventing or deterring corruption is complimented by the Federal Government's commitment to building a stronger public service.⁷³ Overall, the prevention and investigation of corruption in the Australian Public Service by the NACC, and by similar anti-corruption bodies in State/Territory public service, is critical to building public trust, and for positioning Government as a fair and ethical employer.

⁷¹Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), *Trust in Australian Public Services 2022 Annual Report*, PM&C, Australian Government, 2022.
⁷²Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), *Trust in Australian Public Services 2022 Annual Report*, PM&C, Australian Government, 2022.
⁷³National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), *Overview of the National Anti-Corruption Commission*, NACC, Australian Government, 2022; PM&C, Official website, PM&C website, 2022, accessed 13 February 2024.

INDUSTRY-SECTOR CHALLENGES

Challenge 1: National Skills Shortages

National skills shortages are an acknowledged challenge across the Australian labour market. The 2023 *Jobs and Skills Australia Skills Priority List* reported that 332 of 916 occupations listed a shortage due to competitive labour markets.⁷⁴ In the Government workforce, a national shortage was identified for Contract Administrators, with regional shortages identified for Program or Project Administrators, Information Officers, General Clerks and Human Resource Managers.⁷⁵ The public sector represents a microcosm of the broader workforce as it employs a wide range of roles, from professional roles to trades and labourers. As such, given the breadth of roles relevant to the Government workforce, it is likely that many of the 332 occupations identified as in shortage will affect the Government workforce. This places Government employers in direct competition with the private sector where, due to Government budget restrictions, they are generally not able to offer competitive salaries.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), *Skills Priority List*, JSA website, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024.
⁷⁵JSA, *Skills Priority List*, JSA website, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024.
⁷⁶JSA, *Skills Priority List*, JSA website, 2023, accessed 13 February 2024.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

The Government Subcommittee validated that departments and organisations are experiencing challenges as they need to recruit for a wide range of roles including, but not limited to, Urban Planners, Mechanics, Engineers, Childcare Workers, and Community Health Practitioners. While these occupations sit outside the scope of Public Skills Australia’s remit, there may be opportunity for cross-JSC collaboration to identify the factors driving these skills shortages for the Government workforce.

The Local Government industry-sector highlighted that Engineers and Urban and Regional Planners were particularly important in assisting local communities when preparing for climate change and natural disasters. With 43 per cent of all Local Governments in Australia not having an Urban and Regional Planner on their staff, this occupation is in high demand.⁷⁷ Urban and Regional Planners have also previously been highlighted as required to support the transition to net zero.⁷⁸

Local Governments are utilising skilled migration to mitigate skills shortages. However, this process is costly, lengthy and draws on a limited pool of suitably skilled migrants.

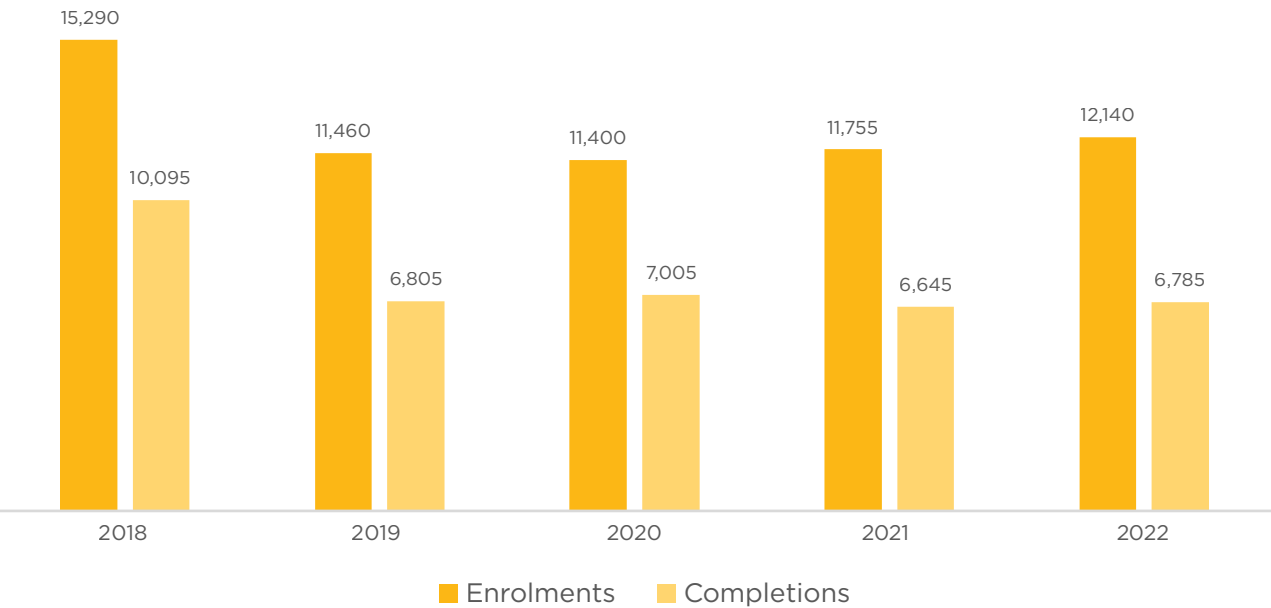
Public Sector representatives noted that, across all levels of Government, agencies have a limited ability to negotiate salaries which is driving retention challenges as the private sector has more flexibility to offer above average salaries.

⁷⁷Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), *Planners in Australia: State of the Profession Report*, PIA, 2023.
⁷⁸JSA, *The Clean Energy Generation: Workforce needs for a Net Zero Economy*, JSA, Australian Government, 2023.

Challenge 2: PSP Public Sector Training Package Enrolments

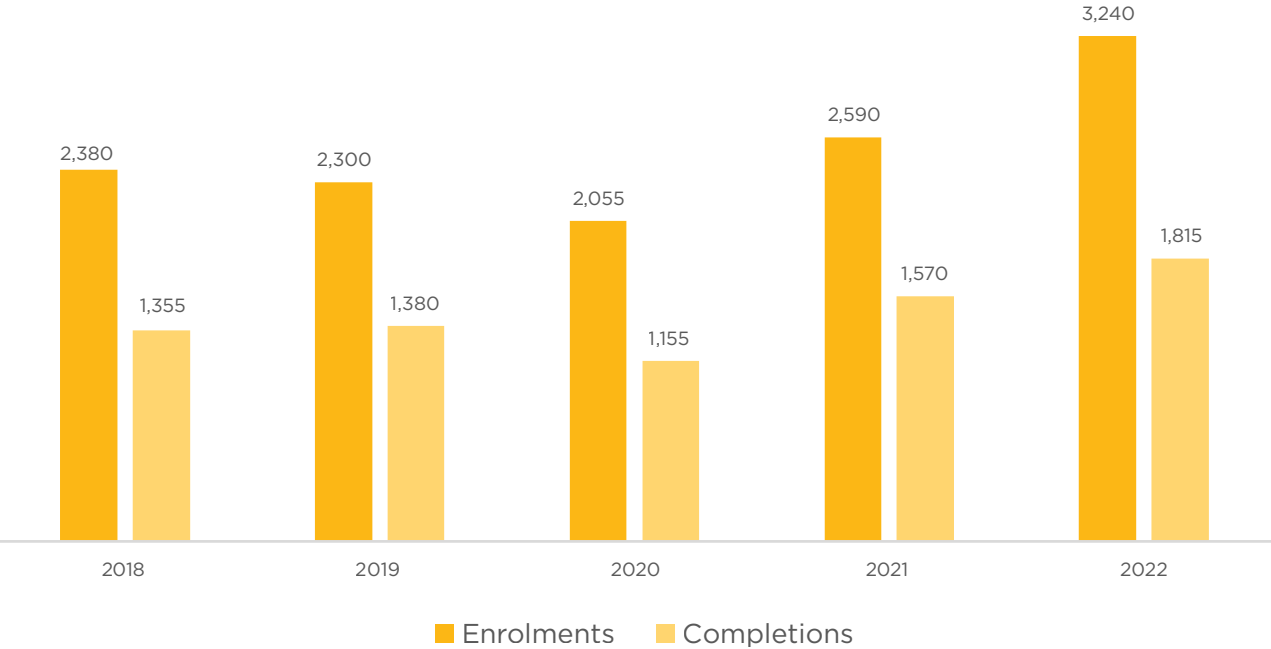
The PSP Training Package provides important education and training qualifications to the Public Safety and Government workforce (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Yearly enrolment and completion numbers for the PSP Public Sector Training Package⁷⁹



