

2026 Federal and State/ Territory Government Workforce Insights Report



**PUBLIC SKILLS
AUSTRALIA**

PUBLIC SAFETY SKILLS AUSTRALIA LTD

JSC

Jobs and Skills Council
Public Safety and Government
An Australian Government Initiative

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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, comprising Correctional Services, Defence, Federal, State/Territory and Local Government, Fire and Emergency Services and Police industry-sectors.

Through its work, Public Skills Australia actively supports employer and employee bodies in these industries and associated volunteer associations. Public Skills Australia works in partnership with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and other JSCs to give effect to broader Ministerial and government priorities.

Public Skills Australia:

- › undertakes data analysis, research and consultation to deepen understandings of contemporary workforce challenges and what can be done to mitigate these challenges
- › develops quality training products to strengthen the skills and capabilities of Public Safety and Government workforces
- › monitors and promotes the implementation of training products to support career pathways for the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors
- › consults with, advocates for and promotes the needs of the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors.

Public Skills Australia remains committed to encouraging the participation of First Nations people,¹ those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those living with or experiencing disabilities, women and other gender diverse people and mature people in the Public Safety and Government industry workforces.

¹ Please note, First Nations people will be used as preferred terminology inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. When citing a data source (such as government strategies or state of the sector reports) the terminology of the data source will be used to maintain accurate data representation.

Executive Summary

Public Skills Australia's *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* (the Report) considers the wider operational contexts impacting Public Safety and Government industry. It identifies four drivers of change that will impact workforce planning in the short to medium term aligned with the nine megatrends detailed in previous Workforce Insights Reports that remain relevant to long term workforce trends.

This report provides an overview of each Federal and State/Territory Government public sector workforce and trends and identified the following two industry insights in the industry-sector:

- › The Federal and State/Territory Government public sector workforce is facing a challenging fiscal environment coupled with the need to build sector capability to be future ready to continue to deliver high quality services for the community. Specifically, within the public service, stakeholders identified a skill gap in artificial intelligence (AI) and occupational shortages such as program/project administration, human resources and digital, Information and Computer Technology (ICT) and cybersecurity roles.
- › While the Federal and State/Territory Government public sector workforce is diverse, meeting First Nations employment targets remains a challenge. There is a growing need to strengthen and expand entry pathways into government roles for First Nations people to meet national commitments and increase and support career development.

The following strategy has been developed to support efforts to address challenges identified through the above industry insights:

- › **Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government:** Public Skills Australia will use a strategic-foresight approach to convene jurisdictional workshops to identify where nationally accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET) training can support capability development.

This report concludes by looking towards the *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* and beyond. Future work will firstly focus on broader priorities, including First Nations workforce participation, gender equity in the Public Safety and Government workforces, and the implications of AI and digital transformation.



Introduction

The *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* (the Report) is the fourth workforce report generated by Public Skills Australia for the Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sector since 2023. It builds on the previous iterations to identify workforce challenges and proposes strategic initiatives to mitigate them. This report represents the insights, commitment and efforts of the Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sector shared with Public Skills Australia.

Public Skills Australia's *Workforce Insights Reports* are developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data obtained from primary and secondary sources and supported by stakeholder consultations.

Structure

This report is structured as follows:

Drivers of Change	› Identifies four key drivers of change that will impact Public Safety and Government industry-sectors in the short to medium term › Provides a recap of the nine megatrends identified in previous <i>Workforce Insights Reports</i> that remain relevant to long term workforce trends
Industry-Sector Analysis	› Examines each Federal and State/Territory Government workforce individually, providing data analysis, identifying workforce insights and detailing strategy aimed at addressing workforce challenges
Proposed Strategy Summary	› Outlines the 2026 Workforce Strategy proposed through this Report
Existing Industry-Sector Strategies	› Details current strategic work being undertaken within the industry-sector and how this informs Public Skills Australia's work
Federal Government Initiatives	› Details Federal Government initiatives containing critical recommendations, strategic directions and national objectives that inform the planning and delivery of Public Skills Australia's projects
Looking Forward to 2027	› Concludes the Report by outlining key lines of inquiry that will support shaping <i>2027 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report</i> or other projects

Methodology

Public Skills Australia's *Workforce Insights Reports* are developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data obtained from primary and secondary sources. This *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* is supported by stakeholder consultations and engagements.

These consultations were used to gain insight into challenges the Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sector is facing in developing and maintaining a skilled workforce. The challenges identified through these consultations were thematically analysed to identify shared challenges and trends. Specific to the Federal and State/Territory industry-sector, and in alignment with the tripartite approach for Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs), consultations were held with employers, employee bodies and Government organisations, both in-person and through online meetings, workshops and presentations.

Public Skills Australia undertook targeted workforce planning consultation with key industry-sector representatives as below:

Australian
Public Service
Commission

Department
of Premier
and Cabinet –
Workforce Planning

Australian Public
Service Commission
APS Centre for
Excellence for
Workforce Planning

Australian
Government
Department of
Employment and
Workplace Relations

Australian Public
Sector Commission
Interjurisdictional
Working Group

NSW Premier's
Department –
Strategic Workforce
Development

Community and
Public Sector Union,
Northern Territory

Office of the
Commissioner for
Public Employment,
Northern Territory

Public Sector
Commission,
Queensland

Jobs
Queensland

Office of the
Commissioner
for Public Sector
Employment,
South Australia

Department Premier
and Cabinet,
Tasmania

Victorian Public
Sector Commission

Western Australia
Public Sector
Commission

Following these consultations, Public Skills Australia conducted secondary qualitative and quantitative research to verify the challenges raised. Additional targeted consultations with senior stakeholders were held to further validate workforce challenges and identify related industry-sector insights. Drafts were subsequently progressed through Public Skills Australia's governance process that includes:

Government Subcommittee	Industry Advisory Group	Public Skills Australia Board
The Subcommittee is responsible for recommending this report to the Industry Advisory Group (IAG) for endorsement.	The IAG is responsible for endorsing this report to the Public Skills Australia Board for approval to be submitted to the DEWR.	The Public Skills Australia Board (the Board) is responsible to approve the submission of this Report to DEWR.
This recommendation should be made on the basis that the Subcommittee is satisfied that sufficient consultation and engagement has been undertaken, and that consultation feedback was appropriately actioned.	This endorsement should be made on the basis that the IAG is satisfied with the Government Subcommittee's recommendation for endorsement. The IAG further provides its strategic guidance and endorsement if comfortable that the strategic priorities of Public Safety and Government industry-sectors are also captured.	This approval should be made on the basis that the Board is satisfied that an appropriate development and consultation process was followed and that the Report has been progressed in line with the internal governance requirements of Public Skills Australia.

This Report uses publicly available datasets accessible from Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and other supporting online sources. Due to the complexity of large-scale workforce data, no single source provides an accurate or complete picture. Therefore, multiple data sources are used to provide the most accurate representation of the workforce as possible, supported by qualitative research. This research was bolstered by literature reviews of government reports and documents online sources, annual reports, departmental documentation, legislation, research articles, further online material and relevant Royal Commission Reports.

Public Skills Australia thanks the contributors, including industry representatives, its Board and governance group representatives, DEWR and JSA for sharing their views and data generously, and supporting the development of this Report.

Drivers of Change

In 2024, Public Skills Australia identified nine megatrends impacting the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. These megatrends were further considered in the development of the *2025 Workforce Insights Reports*.

These megatrends included:



Limitations in
career pathways



Competition
for labour



Climate
change



Demographic
shifts



Diversity and
inclusion



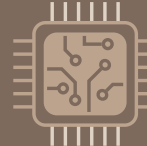
Expansion of
core duties



Public trust and
perceptions



Recruitment and
retention



Technological
development

While these megatrends will continue to have longer term implications for workforce planning and development across the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors, the *2026 Workforce Insights Reports* have built on these and analysed four key drivers of change that cut across most megatrends. This is important as these drivers of change will likely impact the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors in the short to medium term. The four key drivers of change include:

- › **Resilience of organisations to respond to strategic shocks:** Organisational resilience is emerging as a critical driver of change across Australia's Public Safety and Government industry-sectors, particularly as agencies confront increasingly frequent and complex strategic shocks. Recent experience with compounding crises (such as increasingly intense bushfires, major cyber attacks and intensifying geopolitical tensions) have exposed structural vulnerabilities and highlighted the need for more adaptive, anticipatory and integrated capabilities. Investment will be required to deepen organisational capabilities that supports system-wide preparedness, robust governance and the ability to maintain critical functions under stress.²
- › **Challenges to workforce productivity:** In its *Five Pillars of Productivity* inquiry reports, the Productivity Commission observed that productivity growth has been slowing globally since the mid-2000s, with Australia experiencing the slowest productivity growth in 60 years. The Productivity Commission identified long-standing pressures that have contributed to the productivity slowdown, including market stagnation, a persistently tight labour market and slower uptake of technological innovations.³ These factors are further exacerbated by emerging challenges linked to the megatrends including an ageing population, technological development, climate change and competition for labour.⁴
- › **Emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), greater automation and broader digital transformation:** AI, automation and accelerated digital transformation are powerful drivers of organisational and system-level change in the short term. This is reinforced by a push from the Federal Government for greater adoption of AI and digital initiatives across federal agencies.⁵ These initiatives signal a shift toward embedding AI into core service delivery, regulatory functions and operational decision making. AI, automation and digital transformation represent an opportunity for significant capability uplift through AI-enabled analytics, automation of high-volume processes and advanced digital platforms that enhance situational awareness, threat detection and emergency response coordination. Conversely, they represent a growing security risk as they are also being leveraged by threat actors to disrupt government services, facilitate foreign interference, enable disinformation, promote false narratives through deepfakes and erode trust in government institutions.⁶
- › **Workforce inclusivity:** Workforce inclusivity has been a key focus across the labour market. In the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors this is likely to translate into a continued focus on recruiting, retaining and developing employees from diverse cultural, linguistic, gender, disability and neurodivergent backgrounds. As organisations seek to increase workforce participation from these cohorts, they will be required to adapt and change legacy systems and processes to respond to the needs of the modern workforce.

² Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, [Organisational Resilience: Good Practice Guide](#), Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2024, accessed 25 February 2026.

³ Productivity Commission, [Five pillars of productivity inquiries – final reports](#), Productivity Commission, 2025, accessed 13 February 2026.

⁴ Productivity Commission, [Five pillars of productivity inquiries](#), Productivity Commission, 2025, accessed 25 February 2026.

⁵ Australian Government Department of Finance, [National framework for the assurance of artificial intelligence in government](#), Australian Government Department of Finance, 2024, accessed 25 February 2026; Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency, [Policy for the responsible use of AI in government](#), Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency, 2025, accessed 25 February 2026.

⁶ Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), [Director-General's Annual Threat Assessment 2025](#), ASIO, 2025, accessed 25 February 2026.

Federal and State/ Territory Government Industry-Sector Overview

In Australia, all tiers of government play an essential role in governance and delivery of public services. The Federal Government is responsible for both domestic, economic and foreign affairs, while state and territory governments provide state or territory-based services, in line with relevant legislation, including but not limited to health, education and criminal justice.

As there are a breadth of roles across the public sector, several occupations are in the remit of other JSCs, such as early childhood educators and allied health professionals. Other occupations that make up the public sector including Defence, Police and Local Government will be covered in other Workforce Insights Reports produced by Public Skills Australia.

The *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* focuses on non-frontline occupations that support the business of Federal and State/Territory Government such as, but not limited to, policy analysts, project management, inspectors and regulatory officers and project administrators. As each Federal and State/Territory Government is unique, the following sections provide a snapshot of each workforce as well as any relevant industry insights to provide context for the overarching workforce challenges.

In the subsequent sections that follow, data profiles have been created to present the workforces for the Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sector. These data profiles primarily refer to the public service where such data is available, noting that, in some jurisdictions, data is only available for the broader public sector. Public Skills Australia notes that these figures are likely to include front-line roles including but not limited to, police, health and education-based roles.

Federal Government Overview

The Federal Government is made up of 102 agencies and 198,529 Australian Public Service (APS) employees (Federal Government workforce, as of 30 June 2025).⁷ While a large proportion (35.4 per cent) of APS employees are based in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), APS employees are spread across Australia, with a considerable proportion based in Victoria (18 per cent), New South Wales (16.9 per cent) and Queensland (13.3 per cent). The APS workforce is diverse with women comprising a large proportion of employees (60.5 per cent).⁸ First Nations employees comprise 3.4 per cent of the APS, however the Federal Government has committed to increasing First Nations employment to 5 per cent of the APS by 2030.⁹ The following datapoints were identified through this industry overview for the Federal Government workforce:

- **Future Workforce Growth:** While the number of APS employees grew by over 13,000 (7.1 per cent) between 2024 and 2025, JSA projects this rate of growth to slow substantially, with 18,000 employees projected to join the workforce in 2030, at a growth rate of approximately 1.7 per cent per year.¹⁰ Reporting by the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) reported that 79% of agencies identified cyber security as a critical skills shortage, with identified critical skill shortages in 2025, and 64% identified critical skills shortages in enterprise/technology architecture.¹¹
- **Future Workforce Skills Needs:** The Federal Government is strengthening workforce planning capability to meet future workforce needs. This includes the *Delivering for Tomorrow: APS Workforce Strategy 2025*, which has a range of resources to support workforce planning in the APS. The APS Academy also provides learning and development to build capability in the APS, allowing a pathway to address future skill gaps. They provide training in AI and other critical digital skills areas. Government priorities to build in-house capability compared to relying on external work provides an opportunity to address skills shortages internally among existing APS employees.

⁷ Australian Government, *State of the Service report 2024-25*, Australian Public Service Commission, 2025, accessed 2 February 2026.

⁸ Australian Government, *State of the Service report 2024-25*, Australian Public Service Commission, 2025, accessed 2 February 2026.

⁹ Australian Government, *State of the Service report 2024-25*, Australian Public Service Commission, 2025, accessed 2 February 2026.

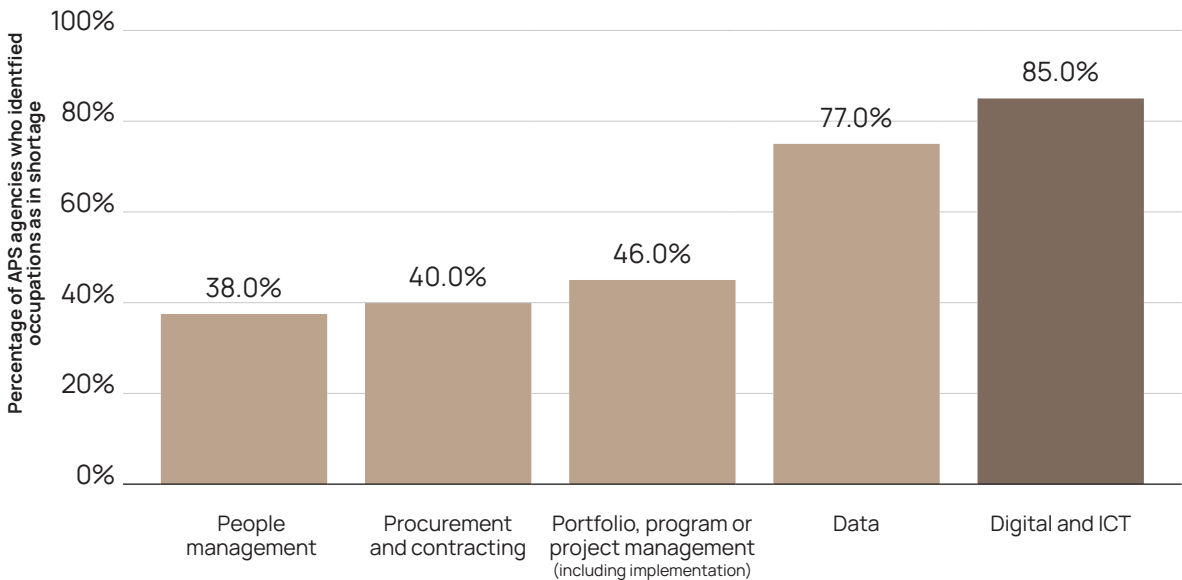
¹⁰ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), *Employment projections – May 2025 to May 2035* [data table], JSA, 2025, accessed 4 February 2026.

¹¹ Australian Government, *State of the Service report 2024-25*, Australian Public Service Commission, 2025, accessed 2 February 2026, p.329.



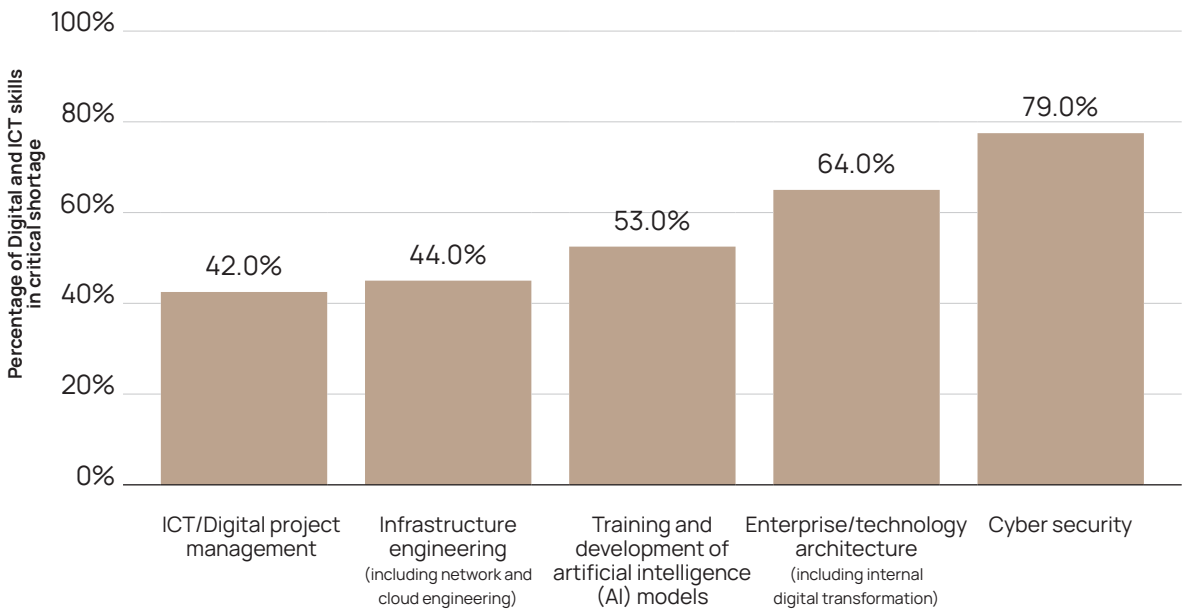
Future Workforce Skills Needs

Top 5 Skills Shortages Identified by APS Agencies

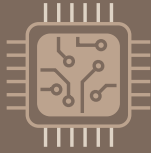


Source: Australian Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), 2025, Table A-36

Digital and ICT Skills Identified as being in Critical Shortage



Source: Australian Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), 2025, Table A-37



85%

of respondents identified
Digital and ICT skills as being
in shortage



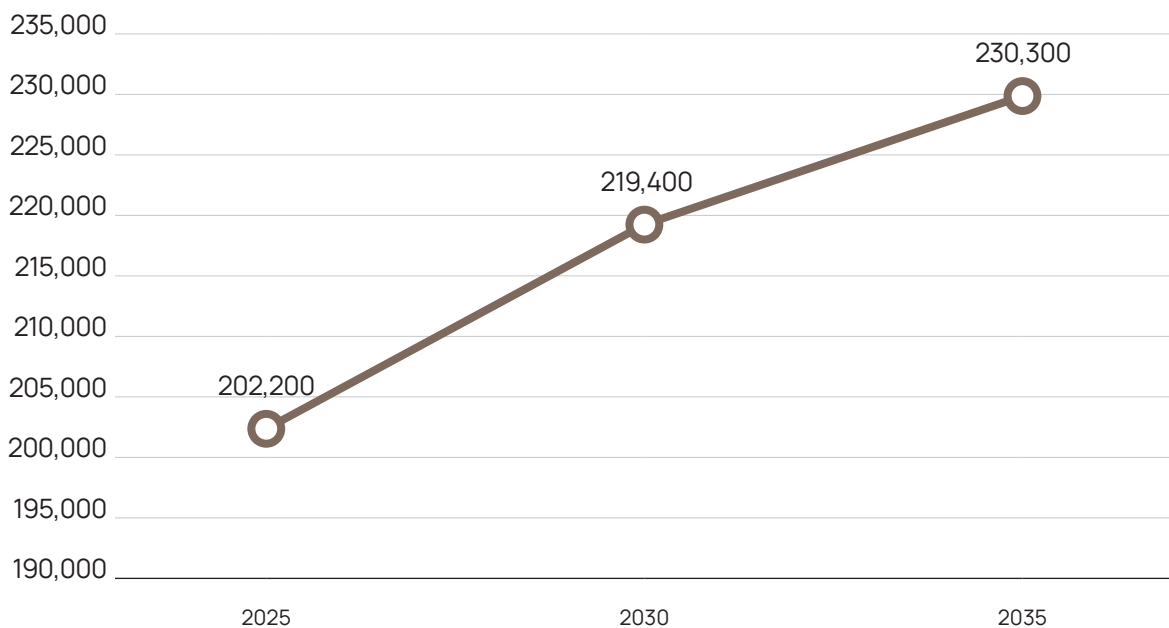
79%

of respondents felt Cyber
Security skills were the most
lacking capability

Source: Australian Government, [State of the Service report 2024-25](#)

