



ACT
Government

ACTPS 2025 Taskforce Report

April 2025



We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

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PART 1 – INTRODUCTION AND PRELIMINARIES

1. In late 2024, the ACT Government announced that changes would be made to the structure of the ACT Public Service (ACTPS), including the amalgamation of several existing directorates to be implemented by 1 July 2025. These are known as Machinery of Government (MoG) changes and include the following:
 - a. Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS), the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD), Access Canberra (AC) and some related regulatory functions in Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) to come together as one new Directorate; and
 - b. the Community Services Directorate (CSD) and ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) to come together to form a second new Directorate.
2. These changes are designed to support an ACTPS structure that is primed to deliver the Government's priorities and meet the community and stakeholder expectations about its services.

ACT PUBLIC SERVICE 2025 TASKFORCE

3. The Chief Minister subsequently announced that in order to ensure the smoothest transition possible a Taskforce, the ACT Public Service 2025 Taskforce (the Taskforce), would be established and led by Caroline Edwards PSM to review the structure and capabilities of teams to undergo the MoG and make recommendations as to how the proceed in furtherance of the Government's objective.
4. The Head of Service seconded a small project team to support the work of the Taskforce with particular focus on governance and policy, human resources and industrial relations, communication and engagement, finance and administrative support.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

5. The Terms of Reference for the work of the Taskforce (Appendix 1) were agreed by Government and made available on 5 February 2025 as the governing document for the operation of the Taskforce.

DISCOVERY AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

6. An extensive consultation and discovery process was undertaken in order that the Taskforce could gain a solid understanding of the current operating procedures of the ACTPS and gather insights. This included meeting with staff, management and others to discuss the MoG, canvass views on how best to proceed, listen to ideas on how the ACTPS can best deliver the priorities of government and better services to the community. This phase occurred primarily between 10 January and 28 February 2025 although some meetings and site visits continued during March and early April.
7. The phase comprised;
 - a. Creation of an Information Hub webpage to house information about the ACTPS 2025 Taskforce, and frequently asked questions (FAQs). These have been updated regularly to provide the most up-to-date information and respond to questions being asked.

- b. Regular emails (in most cases weekly) providing a recap of the week's activities, detailed information on how to get involved and voice opinions and including links to updated FAQs and other information.
 - c. More than 140 meetings were held across the Government, the ACTPS and beyond to discuss the MoG and related issues – details of all meetings are set out in Appendix 2.
 - d. Six town hall meetings in the week of 24 February 2025, each led by the Taskforce and a Directors-General or Senior Executive of one of the affected directorates. Three of these meetings were conducted online, and three were held in person at the following locations ACTPS office locations: 220 London Circuit, Canberra City; Bowes Street, Phillip; and 480 Northbourne Avenue, Dickson. In total, 1201 staff registered for these meetings, and 114 questions were asked and responded to. A summary of the issues raised at these meetings is at Appendix 3A.
 - e. Six lunchtime small group sessions were held in the week of 17 February 2025 for interested staff at the non-Senior Executive Service (SES) level from the affected directorates. In total, 64 staff attended these sessions, and each question asked was responded to and collated as part of overall themes in the summary report at Appendix 3B.
 - f. All ACTPS staff were:
 - i. provided with a link to a survey via the Intranet and email. 882 surveys were completed with 510 free text responses provided (an overall summary of survey responses is collated at Appendix 3C.
 - ii. encouraged to email the taskforce team or me directly with ideas, concerns and information. 535 emails were sent to the taskforce inbox (as of 3/4/2025) and over 3000 emails to my personal inbox.
 - g. In addition to meetings with representatives of individual unions (included in Appendix 2), meetings were convened on two occasions to which all unions party to the relevant Enterprise Agreements were invited; 4 February 2025 and 4 March 2025. A total of 12 union representatives attended these meetings and 15 questions were asked and responded to.
8. 311 stakeholders were sent letters via email, providing information about the MoG, inviting them to complete a stakeholder survey and to email me or the team with any issues. In total, 15 stakeholders completed the survey, along with additional emails sent directly to me and the ACTPS 2025 Taskforce shared inbox and some requested meetings.
9. SES offices and executives currently on long term leave were contacted through a formal letter via the Chief Operating Officers within affected Directorates. This communication outlined various methods for them to stay connected and actively participate in providing their insights and suggestions. A number of these staff made contact and had meetings to discuss the MoG.
10. I conducted 17 in-person site visits to various ACTPS locations, including:
- a. Access Canberra Service Centre – Woden
 - b. Bus Depots – Tuggeranong and Belconnen
 - c. Capital Linen Services – Mitchell
 - d. Child and Family Centre – Gungahlin

- e. Canberra Memorial Park – Gungahlin
- f. Domestic Animal Services – Symonston
- g. Housing ACT Central Access Point – Belconnen
- h. Libraries ACT – Heritage Library, Fyshwick
- i. Libraries ACT – Kippax
- j. Motor Vehicle Inspection Station – Hume
- k. Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm – Paddy’s River
- l. Office of Nature Conservation – Dickson and Mulunggari Nature Reserve
- m. Parks and Conversation Depots – Mitchell and Tidbinbilla
- n. Traffic Management Centre - Fyshwick
- o. Yarralumla Nursery – Yarralumla

WHAT WE HEARD DURING DISCOVERY AND ENGAGEMENT

11. The discovery and engagement process provided a greater understanding of frontline operational roles and comprehensive insights into staff concerns and ideas. It assisted in defining issues from various perspectives to enhance my understanding of the current landscape and inform my recommendations.
12. As I note throughout this report, many of the key issues discussed and my recommendations are driven by what I heard and saw during the consultation.
13. Central insights arising from the consultation include:
 - a. Throughout the process I met and saw the work of committed, skilled people working hard to provide excellent service to Canberrans. I was particularly impressed with the teams working most directly on service delivery who demonstrated enthusiasm, and commitment and were clearly on the constant look out for innovation and improved service delivery and outcomes. I would refer to the Bus Operation, the Gungahlin Children and Family Centre, the Capital Linen Service and the Ngunnawal Healing farm as examples although they were by no means the only ones.
 - b. There was also positive and thoughtful engagement by staff throughout the affected Directorates about the upcoming MoG about how they might leverage the change to improve outcomes and advance their careers. Many people took up the invitation to provide ideas about how the new structure might look and many of those ideas are part of the recommended approach. I have been particularly impressed at the close collaboration which has been established between COO and corporate areas – especially with respect to TCCS, EPSDD and Access Canberra – and the planning which is already underway between them will be of major assistance in the MoG transition.
14. Staff were virtually unanimous in their support for more standardised processes and systems across the ACTPS and for greater engagement and movement of staff within and between Directorates.
15. I also heard frequently about high workloads, and that staff were often faced with multiple competing priorities and a desire for clearer communication, more long-term planning and greater visibility of and

direction from executives. In this regard the top 3 ranked priorities nominated as important to staff in the online survey were a positive organisational culture, streamlined work functions and processes and clear work roles and responsibilities.

16. One issue I would have liked to have heard more about was interaction with the business community. The role that commercial enterprises play in the life of the city is important in all policy areas and there is scope to enhance this relationship and foster further collaboration with business.
17. I finished the consultation process with much gratitude for the manner in which so many people engaged, for the ideas and insights which were generously provided and which greatly enriched my understanding of the ACTPS and its work.

PART 2 – PRINCIPLES FOR DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT CHANGES

KEY PRINCIPLES

18. The core task of the Review has been to recommend an approach for the coming together of the affected directorates into two new entities (Part 3) and to recommend the process for that implementation (Part 4). Having regard to my assessment of current ACTPS structures and processes, the result of the consultations, and in order to ensure that my recommendation in this regard meet the aims of the Government, I have applied several key principles to this task.

Culture is key

19. A topic which arose in virtually every meeting – and in the responses to the survey - related to the insufficiency of structural changes in themselves to yield operational changes and efficiencies. It was broadly acknowledged that cultural change and excellent leadership must accompany the changes to directorates if they are to be a success. There is no doubt that the ACTPS is populated by skilled and committed officers who are dedicated to achieving better outcome for the Canberra community. However, my observation, and the outcomes of the consultations, indicate that the ACTPS can also be risk averse and may not always be positioned to implement Government priorities promptly. This observation bears upon the Chief Minister's commitment to focus more closely on service delivery, an aim which requires timely, decisive action.
20. In my assessment the structural changes need to enable and facilitate cultural change in the following respects:
- a. development of a new unified sense of purpose across each of the new directorates;
 - b. a greater sense of urgency for delivery of outputs;
 - c. an overarching service focused and outcomes-based approach;
 - d. enhanced one service commitment and sense of cooperation within and between directorates;
 - e. support and reward for problem solving and timely decision making;
 - f. enhanced engagement with the community including a greater focus on business across all Directorates; and
 - g. greater commitment by Directorates to financial discipline and financial transparency.
21. As a general position, my observation was that a culture of collaboration and service delivery was strongest in those work units operating closest to the ground and especially where the day-to-day work involves interaction with members of the community. Given the relatively small size of the ACT, there is scope to leverage the way in which direct contact with Canberrans can increase a citizen-centric, service delivery driven culture.
22. The coming together of structures can facilitate this work but the key to cultural change is the quality of leadership and the extent to which reform is authorised by the Chief Minister, Ministers and the Head of Service. The incoming Directors-General and their senior teams will need to set clear direction, be highly visible in the communication of those priorities and engage closely with staff at all levels. This

activity can be challenging among a dispersed workforce which is taking advantage of flexible work arrangements. However, my work engaging with staff across the affected directorates and beyond has indicated that staff are keen to engage and participate in a process aimed to deliver better services to Canberrans.

23. One central area in which I see the need for cultural change and where the current structure tends to impede such evolution relates to the consideration of development proposals. While the overall policy is for an outcomes-based approach, the siloed and rules bound process of entity referrals - as well as a reluctance to make decisions about relative priorities - has tended to frustrate the timely progress of developments which are of value to the community, and which align with Government priorities. I therefore recommend below includes a new function aimed to overcome these problems and embed a collaborative, outcomes focussed and problem-solving culture (see paragraph 66-68).
24. Leaders should clearly communicate that initiative and innovation are genuinely valued and that mistakes – duly admitted – are part of the process of making decisions, implementing initiatives and delivering service in a way that balances quality with the need for prompt effective action. Throughout the engagement period there have been some great ideas from staff at all levels to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Both the bringing forward and the trial and implementation of such ideas should be encouraged at all times as part of setting a continuing improvement culture.
25. Given the centrality of the need to facilitate cultural change, I have considered closely the extent to which creation of the new directorates should comprise a radical departure from the current structures. In this regard, I have balanced the need for sufficient change to ensure progress towards the aims of the endeavour with an appreciation that disruption to service delivery and for staff should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. In this regard I am also aware that other processes are coinciding with these structural changes including the current recruitment pause and clear indications from the Government that there are significant financial pressures looming.
26. I have attempted to take a measured approach, recommending changes which set up the new directorates for full integration on the basis that the incoming leadership be responsible for continuing the process over time.
27. A timely selection of the right leaders for this task will be essential as I discuss in paragraph 89-93 in Part 4 below.
28. One element which contributes to culture is the need for the staff and leadership to be part of and understand the community they serve. While the engagement of staff at a distance should be considered for limited periods for compassionate reasons or to obtain specialist skills not otherwise available in Canberra, these should be rare and frequently reviewed. The current guidelines in this regard are broadly consistent with this view but do not appear to be strictly applied or centrally monitored.
29. In particular, staff in the SES – especially but not limited to those responsible for operational areas – should be permanently located close to the services they oversee.