The *Certificate IV in Government Investigations* is one of the most highly utilised qualifications used by Defence, Law Enforcement and Regulatory departments and organisations across both Federal and State/Territory Government to upskill employees (Figure 11). The Australian Defence College alone has awarded 686 *Certificate IV Government Investigations* qualifications between 2017 and 2023.⁸⁰ These qualifications are not represented in reporting from NCVER due to AVETMISS reporting exemptions.

Figure 11: Yearly enrolment and completion numbers for the PSP40416 *Certificate IV in Government Investigations*⁸¹



⁷⁹NCVER, *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 2 May 2024.
⁸⁰Data collated by the Australian Defence College.
⁸¹NCVER, *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 2 May 2024.

Since 2018, the PSP Training Package has experienced a 20.6 per cent reduction in enrolments and 32.8 per cent reduction in completions (Figure 10). This reduction appears to be largely attributable to declines in enrolments in the Diploma of Interpreting (LOTE-English) and Advanced Diploma of Translating (Figure 12). Other qualifications have experienced modest increases in enrolments, such as in *Certificate II, III, IV* and *Diploma of Auslan*, over time (Figure 13).⁸²

Figure 12: Yearly enrolments for the PSP50916 - *Diploma of Interpreting (LOTE- English)* and PSP60816- *Advanced Diploma of Translating*.⁸³

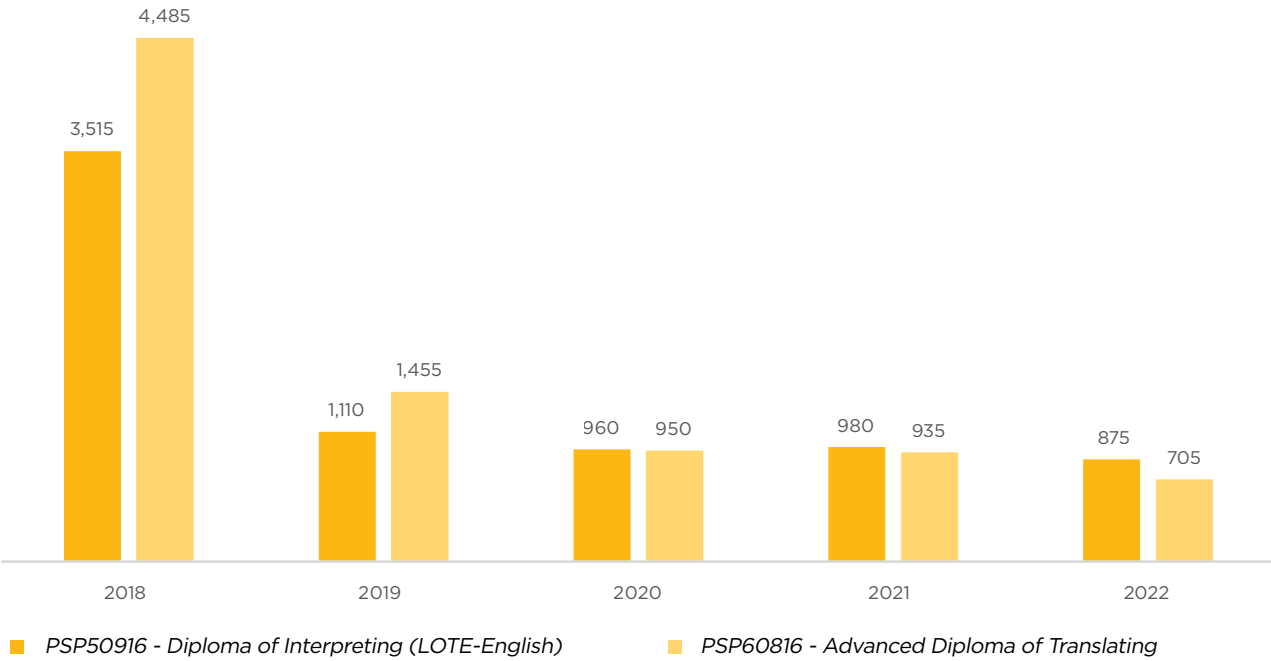


Figure 13: Yearly enrolments for the PSP20218 - *Certificate II in Auslan*; PSP30218 - *Certificate III in Auslan*; PSP40818 - *Certificate IV in Auslan* and PSP51018 - *Diploma of Auslan*.⁸⁴



⁸²NCVER, *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 2 May 2024.
⁸³NCVER, *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 2 May 2024.
⁸⁴NCVER, *Total VET students and courses 2022: DataBuilder* [data set], 2023, ncver.edu.au, accessed 2 May 2024.

Understanding the full utilisation of the PSP Training Package across the Federal, State/Territory, and Local Government industry-sector is complex. Some Enterprise Registered Training Organisations (ERTOs) delivering training through the PSP Training Package hold AVETMISS exemptions and are not represented in national datasets. As such, getting a true national picture of the utility, career pathway opportunities and value of the PSP Training Package is challenging. For example, in 2023 the Australian Defence College, which is exempt from AVETMISS reporting, awarded 1,218 qualifications through the PSP Training Package.⁸⁵

Future consultation for workforce planning will look to further scope the utility of the PSP Training Package and its support of the Government workforce.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Consultation with industry-sector representatives highlighted that, across all levels of Government, the utilisation of the PSP Training Package is not fully understood.

In some contexts, it is used to upskill employees, and in others it is utilised as an entry pathway to the Government workforce or as part of onboarding. For example, a Federal Government representative noted that the PSP Training Package is utilised in Department-level traineeships and cadetship programs. The recently announced Australian Government Apprenticeship Program, beginning in October 2024, will be the first to utilise the PSP Training Package as part of a direct entry program into the Federal Government workforce.