Future Workforce Growth

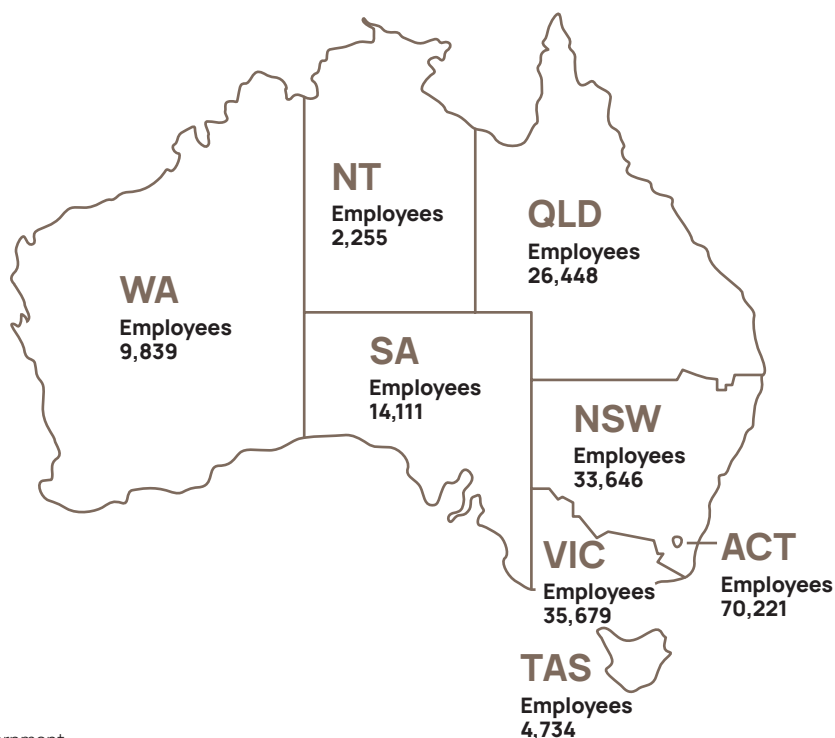
Employment Projections – Federal Government



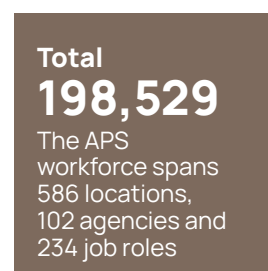
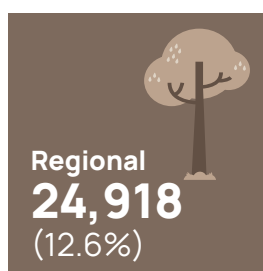
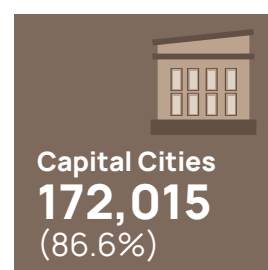
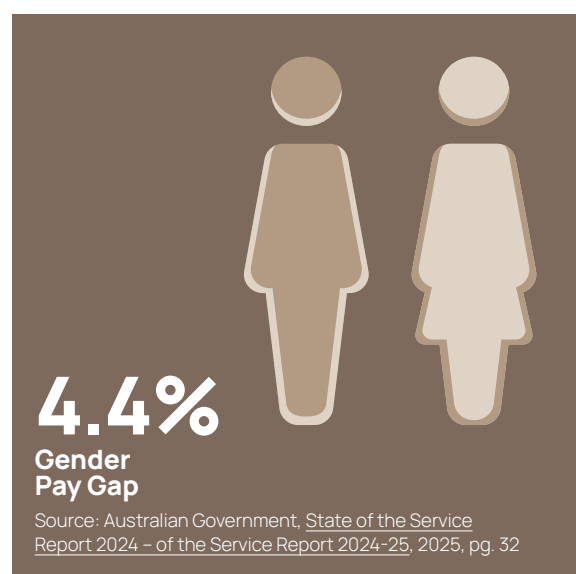
Source: Jobs Skills Australia, [Employment projections](#) – May 2025 to May 2035, Table 5

Industry Profile

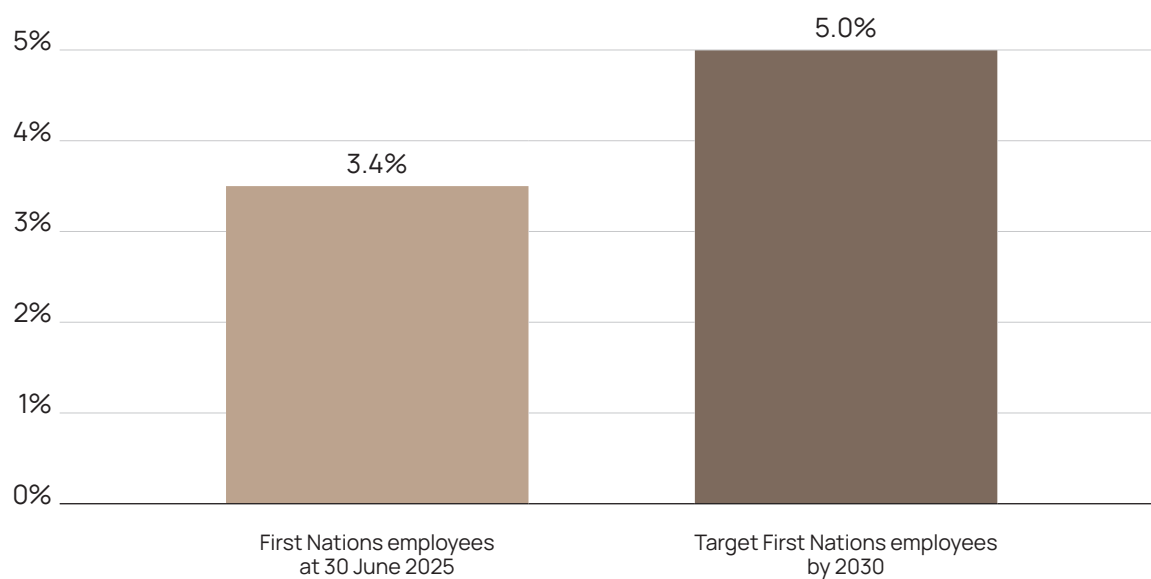
Location of APS Employees



Source: Australian Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), Table 13

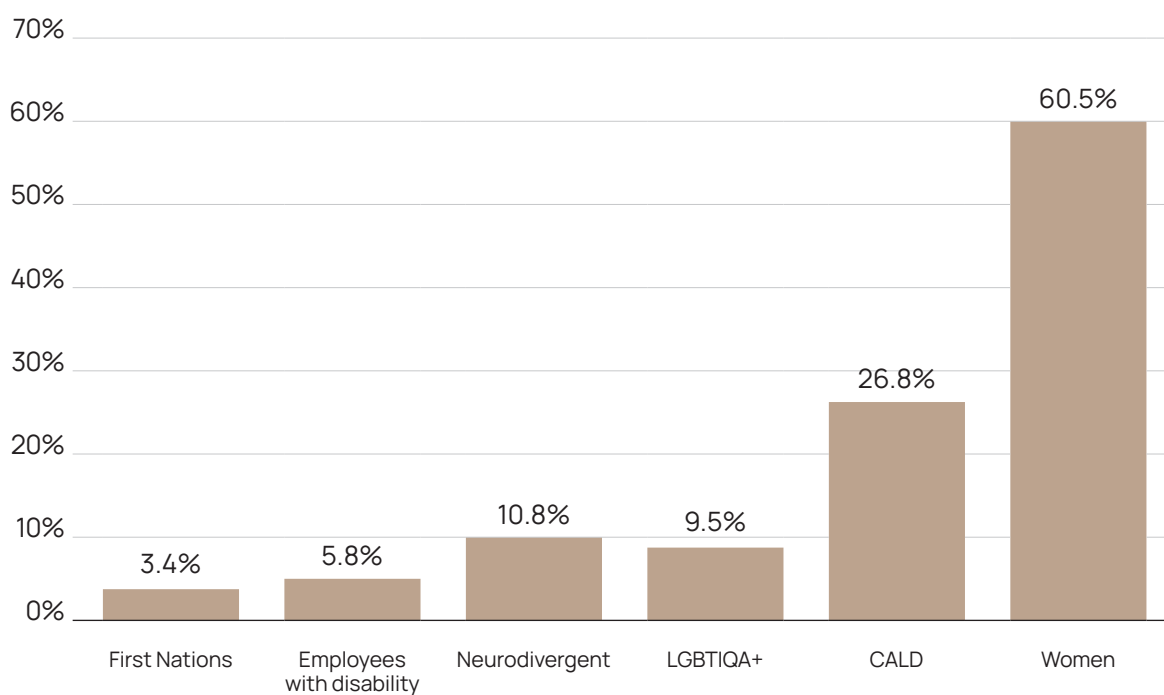


First Nations Employment in the APS



Source: Australian Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25, 2025](#), Table AB 1 & pg. 31

Diversity in the APS



Source: Australian Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25, 2025](#), Table 5

Australian Capital Territory Public Service

Workforce Overview

The Australian Capital Territory Public Service (ACTPS) comprises approximately 31,825 employees.¹² ACTPS makes up approximately 11.6 per cent of the whole ACT workforce,¹³ emphasising its position as a major employer in the territory. The workforce is predominantly female, with women accounting for close to two-thirds of employees. A small proportion of employees identify as non-binary.¹⁴

The ACTPS workforce is diverse with employees from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds accounting for over 25 per cent of the workforce, 2.8 per cent of the workforce identifying as LGBTQIA+ and 3 per cent of employee's report living with a disability.¹⁵

In the ACTPS, First Nations employees account for approximately 2 per cent of the workforce, below the ACT Government's 3 per cent employment target by 2026.¹⁶ Since 2020, the level of ACT public service employees who identify as First Nations has been consistent at around 2 per cent.¹⁷

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The Australian Capital Territory Public Sector comprises the ACT Public Service (ACTPS), statutory bodies and agencies.

The ACTPS is governed by the *Public Sector Management Act 1994 (PSM Act)* and the *Public Sector Management Standards 2016* and consists of nine directorates including Health, Education and Justice and Community Safety.

Separate to the ACTPS, there are 21 independent bodies that operate under section 152 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

¹² ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

¹³ ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

¹⁴ ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

¹⁵ ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

¹⁶ ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2022-23](#), ACT Government, 2023, accessed 6 February 2026.

¹⁷ ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2019-20](#), 2020; [State of the Service Report 2020-21](#), 2021; [State of the Service Report 2021-22](#), 2022; [State of the Service Report 2022-23](#), 2023; [State of the Service Report 2023-24](#), 2024; [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

Workforce Trends

Between 2023-24 and 2024-25, the ACTPS grew by 3.5 per cent,¹⁸ which is greater than the projected 10-year employment growth project for the Public Administration and Safety Industry¹⁹ in the ACT (16 per cent over 10 years).²⁰ The ACT Government has implemented several initiatives to build capability in the ACTPS and has committed to embedding a culture of continuous learning and innovation in leadership development to build a future ready workforce. This includes targeting entry-level recruitment through the ACTPS Graduate Program, which in 2025 transitioned to a career path model that supports balancing business needs and graduate capability.²¹

The ACT Skills Needs List identifies more than 150 occupational skills shortages. This list enables targeted workforce strategies by aligning in-need occupations and the VET qualifications that support them. The list includes two occupations split across five qualifications under the PSP Public Sector Training Package, which Public Skills Australia can address.²²

As the table below indicates, they relate to skills gaps in Australian Sign Language (Auslan) qualifications and occupations:

Qualification Code	Qualification	Occupation
PSP20218	<i>Certificate II in Auslan</i>	Welfare Support Workers
PSP30218	<i>Certificate III in Auslan</i>	Welfare Support Workers
PSP40818	<i>Certificate IV in Auslan</i>	Welfare Support Workers
PSP50922	<i>Diploma of Interpreting</i>	Social Professionals
PSP51018	<i>Diploma of Auslan</i>	Welfare Support Workers

¹⁸ ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2023-24](#), 2024; [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

¹⁹ Please note, Public Safety and Government is the preferred terminology that more fully captures the industry-sectors within Public Skills Australia's remit. Reference to the Public Administration and Safety industry is based on the ANZSIC classification system. When citing a data source (such as JSA Employment Projects), the terminology of the data source will be used to maintain accurate data representation.

²⁰ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), [Employment Projections – Outlook for states and territories](#), JSA, 2025, accessed 4 February 2026.

²¹ ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 2 February 2026.

²² ACT Government, [Skills Needs List](#), ACT Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

Australian Capital Territory Public Service Overview

Workforce Overview



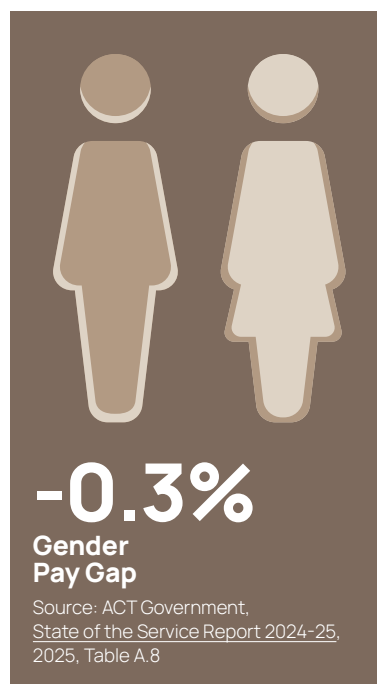
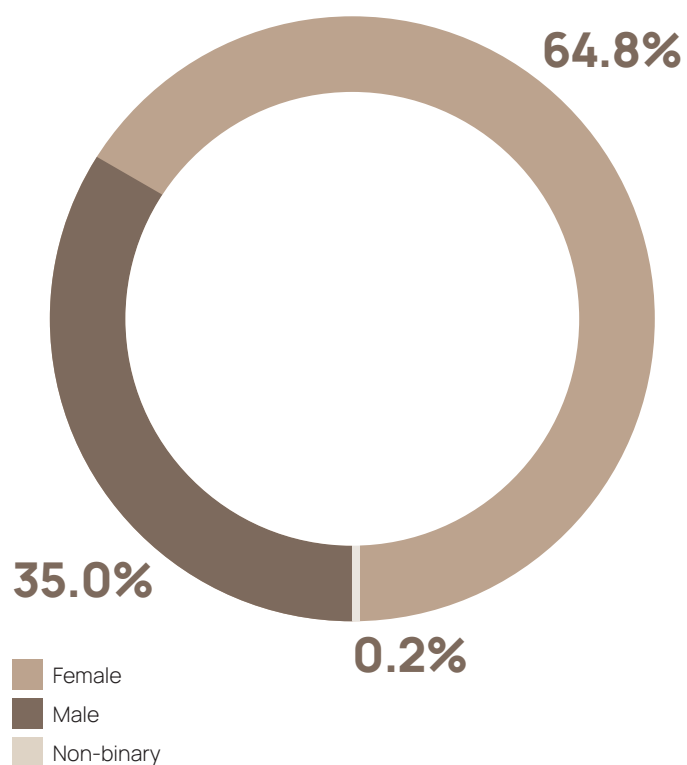
In 2025, the ACT Public Service
was comprised of

31,825

employees (28,181 FTE) – ACT Public Servants
represent **11.6%** of the ACT workforce

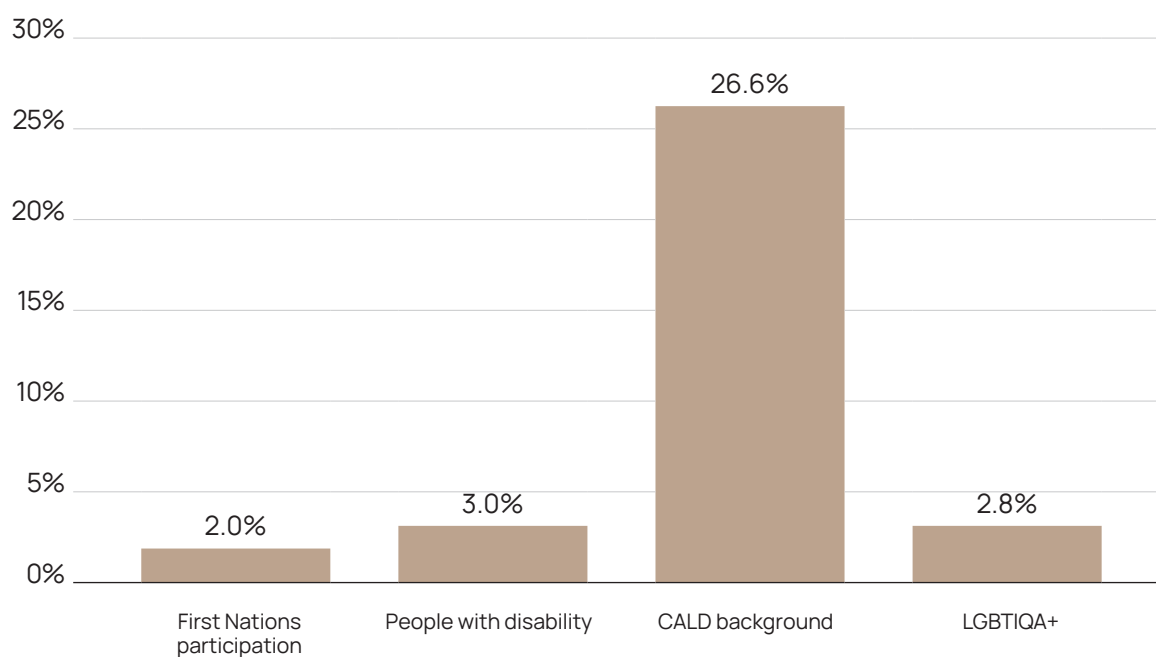
Source: ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), 2025, pg. 6

ACT Public Service by Gender



Source: ACT Government, State of the Service Report 2024-25, 2025, Table A.1

Workforce Participation as Proportion of Total Workforce



Source: ACT Government, State of the Service Report 2024-25, 2025, Table A.1

Workforce Trends

16%

Employment growth rate projection to May 2035 for ACT Public Administration and Safety Industry

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Employment Projections – Outlook for states and territories, 2025, Table 2

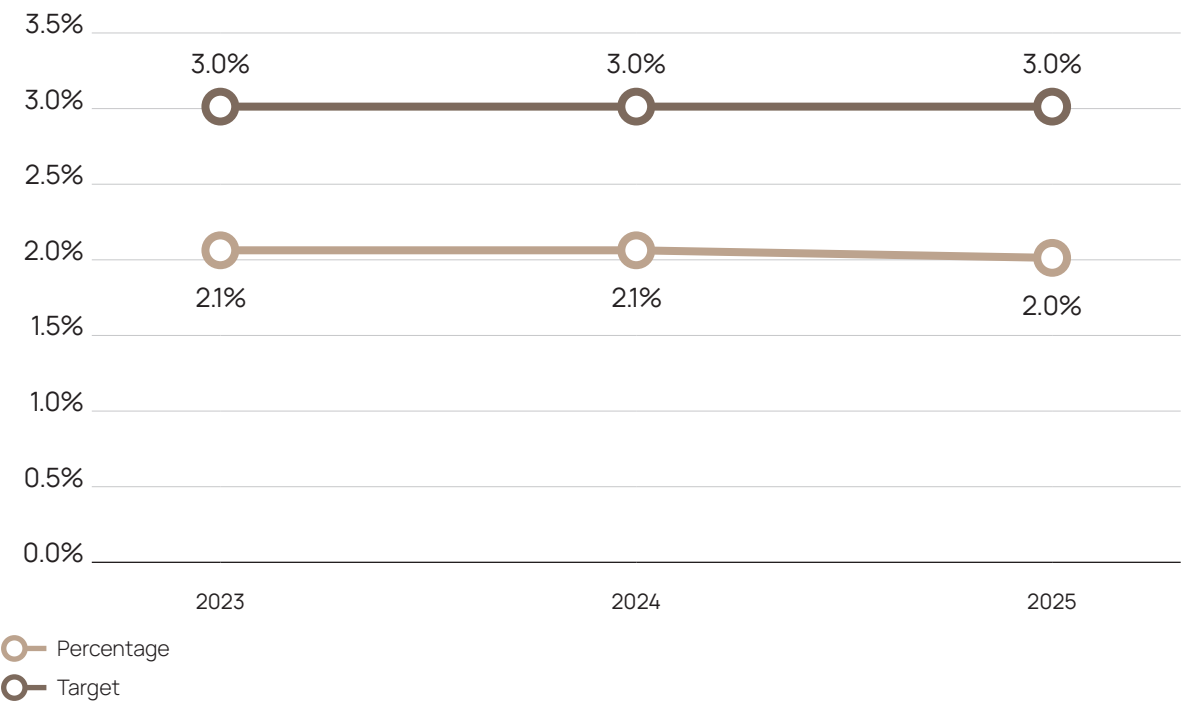
ACT

Occupational Shortages

- > Social Professionals (Interpreters, Translators)
- > Inspectors and Regulatory Officers

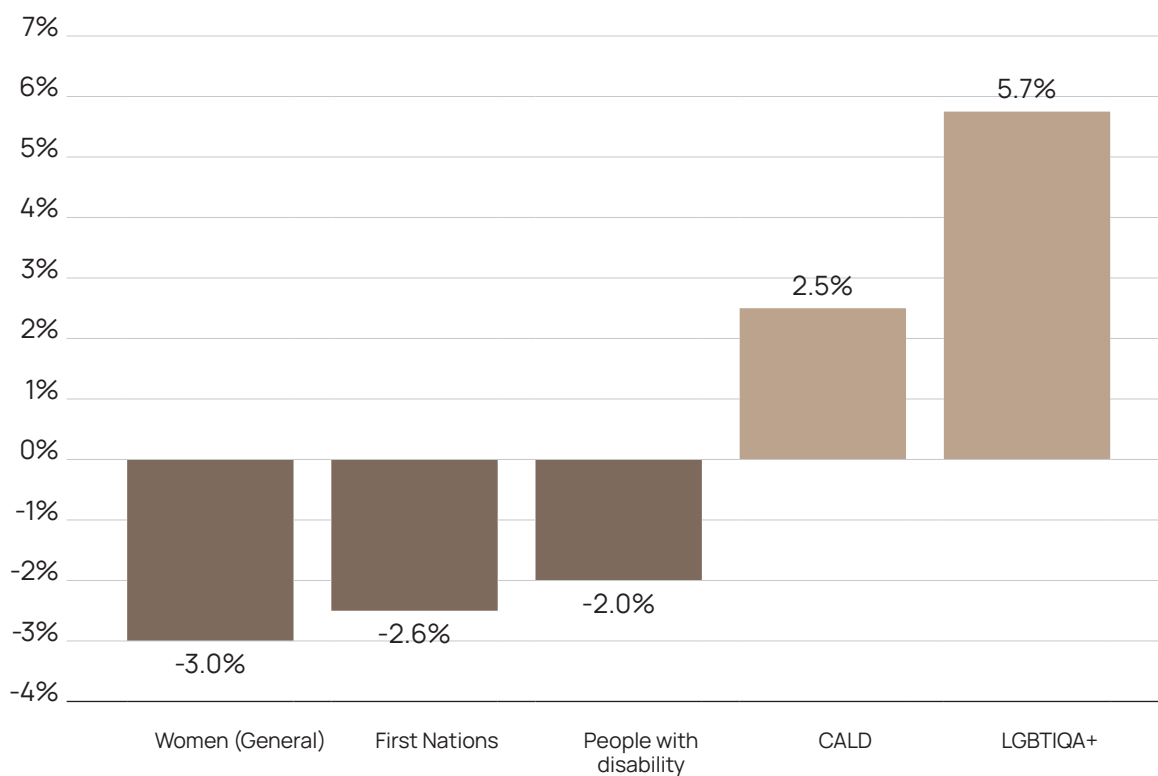
Source: ACT Government, ACT Skills Needs List – Occupation needs employed by Public Administration and Safety Industry, 2025

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation in the ACT Public Service (2023-2025)



Source: ACT Government, [State of the Service Reports: 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25](#), Table A.1

ACT Public Service Pay Gap by Cohort



Source: ACT Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), 2025, Figure 6.4

New South Wales Public Service

Workforce Overview

The New South Wales Public Service (NSWPS) employed approximately 84,780 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in 2025.²³ The majority were engaged on an ongoing basis, with smaller numbers of staff employed on temporary or casual arrangements.²⁴ The workforce is geographically distributed, with more than 27,782 employees in regional areas,²⁵ emphasising the NSWPS as a major employer in regional areas.