Nomenclature – names matter

30. The titles attributed to directorates, work units and officers are a front-line point of engagement between Canberrans and the Government which serves them. The names should therefore be chosen with the perspective of the end user in mind. Long titles and complicated acronyms should be avoided, as should duplication and use of terms which are not readily understandable. For example, the titles

attached to the important roles of ‘senior practitioner’ and ‘chief practitioner’ within CSD provide very limited insight into the nature of the roles or the difference between them. I have recommended new terms which better describe their responsibilities.

31. For similar reasons, I favour retaining names which are already well known and understood in the community. This includes retaining the ‘Access Canberra’ brand within the new directorate.

Minimising ministerial reporting lines

32. The complexity of reporting lines and the desire to simplify the relationship between directorates and work units and Ministers has been a continual refrain in the consultations – from Ministers, SES leaders, stakeholders and staff alike. For this reason, efforts have been made to reduce and streamline reporting lines. However, the complexity of modern government and the (appropriate) commitment in the ACT of taking a multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary approach to issues affecting Canberrans does not allow for crisp lines in every instance. The recommendations reflect this tension. Nonetheless, it might be warranted to make minor adjustments to ministerial allocations in the Administrative Arrangements to coincide with the MoG.

Spans of control

33. The terms of reference anticipate the possibility of reduced SES officers across the affected directorates. However, I have not been provided a target for reduction or asked to provide a specific saving as a result. Instead, I have applied a core organisational principle that every officer should be operating within their maximum range of skill and ability. This means ensuring that decision-making and responsibility lie with the most junior qualified officer and not be pulled up the management hierarchy. SES officers should have broad responsibilities and focus on management and leadership rather than taking on the duties of more junior officers.
34. I favour a clear reporting structure where each SES officer has least 3-4 units within their purview and all sections led by a SOGA or a SOGB report to an Executive Branch Manager (EBM). This is to ensure that lines of accountability and strategic oversight are clear and that all teams have access to guidance and attention. This span of control also ensures that SES officers focus on their senior responsibilities and do not usurp the duties of those in their teams.
35. I would note that notwithstanding my preference for a more traditional structure, I strongly encourage all SES to maintain a high level of visibility with all staff and not to limit their engagement to direct reports. Anecdotal reports are that many of the most senior leaders of the ACTPS are rarely seen on the ground. Ensuring that the appropriate officer is aware of and responsible for their work unit does not preclude broad frequent communication, walking the halls (and virtual halls), visiting work sites, depots and service centres, calling frequent larger meetings and inviting staff at all levels to be part of and see core functions. In fact, my experience meeting with, presenting to and visiting work units all over the ACTPS, has demonstrated that staff at all levels are calling for and highly value this type of engagement by senior leadership.

Increased policy capability

36. An increased and more responsive policy capability is a key deliverable of the MoG. It is important to note that many excellent policy officers already work in the ACTPS and that exceptional and nation leading initiatives are a hallmark of the Government and the city. Maintaining and growing this capability long term depends on the ACTPS being an attractive employer. In addition, a reputation for robust, progressive policy development is in itself an attraction for prospective staff.

37. The structural changes to come into effect can leverage this process. Where appropriate, I favour grouping policy functions and creating larger teams to allow a broader range of skills, greater internal collaboration and more flexibility in allocation of projects and tasks. Importantly, the cultural evolution discussed above, which values innovation and supports broad communication and collaboration as well as an appropriate appetite for risk – that is, to try new things – is important in this regard.
38. A clearer focus on core policy capabilities would also be facilitated by a decluttering of policy, strategies and action plans as I discuss at paragraphs 157-158 below.

Shopfronts, call centres and direct service delivery

39. A core aim of the Government and of the upcoming structural changes is to increase the focus on and quality of service to the community. I have been keen to facilitate the maximum reach of the ACTPS into the community and the scope for interaction between an ACTPS employee and a member of the public to be as accessible and comprehensive as possible. To this end, I recommend the movement of some work units but also the alignment of related or similar functions to facilitate the ongoing collaboration between them and the combination of services and activities.
40. Opportunities for creative collaboration exist across all areas of the ACTPS. A good example already in operation is how the bus services work across other agencies to make use of their disperse network and specialised equipment. They work with police so that bus drivers are on the look-out for missing persons and ensure that their heavy vehicle towing equipment can be used by fire and emergency services.
41. The overarching principle should be that every public facing avenue, shopfront, call centre and member of field staff should be equipped and prepared to deal with as many issues as possible.
42. For example, the range of calls which can be dealt with by Access Canberra should be broadened to cover as many enquiries from Canberrans as possible. Of course, more complicated issues or those needing specialised knowledge will need to be transferred to an officer in the relevant policy directorate but the wider single front door will improve accessibility for callers and relieve specialist staff from calls which can be simply answered. This will reduce the need for multiple call centres across and within other directorates.
43. The same approach should be applied for any shopfront open to the public such as the Access Canberra service centres and the Belconnen public housing office (Housing Gateway). Some important integration is already occurring in locations including at libraries, health centres, and child and family centres but there is scope to expand and formalise these efforts. All locations should be able to deal with the broadest possible range of enquiries and be equipped to help and refer issues. Similarly, Rangers of all descriptions should have the opportunity to collaborate and move between work units.
44. To be clear, these changes will often need to be carefully planned to ensure adequate training for staff and security and support for vulnerable Canberrans, but it should be the overall aspiration that there is no wrong door.
45. As well as improving accessibility and service for the Canberra community, this approach increases the opportunities for staff to learn new skills and expand career opportunities.
46. I recommend a new structure that is designed to facilitate this approach, noting that there will be a need for sustained and long-term commitment to the principle to maximise the opportunities presented.

ACT Planning System Governance Review

47. The terms of reference of this Review require that I consider any relevant reports and refer specifically to consideration of the ACT Planning System Governance Review¹ (PEG Review). That review has direct relevance to my report as it deals with structural arrangements with respect to the planning function and the extent of any potential for an actual or perceived conflict of interest in the making of statutory decisions. Of particular focus was the dual role held, at the time, of the Director-General and the Chief Planner but also the relative structural arrangements and reporting lines applying to other statutory offices to whom entity referrals are made including the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.

48. Although the review made some recommendations aimed at improving planning governance, it did not conclude that there were any major concerns regarding the conferral of such functions upon public servants. It found that:

‘The Chief Planner role can be occupied by a senior public servant. It is common and acceptable practice, particularly in smaller jurisdictions, that statutory office positions requiring the exercise of independent judgement are held concurrently with public service roles.’²

49. Further, the review found that the frameworks in place were effective and that no inappropriate action had occurred as a result of the dual roles held by officers with the planning regime.

50. As observed by the Chief Minister in his statement to the Legislative Assembly in response to the Review³:

‘The reviewers note that the dual role of Director-General and Chief Planner has ensured that treatments are in place to manage the governance challenges presented by holding the two roles, and, again, that there is no evidence that the integrity of decision-making in the planning process has been compromised by this dual role arrangement. I cannot reiterate enough that the review has not raised any concerns with integrity and, in fact, goes so far as to commend the current Director-General for their adept handling of any potential conflict of duties through arms-length delegations and a considered structure within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.....’⁴

‘There is no default need to create separate independent offices to allow statutory officeholders who are also public servants to provide independent advice to ministers. As the review notes, ACT public servants hold statutory roles and exercise statutory functions, and they do so every day.’⁵

51. Public servants who are responsible for statutory decisions are, and should be, absolutely required to perform those functions with integrity and in accordance with the law and the codes of conduct to which they are subject. Transparency and due management and scrutiny of decision-making are key here. The structure within which officers are located is not a major influence. Nothing in the PEG Review nor in my research across the service has indicated any shortfall in current processes.

¹ ACT Planning System Governance Review Final Report, PEG Consulting, https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/2464871/ACT-Planning-System-Governance-Review-Final-Report.PDF,

² page 15

³ ACT Planning System Review and Reform Project independent review – update – Ministerial Statement, Andrew Barr MLA, Chief Minister <https://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/10th-assembly/2024/PDF/20240606.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/10th-assembly/2024/PDF/20240606.pdf> Page 1469

⁵ <https://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/10th-assembly/2024/PDF/20240606.pdf> Page 1470

52. For this reason, the new structure I recommend is not designed with these issues at the forefront. Nonetheless, I continue to favour the conferral of the Chief Planner role on an Executive Group Manager (EGM) and I do so on the basis that this is the best level for decision making of this type. Conversely, Directors-General and Deputy Directors-General should focus on leadership, financial management, strategic pursuit of the priorities of the Government and the delivery of excellent services to the community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and functions

53. The place and role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and of functions which deliver specific services for or policy development in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has been a frequent topic raised during consultations.
54. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are major assets for the ACTPS and the functions are a high priority for the Government. Areas of particular priority include work to increase cultural safety within the ACTPS and the work to implement the Priority Reforms set out in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. A number of staff expressed concern that they were not set up in the manner by which they could best achieve the outcomes to which the Government has committed.
55. Core areas within the affected directorates include the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, the Aboriginal Service Development Branch, the Health Partnerships team, the operational staff for the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm, the Cultural Adviser in TCCS and the similar role in EPSDD. It is also worth noting the functions of the Cultural Transformation Branch in CMTEDD and important work being done in other Directorates.
56. During consultations, proposals have been put forward to merge some or all these functions and areas, or to move them to within the CMTEDD. At the same time, some staff have raised significant concerns about the prospect of any such amalgamation. Some staff were concerned that roles are insufficiently defined especially having regard to the dual areas of policy and program delivery. There was, however, a broad view that greater linkage between the various areas performing roles in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait people would be positive.
57. I have also received numerous representations from potentially affected staff raising specific sensitivities in relation to individual and community relationships and concerns about some of the functions performed by the affected directorates notably child protection functions. Similarly, some Aboriginal staff felt that their managers and the senior executive did not always appreciate the cultural load they bear under their dual hats of public servants and members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (three hats in the case of Canberra region traditional owners). Another concern was that the connections which staff held with and within the community be acknowledged and that maintenance of those links be prioritised.
58. This is clearly a sensitive and important topic with much at stake for the Government, the service as a whole and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and I have had neither the time nor the cultural permission to explore it fully. I am also aware, and have been reminded during this process, of the need to carefully and comprehensively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community and that rushing that engagement can be counter-productive at best and insulting at worse. For these reasons, I am recommending minimal change in relation to the structure of these teams as part of the directorate structures due to come into effect by 1 July 2025.

59. The limited changes I do recommend are to bring together the operational and policy areas of the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm and Aboriginal Health Partnerships and to ensure a position of central influence in the new City and Environment Directorate structure for directorate Cultural Advisers.
60. The work of the ACT Government in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs remains vitally important and I recommend that the new Directors-General continue to engage with affected and interested staff on the best way to progress it. It may be that structural changes become valuable at a later time or there are other mechanisms to increase the focus and success of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agenda. My limited recommendations on this topic reflect the need to carefully work through issues in a manner supported and led by staff over a longer period and I would urge this to occur.
61. Enhancement of and facilitating links amongst Aboriginal and Torres staff and between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander related functions might be a first step. Suggestions from staff in this regard included the revitalisation and elevated status of the existing IDC structure and providing a clearer pathway between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and senior executive to ensure these voices are heard.