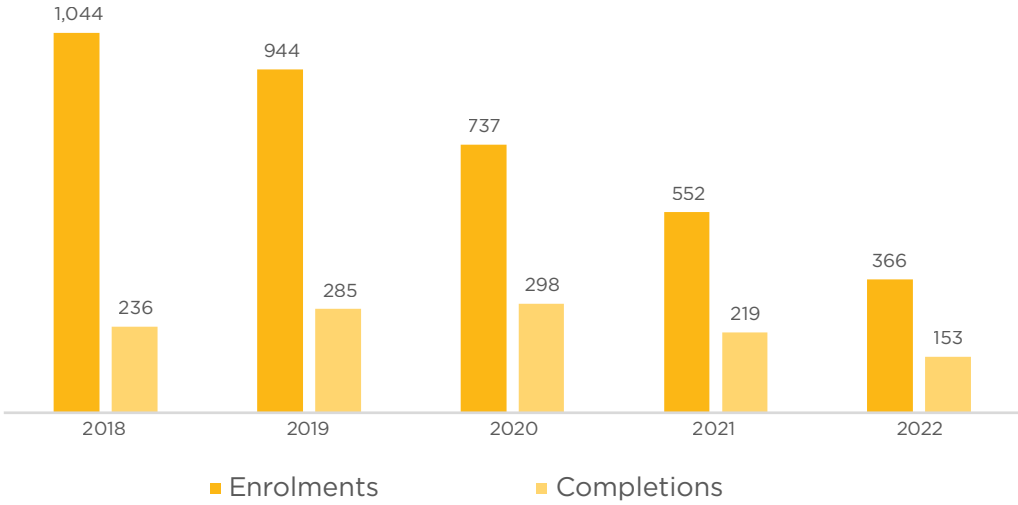
One industry sector representative noted that utilisation may be driven by specific Government reforms or initiatives. For example, it was identified that the Defence industry-sector delivered the *PSPSS00040 – Government Investigations Skill Set* to 18 veterans transitioning out of Defence through a national Department of Veterans’ Affairs initiative that commenced in May 2023.⁸⁶

⁸⁵Data collated by the Australian Defence College.
⁸⁶Department of Veterans’ Affairs, *Veteran Transition Strategy* | Department of Veterans’ Affairs (dva.gov.au), 2023, accessed 16 May 2024.

Challenge 3: Low Enrolment in the LGA Local Government Training Package

Enrolments for the Local Government Training Package (LGA Training Package) have been trending downwards since 2018 (Figure 14). While this trend does appear to have accelerated between 2019 to 2022, likely due to the impacts of COVID-19, the data is yet to show an indication of a post-COVID rebound in enrolments and completion numbers.

Figure 14: Yearly enrolment and completion numbers for the LGA Local Government Training Package⁸⁷



INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Local Government stakeholders in Western Australia highlighted that the LGA Training Package is used to support new employees who have not previously attained VET or higher education as a pathway into the Local Government workforce. Multiple stakeholders from Local Governments in other States/Territories had limited knowledge of how the training package is currently being used and its value in supporting staff.

Local Government employers require access to training across multiple training packages to skill their workforce due to the diverse roles required across the Government industry-sector. This is reflected in the number of imported units for the LGA Training Package, which currently stands at 146 at March 2024.⁸⁸

Consultation with employer associations revealed that the utility and value of the LGA Training Package in supporting Local Government workforces is not well understood.

⁸⁷National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), *Total VET students and completions 2023*, accessed 15 January 2024.
⁸⁸Australian Government, *Training.gov.au* [website], n.d., accessed 15 January 2024.

Challenge 4: Attracting and Developing Regional and Remote Workforces.

Maintaining regional and remote workforces is crucial for all levels of Government to deliver services. In addition to the well-documented challenges of attracting staff to regional and remote locations, there are additional challenges associated with:

- sourcing affordable housing for staff,
- accessing training facilities, particularly Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) with relevant qualifications on scope,
- training staff away from their home locations.

Lack of access to TAFE or other RTOs also impacts the ability of State/Territory or Local Governments to upskill staff.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Despite Local Government’s focus on growing regional and remote staff to mitigate skills shortages, this strategy takes time and cannot immediately impact shortages. Local Government representatives indicated through consultations that, developing staff from local communities in rural and remote settings limits workforce attrition.

Accessing TAFEs or RTOs with required qualifications on scope in regional and remote communities are challenging. Local Governments often pay for staff to train away from their home location including, but not limited to, in hubs located in larger regional centres or capital cities.

TAFE and RTO minimum class size requirements are limiting access to training locally. Local Governments noted that despite efforts to partner with their counterparts, they were often still incapable of meeting the threshold for class sizes. One rural Local Government identified they had significant challenges accessing Animal Control training for Animal Control Officers (Rangers). As this training sits within the Animal Care and Management (ACM) Training Package, the identification of barriers to the delivery of this training may be considered for a future cross-JSC project with SkillsInsight.

It was noted by employee representative bodies that sending employees to train outside their home location has a personal and financial burden and commonly leaves organisations under-staffed for the duration of their training. This may lead to an increased work burden on the remaining staff or a potential reduction in the provision of services to the community.

Throughout consultation it was clear that **Local Governments are seeking opportunities to skill or upskill their staff.** Challenges with access are likely to skew enrolments and completions data.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT & TIMEFRAMES

The *Workforce Plan 2024: Federal, State/Territory and Local Government* identified the following strategies to support industry to address the industry-sector specific challenges outlined above.

Table 6: Proposed strategies to address identified industry-sector challenges

Labour Market Dynamics	Proposed Strategies	Key Stakeholders
Challenge 3: Low Enrolment in the LGA Local Government Training Package. Symptom: - Lack of understanding of the value of this package - Thin training market	JSC Function: Workforce Planning Strategy: Review of uptake and utility of the LGA Training Package Actions: - Reviewing enrolments and completions. - Reviewing number and scope of RTOs and TAFEs delivering qualifications in this package. - Stakeholder interviews and surveys to investigate and diagnose barriers to the uptake of the LGA Package. - Reviewing the training needs currently being served by the LGA package. Impact: The review will provide a thorough assessment of the factors influencing low uptake of the LGA Training Package and make recommendations about the way in which the package supports employers in skilling their workforce. Anticipated Timing: July 2024 – June 2025	- ALGA - State/Territory Local Government Associations - Local Councils

Labour Market Dynamics	Proposed Strategies	Key Stakeholders
Challenge 4: Attracting and developing regional and remote workforces. Symptom: - Under attractive occupations - Thin training market	JSC Function: - Workforce Planning Strategy: Conduct a Local Government skills audit Actions: - Assess current occupations employed in Local Government and the required training to perform roles. - Identify gaps in training access in regional/remote communities. - Formulate recommendations to support training access and/or training review in line with employer and employee needs. Impact: This audit will assist in diagnosing training access challenges for regional and remote Government employers and provide recommendations to support skilling pipelines. Anticipated Timing: July 2024 – June 2025	- ALGA - State/Territory Local Government Associations - Local Councils - Jobs and Skills Councils

EXISTING WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

This chapter maps the connections between existing workforce strategies in the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors and Public Skills Australia’s *Workforce Plan 2024: Federal, State/Territory and Local Government*. This mapping identifies strategies that are currently used by Government and industry-sectors to inform Public Skills Australia’s workforce planning efforts.