The *NSW Women's Strategy 2023-2026* identifies improving gender equality outcomes, including reducing the gender pay gap.²⁶ In 2025, women comprised 66.6 per cent of the NSWPS workforce, while men accounted for 33.3 per cent of employees.²⁷ A small proportion of employees identified as non-binary. Despite women representing a majority, the gender pay gap in the NSWPS stood at 7.3 per cent in 2025, an increase from 7.2 per cent in 2024.²⁸ Addressing this pay gap remains an ongoing priority for the NSWPS.

Diversity information indicates that employees who speak a language other than English comprise over one fifth of the NSWPS workforce.²⁹ Employees with disability comprise 2.8 per cent.³⁰

First Nations people comprise four per cent of the NSWPS workforce,³¹ above the New South Wales (NSW) Government's three per cent employment target by 2025 in non-executive salary levels, as set out in the *NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy*.³²

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The New South Wales Public Service (NSWPS) encompasses Departments, Executive Agencies related to a department, and Separate Public Service Agencies. The NSWPS consists of those employed under Part 4 of the *Government Sector Employment Act (2013)* (GSE Act). There are 11 departments of the Public Service, each led by a Secretary.

The Government Sector comprises the Public Services, Teaching Service, the NSW Police Force, the NSW Health Service, the Transport Service of New South Wales and any other service of the Crown. It also includes bodies constituted by an Act or prescribed by regulations, such as a State owned corporation. The NSWPS incorporates the government sector and other government agencies (e.g. the Independent Commission Against Corruption). These areas of government are defined by the GSE Act (2013).

²³ NSW Government, *Workforce Profile Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

²⁴ NSW Government, *Workforce Profile Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

²⁵ NSW Government, *Workforce Profile Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

²⁶ NSW Government, *NSW Women's Strategy 2023-2026*, NSW Government, 2022, accessed on 6 February 2026.

Workforce Trends

The number of employees in the NSWPS increased by 1.2 per cent in 2025.³³ Employment projections from Jobs and Skills Australia suggest a projected growth rate for the Public Administration and Safety Industry in NSW of 11 per cent over 10 years.³⁴

The *NSW Skills Plan 2024-28* is the NSW Government strategic plan for skills and reform in VET. The non-government sector has previously provided many of these identified skills to government. The plan identifies six critical areas as a focus including 'Digital and cyber' and 'Care and support economy', of which the following occupations are in demand (relevant to Public Administration and Safety):³⁵

ICT Customer
Support Officers

Welfare Support
Workers

ICT Support
Technicians

Cyber Security
Analysis

Hardware
Technicians

Developer
Programmers

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Building in-house capability, rather than relying on non-government sector resources, is becoming increasingly important due to increased community expectations on the NSW Public Service.

²⁷ NSW Government, *NSW Public Sector Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

²⁸ NSW Government, *Workforce Profile Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

²⁹ NSW Government, *NSW Public Sector Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

³⁰ NSW Government, *NSW Public Sector Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

³¹ NSW Government, *NSW Public Sector Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

³² NSW Government, *NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025: Refresh 2022*, NSW Government, 2022, accessed 12 February 2026.

³³ NSW Government, *Workforce Profile Report 2025*, NSW Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

³⁴ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), *Employment Projections – Outlook for states territories*, JSA, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

³⁵ NSW Department of Education, *NSW Skills Plan 2024-28: Building Skills and Shaping Success*, NSW Government, 2024, accessed 4 February 2026.

New South Wales Public Service Overview

Workforce Overview



In 2025, the NSW Public Service
was comprised of

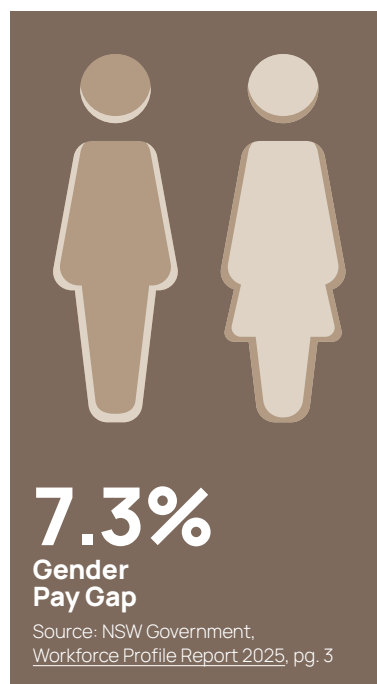
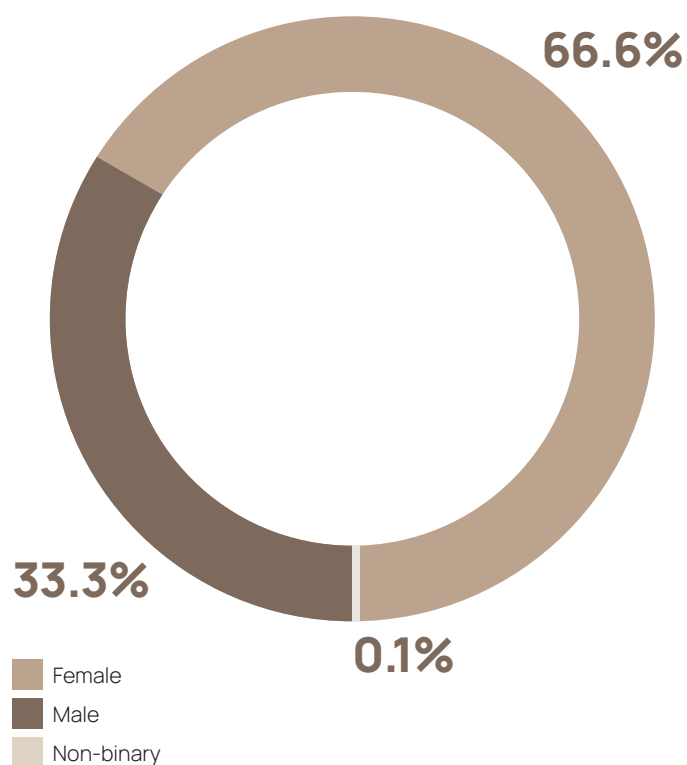
84,780 employees

55,959 FTE in metro areas

27,782 FTE in regional locations

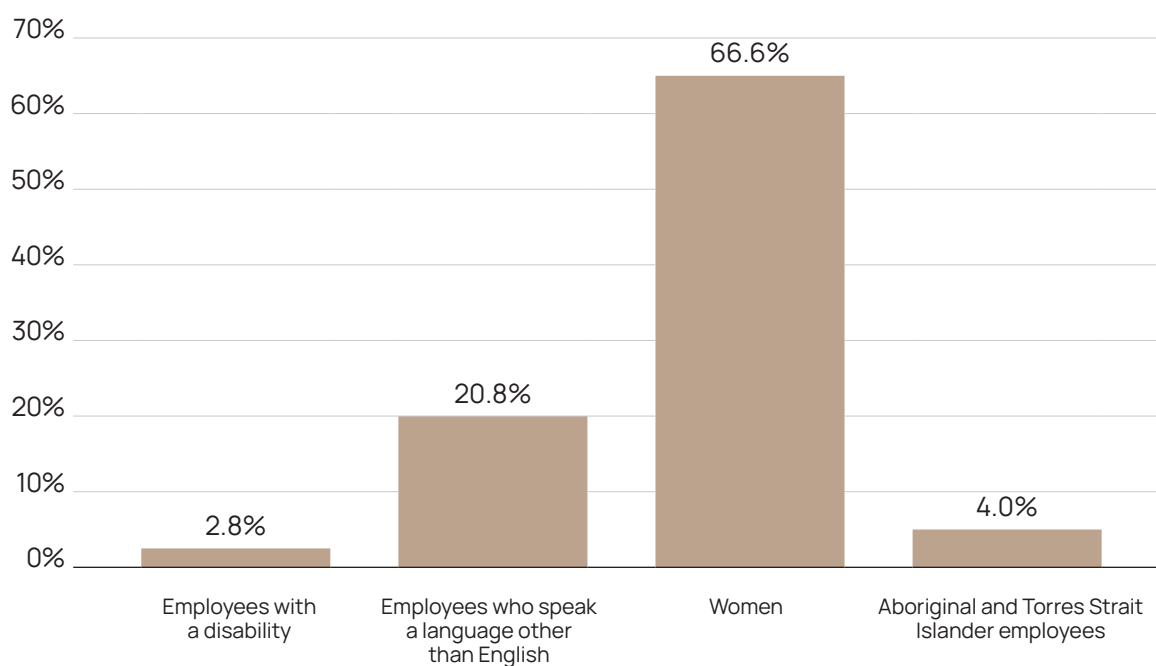
Source: NSW Government, [Workforce Profile Report](#), 2025, Table 2.2

NSW Public Sector Employees by Gender



Source: NSW Government, [Workforce Profile Report](#), 2025, pg. 25

Diversity in the NSW Public Sector



Source: NSW Government, [Workforce Profile Report](#), 2025, pg. 19

Workforce Trends

11%

Employment growth rate projection to May 2035 for Public Administration and Safety Industry

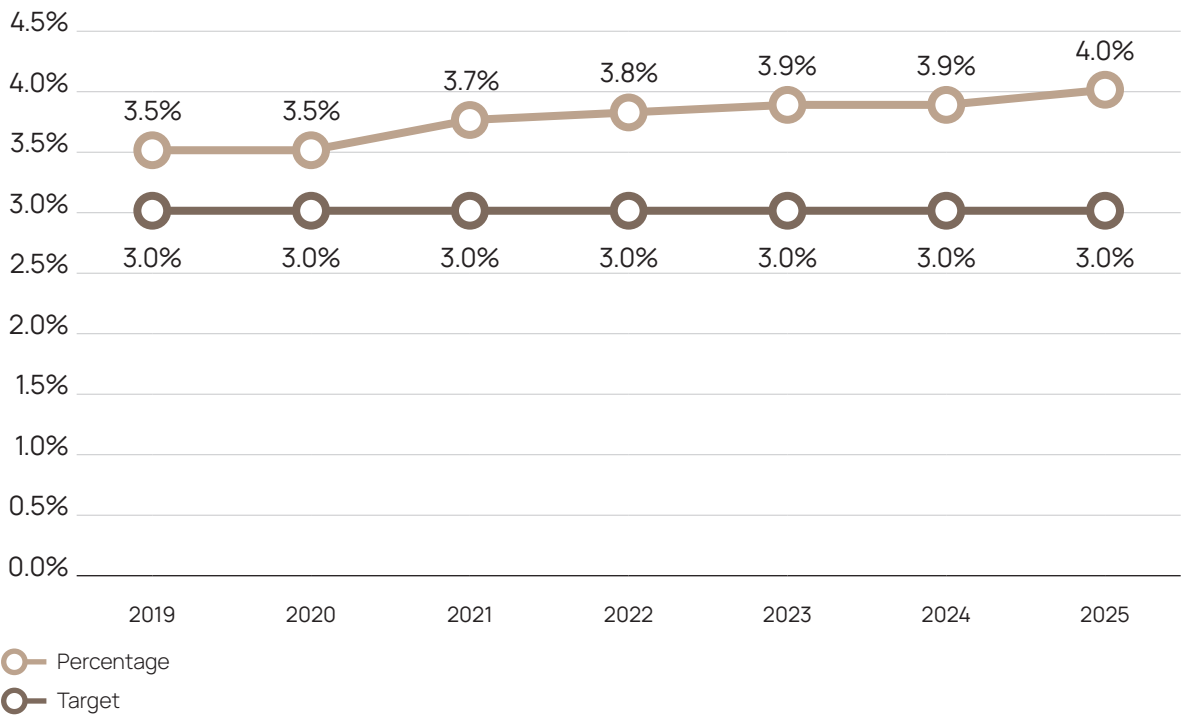
Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, [Employment projections – Outlook for states and territories](#), Table 2

1,410

Additional public servants in the workforce in 2025

Source: NSW Government, [Workforce Profile Report](#), 2025, Table 2.2

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation in the NSW Public Sector (2019-2025)



Source: NSW Government, [Workforce Profile](#), 2025, Figure 5.3



Northern Territory Public Service

Workforce Overview

The Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) employed 25,786 people in 2025.³⁶ The workforce is highly concentrated geographically, with just under 70 per cent based in Darwin, and much smaller numbers of staff employed across regional and remote areas.³⁷

Women comprise just over 60 per cent of the workforce.³⁸ While 1.9 per cent of the NTPS identify as living with a disability.

Increased First Nations workforce participation remains a key priority for the Northern Territory Government. First Nations employees comprise 11 per cent of the workforce, below the Northern Territory (NT) Government's 16 per cent target. However, the NTPS remains committed to a range of workforce initiatives including the Aboriginal Employee Forum, Aboriginal Employee Mentoring Program and training programs offered in partnership with the middle manager development program and executive leader development framework.³⁹

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The NTPS comprises agencies, local authorities, statutory corporations and other related bodies to deliver public services on behalf of the Northern Territory Government.

This includes agencies such as:

- > Department of Corrections
- > Department of Health
- > Department of Education and Training

It operates under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act (1993)*.

³⁶ Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-2025](#), Northern Territory Government, 2025, accessed 18 February 2026.

³⁷ Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-2025](#), Northern Territory Government, 2025, accessed 18 February 2026.

³⁸ Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-2025](#), Northern Territory Government, 2025, accessed 18 February 2026.

³⁹ Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-2025](#), Northern Territory Government, 2025, accessed 18 February 2026.

Workforce Trends

The NT Government has identified the following skilled occupations (October 2025) relevant to the Public Administration industry group, as high priority based on how hard they are to fill.⁴⁰ Additionally, the Jobs and Skills Australia Occupational Shortage List indicates that 'Contract, Program and Project Administrators', 'Welfare, Recreation and Community Arts Workers', 'Welfare Support Officers' and 'Human Resource Professionals' are in shortage for 2025.⁴¹ Several of these occupations are listed under the priority occupation scheme for skilled migration in the Northern Territory. For 2025-26 the Northern Territory has been allocated 850 nominations for the Subclass 190 Skilled Nominated visa and 800 nominations for the Subclass 491 Skilled Work Regional (Provisional) visa. Skilled migrants, particularly under subclass 491 may help to alleviate occupational shortages in regional areas.

ANZSCO CODE AND OCCUPATION	
132411	Policy and Planning Manager
223111	Human Resource Adviser
224412	Policy Analyst
224999	Information and Organisation Professionals nec
272499	Social Professionals nec
272613	Welfare Worker
411711	Community Worker

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Stakeholders noted that whilst skilled migration offers solutions for regional skills shortages, this can come with knowledge gaps and cultural challenges, particularly in regions with high populations of First Nations communities.

The NT Government's Skills Plan 2024-25 identifies several priorities relevant to the industry-sector including:⁴²

Develop learning assessment resources tailored to First Nations learners in VET
Continue funding regional and remote community projects
Promote accessible training pathways to increase entry into under-represented industries such as technology
Drive digital and technology skills development through targeted programs such as technology boot camp
Explore high level apprenticeship and provide ongoing digital skills training to VET workforce aligned with industry needs

⁴⁰ Northern Territory Government, [Hard to fill jobs in the NT](#), Northern Territory Government, 2025, accessed 10 February 2026.

⁴¹ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), [Occupational Shortage List](#), JSA, 2025, accessed 18 February 2026.

⁴² Department of Education and Training, [Skills NT Plan 2024-25 Rebuilding the Economy](#), Department of Education and Training, 2025, accessed 10 February 2026.

Northern Territory Public Service Overview

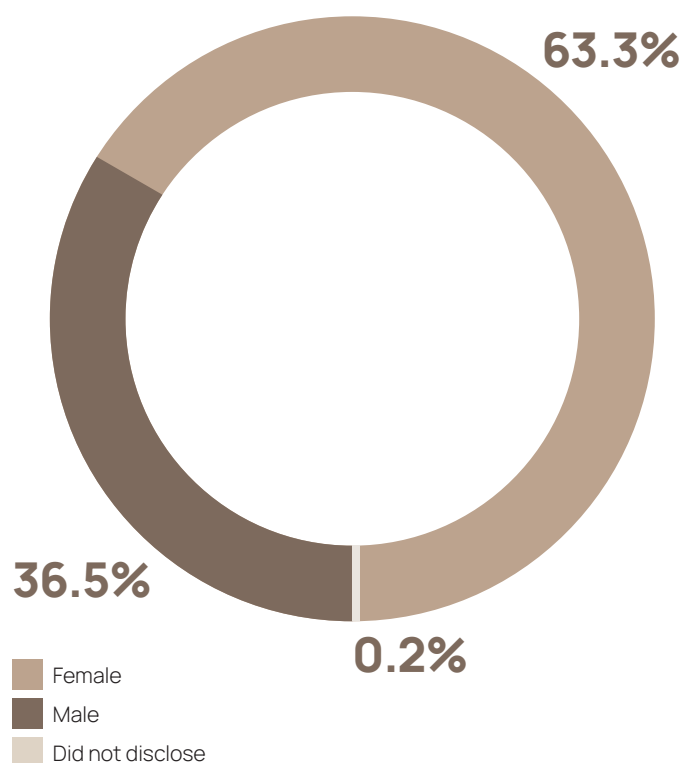
Workforce Overview

In 2025,
the Northern Territory
Public Service
was comprised of
25,786
employees (23,754 FTE)

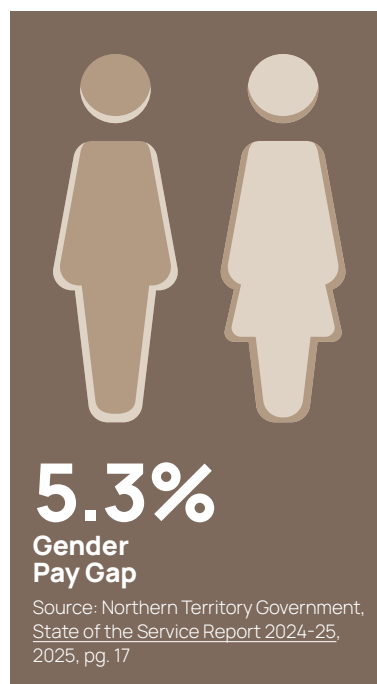


Source: Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-2025](#), 2025, pg. 10

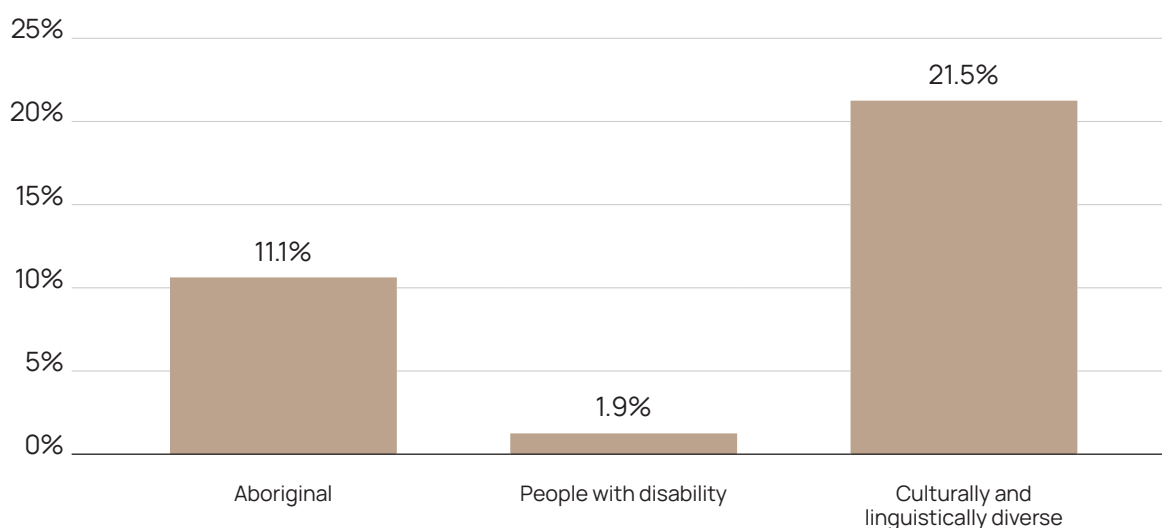
Northern Territory Public Sector Employees – Gender