PART 3 – RECOMMENDED STRUCTURES

EPSDD, TCCS AND ACCESS CANBERRA TO BECOME A SINGLE CITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

62. EPSDD and TCCS are to come together with Access Canberra and the Better Regulation team from CMTEDD (Better Regulation Taskforce) to form a new Directorate. This Report also recommends a number of additional moves into and out of the directorate (see especially Key Attributes below and Part 5 *Functions Recommended for External Move*). The new directorate is to be called the City and Environment Directorate. In accordance with the principles at paragraph 30, the final name of the directorate should be short and descriptive of its functions from the point of view of the community.
63. In order to meet the announced aims of the Government in progressing with the MoG, and facilitate the required cultural change, the recommended approach for the City and Environment Directorate is that it reflect the Principles for Design and Implementation of Machinery of Government Changes set out in Part 2, the Key Attributes set out below and the other recommendations of this report.
64. As part of the work of the Taskforce, indicative structure charts for the City and Environment Directorate will be provided to the Head of Service. Administrative structures by nature involve arbitrary demarcations and the indicative structure should be adjusted having regard to further consultation and as needed in the face of changing circumstance and Government priorities during implementation. It would not be appropriate to distribute the indicative structure chart further at this stage.

Key attributes of the City and Environment Directorate

65. In terms of senior executive, the new structure will comprise a Director-General and two permanent Deputy Directors-General as well as a time limited Deputy Director-General who will be responsible for corporates services and a MoG implementation team to implement and settle the new structure, track progress and arrange for evaluation of the impact of the changes. Importantly this Deputy Director-General will be responsible for some core strategic priorities, change management, the integration of teams and the development of a shared culture. Once the new structures are bedded down, the MoG group can be disbanded and the corporate services area collapsed under another Deputy Director-General or report directly to the Director-General.
66. As I foreshadow above, in recommending this structure, I have had particular regard to the need for faster and more streamlined decision making in relation to proposals for development including the statutory processes of Development Applications. To this end, I have recommended the creation of a new function to be placed within the Directorate. That new branch, Development Solutions, will be a front door for engagement with Government on building and development matters and will manage a streamlined and coordinated process of entity referrals. It will amalgamate as many of the entity referral areas as possible and build a stronger interface with those that are external to the Directorate namely Icon Water, and EVO Energy. Core to its responsibilities will be ensuring prompt and consistent entity advice and a culture of cooperation and problem solving between entities to ensure that as many issues as possible are resolved before the decision maker is required to exercise statutory power. Staff will be required to maintain strong links with operational areas and be expected to thoroughly raise issues early and definitively.

67. The current arrangements are not primed for streamlined consideration of proposed new activity. Rigid entity referrals advice (say for example in relation to traffic) can prevent a project from going ahead without sufficient consideration given to how those issues can be resolved over time and / or whether those issues might be outweighed by the economic and social benefits for the community. The proposed new team would be charged with working through these issues early to provide the decision maker with a plan for success rather than a blunt barrier. The decision maker would thereby be presented with coordinated entity comments making the assessment process clear and maintaining the integrity of that statutory function. At the same time, the new function would be able to identify early those proposals which will not be able to overcome concerns and issues and hence avoid costly and time-consuming preparations for a development which is not viable or appropriate. Of course, the work of the team in problem solving about development would still be subject to the statutory approval decision hence maintaining adequate checks and balances.
68. The new Development Solutions branch should sit with a centralised policy and coordination group.
69. In accordance with the Chief Minister's push for focus on service delivery, on the ground operations and service delivery will be within one group. Given the size and priority of these municipal services type functions, they should be managed across two branches within the group instead of the current one. This will ensure due executive attention noting that the two branches will be expected to work very closely. The operations of the Parks and Conservation service will be with the same group so that synergies can be explored.
70. The new structure should move towards grouping policy functions together and separately from regulation. The NoWaste and Roads areas will be particularly affected in this regard and the senior executive may choose to stagger these moves over time. functions such as those in the NoWaste and Roads areas.
71. A streamlined structure will be implemented for all the environment, climate change and energy functions with all teams reporting through EBM's to one EGM (see rationale in paragraph 34 above). This includes folding in the Office of Water as well as waste policy and the functions of the Conservator of Flora and Fauna. This approach will increase alignment and collaboration within the functions and be responsive to policy decisions made by the Government and the Minister.
72. In large part, the current structure of Access Canberra should retain its current form so as to continue to leverage the advantages of its brand recognition and what I have observed to be solutions driven and customer focussed culture. The new Director-General and senior staff will likely increase integration over time. The limited changes that are initially envisaged include:
- a. The Construction and Planning Regulation branch will move to report to the Chief Planner to reflect the alignment of the functions and to balance workloads across the Directorate.
 - b. The Better Regulation team from CMTEDD will be co-located with other data and policy functions to leverage resources and expertise.
 - c. The Libraries branch will move into the Access Canberra stream with the expectation that this function will work closely with the Access Canberra Contact Centres and will move to increase its link with services for vulnerable people. It is proposed that the Heritage Library be separated from other libraries and moved to align with Archives located with the Territory Records Office in Policy and Cabinet, CMTEDD.
 - d. All appropriate phone enquiry lines currently managed by TCCS will transition into the Access Canberra contact centre commencing with:

- i. Canberra Memorial Parks;
 - ii. ACTION MyWay;
 - iii. ACT No Waste;
 - iv. Domestic Animal Services; and
 - v. Flexible Transport.
 - e. The Access Canberra Resolution Support team will take on complaints from TCCS and other relevant complaint processes.
 - f. Access Canberra service centres to commence preparations to be able to deal with public housing enquiries (including receiving Applications for Housing and for Rental Rebate) and with a view to expanding the service offering over time.
 - g. Subject to appropriate training, functions and powers will be cross delegated between city rangers, Domestic Animal Services Rangers and parking and speed operators. Overtime consideration should also be given to cross delegation of appropriate functions with ACT Parks and Conservation Service rangers.
 - h. Corporate, digital and IT elements of Access Canberra currently in the Corporate Support and Capability branch will be incorporated into whole of directorate corporate services or appropriately referred to the proposed new Digital and IT Directorate (paragraphs 106-120 below).
 - i. The remaining functions of the Loose Fill Asbestos Coordination section currently in the Development and Implementation Group of EPSDD (engaging with a small number of householders) should be absorbed with the Access Canberra structure.
 - j. The Chair of the Gaming and Racing Commission raised concerns as to the level of support provided to the Commission by Access Canberra. However, I have taken the view that those issues are best dealt in negotiation with the senior management of Access Canberra and the responsible policy agency as opposed to requiring structural change, at least in the first instance.
73. As foreshadowed in paragraph 59 above, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural adviser function should be attached to and report directly to the DDG responsible for corporate operations.

Recommendation 1

EPSDD and TCCS come together with Access Canberra and the Better Regulation team from CMTEDD (Better Regulation Taskforce) to form a new Directorate⁶ called the City and Environment Directorate. The new directorate should reflect the Principles for Design and Implementation of Machinery of Government Changes set out in Part 2, the Key Attributes set out above and the other recommendations of this Report.

⁶ I note that the more efficient and straightforward technical process may be to retain one of the existing directorates and move the remaining functions into it. While this approach should be adopted if it saves on administration, the change should be treated and characterised as creation of a new body for all other purposes and should be messaged accordingly.

ACT HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATES TO BECOME TO BECOME A SINGLE HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

74. ACT Health and CSD are to come together to form a new Directorate. This Report also recommends a number of additional moves out of the directorate (see especially Key Attributes below and Part 5 *Functions Recommended for External Move*). The new directorate is to be called the Health and Community Services Directorate for the balance of this report. In accordance with the principles at paragraph 30, the final name of the directorate should be short and descriptive of its functions from the point of view of the community.
75. In order to meet the announced aims of the Government in progressing with the MoG, and facilitate the required cultural change, the recommended approach for the Health and Community Services Directorate is that it reflect the Principles for Design and Implementation of Machinery of Government Changes set out in Part 2, the key attributes set out below and the other recommendations of this report.
76. As part of the work of the Taskforce, indicative structure charts for the Health and Community Services Directorate will be provided to the Head of Service. Administrative structures by nature involve arbitrary demarcations and the indicative structure should be adjusted having regard to further consultation and as needed in the face of changing circumstance and Government priorities during implementation. It would not be appropriate to distribute the indicative structure chart further at this stage.

Key attributes of the Health and Community Services Directorate

77. In terms of senior executive, the new structure comprises a Director General and two permanent Deputy Directors-General as well as a time limited Deputy Director-General who will be responsible for corporate services and a MoG implementation team to implement and settle the new structure, track progress and arrange for evaluation of the impact of the changes. Importantly this Deputy Director-General will be responsible for change management, the integration of teams and the development of a shared culture. Once the new structures are bedded down, the MoG group can be disbanded and the corporate services area collapsed under another Deputy Director-General or report directly to the Director-General.
78. In recommending these changes, I have had particular regard to the need for closer and more collaborative service provision to vulnerable Canberrans whose health and special services needs frequently align and currently overlap. I am also aware of the need to reduce administrative burden on service providers in contract and reporting obligations and streamline relationship management as much as possible. External stakeholders of the current directorates referred to difficulty in navigating to the right area and the recommended approach aims to improve the transparency of which function lies in which team. To this end, policy teams should be co-located as should other teams with comparable functions. This will allow economies of scale, greater collaboration and easier navigation by stakeholders.
79. The structure supporting the functions of child protection and youth justice (Children, Youth and Families) would remain largely unchanged within the recommended new Directorate on the basis that the area has recently been restructured and that these functions are particularly sensitive and critical.
80. I have also been concerned to ensure that the relationship and collaboration between the Health and Community Services Directorate and Canberra Health Services (CHS) is supported to the greatest extent possible:

- a. A key consequence of this approach relates to the Digital Solutions Division (DSD) which is a topic of real dispute and concern as between the Health Directorate and CHS. I have concluded that rather than attempt to arbitrate between the two entities, the dispute is best resolved by moving the entire division (along with other IT and digital functions across the service) to a new dedicated IT directorate. This proposal is discussed at paragraphs 106--120 below.
 - b. A further area which both the Health Directorate and CHS believe should be situated with them is the research ethics and governance function, under the Research Ethics and Governance Office (REGO). Both make an argument for its oversight. On balance I have concluded that it should transfer out to CHS in accordance with the view of the former Chair of ACT Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and the preference of key staff.
 - c. The Child Development Service – which currently sits in the Inclusion Division of CSD - has been the subject of much interest given that this early intervention service is partly clinical and partly an expert social service for families. It also has clear links with education and is central to the work to establish foundational supports. I have concluded that it should remain with the Health and Community Services Directorate following the MoG alongside other operational areas, at least for the immediate term. However, I would strongly encourage all relevant areas to work together to collaborate on and streamline processes including the work needed to fully integrate services and avoid duplicate waiting lists for families.
81. In terms of the broader leadership team for the new structure, I have recommended changes to some senior positions (see discussion of rationale at paragraphs 157-158 in relation to coordinators-general and senior officers and paragraphs 33-35 in relation to hierarchies and spans of control). The recommended changes are:
- a. As the role of Coordinator-General for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) has already been combined with a Deputy Director-General role in the existing CSD, the title of Coordinator-General should be retired. This should in no way diminish the focus on convening and pressing for collaboration and action in combatting DFSV under the new structures or the priority given to this critical work. However, given the skills and resources required, the function of Death Review Coordinator (*Domestic Violence Agencies Act 1986*) as well as the Children and Young People Death Review Committee function (*Children and Young People Act 2008*) would more properly sit with the Coroner going forward.
 - b. Cessation of the role of Coordinator-General for Mental Health with those functions to be rolled into a new Mental Health division. This new strengthened division will reflect that a single minister is now responsible for mental health as well as physical health and will be responsible for mental health policy, reporting and program delivery as is appropriate in this high priority area. The current functions currently overseen by the Coordinator-General should transition into and continue within the new structure subject to further consideration by the Minister and senior executive.
 - c. The Chief Health Officer role will return to a stand-alone function (with dedicated staff) to focus more directly on the important statutory and other public health functions of the position. The role will be grouped with the other clinical ‘chiefs’ where it will also be joined by the Chief Pharmacist and ACT Government Laboratories.
82. In relation to infrastructure, I have noted that significant infrastructure projects are in process of transfer to Infrastructure Canberra (iCBR) in accordance with MoG decisions of December 2024. In order, to streamline the residual arrangements for infrastructure, I recommend:

- a. the remaining elements of the establishment of the North Canberra Hospital project (in relation to property acquisition compensation) be transferred to Treasury due to the nature of the work and as the relevant officers are already reporting to the Under-Treasurer.
 - b. the Health and Community Services Directorate retain only a strategic planning function in relation to infrastructure (for example new Child and Family Centres as the operational delivery sits with the directorate). In the exercise of this function the Directorate should collaborate as closely as possible with CHS so as to minimise the scope for duplication and to avoid the emergence of a three-way split in views between the Health and Community Services Directorate, iCBR and CHS.
 - c. the implementation of commitments to increase the public housing stock be transferred to iCBR (Growth and Renewal), noting the strategic planning function for the type of housing needed for tenants would remain with the Health and Community Services Directorate.
83. On the related matter of implementing the Government's commitments to insourcing, I note that the Facilities Insourcing Taskforce from Housing Assistance in CSD is due to transfer to iCBR. To streamline and drive the overall process of implementing the new service delivery model, I recommend that the function of managing the public housing maintenance contract transfers with and is situated within the Facilities Insourcing Taskforce in iCBR. In addition, I note that other areas of the ACTPS are progressing insourcing projects and issues. While these teams are outside the scope of my Terms of Reference, it might be appropriate to also implement a single coordinated approach for all this work.
84. I closely considered a potential move of the Canberra Multicultural Festival to Events ACT within CMTEDD, especially given the high risk, profile and importance of the festival the community. However, I have been persuaded that the unique need for close engagement with various local communities in preparation for and staging of the event means that it should remain with the functions that currently sit with the Office of Multicultural affairs. While I am not recommending the move, I urge a much greater level of collaboration, shared operations and capability development between the Multicultural Festival and Events ACT who are responsible for the majority of other ACT Government planned and managed events.
85. As foreshadowed in paragraph 59 above, the Health Partnerships team responsible for policy in relation to the Ngunnawal Healing Farm should be co-located in a branch with the Healing Farm operations.
86. Whilst not anticipated by the formal Terms of Reference, I am proposing that the Office for LGBTIQ+ be moved from CMTEDD to the Health and Community Services Directorate to maximise the benefits of collation of social policy functions. This move will help realise benefits of streamlining policy functions in the Health and Community Services Directorate.

Recommendation 2

Health and Community Services Directorates come together to form a new Directorate called the Health and Community Services Directorate⁷. The new directorate should reflect the Principles for Design and Implementation of Machinery of Government Changes set out in Part 2, the Key Attributes set out above and the other recommendations of this Report.

⁷ I note that the more efficient and straightforward technical process may be to retain one of the existing directorates and move the remaining functions into it. While this approach should be adopted if it saves on administration, the change should be treated and characterisation as creation of a new body for all other purposes and should be messaged accordingly.

PART 4 - IMPLEMENTING THE MOG CHANGES

TIMING

87. The Terms of Reference require that the changes occur by 1 July 2025. I have considered a range of factors including the desirability of acting quickly in the interest of staff and stakeholder certainty and moving to improved arrangements rapidly. However, given the task of building new budgets, engaging Directors-General, and possibly other senior staff for the new entity and the low general familiarity and corporate history with major MoG processes in the ACTPS, I have concluded that the best course is to recommend a 1 July 2025 date for commencement of the new Administrative Arrangements. This will allow sufficient time to prepare for and commence the task of change management.
88. To allow preparations to occur apace in advance, I recommend that the Administrative Arrangements be executed prior and as soon as possible but with an effective date of 1 July 2025.

Recommendation 3

The Administrative Arrangements to bring the MoG into effect is made as soon as possible with a commencement date of 1 July 2025.

LEADERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

89. Above all, the success of the structural changes will depend on the quality of the leadership. Each of the new directorates will need an exceptional leader both to land the structural changes, influence the culture and deliver the ambitious agenda that Government has set out.
90. For this reason, I strongly recommend that a recruitment for these positions commence immediately and that the process include a broad search and open competition. In this regard, there would be value in combining this process with the filling of other Director-General level positions currently vacant within the ACTPS. This would save on the cost of the recruitment process but also enable a broad field to be attracted among a 'buzz' of new leadership in the ACTPS.
91. The Deputy Director-General level will also be central to the appropriate embedding of the new arrangements. Many of the current officers occupying these roles are exceptional but there are several vacancies. There are also many officers at the EGM level who would relish the opportunity to take on a Deputy Director-General role and persons all over Australia with essential skills and leadership expertise who might be attracted.
92. For this reason, I would favour an open recruitment process including external search for Deputy Director-General positions across the affected directorates and possibly beyond to add the new leadership 'buzz' and to ensure that the best, most enthusiastic and skilled officers are in place as early as possible in the lives of the new directorates.
93. To be clear, I do not favour or recommend such recruitment for any officers below the Deputy Director-General level. Executive positions below the DDG level should be filled with existing SES officers.

Recommendation 4

The recruitment of Directors-General for the City and Environment Directorate and the Health and Community Services Directorate commence immediately and that there be an open recruitment process to fill the Deputy Director-General positions in the affected Directorates.

Movement of staff into the new structures

94. The movement of staff from current structures into the new arrangements has been perhaps the greatest area of concern amongst officers at all levels and the issue with greatest potential to cause distress. It could also be complicated and resource intensive if a cumbersome process were to be adopted. For these reasons, I am recommending the most straightforward approach possible as follows:

a. The Director-General to be responsible

The Director-General of the City and Environment Directorate and the Health and Community Services Directorate be responsible for the process of staff movement into the new structures and delegated required powers and functions by the Head of Service to the maximum extent possible.

b. Staff to follow function

This shortly stated principle is the core premise of MoG activity and should be applied as fundamental. In most cases the current staffing structure will translate directly into the new structure meaning that most people take their current responsibilities into the new arrangements. This approach minimises disruption to service delivery and productivity and delivers least uncertainty. To facilitate this approach, I favour Branch structures being retained wherever possible.

In some cases, the principle of 'staff follow function' may lead to a misalignment of staff numbers in some areas – perhaps notably in corporate areas. However, I do not expect this immediately to be the case as corporate functions will tend to peak at the time of the MoG coming into effect as processes are combined and re-designed to match the new entity. This is especially the case as some staff can be mapped into the new MoG implementation teams.

c. Director-General to match unplaced staff within the new structure

For any staff that do not neatly match into the new structure, the incoming Director-General and senior staff would be responsible for allocating staff at level into new positions. This would be in furtherance of more a more flexible approach to mobility which I discuss at paragraphs 135-141 below.

Communication with the affected staff and due regard to their views and preferences will be mandatory during these processes and as outlined in Enterprise Agreements.

In some instances, staff may appropriately be transferred into other Directorates with a need for officers at the relevant level and with the relevant skills. I would expect Directors-General to work together in this regard. In addition to frequent informal discussions, a purpose specific Working Group might be required with major issues raised at Strategic Board as appropriate.

Director-Generals would be at liberty to decide in any particular instance that a competitive process is required.

d. SES movements – EBMs and EGMs to be similarly managed

The above principles should also be applied with respect to Band 1 and Band 2 SES officers with those who cannot follow function being matched with a new role and or able to compete in a competitive process for a particular position.

e. Excess SES officers to be managed in accordance with existing procedures

In the case SES officers who cannot be placed in the new structure (or do not win a role in the case of Deputy Directors-General) the existing excess officers processes to apply which would be

managed by Directorates in consultation with the [Excess Officer Redeployment Guidelines](#) owned by the Office for Industrial Relation and Workforce Strategy.

f. Mobility rounds to be offered

I also recommend that the incoming Directors-General consider one or more mobility rounds in which officers are invited to express interest in a move. These processes can be invoked during the MoG and or at regular intervals afterwards and are a useful mechanism to offer career development, opportunities, facilitate new thinking and generally refresh the workforce.

Recommendation 5

Movement of staff and SES Band 1 and Band 2 officers be moved in the new structure in accordance with the principles(a) to (f) above.

Not a substitute for performance management

95. The movement of staff which is inherent in a MoG process is not a reason to delay, avoid or otherwise act in relation to poor performance, complaints of bullying or other conduct contrary to the values and code of conduct of the ACTPS. Any officer for whom issues have been raised is entitled to swift, fair and proportionate reaction and the complainant, if any, is entitled to timely feedback on the outcome of their complaint.

96. The structural changes of the affected directorates should not impede these processes in any way.

MoG teams, change management tracking and evaluation

97. As has been discussed during the consultations, many of the tasks inherent in implementation of the MoG will occur after the formal changes have come into effect. In fact, I am of the view that many of these tasks, such as rationalisation of corporate functions, stakeholder management, ensuring staff are aligned with most important priorities and facilitating greater collaboration are best performed under the direction of newly appointed Directors-General and their senior staff.

98. It is for these reasons that I have recommended a dedicated MoG implementation team in each of the two new entities and would propose that these be established as soon as possible, preferably well in advance of the 1 July date, and that they be in place for a period of up to 12 months. These teams should be drawn from within the impacted directorates and will be responsible for planning and guiding implementation of the MoG and for overseeing the change management process. While I appreciate the need for tight financial discipline, I take the view that the establishment of these teams will be essential for smooth transition and to avoid service delivery disruption. I have proposed that these be led at the EGM level at least initially and have links through to all areas of the new directorate especially the corporate areas.

99. These same teams should be charged with the task of tracking the progress of the MoG, reporting on that progress and recommending how and when the success of the changes should be evaluated. It may not be necessary to have formal external evaluation of the MoG but a process should be included to gather learnings from the process and to advise senior leadership on aspects that should be accelerated, delayed, or reversed or order to meet the original intentions and cater for developing circumstances.

Recommendation 6

MoG implementation teams be established in both the City and Environment Directorate and Health and Community Services Directorate as soon as possible and preferably well in advance of the 1 July 2025 effective date.