Table 7: Existing national and industry-sector strategies

National Strategies						
Strategy	Link to Industry-Sector Challenge	Link to Cross-Industry Megatrend	Owner	Timing	Purpose and Components	How this will inform Public Skills Australia’s work
<i>Towards a National Jobs and Skills Roadmap: Annual Jobs and Skills Report 2023</i> ⁸⁹	1, 2, 3	1, 3, 4	JSA	2023 (complete)	This report maps trends in the labour market including digital transformation, and the transformation to a clean energy and net-zero economy. ⁹⁰ Reforms undertaken within the VET and higher education system to meet the identified workforce challenges, including the formation of the JSC program, proposed National Skills Passport, and the <i>Australian University Accord Interim Report</i> are also considered.	Public Skills Australia will support JSA by undertaking and facilitating consultation with the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors on components of the Report. This will include engaging key stakeholders and JSA throughout the development of the Skills Priority List (SPL) to ensure access to critical industry intelligence.
<i>The Clean Energy Generation: Workforce needs for a Net Zero Economy</i> ⁹¹	1	7	JSA	2023 - 2025	This series of reports considers emerging and future clean-energy workforce requirements as Australia strives to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. JSA’s preliminary modelling estimates Australia’s clean-energy workforce will need to grow from the current 53,000 workers to 84,000 workers by 2050.	The impact of climate change and more frequent natural disasters flow into the related challenges of competition for labour, and recruitment and retention across the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. Consideration of the impact of Net Zero on the Public Safety and Government workforce will be supported by Public Skills Australia and its industry-sectors.
Skills Priority List (SPL) ⁹²	1	3	JSA	Ongoing	The SPL is an online tool that assesses whether an occupation is in shortage and its anticipated future demand. The SPL is released annually, and classifies occupations into one of three categories: shortage, no shortage and regional shortage. The SPL outcomes may be used to inform, along with other inputs and evidence, the direction of national and State/Territory workforce policies.	Public Skills Australia will continue to broker the capturing of intelligence from the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors to inform the development and review of the SPL.
Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) Review ⁹³	1	4	Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)	2023 - 2024	A review of the ANZSCO occupation classification structure is underway. The ABS review provides an opportunity to update the classification structure to better reflect contemporary occupations in the Australian economy. This will ensure that more accurate data is collected regarding the Australian labour market to inform, along with other inputs and evidence, the direction of national and State/Territory workforce policies.	Public Skills Australia has and will continue to work closely with its industry-sectors to collate industry intelligence and provide advice regarding required changes to the ANZSCO occupational classification structure. Outcomes of this review may ensure that occupational shortages in the Public Safety and Government industry are better represented in datasets that are aligned to ANZSCO.

⁸⁹Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), *Towards a National Jobs and Skills Roadmap*. Towards a National Jobs and Skills Roadmap, JSA, Australian Government, 2023.
⁹⁰JSA, *The Clean Energy Generation: Workforce needs for a Net Zero Economy*, JSA, Australian Government, 2023.
⁹¹Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), *The Clean Energy Generation: Workforce needs for a Net Zero Economy*, JSA, Australian Government, 2023.
⁹²SA, Skills Priority List, JSA website, 2023, accessed: 13 February 2024.
⁹³Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), ANZCO Comprehensive Review – Consultation Round 3, ABS, Australian Government, 2023, accessed 30 April 2024.

Table 7: Existing national and industry-sector strategies

National Strategies						
Strategy	Link to Industry-Sector Challenge	Link to Cross-Industry Megatrend	Owner	Timing	Purpose and Components	How this will inform Public Skills Australia's work
The Australian Government's Strategic Priorities ⁹⁴	2	7	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet	2022-2026	The Federal Government's strategic priorities provide a four-year (2022-2026) policy direction for the Australian Public Service (APS) and sets targets across key areas. These key areas include the economy, public health and climate change.	Public Skills Australia will support the implementation of the Federal Government's strategic priorities, particularly those which seek to strengthen the APS workforce.
<i>Closing the Gap Report</i> ⁹⁵	1	3, 6	Council of Australian Governments	2019-2029	<i>The Closing the Gap Report</i> informs the development of specific recruitment, health and social programs for First Nations peoples. These programs are deployed across the Public Safety and Government industry.	Public Skills Australia acknowledges that representation of First Nations peoples within the five Public Safety and Government industry-sectors varies greatly. Improving the quality of workforce data pertaining to First Nations people's representation is an ongoing priority in workforce planning.
Australian Cyber Security Strategy ⁹⁶		8	Department of Home Affairs	2023-2030	The 2023-2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy serves as a roadmap to achieve the Australian Government's vision of becoming a world leader in cyber security by 2030. Most relevant to Public Safety and Government, the Strategy aims to ensure: - Australia has a diverse and professional cyber workforce that can protect citizens and businesses from cyber-attacks. - Critical infrastructure and government systems can withstand and bounce back from cyber-attacks.	Public Skills Australia will aim to support the Cyber Security Strategy in its work with Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. Ensuring that Public Safety and Government industry-sectors have the requisite workforce skills and expertise to fulfil the Cyber Security Strategy is of critical importance for the safety of the Australian public and businesses.
Industry-Sector Strategies						
<i>Delivering for Tomorrow: APS Workforce Strategy 2025</i> ⁹⁷	1, 2	3, 4, 8	Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)	2021-2025	<i>The Delivering for Tomorrow: APS Workforce Strategy 2025</i> report provides an overview of the APS workforce. It organises the implementation of workforce strategies into three areas of action: - Attract, build, and retain skills, expertise and talent. - Embrace data technology, and flexible and responsive workforce models. - Strengthen integrity and purposeful leadership.	This report seeks to establish career pathways aligned to skill development. Public Skills Australia will look to strengthen relationships and gain insights from the APSC to further examine the development of career pathways and understand the use of the PSP Training Package as a career development tool within the public sector.
<i>Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2025</i> ⁹⁸	1	3, 8, 9	NSW Public Service Commission	2022-2025	The NSW Public Service Commission has developed its <i>Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2025</i> to address the key challenges and opportunities within the Government of New South Wales. Five initiatives have been set by the NSW Public Service Commission to strategically position its workforce for the future: - Enable internal consultancy with a skills and capability register using talent profiles or skills marketplaces. - Participate in virtual reality/augmented reality pilot. - Build key future capabilities. - Rebrand the Public Sector Commission Employee Value Proposition and improve recruitment templates and practices. - Pursue a family inclusive workplace certification.	<i>The Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2025</i> is a comprehensive workforce plan for the NSW Public Service workforce. It details the use of emerging technologies to produce attractive hybrid-workplace arrangements for State/Territory Government employees. Public Skills Australia may consider how the adoption of emerging technologies affect the attractiveness of working for the Government industry-sector.

⁹⁴Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), *2022-2026 Corporate Plan: Part two – The Australian Government's Strategic Priorities*, PM&C, Australian Government, 2022.

⁹⁵Council of Australian Governments, *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, Council of Australian Governments, Australian Government, 2020.

⁹⁶Digital Transformation Agency, *2023–2030 Australian Cyber Security Strategy*, Digital Transformation Agency, Australian Government, 2023.

⁹⁷Australian Public Service Commission (APSC), *Delivering for Tomorrow: APS Workforce Strategy 2025*, APSC, 2021.

⁹⁸New South Wales Public Service Commission (NSW PSC), *Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2025*, NSW PSC, Government of New South Wales, 2022.