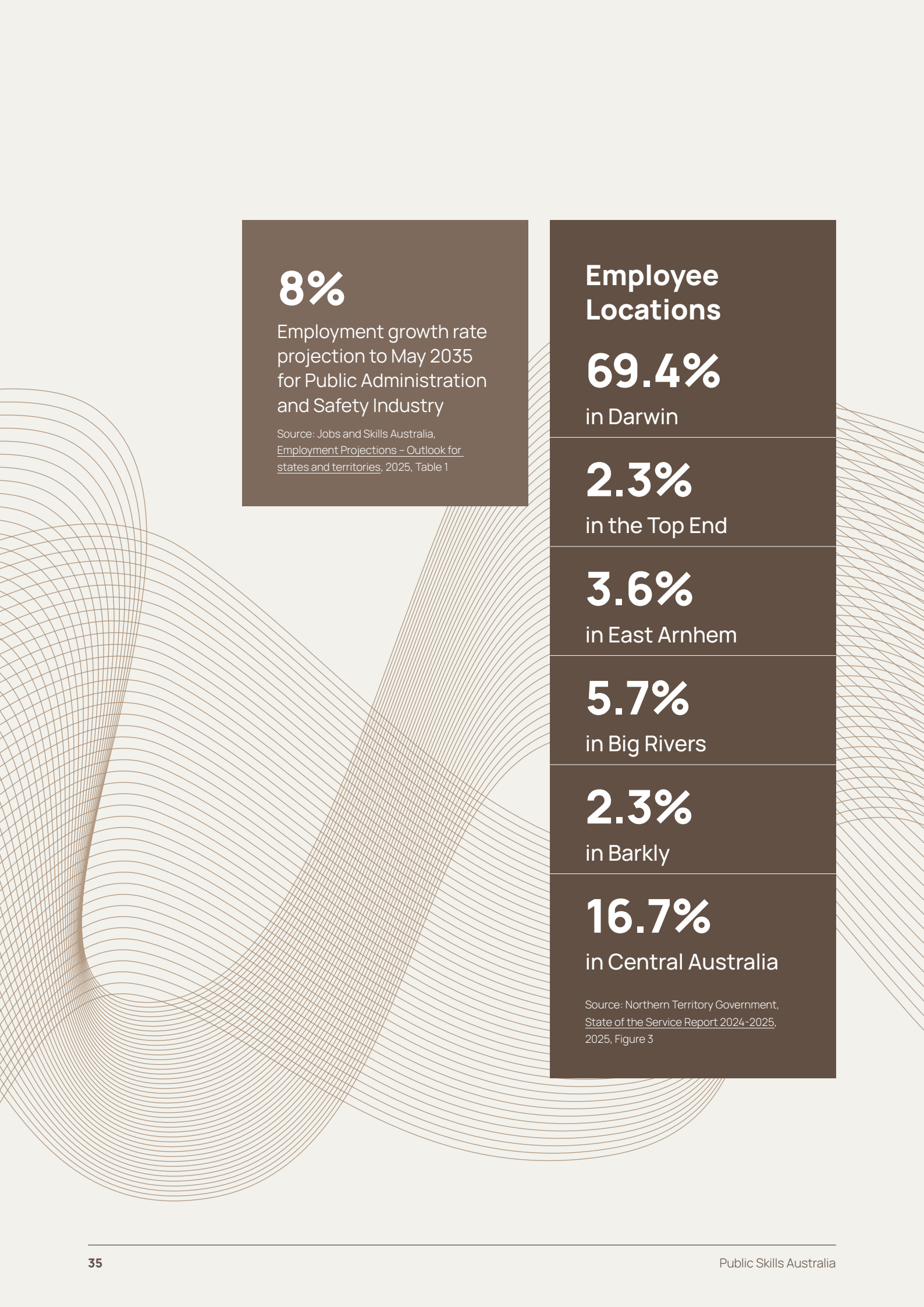
Source: Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), 2025



Workforce Diversity in the Northern Territory Public Sector



Source: Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), 2025, Figure 18



8%

Employment growth rate
projection to May 2035
for Public Administration
and Safety Industry

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia,
Employment Projections – Outlook for
states and territories, 2025, Table 1

Employee Locations

69.4%

in Darwin

2.3%

in the Top End

3.6%

in East Arnhem

5.7%

in Big Rivers

2.3%

in Barkly

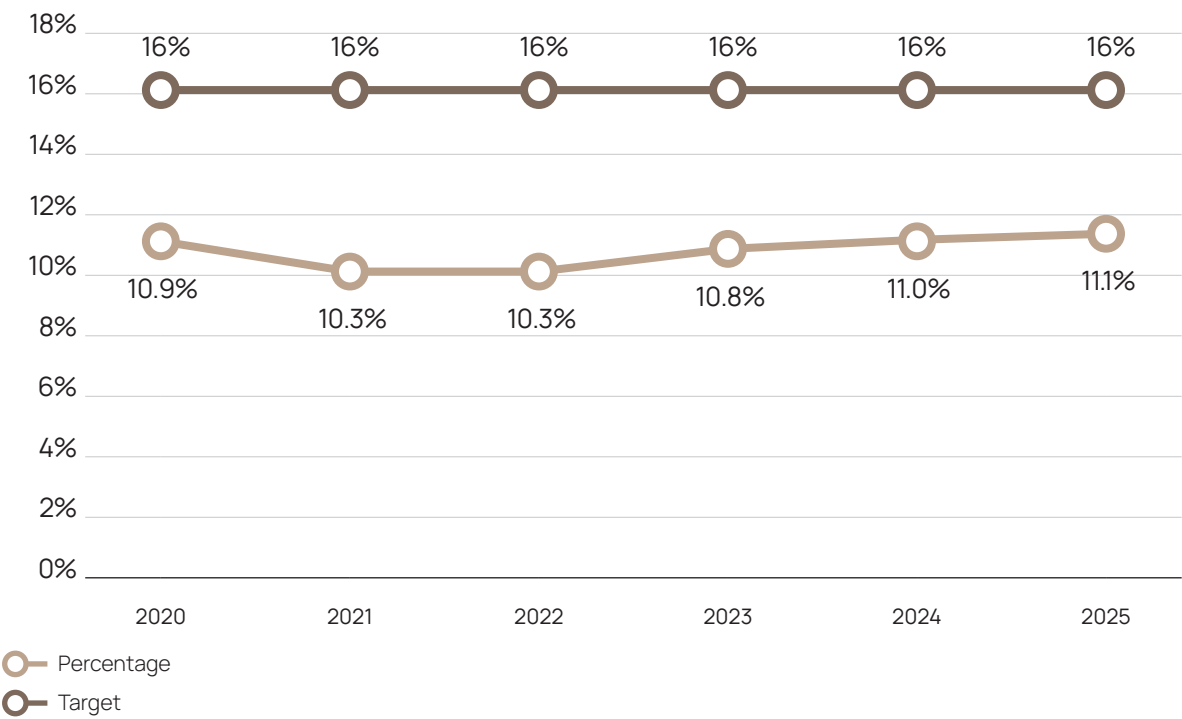
16.7%

in Central Australia

Source: Northern Territory Government,
State of the Service Report 2024-2025,
2025, Figure 3

Workforce Trends

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation in Northern Territory Public Sector (2020-2025)



Source: Northern Territory Government, [State of the Service Report 2024-25](#), 2025, Figure 18

Queensland Public Service

Workforce Overview

The Queensland Public Service (QPS) comprises approximately 74,410.52 FTE.⁴³ The workforce is geographically dispersed, with close to two thirds employed in regional areas and one-fifth located in Brisbane's inner city.⁴⁴ Women represent most of the workforce, while men comprise just over one-third.⁴⁵ A small proportion of employees identify as non-binary or preferred not to disclose their gender.⁴⁶ Diversity data shows employees from CALD backgrounds as the largest cohort, followed by LGBTQIA+ and those with disabilities.

First Nations people make up a smaller (2.7 per cent) share of the workforce. Between 2021 and 2025, QPS saw gradual growth in First Nations peoples representation from 2.5 per cent to 2.7 per cent.⁴⁷ During this period the Queensland (QLD) Government increased its First Nations workforce target from 3 per cent to 4 per cent in 2023.⁴⁸ While the data indicates progress, a gap remains relative to the stated target, highlighting the continued focus required on First Nations employment. The QLD Government has established explicit employment diversity targets for CALD individuals and people with disabilities, with the target for both cohorts set at 12 per cent of the workforce.⁴⁹

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The QPS comprises Departments, Statutory Agencies related to a department, and separate Public Service Agencies.

The Public Service consists of those employed under the *Public Sector Act 2022*. There are 22 departments of the Public Service, each led by a Secretary.

The Queensland Public Sector comprises over 100 different organisations and involves delivering different services including education, healthcare, social welfare and public security.

⁴³ Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Queensland Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

⁴⁴ Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Queensland Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

⁴⁵ Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Queensland Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

⁴⁶ Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Queensland Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

⁴⁷ Queensland Government, [Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples](#), Queensland Government, 2024, accessed 11 February 2026.

⁴⁸ Queensland Government, [Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples](#), Queensland Government, 2024, accessed 11 February 2026.

⁴⁹ Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Queensland Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

Workforce Trends

The QPS (excluding the education and health workforce) increased by 6.7 per cent between 2024 and 2025.⁵⁰ According to JSA employment projections, the projected growth for the Public Administration and Safety Industry in QLD is 13 per cent.⁵¹ However, the QLD Government is facing the challenge of delivering high quality services in a fiscally constrained environment, which will require strong performance and innovation.⁵² The *Even Better Public Sector for Queensland Strategy 2024-2028* provides an opportunity to identify and grow current and future workforce skills.

⁵⁰ Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Queensland Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

⁵¹ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), [Employment Projections – Outlook for states territories](#), Australian Government, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

⁵² Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Queensland Government, 2025, accessed on 6 February 2026.

Queensland Public Service Overview

Workforce Overview

In 2025,
the Queensland
Public Service
was comprised of

74,410 employees

20.9% FTE in Brisbane inner city

63.6% FTE in regional locations



Source: Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), 2025, pg. 6

13%

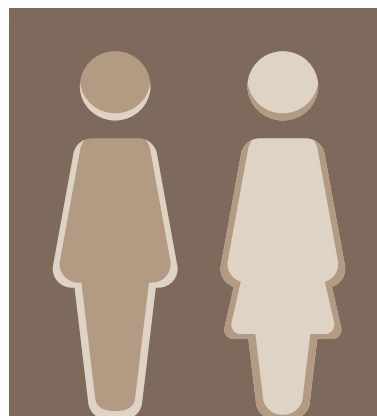
Employment growth rate
projection to May 2035 for Public
Administration and Safety Industry

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, [Employment Projections –
outlook for states and territories](#), 2025, Table 2

6.7%

Employment increase
in public servant workforce
from 2024 to 2025

Source: Queensland Government,
[State of the Sector Report 2025](#), 2025, pg. 6

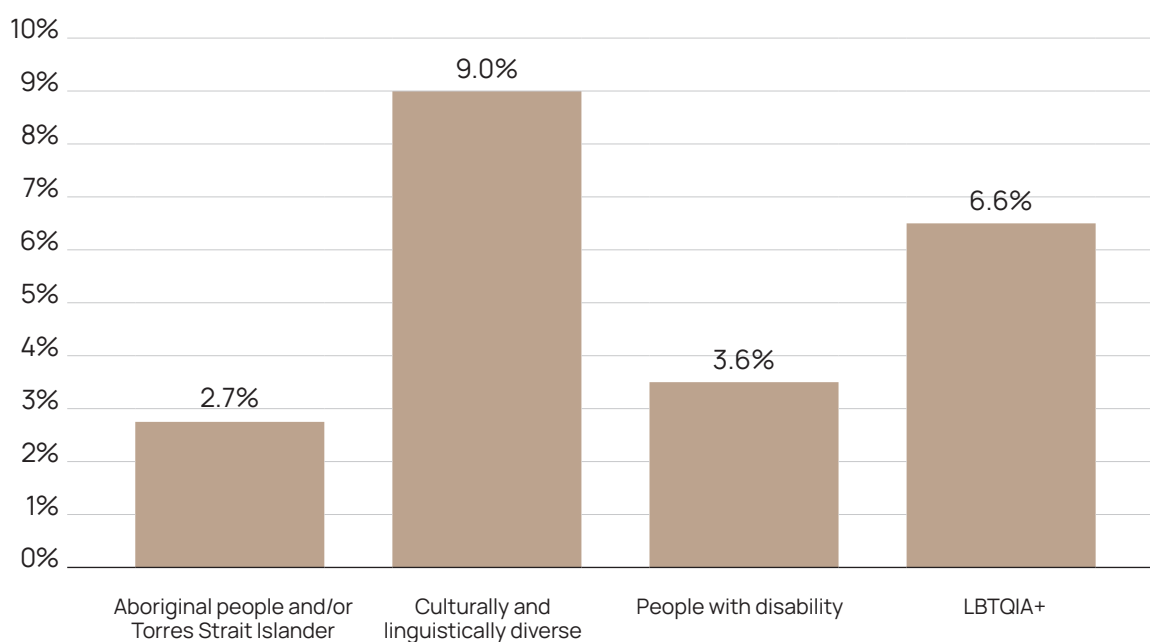


6.0%

Gender
Pay Gap

Source: Queensland Government,
[State of the Sector Report 2025](#), 2025,
pg. 66

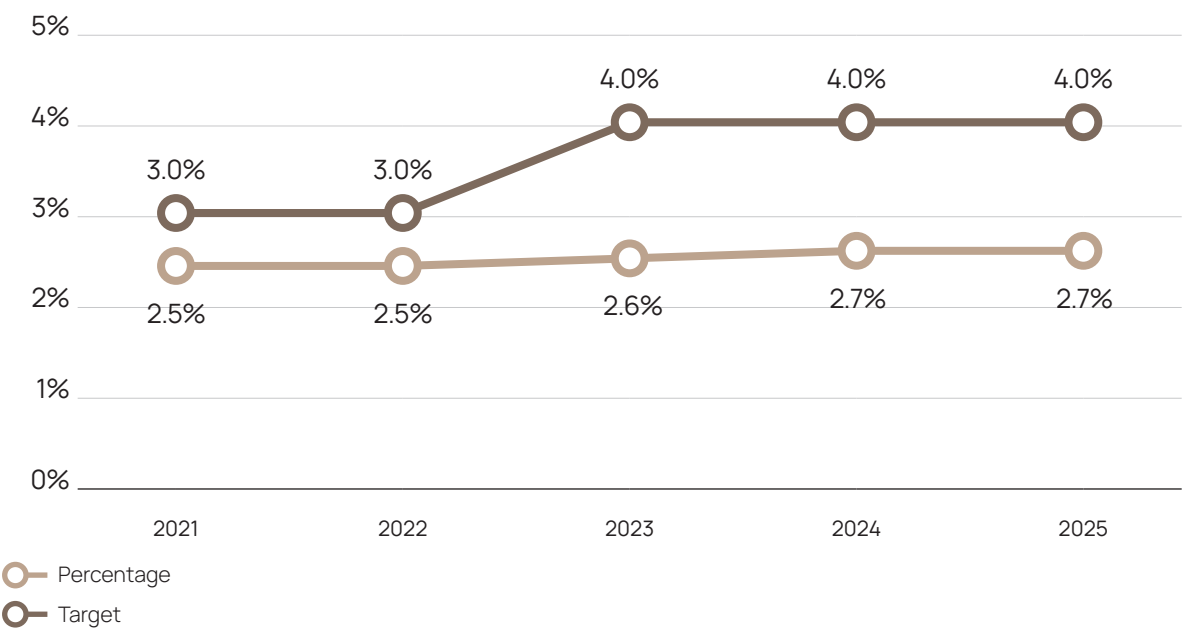
Diversity in the Queensland Public Sector



Source: Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), pg. 35

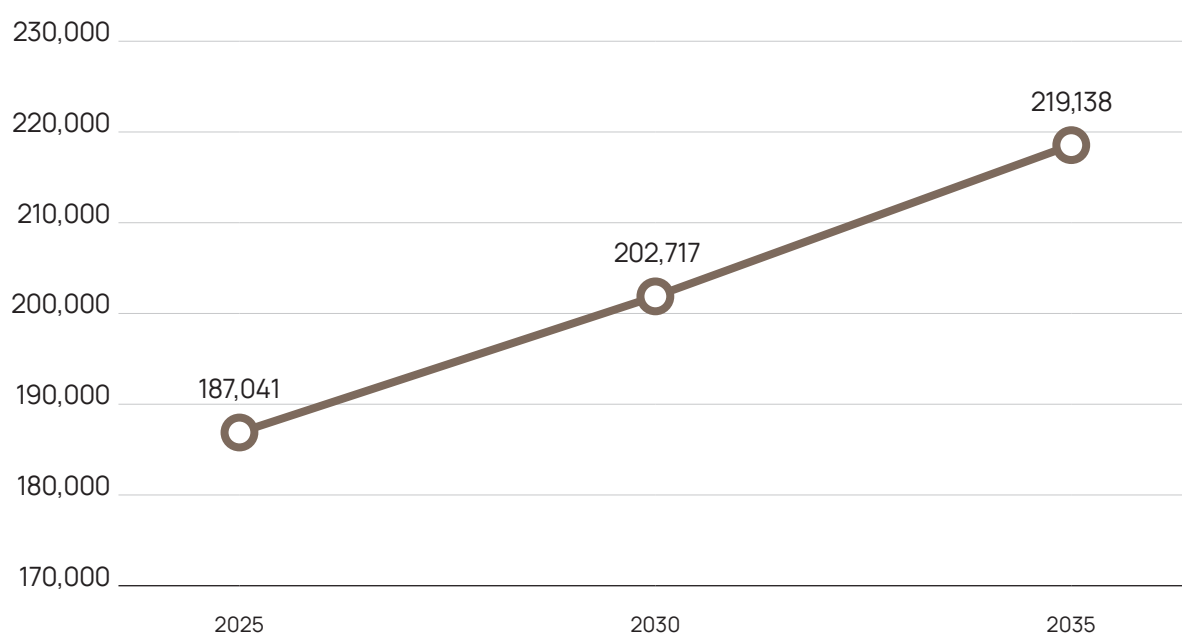
Workforce Trends

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation in the Queensland Public Sector (2021-2025)



Source: Queensland Government, [State of the Sector Report, 2025](#), pg. 42

Queensland Employment Projections to 2035 – Public Administration and Safety Industry



Source: Queensland Government, [Regional employment Projections Data](#), Tables 2010-11 to 2040-41

South Australian Public Service

Workforce Overview

The South Australian public sector (SAPS) employs approximately 101,700 FTE employees, with a headcount of 122,644 employees.⁵³ Just under three in ten employees were engaged in frontline or direct support roles outside health and education, while a similar proportion were employed in policy or administrative roles, highlighting the dual service-delivery and system-stewardship functions of the sector.

Women comprise close to 70 per cent of employees, while men represent under one-third.⁵⁴ The age profile of the SAPS shows most employees concentrated in the 30-40 and 40-50 age cohorts.⁵⁵ First Nations employees accounted for approximately 2.3 per cent of the workforce in 2025 rising from 2.1 per in 2020.⁵⁶

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The South Australian Public Sector is defined under the *Public Sector Act (2009)* and consists of General Government Sector agencies, Public Non-Financial Corporations, Public Financial Corporations and Non-Budget Entities.

The General Government sector covers the largest portion of services and consists of 79 Agencies including:

- > Departments
- > Police
- > Fire and Emergency Services

⁵³ Government of South Australia, [Workforce Information Report 2024-25](#), Government of South Australia, 2025, accessed 9 February 2025.

⁵⁴ Government of South Australia, [Workforce Information Report 2024-25](#), Government of South Australia, 2025, accessed 9 February 2025.

⁵⁵ Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), Government of South Australia, 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

⁵⁶ Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2020](#), 2020; Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2021](#), 2021; Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2022](#), 2022; Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2023](#), 2023; Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2024](#), 2024; Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

Workforce Trends

The South Australian (SA) Government undertakes employment projections annually.