Location of staff

100. I am aware that location changes can impact heavily on staff including for arrangements such as meeting family responsibilities. As a result of the impact on workers, I would place a low priority on all but absolutely critical physical moves.
101. I do not expect that the MOG will require physical relocation of teams at any scale. Some senior leaders may need to move to be located nearer their new reports and there may be consequential moves for small numbers of individuals. The existing Activity Based Work and Flexible Working Arrangements in place for many ACTPS staff already provides the flexibility and virtual mechanisms for teams to connect and collaborate from across Canberra.
102. Over time, leaders may move to incorporate physical moves into the new arrangements and importantly cross delegation and collaboration between functions may warrant these physical changes.
103. This view does not exclude physical moves which might be required as a result of changes in the overall property footprint of the ACTPS, for example as the result of the end of a lease. Any such changes that might be required may be able to support the structural changes to directorates, but that eventuality would be independent of this MoG.

PART 5 - FUNCTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR EXTERNAL MOVE

104. This Report anticipates some transfers of functions from the affected directorates to elsewhere in the ACTPS. These have been noted above and include transfer of the Heritage Library to Territory Records in Policy and Cabinet within CMTEDD, some health research functions to CHS, additional infrastructure moves to iCBR and the potential move of the oversight of death review functions to the Coroner. I have also recommended the move of the Office of LGBTIQ+ to the Health and Community Services Directorate for reasons set out at paragraph 86.
105. Beyond these consequential matters, two major external transfers of function are recommended in relation to IT and digital functions across the ACTPS and the management and future development of ACT owned business enterprises currently located within TCCS.

IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROJECTS

106. Digital systems are at the heart of modern public administration and the IT infrastructure, systems and workforce of the ACTPS are among its most crucial assets. High quality internal and public facing digital operations are core to efficient and effective service delivery and to overall communication and administration.
107. At the same time, the development and introduction of new systems and the upgrade and ongoing support for existing systems are among the major budget pressures for the ACT and for governments everywhere.
108. Issues with recent major IT projects – notably the abandoned Human Resource Information Management System (HRIMS) project, the Digital Health Record (DHR) and issues with the roll out of MyWay+ ticketing system – were raised with me frequently by Ministers, SES officers, external stakeholders and staff. I am also aware of various proposals within the affected directorates for new or augmented systems. The proposed e-Development system is an example as is the pressing need to move the public housing systems away from paper. Getting these projects right and ensuring reliable, secure digital systems for all operations of the ACTPS is both among the highest priority for action and comprises the highest risk for business continuity and financial constraint.
109. Concerns about the DHR were raised during discussions. Other investigations and review have been held or are in train to examine the project's governance and outcomes and I have not attempted to pre-empt them here. However, the ongoing difference of opinion between the Health Directorate and CHS as to how the DHR should be controlled is a significant, continuing issue.
110. Added to the issues associated with the MyWay+ ticketing system and HRIMS, this position has led to the perception that the ACTPS is not well positioned to deliver complex IT issues and a lack of confidence in existing structures.
111. It seems clear that, although the Digital, Data and Technology Solutions (DDTS) area of CMTEDD has worked hard to try to improve the how IT is governed, the information from the centre is often treated more as guidance than directive. Directorates have tended to run projects in house and at arms-length from DDTS. This position poses a major risk for the ACT in financial terms, in terms of project management of new projects, and in terms of potential duplication and lack of consistency.
112. Meanwhile, it is essential to note that there is much to be commended about the IT systems in the ACT. Notwithstanding the ongoing concerns about the implementation of the DHR, the product from a

patient standpoint is nation leading and a major asset for the ACT health system. Many of the shared service IT systems also deliver well for the ACTPS even though the failure of the HRIMS project leaves the service without a core tool. It should also be said that the failure of major IT projects is in no way a unique occurrence in the ACT as is demonstrated by numerous failed projects Australia wide.

113. Nonetheless, the overall position has persuaded me of the need to make significant change to the way IT is managed and projects progressed in the ACT. I recommend a centralisation of all IT functions – major projects, minor projects and upgrades as well as business as usual IT management and oversight. This would allow a fresh and standard approach to be imposed across all systems and for IT relative priorities to be set on a whole of service basis. It would also provide the platform for the implementation of best practice project management and strict budget discipline for all new initiatives.
114. My preferred option in this regard is the creation of a new stand-alone, but time limited, directorate to deal with IT and implement an overall reset. It might be called Digital and IT Canberra. In this scenario, I would anticipate the new arrangements being in place for an initial period of 2 years, after which time, the arrangements be reviewed to assess the best manner to deal with the portfolio going forward. At that time, options are likely to include: continuing the stand-alone directorate; re-decentralisation of some functions; and merger into iCBR on the basis that IT should be treated as infrastructure and in the same way as property and construction projects. The complexity of the change required to extract and amalgamate all IT functions into a new entity may require a longer time frame than the 1 July 2025 start date set for other changes.
115. I am conscious that this option would be expensive given the need for an additional Director-General and all the administration and accountabilities that come with a directorate. However, it would be the optimal mechanism to give IT due focus and to fully remedy actual and perceived shortcomings.
116. Another option would be to proceed to transfer the IT functions into iCBR immediately. However, I do not favour this approach as iCBR is already in a period of major growth and transition and the addition of extra responsibilities at this time would be high risk. There would, however, be value in pairing the new Directorate with iCBR, minimising duplication and the need to create new structures by sharing back-end processes between the two Directorates and placing the Director-General of iCBR on key governance bodies in relation to IT.
117. Of course, as with any centralised function, Digital and IT Canberra will need to work closely with directorates to set and deliver on specifications for the business area. Each directorate should retain a Chief Information Officer who engages day to day with the line directorate but reports back through to the new entity.
118. As I have recommended in relation to financial management below, the status of IT systems and projects should be a regular item for Strategic Board based on a clear traffic light reporting template brought by the Director-General of Digital and IT Canberra.
119. The recruitment of the Director-General could commence as part of the process to recruit the new Directors-General of the City and Environment Directorate and the Health and Community Services Directorate (as outlined at paragraphs 89-93).
120. Should this recommendation not be accepted, or is not able to be implemented by July 2025, an alternative would be to move only projects over a set threshold to iCBR (for example \$25 million). This would add rigour and project management capability to major projects but not deliver on the need to reset the overall portfolio nor resolve the disagreement over responsibility for the DHR.

Recommendation 7

Establishment of a time limited Digital and IT Directorate to manage all Digital and IT functions across the ACTPS commencing on a date to be determined and to be reviewed after an initial two-year period.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

121. Several vibrant businesses are managed within the auspices of the TCCS directorate. I have been impressed with the business models in place and the staff and executive who operate them. My visits to the Yarralumla Nursery and the Capital Linen Service also revealed the excellent efforts being made by these businesses to pursue diverse employment outcomes for Canberrans and the opportunity to expand on these benefits.
122. These businesses are an asset to the ACT and maintain in house commercial activity which both provides a service for other areas of Government and delivers high quality services to the community.
123. A third commercial business currently sits within the Territory and Business Services Group of TCCS, namely Canberra Memorial Parks (the trading name for the Cemeteries and Crematoria Authority). While also a commercial business, this entity is a statutory authority established under the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2020*. The Authority currently manages and operates three public cemeteries at Gungahlin, Woden and Hall and a crematorium on the grounds of Gungahlin Cemetery. It provides a sensitive service with clear strategic and operational priorities that include improving the share of the cremation market and expanding, diversifying and innovating service offerings to meet contemporary community needs.
124. The ACT Government's retention of businesses of this type is unusual across the states and territories and ensures that Canberrans have retained access to publicly owned commercial service provision. However, the management of these businesses within the ordinary public service structure presents issues and risks for these commercial entities and for the Government.
125. Firstly, they are often frustrated and their processes complicated in having to comply with public service systems. Public service procurement arrangements tend to impede commercial agility and there can be a mismatch of financial systems given the need to account for trading income. They are also reliant on budget processes for capital injection and funding. For example, the capital infrastructure renewal program for the Capital Linen Service is dependent on budget decisions rather than part of a business planning process as would be the case for other comparable businesses. This can mean that machinery is being serviced beyond its expected life span with a consequential risk to its functionality and hence ability to manage business continuity.
126. In addition, the environment in which these enterprises can or should compete for business has the potential to run foul of competition principles – or at least be perceived to do so – as they have guaranteed Government customers and the benefit of Government as a background manager and financial guarantor. The businesses also absorb public service executive time in circumstances where they are better suited to have genuinely commercial management structures.
127. In my view, these businesses should be retained by the ACT but moved towards a more typical corporate structure to ensure they operate on a level commercial playing field and can operate on a truly commercial basis.
128. At the same time, I see enormous potential in moving these businesses towards social enterprise status to exchange their current ad hoc but longstanding use of employees from disadvantaged groups

for a comprehensive strategy. A corporate structure with a constitution that guarantees ongoing 100 percent ACT Government ownership and social enterprise objectives for employment outcomes would be the optimal approach.

129. To move towards this transformation, I recommend that the businesses be transferred into Economic Development within CMTEDD. Economic Development is best placed to manage this process due to their business development expertise and responsibility for social enterprise programs in the ACT Government.

Recommendation 8

The Yarralumla Nursery, Capital Linen Service and Canberra Memorial Parks be transferred to Economic Development in CMTEDD for a program of reform to transform them to 100 percent ACT owned corporate commercial bodies with social enterprise objectives to be pursued with respect to employment of disadvantaged Canberrans.

PART 6 – OVERALL OBSERVATIONS AND SERVICE WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

130. The Terms of Reference for this Report are prefaced on the principle of ‘One Service’ which entrenches “a responsibility to work cooperatively to ensure a whole of government focus supported by a core value of Collaboration”. I have approached this Review with the aim of building on this approach in the context of the MoG and in relation to processes and policies which apply to the affected directorates. On this point, input to the consultation process was virtually unanimous across all levels of the ACTPS that further efforts should be made to standardise processes, policies and procedures across the affected Directorates and beyond. In my view, an alignment of core processes will facilitate the smooth transition to the new structure, increase efficiencies and provide better accountabilities and clarity in the work done by the ACTPS.
131. To illustrate the current position, I extract below a table prepared jointly by the Chief Operating Officers (COOs) of EPSDD, TCCS and Access Canberra⁸ that maps the governance of IT and digital arrangements operating in their respective agencies.