Table 7: Existing national and industry-sector strategies

Industry-Sector Strategies						
Strategy	Link to Industry-Sector Challenge	Link to Cross-Industry Megatrend	Owner	Timing	Purpose and Components	How this will inform Public Skills Australia's work
<i>NTPS Workforce Strategy 2021-2026: Working for Territory</i> ⁹⁹	1, 3	3, 8	Northern Territory Public Service (NTPS)	2021-2026	The <i>NTPS Workforce Strategy 2021-2026 Working for the Territory</i> aims to address the opportunities and risks faced by the Public Sector. This report highlights four main workforce goals for the Northern Territory public sector: - Delivering Excellence. - Leadership and Culture. - Committed and Capable. - Planning for the future.	The NTPS strategy focuses on recruitment and retention, future skilling needs and digital workforce solutions. Public Skills Australia may consult the NTPS on megatrends related to recruitment and retention, regional workforce development, and technological advancement.
<i>2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey: Final Report</i> ¹⁰⁰	4	4	Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)	2022	The <i>2022 Local Government and Workforce Skills and Capability Survey: Final Report</i> provides information on Local Government workforce demographics, including a qualification profile of the Local Government workforce. In particular, the survey indicated that 78 per cent of Local Government employees had a diploma or higher-level qualification in 2021, up from 44 per cent in 2016. Holders of diplomas or higher level-qualification are skewed toward younger Local Government employees. The survey also maps workforce challenges for local councils and summarises the strategies they employ to address those challenges. This survey identified skills and occupational shortages as one of the primary workforce challenges for the industry-sector.	Public Skills Australia may support the improvement of workforce planning activities across the breadth of Local Government bodies to better understand this industry-sector's workforce challenges and mitigation strategies. This activity will also support the collection and reporting of stronger data from within Local Government, as there is currently no standard for reporting on workforce characteristics. ALGA and its State/Territory counterparts have been invited to be a member of Public Skills Australia and its governance framework.
<i>Overview of the National Anti-Corruption Commission</i> ¹⁰¹		9	Australian Government Attorney General's Department	2022	The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is an independent agency tasked with the prevention, detection, investigation, and reporting of serious or systemic corruption in the Commonwealth public sector. The NACC began operations in mid-2023 and was created as a response to emerging research showing declining levels of public trust in government and public institutions. The NACC's jurisdiction extends to: - Members and senators of the Commonwealth Parliament including ministers and their staff. - Employees and contractors of Commonwealth agencies and Commonwealth companies. - Holders of Commonwealth statutory offices.	The NACC seeks to promote trust in government and public institutions by preventing corruption and ensuring the integrity of public officials. Public Skills Australia will continue to research the impact of the NACC's work on public trust and perceptions of the Australian government and will work to promote confidence in our public institutions.
Local Government Annual Reports and Corporate Plans	4		Australian Local Governments	2023 - 2024	Local Governments conduct workforce planning activities according to State/Territory Local Government Acts. These workforce plans are either produced using Local Government annual reports or corporate plans. The detail and breadth of workforce planning varies considerably across Local Governments due the varied guidance and capacity in each council.	Workforce planning and reporting across Local Governments in Australia is not standardised, making it difficult to accurately assess workforce challenges. Public Skills Australia will continue to consult with Australian Local Government Associations and their State/Territory members, as well as with State/Territory Government departments, to work towards standardised workforce planning and reporting.

⁹⁹Northern Territory Public Service (NTPS), *NTPS Workforce Strategy 2021-2026: Working for Territory*, NTPS, Government of Northern Territory, 2021.

¹⁰⁰Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), *2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey*, ALGA, 2022.

¹⁰¹National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), *Overview of the National Anti-Corruption Commission*, NACC, Australian Government, 2022.

Table 7: Existing national and industry-sector strategies

Industry-Sector Strategies						
Strategy	Link to Industry-Sector Challenge	Link to Cross-Industry Megatrend	Owner	Timing	Purpose and Components	How this will inform Public Skills Australia's work
<i>The Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability</i>	1, 3, 4	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Australian Parliament House	2024 - onwards	<i>The Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability</i> was designed to receive feedback from local governments, departments, constituents, and other stakeholders on a range of issues including: • The financial sustainability and funding of local government. • The changing infrastructure and service delivery obligations of local government. • Any structural impediments to security for local government workers and infrastructure and service delivery. • Trends in the attraction and retention of a skilled workforce in the local government sector, including impacts of labour hire practices. • The role of the Australian Government in addressing issues raised in relation to the above.	The <i>Inquiry</i> identified the following: • Drivers and pressures for the regional and remote local government workforce. • Occupational shortages in regional and remote areas. • Relationships between State/Territory and Local Government funding arrangements are challenging. All three of these key areas will be critical for Public Skills Australia to deliver accurate and significant workforce planning in the future.

⁷⁵Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), AFAC Strategic Directions for Fire and Emergency Services 2022-2026, AFAC, 2021.
⁷⁶Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), AFAC Strategic Plan 2023-2027, AFAC, 2023.
⁷⁷Champions of Change Coalition – Fire and Emergency Group, 2022 Progress Report, Champions of Change Coalition – Fire and Emergency Group, 2022.
⁷⁸Volunteering Australia, National Strategy for Volunteering 2023-2033, 2022.

CONSULTATION PLAN

2024 Workforce Plan Engagement

In the development of the 2024 Workforce Plans, Public Skills Australia undertook extensive industry-sector consultation. The approach adopted by Public Skills Australia towards the engagement of consultees, gathering and analysing their insights, and generating high-level themes and challenges across the industry-sector, is summarised in the Methodology section above. Table 8 illustrates the industry-sector representatives engaged in the development of the *Workforce Plan 2024: Federal, State/Territory and Local Government*.¹⁰²

Table 8: Summary of stakeholders engaged for Workforce Plan 2024

APS ACADEMY	AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION	AUSTRALIAN SERVICES UNION
COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SECTOR UNION	DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE	DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS	GRIFFITH CITY COUNCIL	JOBS QUEENSLAND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND	LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA	LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW SOUTH WALES (LGNSW)
MANDURAH CITY COUNCIL	MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (MAV)	PORT AUGUSTA CITY COUNCIL
VICTORIAN PUBLIC SECTOR COMMISSION	WESTERN AUSTRALIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION	AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SECTOR COMMISSION (APSC)
STATE AND TERRITORY TRAINING AUTHORITY (STTA) CONTACTS	SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (SRO) CONTACTS	

¹⁰²Multiple attempts were made to contact a range of State/Territory and Federal Government departments and statutory bodies during the development of this Workforce Plan but were not able to be consulted within the timeframe. Consultation with these bodies will be prioritised in future workforce planning efforts.

2025 Workforce Planning Engagement

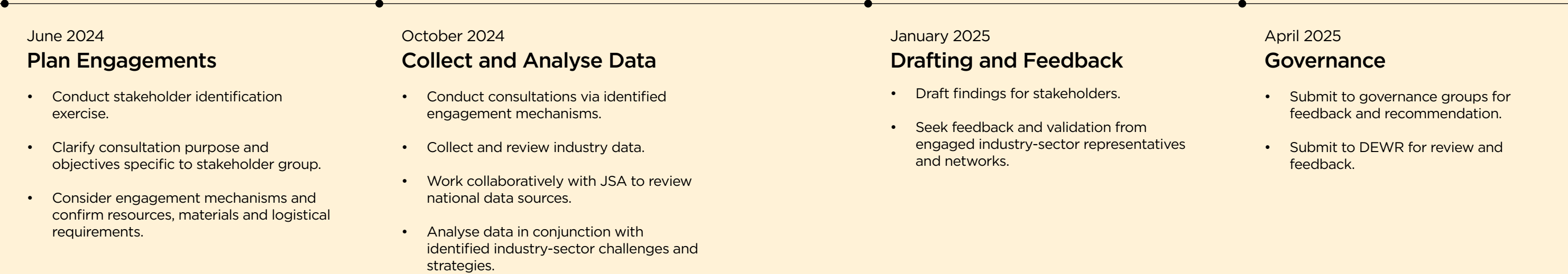
In the development of the 2025 Workforce Plans, Public Skills Australia will target identified stakeholders for consultation with using different engagement mechanisms, as outlined in Table 9.