Qualifications are projected to be in very high or high demand for the following occupations between 2025-2028: ⁵⁷	Occupations in digital, technology and cybersecurity are also in strong demand, including:
Managers	ICT Managers
Community and Personal Service Workers	ICT Support Technicians
Professionals	Database and Systems Administrators, and ICT Security Specialists
Clerical and Administrative Workers	

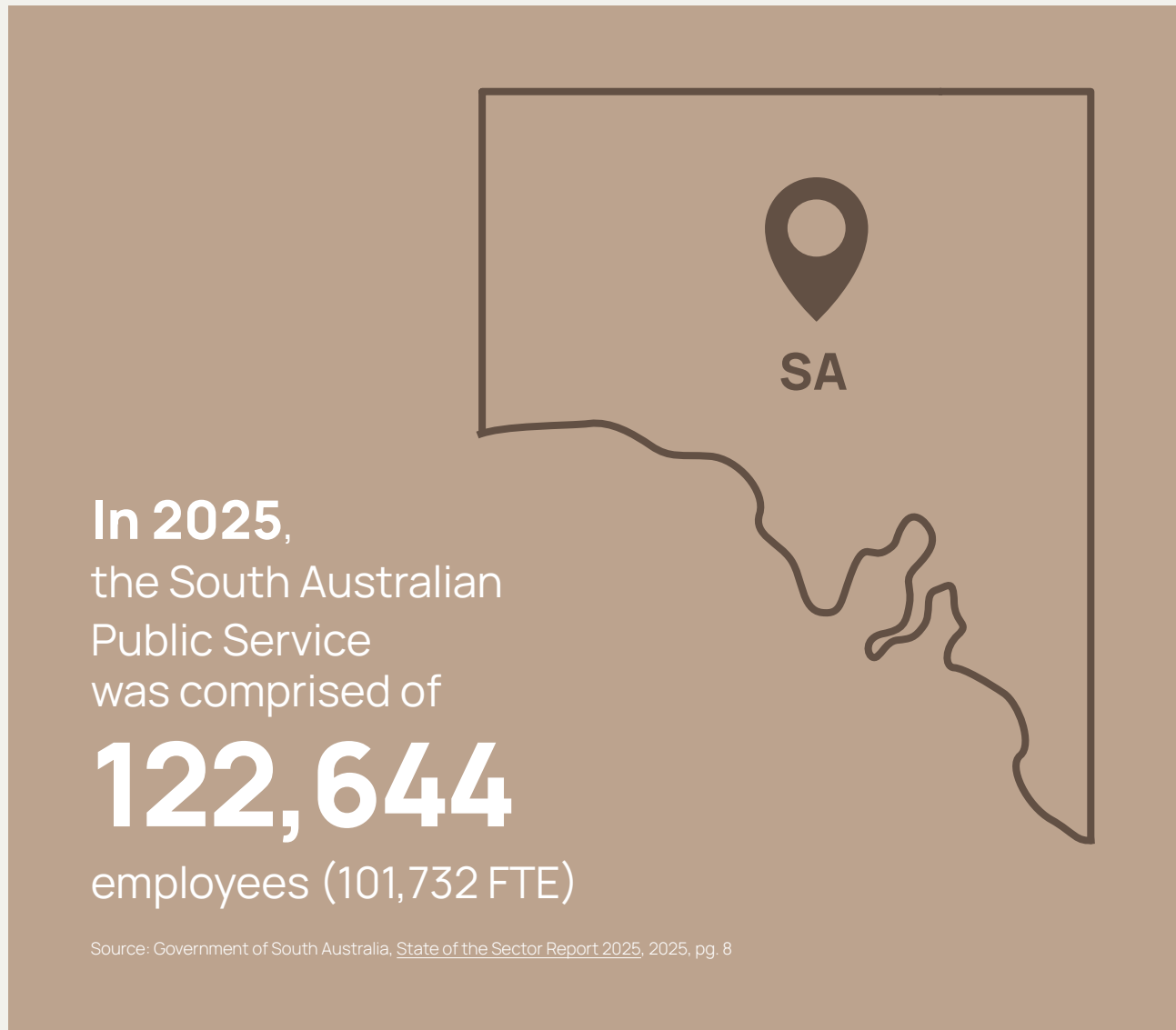
INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Alongside projected high-demand qualifications and occupations, stakeholders also identified future skills needs in AI, Digital Transformation, IT (architects and specialists).

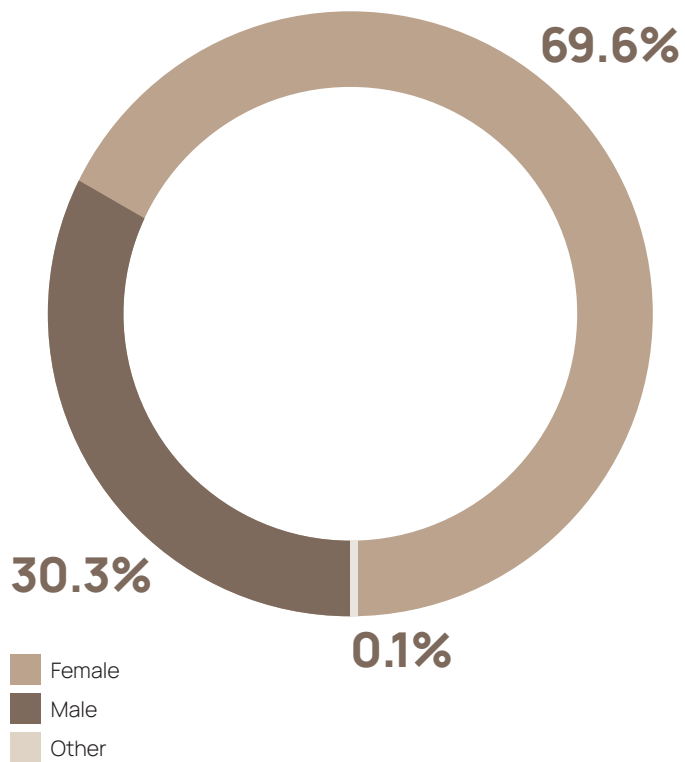
⁵⁷ Department of State Development, [Jobs and Skills Outlook 2024](#), Government of South Australia, 2024, accessed 11 February 2026.

South Australian Public Service Overview

Workforce Overview

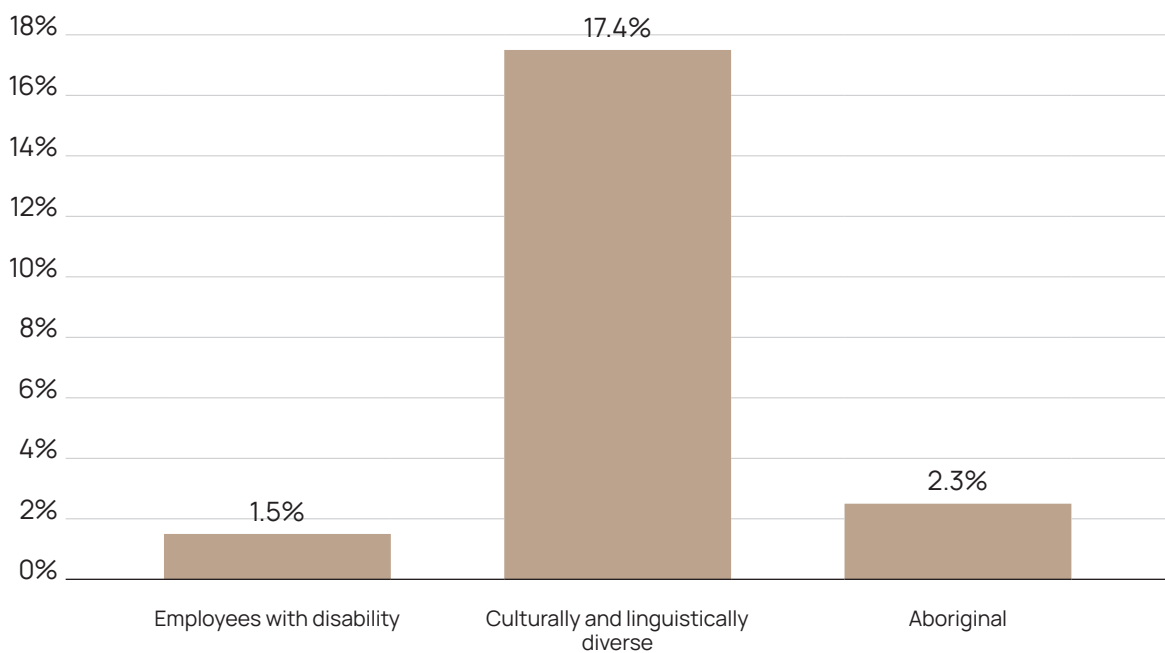


South Australian Public Sector Employees – Gender



Source: Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), 2025, pg. 8

Diversity in the South Australian Public Sector



Source: Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2025](#), 2025, pg. 8 & 18

Workforce Trends

7%

Employment growth rate to May 2035 for Public Administration and Safety Industry

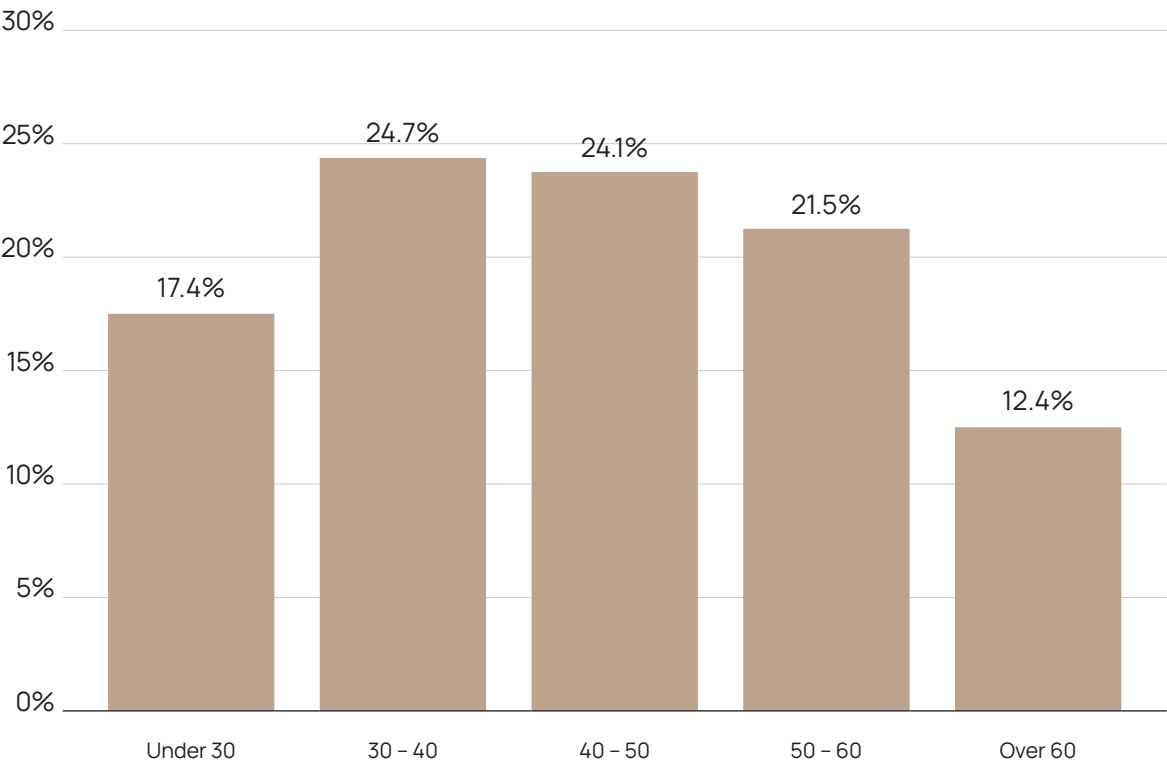
Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, [Employment Projections – outlook for states and territories, 2025, Table 2](#)

Since 2021, the proportion of First Nations people’s employment in the South Australian General Government sector rose from:

2.1% ► 2.25%

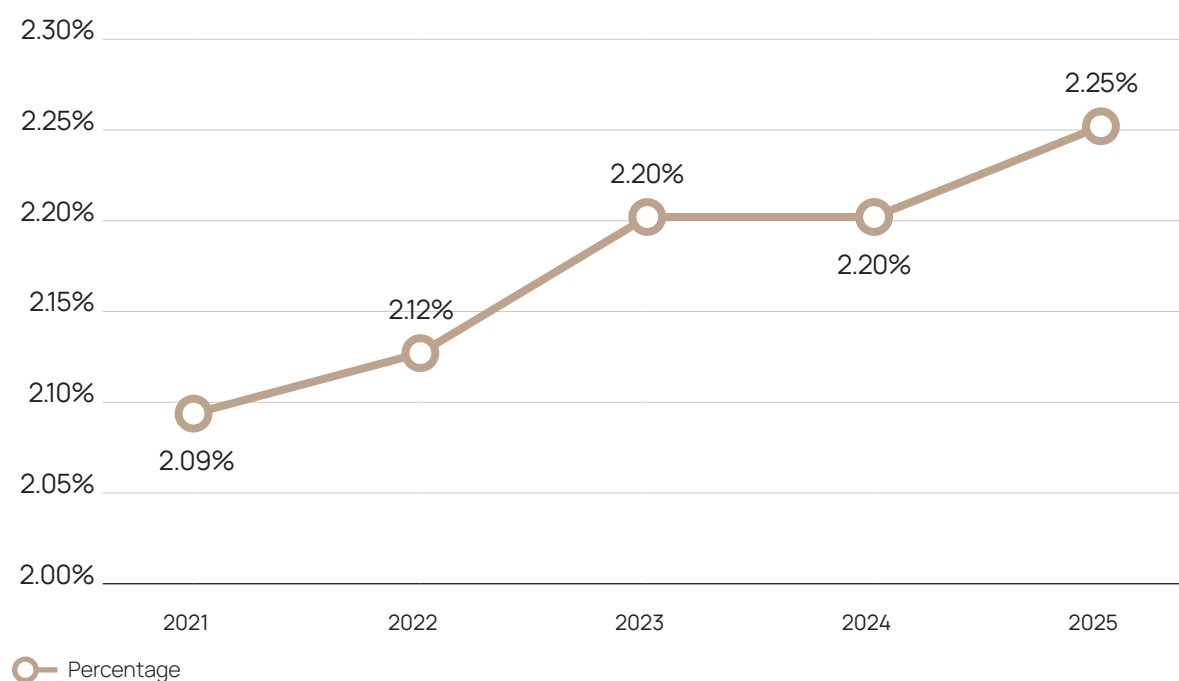
Source: Government of South Australia, [Workforce Information Report Data Dashboard \[data set\], 2025](#)

South Australian Public Sector Employees by Age



Source: Government of South Australia, [State of the Sector Report 2025, 2025, Table 1](#)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation in the South Australian Public Sector (2021-2025)



Source: Government of South Australia, [Workforce Information Report Data Dashboard](#) [data set], 2025

Tasmanian Public Service

Workforce Overview

The Tasmania State Service (TSS) comprises approximately 36,168 employees.⁵⁸ The workforce is predominately female, with women accounting for just over 70 per cent of employees, men comprise just under 30 per cent and 0.3 per cent identifying as 'other'.⁵⁹ Overall, the gender profile reflects a strongly female-dominated public sector workforce, similar to other states and territories.

Diversity data from the *2024 Tasmanian State Service Employee Survey* shows variation across cohorts. Employees who speak a language other than English represent the largest diversity group at 11 per cent of the total workforce.⁶⁰ Eight per cent of employees were born overseas in another country and 6 per cent identify as LGBTQIA+.⁶¹

First Nations employees make up approximately 3 per cent of this workforce. While the Tasmanian Government had a set target to increase First Nations employment from to 3.5 per cent across the TSS, this only covered up to 2022 and does not appear have been renewed.⁶²

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The TSS comprises of 17 Agencies (for example, the Department of Premier, and authorities such as the Environment Protection Authority).

The TSS supports the government of the day by providing robust and independent policy advice and ensures a wide range of services are delivered to the community.

The TSS also provides support to Ministers to develop and implement policies and legislation, administer state finances, manage resources and deliver or support on a wide range of public services.

⁵⁸ Tasmanian Government, *State of the Service Workforce Report no. 2 of 2025*, Tasmanian Government, 2025, accessed 18 February 2026.

⁵⁹ Tasmanian Government, *State of the Service Workforce Report no. 2 of 2025*, Tasmanian Government, 2025, accessed 18 February 2026.

⁶⁰ Tasmanian Government, *2024 TSS Employee Survey – whole of service results*, Tasmanian Government, 2024, accessed 18 February 2026.

⁶¹ Tasmanian Government, *2024 TSS Employee Survey – whole of service results*, Tasmanian Government, 2024, accessed 18 February 2026. LGBTQIA+ proportion is combination of employees that described their sexual orientation as Gay or Lesbian, Bisexual and I use a different term.

⁶² Tasmanian Government, *Tasmanian State Service Aboriginal Employment Strategy to 2022*, Tasmanian Government, 2019, accessed 9 February 2026.

Workforce Trends

The Public Administration and Safety industry in Tasmania is expected to have 2,795 new employees by 2027 with a projected 10-year employment growth rate of 4 per cent.⁶³

However, for key Public Administration occupations, the employment growth rate expected by 2027 is as follows:⁶⁴

Policy and Planning Managers – 12.4%
Intelligence and Policy Analysts – 14.6%
Contract, Program and Project Administrators – 8.6%
General Clerks – 11.2%
Other Information and Organisation Professionals – 10.5%

In May 2025 the Tasmanian Government announced saving measures, which included a hiring freeze for some TSS roles.⁶⁵ This is likely to present a challenge for the industry in meeting employment projections. However strategic planning is underway for a centralised Human Resources Information System, delivered through the Human Resources Transformation Program, to track skills, training and occupational shortages in agencies of the TSS.⁶⁶

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Stakeholders identified the Human Resources Transformation Program as an essential emerging initiative to assist in tracking skills gaps training needs.

⁶³ Department of State Growth, [Tasmanian Skills Plan](#), Tasmanian Government, 2024, accessed 12 February 2026; Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), [Employment Projections – Outlook for states and territories](#), Australian Government, 2025, accessed 4 February 2026.

⁶⁴ Department of State Growth, [Regional Employment Projections Dashboard 2024-27](#) [Occupation dashboard], Tasmanian Government, n.d., accessed 4 February 2026.

⁶⁵ Pulse Tasmania, [Tasmania targets \\$150 million in public service cuts as new unit hunts for efficiencies](#), Pulse Tasmania, 2025, accessed 4 February 2026.

⁶⁶ Department of Premier and Cabinet, [Tasmanian State Service Annual Report 2024-25](#), Tasmanian Government, October 2025, accessed 24 March 2026, p.13.

Tasmanian Public Service Overview

Workforce Overview

In 2025,
the Tasmanian State Service
was comprised of

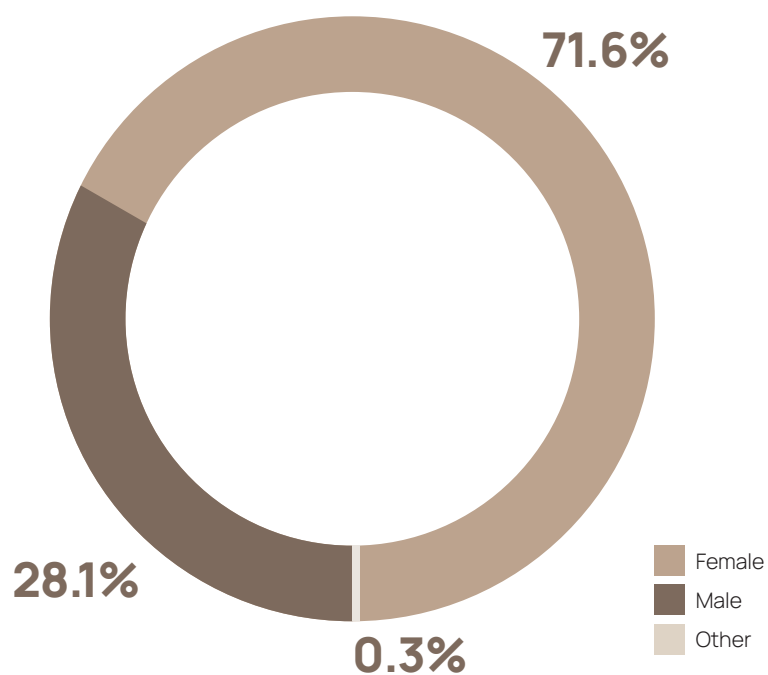
36,168

employees (29,789.09 FTE)



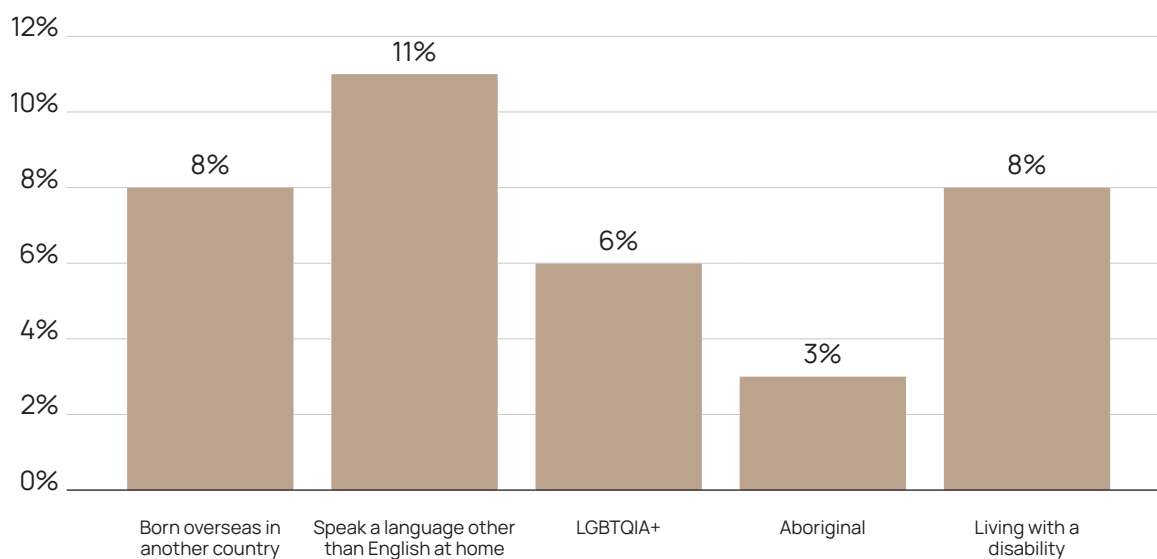
Source: Tasmanian Government, [Tasmanian State Service Annual Report 2024-25](#), 2025, pg. 10

Tasmanian State Service Employees – Gender



Source: Tasmanian Government, [Tasmanian State Service Annual Report 2024-25](#), 2025, pg. 11

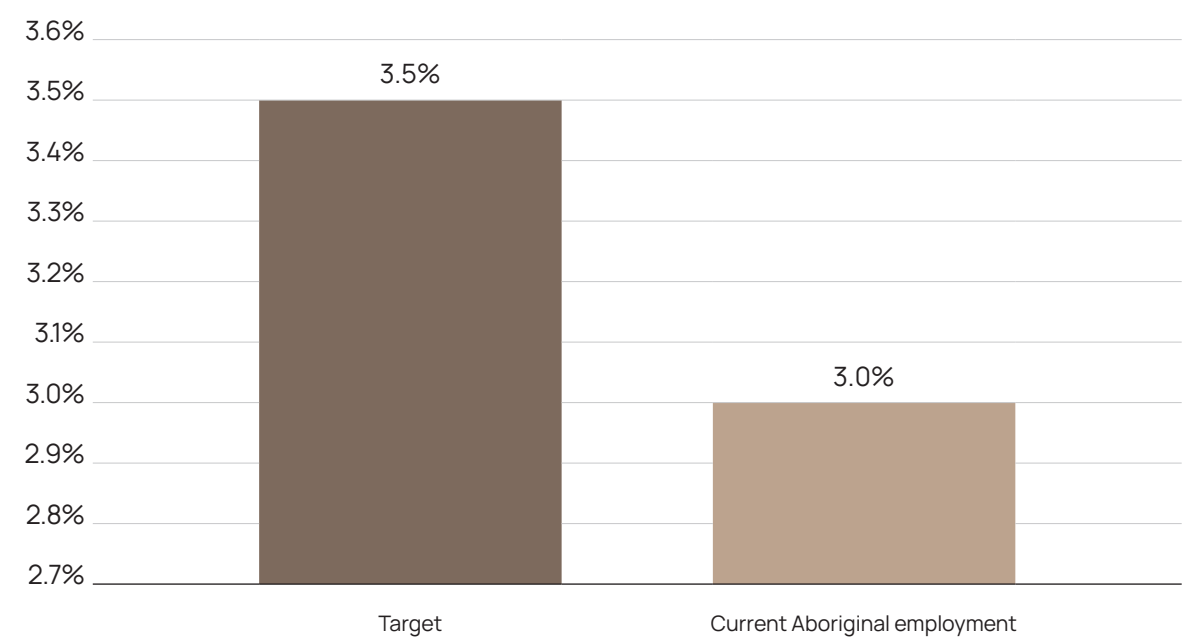
Diversity in the Tasmanian State Service



Source: Tasmanian Government, [2024 TSS Employee Survey](#) – whole of service results, 2024

Workforce Trends

Tasmanian State Service Aboriginal Employment Level against Employment Target



Source: Tasmanian Government, Tasmania State Service Aboriginal Employment Strategy to 2022, 2019, pg. 8

4%

Employment growth rate projection to May 2035 for Public Administration and Safety Industry

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, [Employment Projections – Outlook for states and territories](#), Table 2



Victorian Public Service

Workforce Overview

As of June 2025, 58,169 (55,672 FTE) employees were engaged in the Victorian Public Service (VPS).⁶⁷

The VPS workforce is predominantly female, with women accounting for just under 60 per cent of employees, while men represent under 40 per cent.⁶⁸

Over 19 per cent of employees reported speaking a language other than English at home and 19.5 per cent were born outside Australia.⁶⁹ First Nations employees comprised approximately 1.6 per cent of the VPS workforce, which was below the government's target of two per cent by June 2022.⁷⁰

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The VPS workforce includes the Public Service which encompasses Departments, administrative offices, the Victorian Public Sector Commission and Separate Public Entities.