Governance (Frameworks, Strategies, Policies, etc)		
EPSDD	TCCS	Access Canberra
Documents Published: • EPSDD Data Strategy 2022-25 • EPSDD Digital Transformation Strategy 2021-26 (unfit-for-purpose and needs to be replaced) • TCCS/EPSSDD GIS Strategy 2024-26 • Geospatial Ecosystem Spatial Metadata Guide (2023) • Geospatial Deliverable Standard (2024) • Open Data Release and Sharing Guide(2024) • Cyber Security Resilience Plan (2024) • Data Breach Response Plan (2024) • Secure Data Sharing Guide (2024) • External Data Sourcing Guide (2024) • EPSDD AI Adoption Strategy (2024) • Geospatial Ecosystem Governance Framework (2025) • Project Governance Framework and Guidelines (2025) Bodies: • Digital and Data Governance Steering Committee (DDGSC) – subcommittee of Executive Management Board (EMB) • Technology Advisory Group (TAG) • Environment, Heritage, and Water Data & ICT Group • Geospatial Ecosystem Steering Committee (GESCI) • Geospatial Ecosystem Technical Advisory Group (GETAG)	• TCCS Digital and Technology Strategy 2023-28 • Data Strategy (update to include AI) • Cyber Strategy (pending) • GIS/Geospatial Strategy (Shared with EPSDD??) • Project Management Framework (part of Governance and Ministerials – PMO – including ICT lead by CIO Branch) • Field Services Design and Operating procedures (Salesforce) Bodies: • Digital and Technology Committee (sub-committee of TCCS Exec Board) • Geospatial Ecosystem Steering Committee (joint with EPSDD) • Geospatial Ecosystem Technical Advisory Group (joint with EPSDD) • Field Services Prioritisation Committee • Field Services FRISBEE – Technical Steering Committee • Project-based Steering Committees or Boards and working groups • SARB and SAWG: Salesforce Architecture Review Board and Working Group.	Documents: • Access Canberra Digital Strategy 2023-26 • Project Governance Framework • Project Management Framework (under review) • Design and Analysis Framework • Information Security Framework • Testing Framework (Draft) Bodies: • ICT Project Advisory Group (ICTPAG) • Digital Design and Delivery Portfolio Steering Committee • Project-based working groups and advisory groups • Access Canberra Project Governance Board (sub-committee of ACEM responsible for all project governance across Access Canberra)

Categories:
 *shared with other Directorates/agencies
 <add a category here and use colour codes>

132. The duplication and divergent approaches even within this one area of operation are stark and demonstrate the value which could be gained in standardising arrangements.
133. Similarly, many other processes, policies and procedures would also benefit from simplification and reduction in administration. On this basis, I favour a shift towards principle-based approaches which rely on the exercise of judgment by responsible officers in a transparent and accountable manner with minimum possible process.

Recommendation 9

An overall principle of driving towards standard processes and procedures, with policies to be adopted to progress the principle of one service, facilitating collaboration and mobility between works units, freeing up staff from the performance of unnecessary administration and improving financial visibility. This process should commence immediately, be service wide and be factored into business planning.

⁸ As I note above, the work being done by COOs and other officers in EPSDD, TCCS and Access Canberra to join with their counterparts and pre-plan for the MoG has been exemplary.

134. While this recommendation is general and should be applied across the operation of the ACTPS, I note the areas below for immediate and urgent action as I take the view that they are constraining best practice and are a barrier to smooth transition to the MoG.

STAFFING MOBILITY AND POTENTIAL FOR REDUCED ADMINISTRATION

135. A core principle of public service is that it should operate so as to apply the laws of the ACT, deliver the agreed and funded initiatives of the Government and, importantly, adjust its structures and approaches to align with changed circumstances, Government decision and financial constraints.
136. A modern and agile public service will be able to move resources to the place needed quickly and without delay. To facilitate exactly this approach, the PSMA confers upon the Head of Service and hence to her delegates broad powers to administer the public service and move resources as and when required to meet priorities. The provisions of the PSMA⁹ are straightforward providing generally that the Head of Service (or her delegate) may transfer individuals at level within or between work units or directorates or to perform higher duties. Sensible requirements are imposed to ensure that the officer is consulted and informed (noting that Enterprise Agreements also provide for consultation in certain circumstances) and that the relevant Director-General or Directors-General are consulted. This reflects an appropriate process of engagement and discussion with and between management and staff to facilitate a prompt transfer of personnel as needed to respond to operational requirements.
137. Conversely, the current processes applied to the mobility of staff (both at the SES and non-SES levels) are variable between directorates and in many cases rigid and subject to cumbersome and lengthy processes beyond those that are required by the PSMA. Although, the PSMA powers have been used at times to facilitate fast action in the interests of the Canberra community – such as in the context of the COVID19 pandemic – this is not the usual approach.
138. For example, in some areas, mobility at level is not permitted unless the ‘position description’ – a term which is not a feature of the PSMA - between the losing and receiving position are identical, a practice which limits the career opportunities of staff and the ability of management to respond to operational demands. In other areas, the need for a competitive recruitment process is applied even for very short period of higher duties and even in circumstances where the most appropriate and likely performer of those higher duties is clear. A further example in relation to SES staff is the practice of preparing a new contract in every instance of changed duties even there is no change of level of responsibility or of terms and condition. In my view, many of these practices should be rescinded, relaxed and revised or replaced with a principle-based process to facilitate mobility and agility in the structure of the service and the performance of functions. This would also allow for increased career opportunity and development for staff, smooth movement and collaboration between work units, quick response to changing circumstances and a significantly reduced administrative load.
139. Some administrative processes particularly applied to SES positions and movement should also be reviewed with a view to simplification. It is not clear that the benefits of the tiered salary with Bands for SES and the practice of routinely engaging a consultant to assess job size (known as the Mercer practice) warrants the inflexibility, delay and expense incurred. The outsourced Mercer practice appears to presume a stasis in the work to be done by any particular officer and in any particular position contrary to the realities of a modern service where the activities, pressures upon and responsibilities of any officer vary day to day depending on circumstances and Government decision making.

⁹ See [Public Sector Management Act 1994](#) Division 5.6 Transfer of Officers

140. In addition, decisions in relation to the staff in a directorate should be wholly the responsibility of the relevant Director-General to be performed in compliance with service wide principles, within budget and in collaboration with other Directors-General. This collaboration would better facilitate mobility of leadership for short or long-term periods without the need for formal processes and in turn increase collaboration between directorates.
141. Of course, a principles-based approach for decision making on staff mobility and placement requires the utmost transparency and integrity by the decision makers who should be then appraised on the basis of their skill and performance in this regard. The overarching principles of respect for every officer, consultation as required, open information provision and the application of substantive merit will be the tests against which officers are assessed.

Recommendation 10

The ACTPS set in a train a program of reform during the course of 2025-26 to achieve greater mobility of staff, reduced administration in recruitment practices and increased ability to respond to operational demands.

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS, TRACKING AND PLANNING

142. A core accountability of the ACTPS is to maintain comprehensive and accurate financial records, to apply resources as efficiently as possible for maximum impact and to remain within budget constraints.
143. While these principles are understood across the service and I have seen no evidence of inappropriate activity, approaches tend to lack the necessary urgency or rigour required of budget management, early advice of pressures and projected overspends or to sufficiently value identifying areas of budget which can be made available for reallocation within or between directorates.
144. Systems and processes could better support this activity. In particular, the tools used to report on and project expenditure and other financial activity vary considerably between directorates and in some instances between work units. In addition, the level of priority placed on financial accountability seems often to be based on local leadership rather than agreed and transparent service wide principles.
145. There is an overall lack of awareness of responsibilities under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and the Budget Process Rules which clearly set out responsibilities for management of agency budgets and consideration of proposals outside the budget process. A focus on discipline related to obligations under existing frameworks should be expected.
146. Improving and standardising tools and approaches together with a stronger central ability to track and assess budget positions would help to ensure clearer visibility of financial position and avoid any surprise impact on the overall ACTPS Budget. Clearer and more standard reporting would also allow decisions to be made to move or reallocate resources between work units and or directorates to best reflect whole of Government priorities and respond to unexpected financial impacts.
147. The communications in relation to financial management tends to be insufficiently mandatory in tone which can leave managers with an understanding that strict budget compliance is a guide rather than a fundamental accountability. This is exacerbated by an (understandable given past practices) expectation that unspent funding will be phased into the following financial year and that any shortfall will be met by a "Treasurer's advance" or approach to Government for additional funds.

148. In this regard, it does not always appear that individual directorate CFOs have the authority or supporting frameworks within their directorate to perform the traditional ‘financial policing’ role which is required to monitor and provide assurance around spending and ensure allocation and re-allocation to the highest priorities. There is an overall lack of awareness of responsibilities under the c and the Budget Process Rules which clearly set out responsibilities for management of agency budgets and consideration of proposals outside the budget process. The focus on discipline related to obligations under existing frameworks should be increased.
149. Further, the tracking and overall spending position of the Directorates should be a standard item for the Strategic Board based standard reporting which highlights significant pressures.

Recommendation 11

The ACTPS move to a standard tool and frameworks for financial accountabilities and reporting for all directorates, standard monthly reporting in a template format to be considered by the Strategic Board in an item to be brought by the Under-Treasurer.

Confer increased authority on CFOs and strengthen financial accountabilities for financial delegates and require that each report regularly through to their Director-General as the accountable person under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and enhanced regular reporting to the Treasury.

Include in performance agreements and appraisal processes of all officers with significant financial delegations, a requirement that budgets be complied with. This move to be accompanied by increased communications and where appropriate training to assist managers to improve budget discipline.

OTHER OPTIONS FOR STREAMLINED ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

150. During the consultations, various administrative areas were raised as having the potential to benefit from centralisation. While these proposals are not core to the recommendations, I include them as ideas which might be pursued over the coming period.

Procurement

151. Senior management, staff and external stakeholders alike raised concerns about procurement with descriptions including slow, bureaucratic and cumbersome. I am aware that procurement has been the subject of recent review and reform including the establishment of a procurement accreditation process for goods and services procurement. Whilst this is the case, the ongoing dissatisfaction with the support provided and the processes required may well warrant further consideration of whether these changes need to be revisited to achieve the aim of standardised, streamlined processes with the requisite levels of probity and transparency, particularly given the specialist procurement process that are undertaken in multiple areas across directorates.

Risk and insurance

152. Although common risk management tools are in use through the whole of government Risk Management Policy, the quality and rigour applied to these processes differ markedly between directorates in approach, appetite and application. A greater role for the central risk team within ACTIA would help ensure a consistent approach and provide a key point for escalation of major risk issues. A robust process might include regular reports of significant risks being raised regularly at the Strategic Board.

153. With a more centralised and scrutinised risk profile, the arrangements for insurance might also be made more efficient and streamlined as a consequence. The existing but cumbersome practice of directorates being liable to pay an excess for claims for non-workers compensation related claims could be dispensed with on the basis that a more strenuous risk management and transparency approach (as per above). With the removal of claims excesses, all claims could be managed by the centralised team within ACTIA (where claims over excess are currently managed) to ensure consistency of policy application. Tighter risk assessment, visibility and accountability would more likely drive improved risk practices than the current system.

Administration of external recruitment

154. There might also be merit in enhancement of the One-Service approach by moving to a more standardised and coordinated arrangement for the administration of external recruitment. Feedback from staff suggests that directorates administer recruitment practices in different ways, despite an online shared service centre and there may therefore be a lack of consistency and an opportunity for increased efficiency.

Freedom of Information and related functions

155. A more standardised and coordinated arrangement for freedom of information and related functions (such as responding to Standing Order 213A orders to produce information) might also be considered. I understand that agencies are experiencing increased volume of requests, resulting in demands on resources and workforce pressure. Bringing some functions together and coordinating from the centre might assist in leveraging better use of resources and greater efficiencies and timeliness in responding to public requests for information.

Science related functions

156. A persuasive case was made in the course of consultation with staff for greater linkage between areas of the ACTPS which rely on specialised scientific expertise. Such areas lie in various work units including in the health, environment and criminal justice portfolios and including the ACT Government Analytical Laboratories. It is beyond the scope of the current exercise to design an integrated mechanism for such functions noting that the options might range from greater networking and communication through to a bringing together of scientists into a central hub. Nonetheless it is an idea that should not be lost and warrants further examination.