Table 9: Consultation methods for the 2025 iteration of the Workforce Plans

ONLINE PRESENTATIONS AND FORUMS	GOVERNANCE, ADVICE AND FEEDBACK MECHANISMS
This may include online forums, webinars or consultation that explores specific industry-sectors and their challenges, evidence gaps and strategies.	This may include consulting with and implementing the feedback provided by Networks, Subcommittees, the Industry Advisory Group (IAG), the Public Skills Australia Board, and DEWR.
TECHNICAL GROUPS	WORKSHOPS, ROUNDTABLES AND THINK TANKS
This may include identifying and engaging with subject-matter specialist technical groups focusing on identified workforce challenges, data gaps, futures analysis, or industry-sector specific projects.	This may include workshops involving industry-sector representatives and other stakeholders to engage in collaborative problem-solving, brainstorming, and strategy development.
SITE VISITS AND ROADSHOWS	IN-PERSON STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS
This may involve conducting visits to stakeholders' offices, to foster a better understanding of their operations and challenges. This extends to the proactive promotion of our work as a JSC, and better engaging each industry-sector on research findings, project outcomes, and implementing strategies.	This may include targeted in-person meetings with industry-sector representatives, subject-matter experts, employee bodies and other key stakeholders to explore industry-sector specific challenges, gaps in evidence and potential strategies.

STAGING AND TIMING

Public Skills Australia will consult with identified stakeholders from June 2024 to April 2025. The specific phasings of the consultation efforts are illustrated below:



ENGAGING WITH INDUSTRY-SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES

In the development of the 2025 Workforce Plans, Public Skills Australia will adopt the consultative approach detailed above to continue valuable conversations with identified stakeholders relevant to the Government industry-sector. Table 10 presents an overview of the planned engagements in the development of the 2025 Workforce Plan. This is an indicative list of the organisations that have been identified as relevant to Public Skills Australia’s ongoing workforce planning. Public Skills Australia will identify and engage with any additional stakeholders as necessary as part of consultation efforts.

Table 10: Engagement plan with industry-sector representatives

Industry-Sector Representative	Representation Type	Industry-sector specific challenges	Megatrends	Purpose of Ongoing Consultation
ALGA and State/Territory local government associations	Association	All	All	The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is the principal organisation representing 537 Local Government councils in Australia. Ongoing consultation between Public Skills Australia and the ALGA and State/Territory local government associations will prove a critical avenue to better understanding the identified industry-sector challenges and Megatrends, and the support that can be provided to member agencies in addressing these. The ALGA and the State/Territory-level associations will have a key voice in the development of identified strategies. ALGA has mapped workforce challenges for Local Governments and summarises proposed strategies to address these as part of its <i>2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey</i>.¹⁰³ This Survey identified skills and occupational shortages as one of the primary workforce challenges for this industry-sector. Public Skills Australia will continue to engage with ALGA regarding the outcomes of the House of Representatives Standing Committee <i>Inquiry into Local Government Sustainability</i>.¹⁰⁴
Local Councils	Employer	1, 3, and 4	All	Public Skills Australia will continue to consult with Local Governments to obtain employer perspectives on identified industry sector specific challenges and Megatrends.
Australian Services Union (ASU)	Employee	4	3, 4, 5, 7 and 8	The ASU represents the interests of approximately 135,000 members across the country, including local government employees. Public Skills Australia will continue to consult with the ASU to understand employee representative perspective on changing demand, expansion of core duties, and challenges associated with career pathways. The ASU will also provide employee perspective on the identified industry-sector specific challenge of attracting and developing regional local government workforces.
Federal and State/Territory Government Departments	Employer	1, 2, and 4	All	Public Skills Australia will continue to consult with Federal and State/Territory Government departments to obtain employer perspectives on identified industry-sector specific challenges and Megatrends. Public Skills Australia is conscious of the key role played by Federal and State/Territory Government departments in future workforce planning strategy efforts and will seek to build and foster relationships with additional Federal and State/Territory Government departments in the development of the 2025 Workforce Plan.

Table 10: Engagement plan with industry-sector representatives

Industry-Sector Representative	Representation Type	Industry-sector specific challenges	Megatrends	Purpose of Ongoing Consultation
Federal and State/Territory Public Sector Commission agencies	Employer	1, 2, and 4	All	Public Skills Australia will seek to continue engagement with Public Sector Commissions in each State/Territory to understand and map State/Territory specific workforce planning strategies, guidance, frameworks, and toolkits, and how workforce planning products can be strengthened by working in partnership.
APS Academy	Employer	4	3, 4, 5, 7 and 8	The APS Academy is a networked hub of learning and development designed to support the APS workforce in building the skills and knowledge which are unique and essential to working in the Australian Public Service. Public Skills Australia will seek to engage with the APS Academy to develop and foster a relationship to address identified industry-sector specific challenges and Megatrends.
CPSU	Employer	4	3, 4, 5, 7 and 8	The CPSU represents the interests of approximately 41,000 members in the APS and 80,000 members across the State/Territory public sectors. Public Skills Australia will continue to consult with the CPSU to understand employee representative perspective on changing demand, expansion of core duties, and challenges associated with career pathways. The CPSU will also provide holistic employee perspective on the identified industry sector specific challenge of attracting and developing regional Federal, State, and Territory-level workforces.

ENGAGING WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

In the development of the 2025 Workforce Plans, Public Skills Australia will explore industry-sector-specific challenges and cross-industry Megatrends identified within the Workforce Plans. Stakeholders and their proposed contributions to workforce planning are summarised below. It is likely this approach will continue to evolve as the mapping of industry, gaps and challenges matures.

NCVER

NCVER is the primary body responsible for collecting, analysing and publishing data and conducting research on the Vocational Education and Training sector in Australia.

Public Skills Australia will continue to work with NCVER to source relevant datasets that provide key insights into the training of the Public Safety and Government workforce.

ABS

The ABS provides the foundational data that enables an analysis of the Australian labour market, including the ANZSCO classification system that classifies occupations in the Australian labour market.

Public Skills Australia will continue to engage with the ABS to ensure that their data collection efforts accurately reflect the Public Safety and Government workforce, and the occupations that sit within each industry-sector.

JOBS AND SKILLS AUSTRALIA

JSA conducts significant research and analysis of the Australian workforce and labour market, drawing on Federal Government datasets.

Public Skills Australia will continue to work with JSA to efficiently communicate industry-sector intelligence and support JSA's data collection. This relationship will also conversely ensure that Public Safety and Government workforce planning and product development is informed by JSA research.

STATE/TERRITORY TRAINING AUTHORITIES

State/Territory Training Authorities (STTA) oversee the implementation of VET in States/Territories and gather industry intelligence to identify future skills needs.

Public Skills Australia will continue to engage with STTAs to share industry intelligence, identify emerging skill requirements, and ensure the effective implementation of training products nationally.

CROSS-JSC COLLABORATION

Public Skills Australia will prioritise industry-sector intelligence sharing and cross-collaboration through building strong relationships with the other nine JSCs. In continuing to engage in this way, Public Skills Australia will identify workforce trends that impact on multiple industries or sectors and will collaborate with other JSCs on effective processes and methodologies for both workforce planning and training product development. Public Skills Australia will also undertake close consultation and collaboration with individual JSCs on cross-council projects, shared challenges and support their ongoing work.

PUBLIC SKILLS AUSTRALIA'S GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Public Skills Australia has established a governance framework to support industry-sector engagement and integrate subject-matter expertise into its workforce planning and training products.