The Public Service consists of those employed under *Public Administration Act (2004)*.

There are 10 departments of the Public Service, each led by a Secretary.

Administrative offices are established in relation to a department and perform activities under the direction of ministers.

The Government Sector comprises over 3,000 public entities that deliver public services, and include organisations such as Ambulance Victoria, Parks Victoria and the Transport Accident Commission.

⁶⁷ Victorian Government, [Workforce data \(state of the public sector\) 2025](#), Victorian Government, 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

⁶⁸ Victorian Government, [2024 Workforce data \(State of the Public Sector\) – Age, gender and sexuality](#), Victorian Government, 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

⁶⁹ Victorian Government, [2024 Workforce data \(State of the Public Sector\) – Cultural background and home life](#), Victorian Government, 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

⁷⁰ Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC), [Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander](#), Victorian Government, 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

Workforce Trends⁷¹

While the projected 10-year growth rate for Public Administration and Safety is 1.3 per cent,⁷² this growth rate is slightly higher for the following Public Administration Industry occupations:

Policy and Planning Managers
Inspectors and Regulatory Officers
Human Resource Professionals
Intelligence and Policy Analysts
General Clerks
Organisation Professionals

Digital technologies are a priority for the Victorian Government with over 87,000 new digital technology employees required over the next 10 years. There is a growing demand for skills in data analytics, cyber security and cloud computing,⁷³ noting that these occupational areas have consistently been identified as skills gaps by Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sector stakeholders.

Recently, the *Independent Review of the Victorian Public Service* (the Silver Review) recommended rebalancing the size and structure of the VPS to improve productivity.⁷⁴ Recommendations also included improving the adoption of AI and digital services across the VPS and reducing inefficient duplication in service provision.⁷⁵ The Victorian Government has committed to implementing most of the recommendations.

⁷¹ Employment projections for Victoria are done by Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions. Projections are based on retirements and new employees expected (modelling by the Victorian Skills Authority). These employment projections differ to the Jobs Skills Australia for the Public Administration and Safety Industry.

⁷² Victorian Skills Authority, [Employment Projections Dashboard 2025-2035 \[Workforce summary dashboard\]](#), Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, Victorian Government, 2025, accessed 5 February 2026.

⁷³ Victorian Skills Authority, [Victorian Skills Plan for 2025 into 2026: Shared prosperity through skills](#), Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, Victorian Government, January 2026, accessed 5 February 2026.

⁷⁴ Victorian Government, [Independent Review of the Victoria Public Service Final Report](#), June 2025, accessed 13 February 2026.

⁷⁵ Victorian Government, [Independent Review of the Victoria Public Service Final Report](#), June 2025, accessed 13 February 2026.

Victorian Public Service Overview

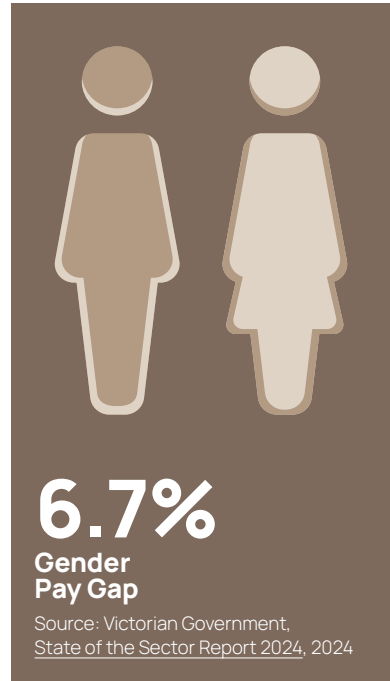
Workforce Overview



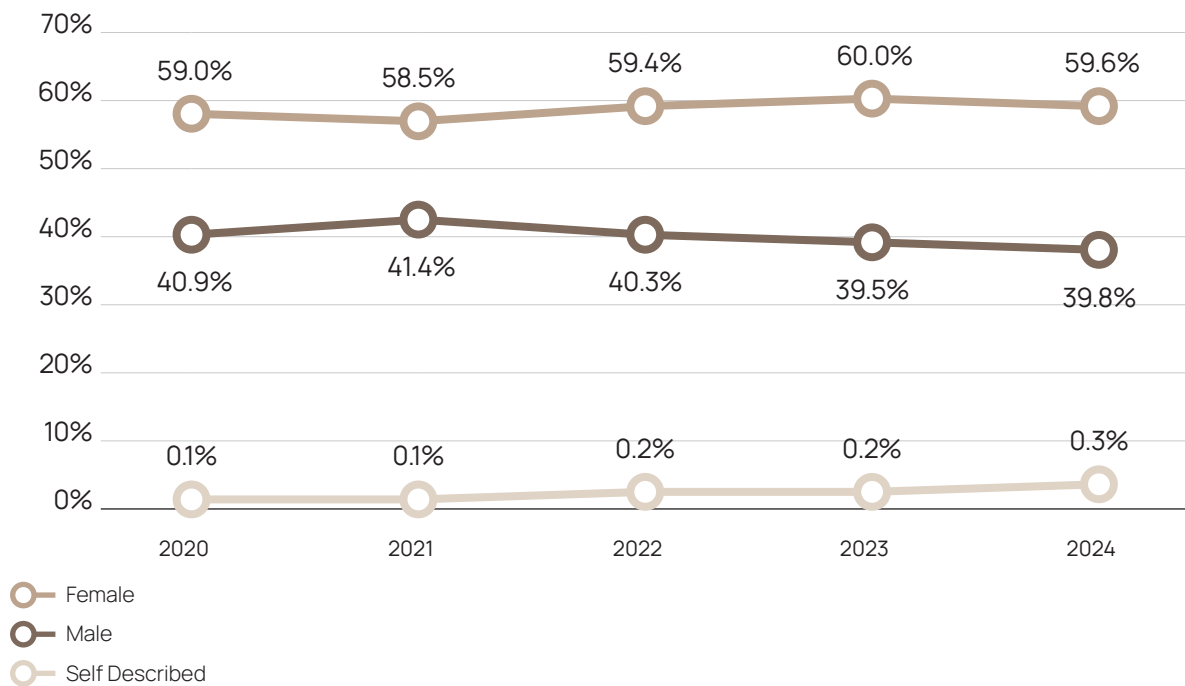
In **2025**, the Victorian Public Service was comprised of

58,169 employees

Source: Victorian Government, [2025 Workforce data \(state of the public sector\) – Number of employees, 2025](#)

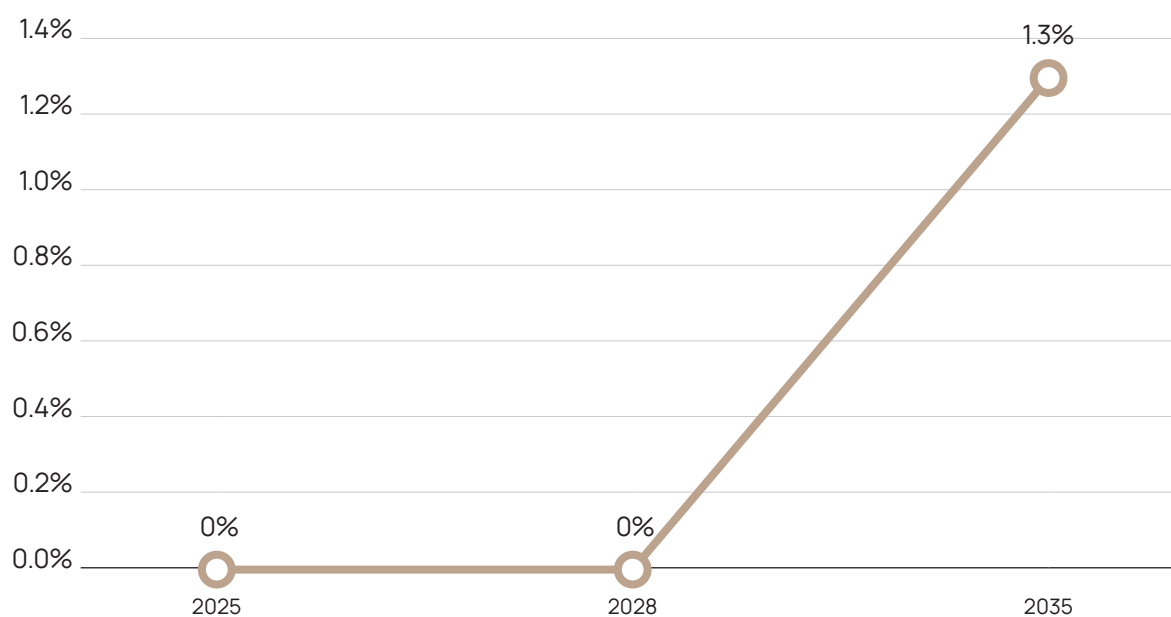


Percentage of Employees in the Victorian Public Service by Gender (headcount)



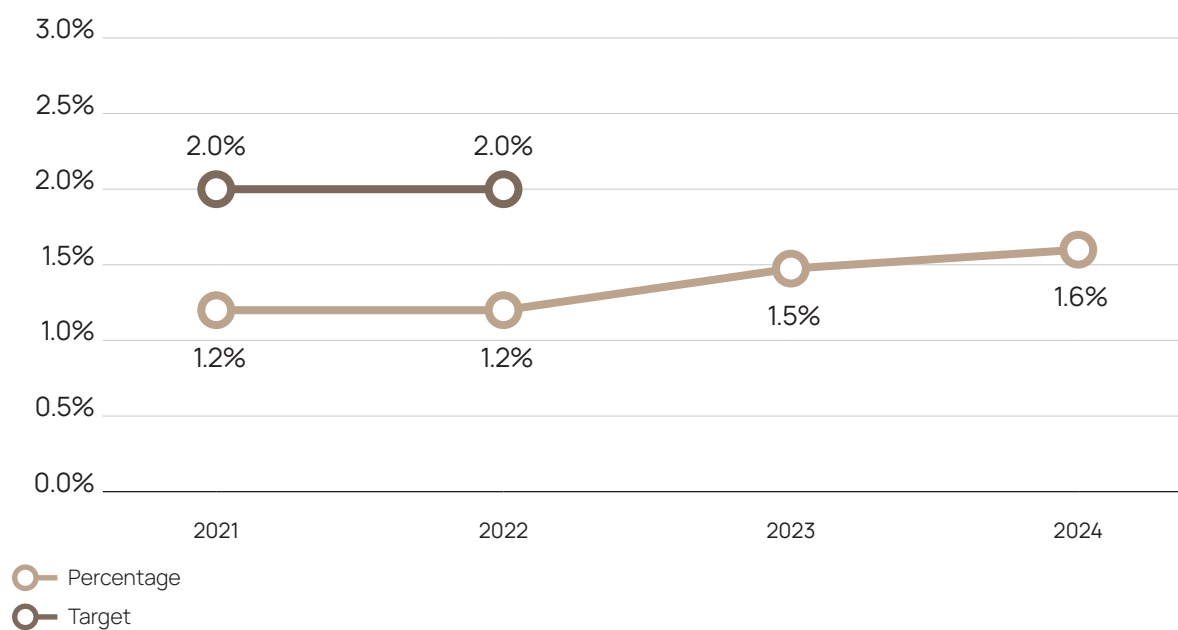
Source: Victorian Government, 2024 Workforce data (state of the public sector) – Age, gender and sexuality, 2024

Employment Growth Rate for Public Administration and Safety Industry to 2035



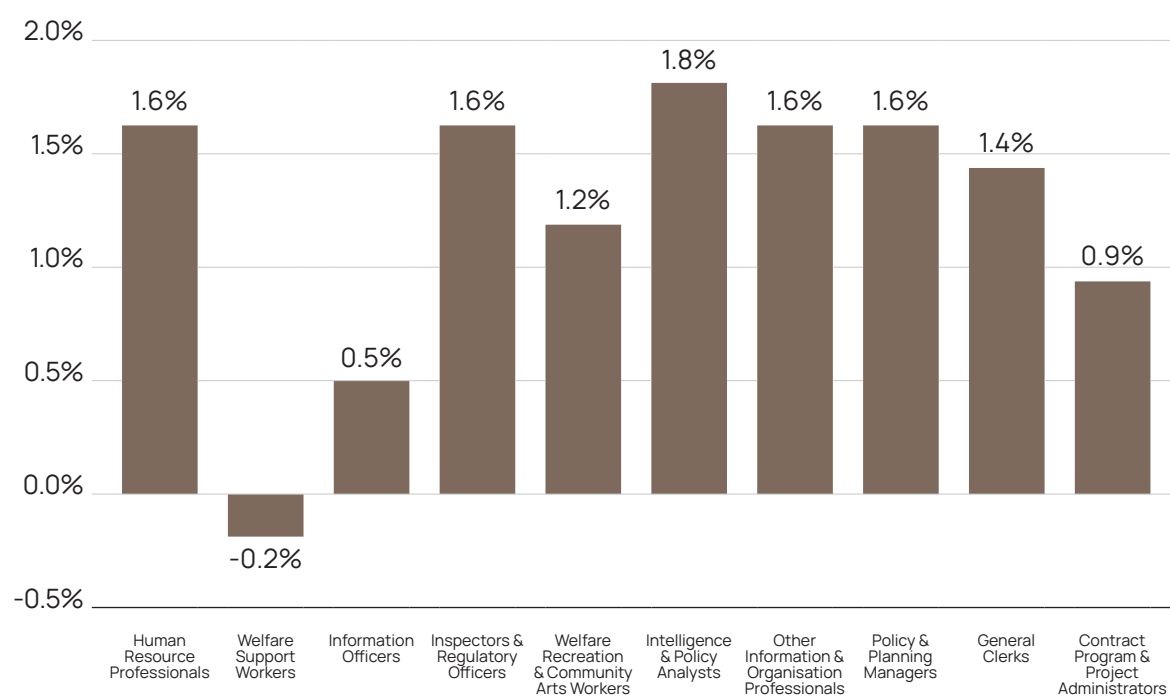
Source: Victorian Skills Authority, [Employment projections dashboard 2025-35](#) – Workforce summary – Industries, 2025

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation in the Victorian Public Service (2021-2024)



Source: Victorian Government, [Workforce data \(state of the public sector\)](#)
2024-25, 2024-23, 2023-22, 2022-21, 2025

10-Year Growth Rate for Top 10 Employed Occupations in Public Administration



Source: Victorian Skills Authority, [Employment Projections Dashboard 2025-35 – Occupations](#), 2025

Western Australia Public Service

Workforce Overview

In 2025 the Western Australia public service (WAPS) included approximately 179,500 employees. Women comprise most of the workforce at 73.2 per cent.⁷⁶ Diversity data shows that employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds represent 18.5 per cent of the workforce.⁷⁷

First Nations employees accounted for approximately 2.8 per cent of the WAPS, below the State Government's 3.7 per cent employment target.⁷⁸ Since 2020, employment has increased from 2.6 per cent to their current 2025 level but has plateaued since 2022.⁷⁹ This indicates progress has been made toward employment of First Nations people, with continued efforts being made to meet the 3.7 per cent.

STRUCTURE AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The WAPS includes Public and Non-Public Service and as of June 2025, it encompasses:

- > 25 departments
- > 43 Senior Executive Service (SES) organisations
- > 50 non-SES organisations
- > 17 Ministerial offices

Other Government Entities operate with a large degree of independence from the government and are not governed by the *PSM Act (1994)*. As of June 2024, these entities encompass:

- > 145 local governments
- > 4 public universities
- > 19 other authorities (e.g. sworn officers in WA Pol) 256 government boards and committees

The Public Service resides within the Public Sector, with employees who are employed under Part 3 of the *PSM Act (1994)*.

Departments are primarily responsible for providing policy advice and administration support to their minister.

SES Organisations are established by law to perform specific statutory functions, generally responsible through a board to a minister.

⁷⁶ Government of Western Australia, [State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2024-25](#), Government of Western Australia, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

⁷⁷ Government of Western Australia, [State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2024-25](#), Government of Western Australia, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

⁷⁸ Government of Western Australia, [State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2024-25](#), Government of Western Australia, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

Workforce Trends

The Western Australia (WA) Government has identified the following occupations as high priority:⁸⁰ 'Policy and planning manager' and 'Program or project administrator'. Both occupations are listed as priority 1 occupations. Priority 1 occupations have high demand or projected high demand over the next five years and may also be experiencing low supply or projected supply is not anticipated to meet demand.⁸¹ The WA Government announced a public sector reform in March 2025 which was designed to drive the goal of job creation through economic diversification. Full implementation was expected by January 2026.⁸²

⁷⁹ Government of Western Australia, [State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2024-25](#), Government of Western Australia, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

⁸⁰ Department of Training and Workforce Development, [State Priority Occupation List](#) [Occupation priority rating page], Government of Western Australia, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

⁸¹ Department of Training and Workforce Development, [State priority occupation list: Methodology paper](#), Government of Western Australia, 2023, accessed 6 February 2026.

⁸² Government of Western Australia, [Public Sector Reform March 2025](#), Government of Western Australia, 2025, accessed 6 February 2026.