PROLIFERATION OF STRATEGIES, ACTION PLANS, POLICIES, COORDINATORS-GENERAL AND STATUTORY OFFICE BEARERS

157. The barriers which the cumbersome processes currently associated with the mobility of staff pose to the rapid re-alignment of staff and resources are exacerbated by the need to apply human resources to each of the current strategies, action plans and policies (the strategies) which have been agreed by Government (though many in the previous term). Each strategy requires a small team to develop, consult on, review and revise the approach even where the strategy does not have funding allocated, where the topic is a lower priority issue or where the levers for action lie with the Commonwealth Government or elsewhere. In many cases, a formal consultation process or ministerial council is also extant and requires support and facilitation.

158. Many of these strategies deal with important issues in relation to which the Government has a view or position and a legitimate interest in seeing the matter progress. However, the inability to commit major resources to the topic may leave a narrow focus, an un-implemented or poorly implemented action plan leading to the dissatisfaction of stakeholders and few or poor concrete outcomes. At the same time and while the strategies remain in place, the officers performing the limited functions are not easily moved to areas of higher or more urgent priority or where action is needed urgently – for example to deal with the rapidly expanding public housing waitlist, to accelerate release of land, increase capacity at the Traffic Management Centre or to develop a robust approach to foundational supports for children with disabilities.

Recommendation 12

Each current Government strategy/policy/framework and action plan be carefully considered either as part of a gradual review or as each comes to a conclusion to assess whether the continuation or revision and renewal of that strategy warrants high priority, is capable of being progressed in a timely way (for reasons of budget or capability), will deliver outcomes for the community, and if the staff who would otherwise perform these roles are more appropriately moved to other functions.

159. A similar issue arises in relation to the teams required to support coordinators-generals, statutory officer holders and other independent or quasi-independent officers. The creation of a specific office 'locks in' staff to support those officers in an inflexible way. The offices tend to be created to reflect a specific immediate need but are not always reviewed when circumstances change or new priorities emerge. In this regard, there are a number of more flexible models including placing the functions within an existing work unit. If senior dedicated experience is needed for a task, the model of the Government Architect has significant merit being in the nature of a contractual retainer and hence able to be supported and drawn upon as needed and with varying levels of support.

160. Any change to or rationalisation in statutory offices is a matter for a more targeted review and consideration but I recommend that such evaluation be undertaken to ensure that the functions and roles remain current and that the resource expended warrants the outcomes achieved.

161. I applied this approach in consideration of the roles of coordinators-generals within the affected directorates during this Review and have made recommendations as to their positions' placement accordingly.

Recommendation 13

Where the establishment of a Coordinator-General or other specific office is under consideration, the better practice would be to provide for a flexible model of engagement with a tenure which is time limited and subject to regular reconsideration. The new offices which are the subject of 2024 election commitments, namely the Government Landscape Architect and the Strata Commissioner should be engaged using the most flexible model possible to as to enable change in the event of changed priorities or circumstances.

A separate review of statutory offices be considered to ensure that the functions and roles remain current and that the resource expended warrants the outcomes achieved.

PART 7 – NEXT STEPS, PLANNING AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT

PLANNING FOR NEXT STEPS

162. An overarching implementation plan will be required covering establishment of the new Directorates and the other major changes recommended in this Report. The Head of Service should be the project owner of this plan.
163. Core to next steps will be consultation as required in Enterprise Agreements.
164. Detailed project plans should sit under the overarching plan and be driven by the MoG implementation teams recommended at paragraphs 98-99. These plans should include dedicated focus on:
- a. key milestones;
 - b. governance framework including working groups for key streams;
 - c. authorising environment for decision making;
 - d. clear roles and responsibilities;
 - e. timeline;
 - f. communications plan (including specific communication plans for areas that are the subject of consequential changes);
 - g. consultation plan (formal consultation as required in Enterprise Agreements);
 - h. risk management;
 - i. dispute resolution;
 - j. work health and safety;
 - k. records and information management; and
 - l. evaluation.
165. There are many elements of the transition to two new directorates that will need to be in place from 1 July 2025 including directorate names, revised Administrative Arrangements and amalgamated finances. Core systems and processes utilised by directorates should also be operational by this date and there should have been active collaboration to ensure a clear roadmap to complete the changes needed for a full transition. There must also be recognition that some processes and systems will take longer to come together, and/or there may be decisions about keeping separate systems and processes for a period. The pace and sequence of transition plan should be designed to ensure minimum disruption to service deliver and proper engagement with staff.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

166. Effective change management will be essential to the successful transition to the new structures and directorates. The recommended MoG implementation teams may benefit from change management resources, including resources to help managers navigating change, that have been developed by directorates that have recently implemented new arrangements.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

APPENDIX 2 – MEETING REGISTER

APPENDIX 3A - WHAT WE HEARD – PART ONE – TOWNHALL MEETINGS

APPENDIX 3B - WHAT WE HEARD – PART TWO – LUNCHTIME SESSIONS

APPENDIX 3C - WHAT WE HEARD – PART THREE – SURVEY

APPENDIX 4 – RECOMMENDATIONS

ACT Public Service 2025 Taskforce

Terms of Reference

1. Background

The ACT Public Service (ACTPS) supports the government of the day and the Canberra community under a whole of government framework as “one service”.

This approach was embedded in legislative reforms in 2011 and 2016 which established the ACTPS as One Service with a responsibility to work cooperatively to ensure a whole of government focus supported by a core value of Collaboration. It has been strengthened by a focus on mobility across the service, the creation of Coordinators-General to drive particular whole of service objectives, and a whole of service focus in training and development.

Collaboration across the ACTPS is essential to ensure that the community experiences a coordinated and seamless public interface.

The ACT Government will undertake select machinery of government (MoG) changes to deliver the best experience and outcomes for Canberrans into the future by aligning the ACTPS administration and resourcing with Government priorities.

These changes will be supported by a review led by the ACT Public Service 2025 Taskforce (Taskforce) which will provide advice to the Head of Service and Government.

2. Purpose of the Machinery of Government Changes Taskforce

The Taskforce has been established for the purpose of reporting to Cabinet on how to achieve the following MoG changes:

- the amalgamation of the Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) Directorate; the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD); Access Canberra and some related regulatory functions in Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD), into a new administrative unit, and
- the amalgamation of the Community Services Directorate (CSD) and the ACT Health Directorate into a new administrative unit.

The Taskforce will review the current structure and operations of the agencies to be amalgamated and develop a report to Government with a recommended implementation plan to achieve the objectives of the machinery of government changes.

2.1 Objectives of the Machinery of Government changes

The Government’s objectives are that the MoG changes will support an ACTPS structure that:

- provides clear agency and executive accountability and responsibilities;
- places priority on service delivery; and better supports Ministers to improve service delivery;
- strengthens the whole of Government approach that encourages coordination and information sharing; and
- delivers the Government’s election commitments and priorities.

The Government has indicated that these changes will result in no reduction in the overall ACTPS staffing.

3. Operation of the Taskforce

3.1 Members of the Taskforce

The Taskforce is led by an independent Chair. The Chair will lead the Taskforce in accordance with these Terms of Reference and the Instrument of Appointment for the Chair role.

The Chair and the Head of Service will nominate Taskforce members to ensure it includes appropriate skills and capability to deliver the objectives of the MoG changes. The Taskforce will comprise ACTPS staff with expertise in human resources and industrial relations; finance; communications, administration, and other skills as required.

The Taskforce will perform its work in close collaboration with the affected Directorates of TCCS, EPSDD, CSD, Health and CMTEDD, including Access Canberra.

The Taskforce will seek advice and input from other ACTPS officers or external experts as required.

3.2 Governance of the Taskforce

These Terms of Reference are endorsed by ACT Cabinet as the governing document for the operation of the Taskforce.

Consistent with the Terms of Appointment, the Chair of the Taskforce will report to the Head of Service and Cabinet.

Directors-General of administrative units retain statutory responsibilities under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, the *Financial Management Act 1996* and all other applicable legislation and delegations throughout the change period.

Members of the Taskforce must declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest. The Chair is required to declare any issues that arise to the Head of Service who will ensure arrangements are in place to record and manage any conflicts of interest. For officers of the ACTPS these will be managed in accordance with existing ACTPS arrangements.

3.3 Secretariat

CMTEDD will provide administrative and secretariat support to the Chair and Taskforce.

The Chair and secretariat will ensure mechanisms are in place to record risks, meetings and actions related the operation of the Taskforce.

4. Taskforce Functions and Deliverables

4.1 Undertake a Machinery of Government Changes Review

The MoG Changes Review (the Review) will consider the structure and capability of the entities undergoing MoG changes:

- TCCS, EPSDD, Access Canberra and associated regulatory reform functions in CMTEDD, and
- CSD and ACT Health Directorate.

The Review will be undertaken in consultation with key stakeholders including the ACTPS, Ministers, relevant employee representative unions as required under Enterprise Agreements and with external experts as necessary. The Taskforce will ensure that a range of options for consultation and engagement in relation to the Review are available to ACTPS staff.

The core aspects that the Review will consider are:

- The functions and associated systems being amalgamated, including existing programs, Government priorities, output classes and accountability indicators.

- People management, including identification of the types and groups of employees (individual employees only if/when possible) who will be affected by the MoG changes.
- Financial management, including Budget and reporting processes and financial governance.
- Information and technology systems.
- Legal and legislative frameworks, including a review of relevant portfolio legislation, any compliance risks and the statutory basis of programs, functions, delegations and authorities.
- Corporate, support and enabling functions.

The review will consider and cater for any particular arrangements needed to provide for the appropriate operation of regulatory functions or statutory offices. In this regard, the review will consider relevant reviews, frameworks, guidance and policies including the findings of and Government Response to the 2024 [ACT Planning System Governance Review together with any other relevant review or report](#).

The Review will consider strategies to:

- avoid negative impacts on service and program delivery throughout the change period;
- maintain a robust and appropriate control environment throughout the change period to ensure administrative changes do not increase the risk of exposure to corruption or maladministration; and
- ensure records management and public access to information is consistent and appropriate throughout the change period.

4.2 *Deliver a Taskforce Report*

The Taskforce will deliver a Taskforce Report for the purpose of Cabinet deliberation on how to implement the MoG Changes decided by Government. The Report will include:

- Advice on the findings of the Review undertaken by the Taskforce.
- Recommendations to the Chief Minister on potential amendments to the Administrative Arrangements;
- Recommendations to the Head of Service to support the Head of Service's responsibility under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* to organise public servants in the service.

The Report will provide detailed plans for the establishment of new agencies.

The Report should provide advice on:

- the mechanism by which ACTPS positions in the new agencies are to be determined and via which employee occupancy is determined;
- the arrangements to be put in place to redeploy or reskill non-SES staff as a consequence of restructuring under the MoG changes, including an estimate of the numbers, categorised by level and skill set;
- the arrangements to be put in place to reduce any SES positions; and
- advice on implications or impacts of the restructuring for the broader ACTPS.

The final report will be provided to the Head of Service and Cabinet by 30 April 2025.

4.3 *Other functions of the Taskforce*

The Taskforce will ensure that engagement and communications activities in relation to the MoG changes are coordinated and effective.