• NETWORKS

Provides comments and feedback using their subject-matter expertise on key priorities. Networks *provide* feedback to Subcommittees.

Volunteer Network: Provides specialist advice on volunteer participation in the Public Safety and Government industry.	Diversity and Inclusion Network: Provides specialist advice on diversity, inclusivity and cultural respect.	First Nations Network: Provides specialist advice on First Nations peoples participation in and interaction with Public Safety and Government.	RTO Network: Provides specialist advice related to the implementation and delivery of VET training products.	Careers and Pathways Network: Provides specialist advice on pathways between VET and higher education.
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• SUBCOMMITTEES

Provides information and advice on our products and supports nominations to the Working Groups. Subcommittees *recommend* products to the Board through the IAG.

Government Subcommittee: Recommends endorsement of workforce planning and training products for the Federal, State/Territory and Local Government to the IAG.	Correctional Services Subcommittee: Recommends endorsement of workforce planning and training products for the Correctional Services industry-sector to the IAG.	Workforce Planning Subcommittee: Recommends endorsement of workforce planning and training products for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Defence industry-sectors to the IAG.	Training Product Development Subcommittee: Recommends endorsement of training products for Public Safety and Government industry-sectors to the IAG.
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• Industry Advisory Group (IAG)

Provides industry intelligence, as well as strategic input and advice. The IAG *endorses* products.

IAG: Endorses workforce planning and training products to the Public Skills Australia Board for approval to be presented to DEWR.

ONGOING WORKFORCE PLANNING

Challenges with Traditional Workforce Planning

To date, workforce planning exercises have largely been driven by quantitative analysis of national datasets (such as ABS or other datasets) and economic modelling. This approach presents some unique challenges for the Public Safety and Government industry.

Employment Projections, Modelling and Quantitative Analysis

When used in isolation, quantitative and economic modelling approaches to workforce planning present challenges for the Public Safety and Government industry. Although data sources that are generally used for workforce planning - including ABS Census, ABS Labour Force Survey and JSA data holdings - are helpful to identify rates of workforce participation and vacancy trends, they are not able to clearly represent the complexities and unique characteristics of Public Safety and Government workforces. As a not-for-profit industry, employment projections and modelling provide a limited view of the current and future workforce as:

Budgets for each of the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors are determined by the Federal Government and may vary depending on political cycles. These budgets may also be impacted by community sentiment, political objectives, public reviews and the perceived value of public services and/or criminal justice.

Recruitment targets and the size of the Public Safety and Government industry are not solely driven by economic conditions - they are also impacted by community expectations, regulatory and policy contexts, government budgets and political priorities. These may shift and change as geopolitical events, emergencies and climate-related disasters emerge.

The ANZSCO and Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) frameworks, which are used to classify ABS and JSA data, present four main challenges for Public Safety and Government industry-sectors:

1. The Public Safety and Government industry employs a diverse range of skills across the breadth of the Australian labour market and is not restricted to a specific range of ANZSIC or ANZSCO classifications.
2. ANZSIC and ANZSCO classifications do not represent the range of roles within the Public Safety and Government industry.
3. Volume-based measurements do not identify skills shortages in specialised roles. Such measurements only identify roles that are currently classified within the ANZSCO and ANZSIC structures, and do not drill into specialised roles. For example, specialised roles could only require a handful of additional people to be trained, but the training could take years, or the size of capability required is not dependant on volume but rather on the criticality of the role.
4. Employment data only captures people's area of paid employment, which may be in industries other than the one that they volunteer for.

Understanding the size and nature of vacancies within the Public Safety and Government workforce is vital to recognising the challenges this workforce faces. These evidence gaps could be addressed by:

- collaborating with industry-sectors (where possible) to make their data available for workforce planning purposes,
- leveraging Public Skills Australia's position to develop partnerships with its industry-sectors, to access workforce data,
- working with ABS and JSA to review their classifications and better represent the roles in Public Safety and Government, and
- engaging with JSA to capture identified data gaps with input from industry.

Industry Data

Intersectional Demographic Data in the Federal Government Workforce

Despite the Australian Public Sector Commission publishing extensive workforce demographic information for all Federal Government agencies, there is limited capture of data that relates to intersectionality qualities within the Federal Government workforce for individuals that represent multiple diversity groups. The Public Skills Australia Diversity and Inclusion Network highlighted the absence of intersectionality data as a key challenge in fully understanding the Federal Government workforce.

Consistency of Local Government Data

Workforce demographic data is collected by Local Government organisations and is commonly reported publicly by individual councils in their annual reports. At time of publishing, aggregate data collation at a national or State/Territory level is not being undertaken. For the 2024 Workforce Plan, annual reports from all 537 Local Governments were retrieved and analysed to develop our understanding of workforce characteristics across the Local Government industry-sector. However, as there is currently no standard for reporting on workforce characteristics within Local Government annual reports the quality, depth, and usefulness of the data is widely varied. Due to this, the demographic data that was collected was not representative of the national workforce and was therefore not included. Equally, no information or analysis was provided for the Australian Capital Territory as there is no Local Government in this jurisdiction.

National Datasets

Another gap in available data relates to the educational backgrounds of State/Territory and Local Government workforces. Jobs and Skills Australia holds educational data at the ANZSCO six-digit level for all occupations, but as similar roles in the industry-sector may sit at different levels of Government, or in the private sector (e.g. a Policy Analyst), the data is not specific to any State/Territory public service or Local Government workforce.

Alternative Approaches to Workforce Planning

Considering the gaps presented by quantitative analysis, exploring other research methodologies will be required to accurately represent the Public Safety and Government workforce, and to fully understand skills shortages, personnel challenges and potential strategies. As such, Public Skills Australia will explore how to support quantitative analysis by using the following:

Futures and Strategic Foresight

Strategic foresight is a structured and systematic method for examining plausible, potential and preferred futures. It utilises analytic tools to forecast future outcomes across a range of alternate scenarios that have been identified by thought leaders. Through strategic foresight, targeted activities can be implemented that address challenges and identify opportunities using different scenarios.

Life Cycle Analysis and Case Studies

Life cycle analysis involves examining the progress of workforce staff through their entire career journey – from their early career until they exit from the workforce. This will allow for a greater understanding of entry and exit points in a career lifecycle and how individuals’ requirements from their employment changes over time and as a result of personal changes in circumstances.

Skills and Capabilities Profiles

Skills and capabilities profiles further examine the range of skills and associated capabilities across industry-sectors, and identifies where those skills are found within a particular organisation or occupation. In doing so, it highlights critical skills shortages in specialist roles that are generally not captured by volume-based quantitative datasets.

APPENDIX A

Demographics of Local Government

To understand the characteristics of the Local Governments, specific to each State/Territory, Table A.1 through to A.7 present the headcount, full-time equivalent (FTE) and gender information for each of the four Local Government classifications. Note that the ACT does not have a Local Government. All information presented here has been gathered from desktop research analysing publicly available Local Government Annual Reports.