Western Australia Public Service Overview

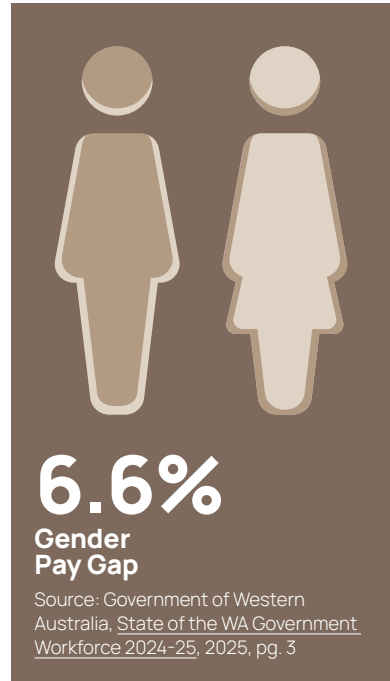
Workforce Overview

In 2025,
the Western
Australian
Public Service
was comprised of

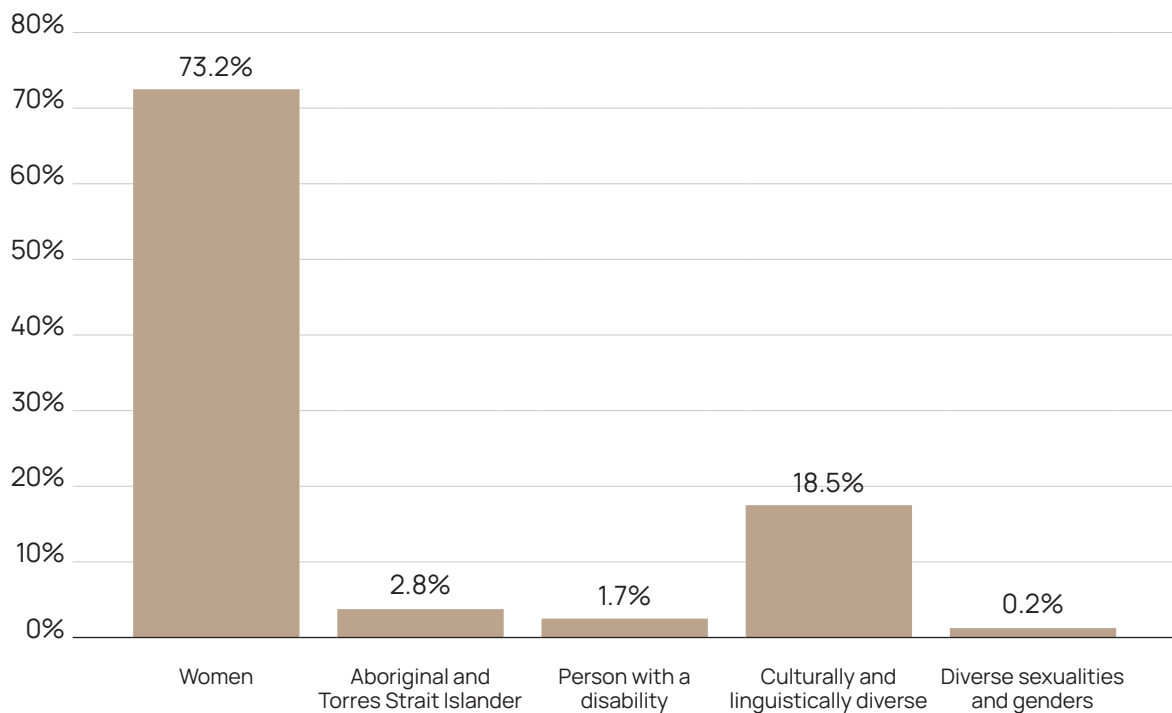
179,490 employees



Source: Government of Western Australia, [State of the WA Government Workforce 2024-25](#), 2025, Figure 2



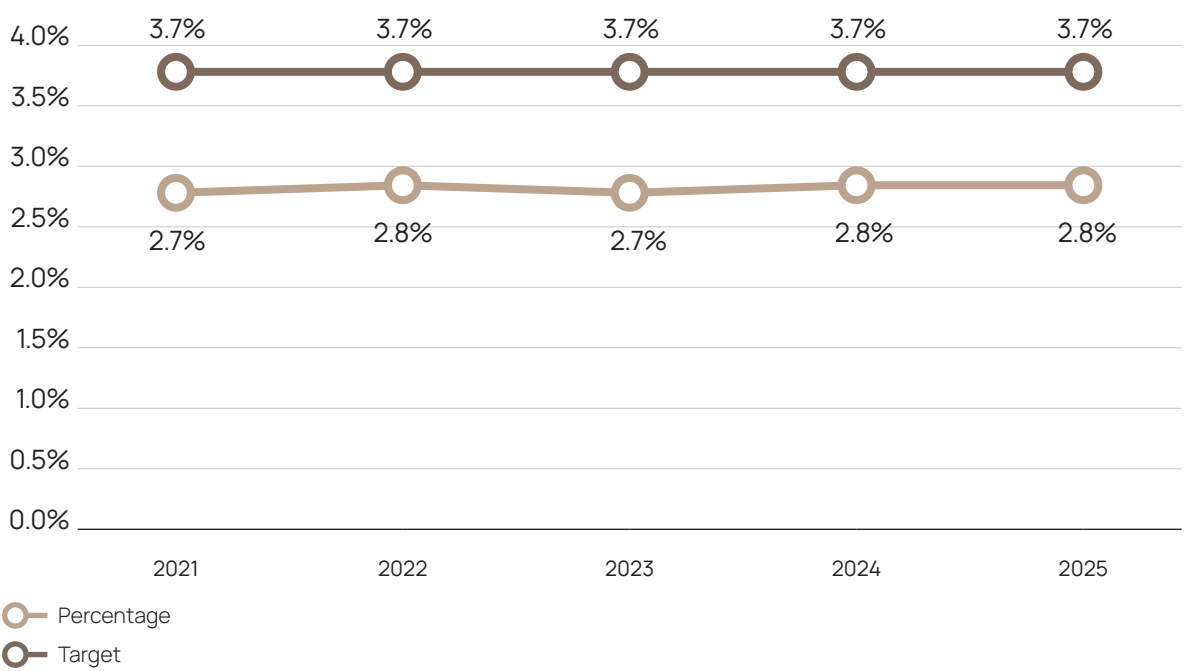
Diversity in the Western Australia Public Sector – 2025



Source: Government of Western Australia, State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2024-25, 2025, pg. 30-35

Workforce Trends

Proportion of Western Australia Public Sector Employees Who Identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (2021-2025)



Source: Government of Western Australia, State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2024-25, 2025, Figure 14

14%

Employment growth rate to May 2035 for Public Administration and Safety Industry

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Employment Projections – Outlook for states and territories, 2025, Table 2

Workforce Insights

The Federal and State/Territory Government Public Service employs over 2 million people.⁸³ Employment in the public sector is also projected to grow across all states and territories and the APS over the next 10 years.

However, with increasing budgetary constraints and changing priorities being experienced across the Federal and State/Territory Governments, the following overarching theme emerged from Public Skills Australia's sector analysis and industry insights:

Theme	Sector Analysis and Industry Insights
Future of the Public Service	The Public Administration and Safety industry⁸⁴ is projected to grow steadily over the next decade, in line with broader increases in public sector workforce participation. Federal and State/Territory Governments operate under differing legislative and governance arrangements for workforce planning, resulting in variable levels of workforce planning maturity. As Australia's productivity growth remains relatively low, the effectiveness of the APS remains critical to supporting economic performance. A skilled, adaptable and future-ready public service workforce has been identified as a priority, particularly in relation to technology, digital literacy and effective use of AI.

⁸³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Public sector employment and earnings 2024-2025](#), ABS, 2025, accessed 13 February.

⁸⁴ This report refers to Public Administration and Safety when the Industry Data classifier is used.

Future of the Public Service

ABS data indicates that the Federal and State/Territory Government public sector has increased between 2024-25 by 3.3 per cent.⁸⁵ According to Jobs and Skills Australia's employment projections, employment in the Public Administration industry group is projected to steadily grow over the next 10 years from the current baseline of 505,200 in May 2025 to 574,900 in May 2035.⁸⁶ These projections encompass government activities at the federal, state and territory levels only.⁸⁷ The future public service workforce will continue to have effects on national economic growth and productivity.

Productivity and Economic Growth

Productivity growth in Australia has slowed in recent decades. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) observed that labour productivity growth in the five years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic was around half the average rate recorded over the previous 50 years.⁸⁸ The OECD highlighted lower productivity in the mining sector and the expansion of the Public Administration and Safety sector as key factors in this slowdown.⁸⁹

However, whilst some analyses consider public sector growth to provide downward pressure on productivity growth, others identify how efficient public service workforces can contribute directly and indirectly to economic growth. In 2024-25, the Gross State Product (GSP) of states and territories grew by 1.4 per cent, which has been attributed to, in part, to the Public Administration and Safety industry.⁹⁰ In the ACT, increased public sector activity has been highlighted as a driver for GSP growth.⁹¹ Alongside their direct impact on economic measures such as GSP, productive public sector agencies have a broader indirect influence on the economy through ties to the private sector. Public sector funding for education, the flow on benefits of public infrastructure projects, and efficient service delivery are examples of how public sector workforces can contribute indirectly to economic growth and productivity.

While it is challenging to capture the full impact of the public sector on productivity, reports from the ABS indicate that public demand, driven by government expenditure and investment, supports Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth.⁹² Therefore, an effective and skilled public sector plays a critical role in supporting economic growth and productivity as it continues to expand.

⁸⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Public sector employment and earnings](#), ABS, 2025, accessed 1 December 2025. This data also includes Local Government, which is classified as part of public sector employment and earnings.

⁸⁶ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), [Jobs and Skills Australia, Employment Projections – May 2025 to May 2035 Table 5: Industry Group \[data set\]](#), JSA, 2025, accessed 1 December 2025.

⁸⁷ JSA, [Jobs and Skills Australia, Public Administration and Safety Overview](#), JSA, n.d., accessed 1 December 2025.

⁸⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), [OECD Economic Surveys: Australia 2026](#), OECD, 2026, accessed 9 February 2026.

⁸⁹ OECD, [OECD Economic Surveys: Australia 2026](#), OECD, 2026, accessed 9 February 2026.

⁹⁰ ABS, [Australian National Accounts: State Accounts](#), ABS, 2025, accessed 8 December 2025.

⁹¹ ABS, [Australian National Accounts: State Accounts](#), ABS, 2025, accessed 8 December 2025.

⁹² Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product](#), ABS, 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

There is a need to regularly upskill the public sector workforce for at least the next 5-10 years in technology, digital literacy and AI use, however this may shift as younger generations enter the workforce with those skills already. The public sector must remain agile to emerging skilling needs following the emergence of AI.

Workforce Gaps

All Federal and State/Territory Governments are facing persistent and increasingly acute skills gaps. These gaps are anticipated to increase as projected employment growth in the Public Administration and Safety industry continues to increase. The *2025 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* detailed occupational shortages as found by Jobs and Skills Australia in the Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sector. Several of these continue to be in shortage as below:⁹³

OSCA Code	Role	In shortage
511231	Program or Project Administrator	WA and NT
411636	Welfare Worker	VIC (Regional) and NT
511131	Contract Administrator	SA and WA
222131	Human Resources Adviser	SA and NT

In addition, shortage in digital, ICT and cyber-security skills are evident in reporting on the APS, as well as NSW, QLD, SA, Victoria and the NT Public Services, with governments emphasising capability building in areas such as data analytics, cloud computing, ICT support and information security.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

AI was identified as an emerging skills gap across the public sector consistently noting the need to uplift workforce capability to support future-ready service delivery.

⁹³ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), [Occupational Shortage List](#), JSA, 2025, accessed 8 December 2025.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Several stakeholders indicated that demand for digital, ICT and cyber-security skills, are the most critical shortages and are further compounded by increasing competition from the private sector for digitally proficient and highly skilled employees. Stakeholders highlighted that talent attraction and retention, particularly in digital and technical roles, is an ongoing challenge across the public sector.

Jurisdictional workforce strategies to respond to these requirements include: expanded VET funding, entry-level recruitment reforms and targeted capability programs such as the APS Academy, the ACTPS Career Path Graduate Model, NT digital skills boot camps and other diversity and capability initiatives.

In anticipation of growing AI skills requirement, the APS has deployed a new development initiative, 'GovAI'. This whole-of-government service is designed to uplift AI capabilities across the APS by providing secure learning resources, curated AI tools and peer collaboration spaces. The aim is to enable public servants to develop practical skills in using AI responsibly and effectively to improve service delivery, streamline work processes and enhance productivity.⁹⁴ The GovAI model provides a model for skills development in AI which may support workforce capability uplift.

Future Skills for the Public Service

The *2025 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* highlighted that each state and territory has different legislative requirements for workforce planning, and therefore different levels of workforce planning maturity. This theme remains prevalent in 2026, within the context of planning for the future of the public service, with changing expectations of government services, and trust in the public service.

Public Skills Australia intends to facilitate 'Future Skills for the Public Service' workshops to provide a forum for cross-jurisdictional knowledge sharing. Drawing on a strategic foresight approach, these discussions would identify shared skills needs and assess future skilling requirements across the public service. Public Skills Australia intends to examine how the VET system could be used or adapted to support these emerging workforce needs. Consultations with stakeholders indicated interest in, and support for, this approach, particularly given that each jurisdiction has different levels of workforce planning and understanding of skills and workforce needs.

⁹⁴ Australian Government, [About GovAI](#), Australian Government, 2025, accessed 9 February 2026.

2026 Proposed Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Strategy

Public Skills Australia proposes the following strategy aligned to the workforce insights identified to support the Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sector.

1

Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government

Workforce Insight: Future of the Public Service

JSC Function: Industry Stewardship

Objective: To support the Federal and State/Territory public service in identifying future workforce skilling needs.

Approach: Using a strategic-foresight approach, convene 'Future Skills for the Public Service' workshops to identify future skilling needs across jurisdictions to support clarifying emerging skills gaps and identify where nationally accredited VET can support capability development.

Key Stakeholders

> Public Sector Commissions or equivalent

Proposed Deliverable: Findings report

Impact: To support the Federal and State/Territory Government public service by providing critical insight to the future needs of public service workforces which can support workforce planning.

Anticipated timing: 12-month project



Workforce Insights: Update on 2025 Strategies

Public Skills Australia's *2025 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* identified the following strategies to support identified workforce challenges:

1. Proposal to Review VET Traineeship and Apprenticeship Pathways into the Public Sector

2. Proposal to Conduct a Cross-Jurisdictional Current and Future Skills Audit for the Public Sector

1. Proposal to Review VET Traineeship and Apprenticeship Pathways into the Public Sector

The *2025 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* proposed to further scope the development of a strategy to investigate the consistency of implementation and outcomes from traineeship and apprenticeship programs in each public sector. The objective of the proposal was to determine if the consistency, accessibility and effectiveness of VET traineeship and apprenticeship pathways into public sector roles across Federal and State/Territory Governments should be investigated, mapped and good practice of the implementation of the programs identified.

Consultation on the proposal was undertaken with the following stakeholders:

Australian Public
Sector Commission

Queensland Public
Sector Commission

Community Public
Sector Commission

Department of Premier
and Cabinet – Tasmania

Victorian Public
Sector Commission

Western Australia Public
Sector Commission

After consultation, it was determined that the industry did not need to explore this further. However, stakeholders highlighted that there is further work for Public Skills Australia to do to support the industry-sector, regarding updating pre-existing PSP Public Sector Training Package qualifications.

2. Proposal to Conduct a Cross-Jurisdictional Current and Future Skills Audit for the Public Sector

In consultation with industry members on this proposal, further refinement to the scope and focus of the strategy has been made. This strategy is now proposed here as *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government*.

Project Updates

The following projects were identified as part of the *2024 Federal, State/Territory and Local Government Workforce Plan*:

- › Auslan, Interpreting and Translating Qualification Review
- › Review of Government Investigations Qualifications
- › Review of Procurement and Contracting Qualifications

An update on the progress of these projects is provided below.

Auslan, Interpreting and Translating Qualification Review

In response to the *2023 Disability Royal Commission Final Report*, Public Skills Australia has commenced a multiphase project to address the recommendation to improve access to Auslan language services. The aim of this project is to increase the number of Auslan interpreters and translators available to Federal and State/Territory Governments. This work supported the following strategic priorities:

Ministerial Priority 2026	The project will contribute to continuing to progress actions to consider and address barriers to participation in Auslan, interpreting and translating qualifications to support an increase in the number of qualified Auslan interpreters as identified in the final report from the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.
Public Skills Australia Strategic Plan	Support industry-sectors through high-quality training products.
Drivers of Change	Challenges to workforce inclusivity.

Following in-depth consultation with Deaf community members and training provider representatives, the resulting *Auslan Interpreting and Translating Final Report* identified a range of challenges in the design and implementation of the qualifications. The findings and recommendations from *Phase One* will be actioned in *Phase Two* to address these key challenges identified and update the qualifications in accordance with the *Training Package Organising Framework*. *Phase Two* will see the redesign of the Training Package.

Consultation for this project has been undertaken with the following stakeholders:

Australian Sign Language Interpreters & Translators Association (ASLITA)	Monash University
Deaf Blind Australia	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
Deafness Council WA	North Metropolitan TAFE
Deaf Connect	Professionals Australia – Translators and Interpreters Australia (TIA)
Deakin University	Queensland Government Department of Trade, Employment and Training
Financial, Administrative and Professional Services Training Council	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
Melbourne Polytechnic	TAFE NSW
Members of the Deaf Community	TAFE SA

Review of Government Investigations Qualifications

To ensure alignment with the Australian Government Investigation Standards (AGIS) 2022 and current operational practices, this project is reviewing three qualifications and a Skill Set in the Government Investigations stream of the *PSP Public Sector Training Package*.

Public Skills Australia has engaged with stakeholders, published a Skills Review and completed training product reviews. The training products are due to be consulted with stakeholders in early 2026. As a result of extensive industry engagement, a series of recommendations have been determined for this project. The outcome is to ensure that the Government Investigations Qualification stream is updated to remain compliant with legislative requirements and support the capability needs of the public sector. This project is due for completion in December of 2026. Consultation for this project has been undertaken with the following stakeholders:

Australian Federal Police	Australian Public Service Commission	Australian Skills Quality Authority	Community and Public Sector Union
Department of Defence	Department of Education	Department of Finance	

Review of Procurement and Contracting Qualifications

The Procurement and Contracting stream of the *PSP Public Sector Training Package* has not been updated since 2016 and no longer meets the requirements of contemporary procurement and contracting roles. This project aims to address the gaps between good practice, current legislative requirements and existing qualifications. As part of this project, several additional qualifications in the *PSP Public Sector Training Package* will be updated to incorporate modern procurement practices, emerging skills needs and address implementation challenges.

Public Skills Australia has published a Skills Review and has engaged with stakeholders to develop training products that the industry-sector requires. It has been identified that there are gaps in knowledge and skills requirements, and duplication of content across units of competency which will be consulted with stakeholders in early 2026. The intended outcome of this review is a contemporary qualification that can meet emerging capability requirements of the public sector. This project is due for completion in December of 2026. Consultation for this project has been undertaken with the following stakeholders:

Australian Procurement and Construction Council	Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
Australian Public Service Commission	Relevant State and Territory Agencies
Community and Public Sector Union	Senior Responsible Officers (SROs)
Department of Defence	State and Territory Public Sector Commissions
Federal Department of Finance	State and Territory Training Authorities / Training Councils (STTAs)
Public Service Association	



Existing Industry-Sector Strategies

State of the Service Reports

Federal and State/Territory Public Service Commissions or equivalent

Ongoing

The Federal Government's APSC and each state and territory's Public Service Commission or equivalent prepares yearly reports on the state of the public sector, called State of the Service Reports (the Reports). These reports are requirements under individual Federal and State/Territory Public Sector Acts.

Overall, these reports provide yearly data and insights about the public sector workforces in federal, state and territory public sectors, as well as any relevant workforce capability strategies or other relevant programs of work being undertaken to uplift the public sector.

The latest 2024-25 reports are:

- › APSC State of the Service Report 2024-25
- › ACT Government State of the Service Report 2024-25
- › QLD Public Sector Commission State of the sector report 2025
- › NSW Government Public Sector Report 2025
- › Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment NT State of the Service Report 2024-25
- › Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment SA State of the Sector 2025
- › Tasmanian Government State Service Workforce Report No 2 of 2025
- › Victorian Public Sector Commission Workforce data (state of the public sector) 2025
- › Public Sector Commission State of the WA Government Sector Workforce 2024-25

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

These Reports informed consultations with Federal and State/Territory Government stakeholders, as well as providing workforce data and insights.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Identifying future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government Project will be informed by insights and plans contained within the Reports, explaining how governments will address the future priority skilling areas within the public sector.

Further, *First Nations Government Education Pathway*, will be informed by the focus on diversity and inclusion targets and plans to improve participation, outlined within the Reports.

APS Reform Program

Australian Public Service Commission

2022 – 2025

The Government's *APS Reform Program* (the Program) was established to strengthen the public service, under four pillars of public service transformation:

- › Pillar 1: The APS embodies integrity in everything it does
- › Pillar 2: The APS puts people and business at the centre of policy and services
- › Pillar 3: The APS is a model employer
- › Pillar 4: The APS has the capability to do its job well

In 2025 there was significant progress embedding key reform principles especially on investing in skills development and embracing digital technologies and AI to deliver services.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Program provided information on the priorities for the APS that informed consultations, particularly in relation to where the APS is investing in capability uplift such as in digital technologies and AI.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Identifying future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government Project, will be informed by the initiatives being undertaken under the Program's *Pillar Four: The APS has the capability to do its job well*. These initiatives are focused on building a more effective and adaptable APS in the future.

NSW Public Service Commission Strategic Workforce Planning Framework

New South Wales Public Service Commission

Ongoing

The *NSWPS Commission Strategic Workforce Planning Framework* (the Framework) aims to assist agencies across the NSW Government sector to better understand and prepare for their future workforce needs.

The Framework outlines a practical, principles-based approach to implementing strategic workforce planning, which can be tailored to meet the circumstances and workforce needs of individual agencies.

The Framework has 5 stages of the planning cycle:

- › Align – align organisational strategy and Strategic Workforce Planning priorities
- › Compare – compare options to achieve outcomes
- › Identify – identify gaps
- › Implement – develop and implement the plan
- › Review – monitor, evaluate and revise

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Framework provided context on NSW Government's approach to strategic workforce planning, which informed Public Skills Australia's ongoing engagements with NSW stakeholders.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Capability gaps identified by NSWPS agencies during the workforce planning stage of the Framework will inform the project to *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government*.

NSW Skills Plan 2024-28: Building Skills and Shaping Success

New South Wales Department of Education

2024 – 2028

The *NSW Skills Plan 2024-28: Building Skills and Shaping Success* (the Plan), aligned with the Department of Education's 'Our Plan for Public Education', aims to strengthen the VET system and prepare the workforce for future challenges. The Plan focuses on essential skills in industries facing shortages, such as construction, digital, cyber and energy transition.

The Plan has five strategic priorities:

- › Priority 1: Target skilling responses to government priorities
- › Priority 2: Improve equitable outcomes, pathways and access for students
- › Priority 3: Strengthen industry and employer partnerships and skills governance
- › Priority 4: Build and support the NSW VET teaching workforce
- › Priority 5: Drive system responsiveness and innovation

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Plan provided context on NSW's strategy to address skills shortages informing engagements, specifically those consultations relating to identifying future skills needs.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government Project will be informed by the priority areas identified in the Plan. This Plan includes work being undertaken under *Priority 1: Target skilling responses to government priorities*, by the New South Wales Department of Education. This will include:

- › Establishing new skills insights data assets as public resources to support future-focused planning and system stewardship.
- › Delivering and supporting 2,300 new apprenticeships and traineeships across the NSW public and Local Government sectors to enhance capacity and support diverse and equitable pathways.
- › Establishing 3 Technical and Further Education (TAFE) NSW Centres of Excellence supported by Australian Government funding, to provide high-quality and responsive training in Critical Skills Areas.

NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025

NSW Public Service Commission

2019 – 2025

The *NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025* (the Strategy) was developed to build a culturally safe and capable NSW public sector that reflects the communities it serves, and where First Nations employees feel supported, respected, valued and empowered to pursue their career aspirations.

Initiatives in the 2024–25 Strategy focused on resources and initiatives to attract, retain and support a talented First Nations workforce and create inclusive and respectful workplaces for the First Nations workforce.

An independent review of the Strategy has commenced to assist in developing a successor Strategy for 2026 to 2030.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Strategy provided context for engagements and consultations with government stakeholders from NSW.

The Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) Workforce Strategy 2021-2026

Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment NT

2021 – 2026

The *NTPS Workforce Strategy 2021-2026* (the Strategy) aims to enhance the public sector's ability to deliver policies and services effectively. The Strategy focuses on building workforce capability with an emphasis on adaptability and resilience.

The Strategy has four goals:

- › Delivering Excellence
- › Leadership and Culture
- › Committed and Capable
- › Planning for our Future

As part of this Strategy, the Enterprise Work Experience Program supports talent pipeline development and fosters early interest in NTPS careers as it aims to increase student participation in Early Careers pathways.

A full evaluation of the Strategy is expected in 2026, which will inform the development of the new Strategy from 2027 onwards.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The strategy informed context on the NT's priorities relating to their future workforce, which further informed engagements and consultations.

Grow Your Own Regional Workforce Program

Jobs Queensland

2022 – 2032

The QLD Government's 2022-2025 Action Plan, *Good People, Good Jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032*, includes the 'Grow Your Own (GYO) Regional Workforce Program (the Program)'. This Program supports local stakeholders to identify workforce needs and plan for the skills required in their sectors to support community and economic goals.

To date the Program has provided \$4.5 million in support to 20 locally led workforce development projects over a three-year period up to 2025. Some of the reported accomplishments are the delivery of multiple regional environmental scans, commencement of implementing workforce development plans, launch of new training partnerships and micro-credentials and funding of five industry identified action projects to address future regional skills needs. Implementation of the Program is ongoing, and Jobs Queensland has selected five action-based projects for funding which were identified by industry and were to be undertaken in 2025.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Program provided context on the QLD Government's local workforce planning needs that informed engagements and consultations with QPS stakeholders.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Identifying future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government Project will be informed by this Program and will be used as a key part of the literature that informs this proposed project for research and development.

Queensland Government Workforce Planning: Agency Requirements

Queensland Public Sector Commission

Ongoing

The *QLD Government Workforce Planning: Agency Requirements* (the Initiative) outlines what agencies in the Queensland Public Service need to do to meet their strategic workforce planning obligations. The Initiative provide support and resources, while also enabling the agencies to build strategic workforce plans that line up with both sector and agency strategic objectives and any legislative requirements.

The Agency Planning Requirement Initiative for the 2026 planning period has been released.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Initiative provided context on Queensland Government's approach to workforce planning, specifically agency level requirements, which informed targeted engagements and consultations with various QLD government agencies. The ongoing Initiative will also inform future engagements with QLD Government stakeholder for future work at Public Skills Australia.

Queensland Public Sector Commission Even Better Public Sector for Queensland Strategy

Queensland Public Sector Commission

2024 – 2028

The 'Even Better Public Sector for Queensland' Strategy (the Strategy) provides guidance and support to enabling the sector to deliver advice and services to a high standard, with a series of goals to be achieved in a 5-year period to provide leadership and stewardship to the QPS. The overall aim is for a strong foundation across agencies to be implemented to facilitate ongoing success in the QPS.

The Strategy has three focus areas:

- › Focus area 1 – work
- › Focus area 2 – workforce
- › Focus area 3 – workplace

Since the release of the Strategy, workforce planning on building and maintaining the sector's core internal capability has been undertaken and the following professions have been identified for initial focus: HR, Digital and Policy.

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Strategy provided context on QLD government's service delivery priorities which informed consultation with government stakeholders and identified key occupational areas of focus for the QPS.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Identifying future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government Project, will be informed by this Strategy's Focus Area 2 – Workforce: *our people are ready to meet any challenge*, which will focus on responding to the following challenges:

- › increasing complex local and global needs,
- › skilling up for ongoing digital advancements, and
- › changing workforce demographics.

These outcomes will further inform skills needs research for the Federal and State/Territory industry-sectors.

Leading with Impact: Strategic Plan

Western Australia Public Sector Commission

2023 – 2026

The WAPS Commission's *Leading with Impact: Strategic Plan* (the Plan) has a primary focus on how and where the Commission adds the most value in developing a high performing and future fit sector.

The Plan has five strategic priorities:

- › [Priority 1](#): High impact leadership
- › [Priority 2](#): Effective workforce management
- › [Priority 3](#): Strong agency and individual capability
- › [Priority 4](#): Embedding integrity
- › [Priority 5](#): Trusted and capable Commission

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Plan provided context on the strategic priorities of the WAPS which informed consultations with stakeholders and will further inform future consultations around building capability in the WAPS.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Identifying future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government Project will be informed by work under the Plan's Priority 3.2: Strong agency and individual capability – Introduce a systemic learning approach for the public sector to ensure contemporary knowledge and skills and respond to emerging capability needs.

Victorian Public Service Commission Strategic Plan

Victorian Public Sector Commission

2023 – 2026

The *Victorian Public Sector Commission Strategic Plan* (the Plan) builds on the priorities set out in the Victorian Public Sector Commission's (VPSC) previous strategy and maintains the core functions in accordance with the Public Administration Act 2004.

The Plan is focused on four key outcomes:

- › A values-based, innovative, effective and connected public sector
- › A public sector that is apolitical, accountable and trusted
- › A diverse, adaptable and high-performing workforce
- › A capable and credible Commission that supports the Victorian public sector

How this informs Public Skills Australia's work

Consultation and engagement

The Plan provided context on the strategic directions of the VPS, which informed consultations with Victorian Government stakeholders.

2026 Workforce Strategies

Identifying future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government will be informed by work under the Plan on *Outcome 3: A diverse, adaptable and high-performing workforce*. This includes identifying and supporting pipeline critical capability needs such as improved recruitment of hard to fill roles.



Federal Government Initiatives

Public Skills Australia's work is informed and guided by the Federal Government initiatives detailed in the table below.

National Agreement on Closing the Gap (Closing the Gap)	
National Cabinet (Formerly Council of Australian Governments)	2020 – 2031
<i>Closing the Gap</i> is a commitment from all Australian governments and First Nation peoples representatives, to a fundamentally new way of developing and implementing policies and programs that impact the lives of First Nations peoples. This includes policies and programs impacting recruitment, health and social programs specific to First Nations peoples, which are relevant to the Public Safety and Government industry-sectors. <i>Closing the Gap</i> is jointly implemented by the Federal, State and Territory governments, along with Australian Local Government Associations and Coalitions of Peaks. It focuses on four priority reforms (strengthen formal partnerships and shared decision making; build the community-controlled sector; transform government organisations; and shared access to data) and 19 national socio-economic targets, covering areas such as life expectancy, education, employment, justice and child protection. Overall progress towards meeting <i>Closing the Gap</i> targets has been mixed. Implementation of <i>Closing the Gap</i> is ongoing to 2031. The Productivity Commission is tracking these targets. <i>Closing the Gap</i> performs a substantive role in informing Public Skills Australia's research and engagement efforts. <i>Closing the Gap</i> informed stakeholder consultation preparation as part of engagement for the <i>2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report</i>.	

The Australian Government's Strategic Priorities

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

2022 – 2026

The *Australian Government's strategic priorities* provide a four-year (2022-2026) policy direction for the APS and sets targets across key areas. These areas include the economy, public health and climate change.

The *Australian Government's strategic priorities* are into the final year of their implementation by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet with relevant APS departments and organisations. So far the Strategic Priorities, which have not been placed on set timelines, have achieved several outcomes, including hosting a Jobs and Skills Summit, developing a plan for cheaper child care, implementing fee-free TAFE and creating more university places, establishing the National Reconstruction Fund, introducing legislation for a national anti-corruption commission and strengthening strategic partnerships in the Pacific and South East Asia. Progress is still required for public health and aged care, improving housing supply and planning reforms and advancing government budget sustainability.

The “strong inclusive and sustainable economy” priority informed Public Skills Australia's approach to the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* and provided important context for stakeholder consultation preparation. These priorities also supported the development of the *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government* project.

Working for Women – A Strategy for Gender Equality

Australian Government – Minister for Women

2023 – ongoing

The *Working for Women* strategy outlines a framework for the Australian Government to improve national gender equality. It sets out five priority areas and reports on a range of outcomes and indicators annually to monitor Australia's progress.

These priority areas are:

- › Priority Area 1 – Gender-based violence
- › Priority Area 2 – Unpaid and paid care
- › Priority Area 3 – Economic equality and security
- › Priority Area 4 – Health
- › Priority Area 5 – Leadership, representation and decision-making

Specific to JSCs, Priority Area 3 focuses on improving gender pay gaps, supporting access to skills and training and reducing occupational and industrial gender segregation.

To date, the Australian Government has increased female recruitment into trades and other occupations through apprenticeship supports, fee-free TAFE and targets in the Australian Skills Guarantee, along with including gender equality as a national priority in the *National Skills Agreement*.

In March 2025, the Department for Workplace Relations launched the *Advancing Gender Equality in Gender Segregated Industries* grant program, directly linked to Priority Area 3. This grant program received a \$28.5 million extension in December 2025.

Priority Area 3 of the *Working for Women* strategy – addressing economic equality and security – directly informed the requirement for, and development of, the proposed strategy *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government*. This work will seek opportunities to identify where any gender-based differences in future skills requirements may exist.

The Clean Energy Generation: Workforce needs for a Net Zero Economy

Jobs and Skills Australia

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 employees to 84,000 employees by 2050.

The report makes 50 recommendations to support governments in focusing their efforts on how skills shortages can be averted in the set time, resources and legislative constraints and government objectives. Broadly, the recommendations cover the issue areas of participation and attraction, hiring and retention, transitioning employees and communities, roles and responsibilities, critical occupations, education and training and transport. Implementation remains ongoing and long-term, aligned with the 2050 net-zero target.

This series of reports, specifically, the recommendations made within the reports, informed preparation for stakeholder consultation as part of research and engagement for the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report*. These recommendations provided context on where skilling and occupational priorities may exist in Federal, State and Territory Government workforces.

Australian Cyber Security Strategy

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.

The Strategy is structured around six 'cyber shields' (strong citizens and businesses, safe technology, world-class threat sharing, protected critical infrastructure, sovereign capability and resilient regional/global leadership).

These are to be delivered in three stages or 'Horizons' (2023-2025 strengthening the foundations, 2026-2028 scaling efforts across the whole economy and 2029-2030 leading the development of new cyber technologies). Progress to date has been on the foundational aspects of the Strategy, with the initial work under 'Horizon 1' (2023-2025) concentrating on improving incident reporting and response mechanisms, introducing legislative reforms, piloting threat-sharing initiatives and raising government and critical infrastructure security standards. Overall coordination sits with the Department of Home Affairs, specifically through the Australian Cyber Security Coordinator. The remaining two horizons are to be implemented over the next four years up to 2030.

This ongoing cyber security work provided important contextual background for stakeholder consultation preparation for the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* and informed the need for the *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government*. Specifically, cyber security roles are identified as a current critical skills need, and there is a requirement to determine whether this demand will persist into the medium to long-term future.

Unlocking the Potential of VET

Qualification Reform Design Group

2024

In March 2024, the Qualification Reform Design Group (QRDG) provided advice to Skills Ministers on reforming the VET qualifications system. This included advising that:

- › Qualification and unit of competency design and development processes should be reviewed and updated where appropriate.
- › The VET system should be consolidated by removing training products that are underutilised or unnecessarily duplicated.
- › The Training Package Organising Framework should be updated, where necessary.

As a result, Public Skills Australia undertook a Demonstration Project that consulted widely to determine the efficacy of updating qualification and unit of competency templates. This report was delivered to the QRDG in Q3 2024.

In December 2024, the QRDG provided their final report and recommendations to Skills Ministers, based on national consultation and findings from the JSC Demonstration Projects. The recommendations from this report centred around modernising VET qualifications by implementing a purpose-led, principles-based approach to qualification design. As a result, JSCs are responsible for ensuring qualifications serve a clear purpose, are linked to workforce needs and are not unnecessarily duplicated.

The ongoing work of the QRDG regarding qualification reform continues to inform the method and intended outcomes for both the *Review of Government Investigations Qualifications* and *Review of Procurement and Contracting Qualifications* projects.

Occupation Standard Classification for Australia

Australian Bureau of Statistics

2024 – ongoing

Formerly known as the Australia New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupation (ANZSCO), the Occupation Standard Classification for Australia (OSCA) is a standardised framework for classifying occupations in Australia. As part of the replacement process from ANZSCO to OSCA in 2024, the ABS announced that OSCA will undergo regular updates in accordance with the OSCA Maintenance Strategy, which was released in 2025.

Changes to OSCA outlined in the Maintenance Strategy involve stakeholder engagement and are timed to ensure that each Census of Population and Housing uses the most recent update. Under the Strategy, the first round of consultations and feedback with stakeholders on proposed changes to OSCA are scheduled to be completed in August 2026, with the next update to be published in March 2027 before the data release of the 2026 Census in October 2027.

Public Skills Australia continues to utilise, where possible, the most contemporary version of OSCA to ensure our occupational insights remain relevant and in-line with whole-of-economy standards.

2024 Core Skills Occupation List – Key Findings Report

Jobs and Skills Australia

2024 – ongoing

The Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL) provides labour market analysis that informs the identification of occupations that are considered appropriate for employer-sponsored temporary migration through the Core Skills Stream of the Skills in Demand (SID) Visa.

The 2024 CSOL Key Findings Report compiled a list of 456 occupations considered appropriate for the Core Skills Stream of the new employer-sponsored temporary SID visa. In addition to updating the list, JSA examined the drivers of skill shortages through CSOL analysis and stakeholder engagement and identified a 'suitability gap' category – occupations where there are enough qualified applicants, but they are not regarded as suitable by employers (e.g. auditors, electronics engineers, software and applications programmers). JSA also identified a 'retention gap' category – occupations with below-average rates of retention such as construction and hospitality jobs and child carers. JSA's consultations to inform the 2025 CSOL opened in August 2025 and JSA submitted its advice to Government for consideration in October 2025.

In conjunction with the Jobs and Skills Australia *Occupational Shortage List*, the CSOL (specifically the 2025 CSOL Targeted for Consultation Group) provided important context for stakeholder consultation preparation for the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report*. These lists indicate on a national level where specific occupation demands currently exist and enabled Public Skills Australia to proactively pursue conversations with Federal, State and Territory Government stakeholders on whether these demands exist within their contexts.

Better Together – The Jobs and Skills Report 2024

Jobs and Skills Australia

2024 – ongoing

Better Together was released in November 2024 as part of JSA's mandated obligations to provide insight on the Australian labour market and advice on workforce needs and priorities. It details evidence aligned to five strategic pillars to enable a more prosperous economic future, including:

- › **Fostering inclusive participation:** Focused on broadening employment opportunities through identifying and removing barriers for people and communities.
- › **Understanding today's workforce:** Detailing data to build an evidence base that informs and addresses current and emerging labour market and skills needs.
- › **Shaping Australia's future workforce:** Projecting forward to plan for the opportunities and challenges of Australia's future workforce needs.
- › **Optimising pathways and system architecture:** Monitoring, analysing and advising on the effectiveness of the VET system as key to skilling the workforce.
- › **Activating an informed dialogue:** Detailing stakeholder engagement across the VET system to provide the best evidence and advice on Australia's current and future workforce and skills needs and opportunities.

Better Together outlines JSA's key current and emerging datasets that provide useful insights on the intricacies of Australia's labour market for use in development of strategic workforce planning for the JSCs. Please note JSA released an updated version of this iterative report in November 2025, *Connecting for impact – The Jobs and Skills Report 2025*, which will inform the 2027 Workforce Insights Reports.

The outcomes of *Better Together* provided important context on whole-of-economy skilling and training needs. Specific to the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report*, these outcomes informed the development of the *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government* proposed workforce strategy that aims to ensure this industry-sector maintains a future-ready workforce.

Training Package Organising Framework

Skills and Workforce Ministerial Council

2025 – ongoing

In July 2025, the *Training Package Organising Framework* (TPOF) was updated based on advice from the QRDG in December 2024. Housing the Training Package Products Development and Endorsement Process Policy (TPPDEPP), Training Package Products Policy (TPPP) and the Standards for Training Packages, the TPOF, sets out the process for developing and seeking approval of new VET training products for JSCs. As a JSC, Public Skills Australia will continue to adhere to the TPOF to ensure the Australian VET system is high-performing and readily supports student and industry needs.

The updated TPOF provides specific guidance to all projects that may result in changes to any training products. This includes both 2025 strategies, *Review of Government Investigations Qualifications* and *Review of Procurement and Contracting Qualifications*.

Five Pillars of Productivity Inquiries – Final Reports

Productivity Commission

2025 – ongoing

The Productivity Commission has provided 47 recommendations across 'five pillars' of productivity policy:

- › Creating a more dynamic and resilient economy
- › Building a skilled and adaptable workforce
- › Harnessing data and digital technology
- › Delivering quality care more efficiently
- › Investing in cheaper, cleaner energy and the net zero transformation

At the time of drafting this report, the Australian Government is yet to provide response to the recommendations.

The recommendations from this report provided important context for preparing for stakeholder consultation and informed the need for the proposed *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government* project. Specifically, Public Skills Australia acknowledges the importance of aligning the future skills needs of the Federal, State and Territory Government to whole-of-economy productivity goals.

Opportunity and Productivity: Towards a Tertiary Harmonisation Roadmap Report

Jobs and Skills Australia

The *Opportunity and Productivity: Towards a tertiary Harmonisation Roadmap Report* seeks to articulate the benefits of a more harmonised tertiary sector and provides recommendations on how to create a sustainable pathway forward in collaboration with key stakeholders. It outlines 19 key recommendations, across three categories (enabling the tertiary harmonisation roadmap, early priorities for the roadmap and medium-term horizon roadmap priorities) to work towards a harmonised system that can tackle national challenges, address skilled workforce shortages and improve productivity.

This Report provided important context in preparation for stakeholder consultation for the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report* through its emphasis on productivity, improved student experience and enhancing inflows of appropriately skilled individuals into the workforce.

Gender Economic Equality Study

Jobs and Skills Australia

2025 – ongoing

The *Gender Economic Equality Study* explored three challenges for the jobs and skills systems that contribute to gender economic inequality:

- › occupational segregation
- › pay gaps and gendered divides in the education
- › training and skills systems

The study was reported over three papers, with the third and final paper *Speeding up progress towards gender economic equality* being released in October 2025. This paper sets out 10 recommendations to address challenges in the jobs and skills system that perpetuate inequality and impact productivity:

1. Deliver a three-year 'Shifting the Dial on Gender Segregation' action and evaluation agenda
2. Introduce early career learning into schools to intervene earlier in gendered study choices
3. Embed gender targets and reporting across future National Skills Agreements
4. Coordinate national action to reduce gender segregation in VET pathways for shortage occupations
5. Support First Nation women through a standalone economy-wide plan
6. Accelerate inclusive, safe and respectful workplaces and training settings
7. Normalise men's participation in paid and unpaid care work
8. Adopt the Gender Segregation Intensity Scale (GSIS) to guide and measure progress
9. Further address gender bias in labour market and skills frameworks
10. Expand research, data and intersectional analysis to strengthen accountability

Like the Working for Women strategy, the Gender Economic Equality Study has directly informed the requirement for, and development of, the proposed strategy *Identify future skills needs for Federal and State/Territory Government*. This work will seek opportunities to identify where any gender-based differences in future skills requirements may exist.

Occupational Shortage List

Jobs and Skills Australia

Ongoing

The *Occupational Shortage List* (OSL), which was formerly the Skills Priority List, offers an annual point-in-time review of the status of Australian occupations. Specifically, the OSL reports on whether occupations (at the 4-digit and 6-digit ANZSCO level, and the 6-digit OSCA level) are experiencing shortages nationally and for each state and territory in regional or metropolitan areas.

The OSL was last updated in 2025. The latest OSL differed from previous iterations due to the fact that in 2024 the ANZSCO classification framework for occupations was replaced with the OSCA framework. In terms of the 2025 OSL results, it was reported that 29 per cent of occupations (293 out of 1022 assessed) were in national shortage, which was 4 per cent lower than 2024 (33 per cent) and more than 7 per cent lower than 2023 (36 per cent). The OSL in 2025 also added 29 occupations newly in shortage compared to 2024, most of which were roles related to health, science, technicians and trades and machinery operators and drivers. As of February 2026, JSA had started the 2026 OSL survey but it had not yet confirmed a publication date for this year's list.

The OSL provided important context for stakeholder consultation preparation for the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report*. This list indicates on a national level where specific occupation demands currently exist and enabled Public Skills Australia to proactively pursue conversations with Federal, State and Territory Government stakeholders on whether these demands exist within their contexts.

2027 and Beyond

Public Skills Australia has built on the *2024 Workforce Plans* and the *2025 Government Workforce Insights Reports* to deliver the *2026 Federal and State/Territory Government Workforce Insights Report*. These reports continue to be the strategic centrepiece guiding annual Business Plans for Public Skills Australia, alongside Ministerial, industry-sector and other priorities (e.g. Royal Commissions and Inquiries).

The *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* will focus on broader priorities detailed below and may be delivered throughout 2026/27:

- › Inclusion and participation of First Nations people, women and other genders in the Public Safety and Government workforces.
- › The use of AI and digital transformation and the impact of these technologies on the Public Safety and Government Workforces.

Additionally, the *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* will focus on any other emerging priorities impacting Federal and State/Territory Government industry-sectors including building capability within the public service to be future ready.

Beyond these focused lines of inquiry, the *2027 Workforce Insights Reports* will seek to examine the impact of the Drivers of Change identified in this year's reports on our industry-sector workforces.





Public Skills Australia is one of ten Jobs and Skills Councils.

Jobs and Skills Councils enable the modern and responsive skilled workforces that are required for Australia to prosper. Skilled workforces underpin our strong economy, allowing us to keep living standards high.

We lead efforts to make sure Australia has the right workers, with the right skills, that our nation needs.

2026 FEDERAL AND STATE/
TERRITORY GOVERNMENT
WORKFORCE INSIGHTS REPORT



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