Table A.1: New South Wales Local Government workforce characteristics specific to each of the four Local Government categories. Headcount and FTE data have been summarised along with the total number (n) of Local Governments that reported the information. Average (and range) proportions of the workforce reported as male, female and non-binary are also presented along with the total number of Local Governments that reported the information

New South Wales	Urban Metropolitan	Urban Regional	Rural Agricultural	Rural Remote
Headcount	27,045	18,034	7,018	286
Headcount (n)	32	31	49	2
FTE	54.0	2,153.0	83.0	0
FTE (n)	1	3	1	0
Not reported (n)	1	3	5	0
Male (%)	52.0 (44.1-66.9)	55.8 (38.9-68.1)	62.6 (46.6-76.3)	-
Female (%)	47.3 (33.1-55.0)	44.2 (31.9-61.1)	40.2 (23.7-60.4)	-
Non-binary (%)	0.10 (0.00-0.97)	0.04 (0.00-0.42)	-	-
Male and Female (n)	13	15	12	0
Non-binary (n)	2	2	0	0

Table A.2: Northern Territory Local Government workforce characteristics specific to each of the four Local Government categories. Headcount and FTE data have been summarised along with the total number (n) of Local Governments that reported the information. Average (and range) proportions of the workforce reported as male, female and non-binary are also presented along with the total number of Local Governments that reported the information

Northern Territory	Urban Metropolitan	Urban Regional	Rural Agricultural	Rural Remote
Headcount	424	160	-	1961.5
Headcount (n)	2	2	-	11
FTE	0	0	-	0
FTE (n)	0	0	-	0
Not reported (n)	0	1	-	1
Male (%)	46.5 (41.9-51.1)	-	-	56.5 (47.9-67.2)
Female (%)	50.0 (42.0-58.1)	-	-	43.4 (32.8-52.1)
Non-binary (%)	3.45 (0.00-6.91)	-	-	0.0
Male and Female (n)	2	0	-	7
Non-binary (n)	1	0	-	1

Table A.3: Queensland Local Government workforce characteristics specific to each of the four Local Government categories. Headcount and FTE data have been summarised along with the total number (n) of Local Governments that reported the information. Average (and range) proportions of the workforce reported as male, female and non-binary are also presented along with the total number of Local Governments who reported the information

Queensland	Urban Metropolitan	Urban Regional	Rural Agricultural	Rural Remote
Headcount	7,634	17,701	932	2,460
Headcount (n)	3	19	4	23
FTE	0	3064.5	623.0	540.0
FTE (n)	0	6	3	4
Not reported (n)	1	1	2	11
Male (%)	61.2 (54.0-68.3)	52.9 (47.1-61.3)	57.6 (53.2-62.2)	54.5 (37.2-66.7)
Female (%)	40.8 (35.6-46.0)	47.1 (38.7-52.9)	42.4 (37.8-46.8)	45.2 (30.3-62.8)
Non-binary (%)	0.05 (0.00-0.10)	0.01 (0.00-0.07)	-	-
Male and Female (n)	2	5	3	9
Non-binary (n)	1	1	0	0

Table A.4: South Australia Local Government workforce characteristics specific to each of the four Local Government categories. Headcount and FTE data have been summarised along with the total number (n) of Local Governments that reported the information. Average (and range) proportions of the workforce reported as male, female and non-binary are also presented along with the total number of Local Governments that reported the information

South Australia	Urban Metropolitan	Urban Regional	Rural Agricultural	Rural Remote
Headcount	5,290	1,170	1,582	-
Headcount (n)	16	8	23	-
FTE	1387.8	133.6	508.0	-
FTE (n)	5	1	14	-
Not reported (n)	0	0	1	1
Male (%)	48.7 (40.1-59.9)	38.8 (20.7-58.0)	56.5 (42.9-68.2)	-
Female (%)	50.8 (41.6-59.9)	59.9 (42.0-71.3)	43.2 (31.8-57.1)	-
Non-binary (%)	-	0.23 (0.00-1.00)	-	-
Male and Female (n)	13	7	16	0
Non-binary (n)	0	2	0	0

Table A.5: Tasmania Local Government workforce characteristics specific to each of the four Local Government categories. Headcount and FTE data have been summarised along with the total number (n) of Local Governments that reported the information. Average (and range) proportions of the workforce reported as male, female and non-binary are also presented along with the total number of Local Governments that reported the information

Tasmania	Urban Metropolitan	Urban Regional	Rural Agricultural	Rural Remote
Headcount	1,029	917	294	-
Headcount (n)	4	3	5	0
FTE	254.0	146.0	827.1	-
FTE (n)	2	1	12	0
Not reported (n)	0	0	2	0
Male (%)	63.6	51.2 (48.4-55.2)	64.3 (61.0-67.6)	-
Female (%)	36.4	47.5 (44.8-50.0)	35.7 (32.4-39.0)	-
Non-binary (%)	-	3.8	-	-
Male and Female (n)	1	3	2	0
Non-binary (n)	0	1	0	0

Table A.6: Victoria Local Government workforce characteristics specific to each of the four Local Government categories. Headcount and FTE data have been summarised along with the total number (n) of Local Governments that reported the information. Average (and range) proportions of the workforce reported as male, female and non-binary are also presented along with the total number of Local Governments that reported the information

Victoria	Urban Metropolitan	Urban Regional	Rural Agricultural	Rural Remote
Headcount	11,241	7,850	355	0
Headcount (n)	12	7	2	0
FTE	18,444.7	3,862.8	3,638.3	0
FTE (n)	23	12	20	0
Not reported (n)	0	1	2	0
Male (%)	39.9 (27.5-53.7)	46.7 (34.1-58.7)	50.0 (31.6-65.0)	-
Female (%)	59.5 (40.5-72.5)	53.3 (41.3-65.7)	49.5 (35.0-68.4)	-
Non-binary (%)	0.11 (0.00-0.93)	0.08 (0.00-0.66)	0.03 (0.00-0.41)	-
Male and Female (n)	34	19	21	0
Non-binary (n)	14	5	2	0

Table A.7: Western Australia Local Government workforce characteristics specific to each of the four Local Government categories. Headcount and FTE data have been summarised along with the total number (n) of Local Governments that reported the information. Average (and range) proportions of the workforce reported as male, female and non-binary are also presented along with the total number of Local Governments that reported the information

Western Australia	Urban Metropolitan	Urban Regional	Rural Agricultural	Rural Remote
Headcount	8,261	1,299	1,779	694
Headcount (n)	15	3	31	8
FTE	1,029.0	1067.5	864.7	54
FTE (n)	4	4	10	1
Not reported (n)	12	1	34	14
Male (%)	44.9 (32.1-54.0)	40.4 (31.7-49.1)	51.7 (39.0-69.2)	59.6 (50.0-77.2)
Female (%)	55.1 (46.0-67.9)	59.6 (50.9-68.3)	48.3 (30.8-61.0)	43.3 (31.5-50.0)
Non-binary (%)	0.08 (0.00-0.60)	-	-	-
Male and Female (n)	10	4	12	3
Non-binary (n)	2	0	0	0

APPENDIX B

State/Territory Government Reports

ACT Government, *State of the Service Report 2022-23*, ACT Public Service, ACT Government, 2023.

Government of South Australia, *State of the Sector 2023*, Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, 2023.

Government of Western Australia, *State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2022-23*, Public Sector Commission, Government of Western Australia, 2023.

Northern Territory Government, *State of the Service Report 2022-23*, Officer of the Commissioner for Public Employment, Northern Territory Government, 2023.

State of New South Wales, *Workforce Profile Report 2022*, Public Service Commission, State of New South Wales, 2023.

State of Queensland, *Queensland Public Sector Workforce Profile March 2023*, Public Sector Commission, State of Queensland, 2023.

Tasmanian Government, *Tasmanian State Service Annual Report 2022-23*, Tasmanian State Service, Tasmanian Government, 2023.

Victoria Public Sector Commission (VPSC), *State of the Sector 2022*, VPSC, State of Victoria, 2023.