The Taskforce will lead the provision of advice to support Government's consideration of and decisions on proposed MoG changes – this will include the preparation of ministerial briefings and submissions for Cabinet.

The Taskforce will seek legal advice from the ACT Government Solicitor on the MoG Changes and associated issues where required.

The Taskforce will Support the Head of Service to ensure that the MoG changes are implemented by 1 July 2025.

APPENDIX 2 – MEETING REGISTER

MINISTERS

Role	Attendee
Chief Minister	Andrew Barr MLA
Deputy Chief Minister	Yvette Berry MLA
Minister	Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
Minister	Chris Steel MLA
Minister	Tara Cheyne MLA
Minister	Suzanne Orr MLA
Minister	Michael Pettersson MLA
Minister	Marisa Paterson MLA

LEADERSHIP EXECUTIVE ACTPS

Head of Service and Directors-General	Attendee
Head of Service / CMTEDD	Kathy Leigh
TCCS	David Pryce
EPSDD	Ben Ponton
CSD	Catherine Rule
ACT Health	Rebecca Cross
CHS	David Pepper
Infrastructure Canberra	Gillian Geraghty - DG
Treasury	Russ Campbell – A/g
JACS	Ray Johnson – A/g
Education	Jo Wood – A/g
Whole of Government Directors- General Meeting	All Directors-General

Deputy DGs	
Access Canberra	Margaret McKinnon
Transport Canberra and Business Services, TCCS	Ben McHugh
City Services, TCCS	Bruce Fitzgerald - A/g
Planning & Sustainable Development EPSDD	Erin Brady - DDG,
Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction, EPSDD	Geoffrey Rutledge
Planning & Sustainable Development, EPSDD	Sam Engele – A/g (later ACT Health)
ACT Health	Robyn Hudson
Policy and Cabinet CMTEDD	Leesa Croke
Chief Digital Officer CMTEDD	Bettina Konti -
Economic Development, CMTEDD	Kareena Arthy
Whole of Government Deputy Directors-General	Across ACT Government Directorates

ACT PUBLIC SERVICE EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

Directorate / Business Area/ Forum	Attendees
Access Canberra	Executive and Senior Directors Group
ACT Health	Executive Group
ACT Health Office of Professional Leadership and Education	Chief roles in ACT Health (Medical, GP, Allied Health, Nursing and Midwifery and Psychiatrist)
ACTHD & CSD	SES Band 2 and 3 Officers
CHS	Executive Management Group
CMTEDD	CMTEDD DGs, DDGs and EGM Corporate, EGM Communications and Engagement
CMTEDD	CMTEDD Executive
CSD	Executive Group
Education	Executive Group
EPSDD	Executive Group

EPSDD	Executive Branch Managers
JACS	Executive Group
TCCS	Executive Group
Whole of Government Chief Operating Officers Group	Chief Operating Officers across ACT Government Directorates

GROUP STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Directorate/Business Area	Attendees	Date and Location
Lunchtime Session 1	Open to non-SES staff in affected directorates	17 February 2025 480NBA, Dickson
Lunchtime Session 2	Open to non-SES staff in affected directorates	17 February 2025 480NBA, Dickson
Lunchtime Session 3	Open to non-SES staff in affected directorates	18 February 2025 220LC, City
Lunchtime Session 4	Open to non-SES staff in affected directorates	18 February 2025 220LC, City
Lunchtime Session 5	Open to non-SES staff in affected directorates	20 February 2025 Bowes St, Phillip
Lunchtime Session 6	Open to non-SES staff in affected directorates	20 February 2025 Bowes St, Phillip
Town Hall Meeting 1	Open to all ACTPS Employees	24 February 2025 Online
Town Hall Meeting 2	Open to all ACTPS Employees	25 February 2025 Online
Town Hall Meeting 3	Open to all ACTPS Employees	25 February 2025 480NBA, Dickson
Town Hall Meeting 4	Open to all ACTPS Employees	26 February 2025 220LC, City
Town Hall Meeting 5	Open to all ACTPS Employees	26 February 2025 Online
Town Hall Meeting 6	Open to all ACTPS Employees	27 February 2025 Bowes St, Phillip

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STAFF SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT

Yarning Brew	ACTPS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff	220LC, City
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SITE VISITS (INCLUDING DISCUSSIONS WITH LEADERSHIP AND STAFF)

Site	Location
Yarralumla Nursery	Yarralumla
Capital Linen Services	Mitchell
Housing ACT Central Access Point	Belconnen
Access Canberra Service Centre	Woden
Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm	Paddy's River
Access Canberra Hume Service Centre	Hume
Bus Depot	Tuggeranong and Belconnen
Parks and Conservation Depot - Mitchell	Mitchell
Child and Family Centre	Gungahlin
Parks and Conservation Service - Tidbinbilla	Tidbinbilla
Canberra Memorial Parks	Gungahlin
Libraries ACT - Kippax	Holt
Libraries ACT – Heritage Library	Fyshwick
Traffic Management Centre	Fyshwick
CMTEDD	220LC, City
Domestic Animal Services	Symonston
Office of Nature Conservation	Dickson and Mulunggar Nature Reserve (Kangaroo Fertility Control Program)

OTHER INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – ACTPS

Attendee
Ben Green – EGM, Planning and Urban Policy, EPSDD
Bradley Foxlewin – Lived Experience, Director, ACT Health
Brendan Moyle – EBM, Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, CSD
Caitlin Bladin – EBM, Health Infrastructure, ACT Health
Chloe Stoddart - EGM, Policy, Partnerships and Programs, ACT Health
Craig Neiberding – CIO, CIT

Fiona Barbaro – EGM, Policy and Cabinet CMTEDD
Giuseppe Mangeruca - EBM, Gambling and Racing Commission, Access Canberra
Holger Kaufmann – CIO, ACT Health
Jade Redfern - EBM, Research, Programs and Scientific Services, ACT Health
Jeremy Smith - EGM, Planning & Sustainable Development, EPSDD
Jon Ord - ACT health, Former Minister's Chief of staff
Josh Rynehart, EGM Places and Spaces, ICBR
Kerryn Coleman – CHO, ACT Health
Kristine Reyes – EBM, Facilities Insourcing Taskforce, CSD
Lisa Johnson – SES officer on long leave
Liz Lopa – SES officer on long leave
Matthew Kamarul – EBM, Environment, Land and Technical Regulation, CMTEDD
Michael Young – EGM, Work Safety Group, CMTEDD
Muku Ganeshalingam – CFO, ACT Health
Natalee George – EBM, Cultural Transformation Branch, CMTEDD
Nerida Gordon - Cultural Maturity, CSD
Penny Shields – General Manager, ACT Insurance Authority, CMTEDD
Peter Robinson, Robert Gotts, Wellbeing Team, CMTEDD
Rishi Dutta – EGM, DDTS, CMTEDD
Sally Druhan – CMTEDD CFO
Skye Jacobi – EGM, Health System Innovation and Performance, ACT Health
Stephen Miners – SES officer on long leave
Steven Wright – EGM, Corporate, CMTEDD
Trish Johnston – EGM Communications and Engagement, CMTEDD

OTHER MEETINGS – OFFICE HOLDERS

Adam Davey – CEO, Suburban Land Agency
Anthony Cidoni, Chief Psychiatrist, ACT Health
Brendan Smyth, Commissioner for International Engagement
Craig Gillman – CEO, City Renewal Authority
Peter Garrisson - ACT Solicitor General Kirsten Leece – Deputy Chief Solicitor Ximena Nikias – A/g General Manager, Office of the ACT Government Solicitor
Sarah Miller – Coordinator-General Mental Health & Wellbeing, ACT Health
Sophie Lewis - Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment
Human Rights Commission Penelope Matthew – President and Human Rights Commissioner Karen Toohey – Discrimination, Health Services, Disability and Community Services Commissioner Jodie Griffiths-Cook – Public Advocate and Children and Young People Commissioner Margie Rowe – A/g Victims of Crime Commissioner - Human Rights Commission

OTHER MEETINGS – EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS AND UNIONS

Directorate/Business Area	Attendees
All Union Representatives Meetings	All union with members in the ACTPS invited Representatives
CPSU	Maddy Northam
Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union	Cameron Hardy
Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation	Thomas Cullen
Transport Workers' Union	Ben Sweaney
Professionals Australia	Shadi Behpour

OTHER MEETINGS – EXTERNAL

Attendees	Directorate/Business Area
Darlene Cox	Health Care Consumers Association
David Marshall	Tourism Leaders Forum
Devin Bowes, Michelle Barclay	ACT Council of Social Service
Julie Tongs - CEO	Winnunga Nimmityjah
Katrina Fanning	ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body secretariat
Mark Daniels	White Box Enterprises
Nigel Lyons	ACTHD System Council Chair
Prof Paul Gatenby	Former Chair Human Research Ethics Committee
Stacy Leavens	Capital Health Network
Alison Playford	Former DG
Michael De'ath	Former DG
Justin Foley	Former Officer



Town Hall Meetings

ACTPS 2025
TASKFORCE

Introduction

As part of the consultation and discovery phase, the ACTPS 2025 Taskforce undertook a range of approaches to talk to staff, receive questions, ideas and concerns and pass on information about the progress of the process. A key part of this process was the online and in-person townhall meetings, with more than 1200 staff attending across six sessions.

There was a lot of great engagement and great questions, both at the meetings themselves and via email/chat.

We have received a lot of amazing ideas and feedback and of course there were also concerns raised. All feedback, is extremely valuable and has assisted me greatly when drafting my report. I would like to thank everyone who provided any type of feedback or information throughout this process.

This report provides an overview of 'what we heard' during the townhall sessions. For more detail, recordings of the town hall virtual meetings can be accessed on the information hub.

Change is inevitable if we are to keep pace with the environment that we operate in, and I would like to thank the many teams who are already finding solutions with a positive and collaborative attitude.

Caroline Edwards
Chair - ACTPS 2025 Taskforce

*What we
Heard!*

Townhall Meetings

6 SESSIONS

3 LOCATIONS

1200 ATTENDEES

3 ONLINE SESSIONS

3 IN-PERSON

CULTURE & WELLBEING

REDUCE DUPLICATION

INCREASE COLLABORATION

MORE MOBILITY

COMBINE SYSTEMS



CENTRALISATION
ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP



CLEAR DIRECTION

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

ADEQUATE RESOURCES

ACCOUNTABILITY

BALANCE

OPPORTUNITIES



FOCUS ON COMMUNITY

MORALE

LESS PROCESS

RESPECT

PSYCHOSOCIAL SAFETY

AUTONOMY



Systems & Processes.

“Systems and processes, of course, have come up in almost every town hall meeting. Better systems and processes lead to better service to our community, and I believe wherever we can make changes to improve services to the community, we should.”

As expected, systems and processes continue to be a hot topic. This has been consistent across all meetings.

Staff have raised opportunities in this space to improve service delivery to the community if we combine or minimise the number of separate systems doing almost the same thing.

There have also been a lot of comments about our systems and processes being designed so that they make sense to the community, not only to us.

Also, some nervousness with the pace of change. Some changes can be made quickly, and some will take careful planning and time.

Collaboration & Culture

“*I’m pleased to hear collaboration and culture keep coming up. these two things are clearly important across the ACTPS and if embraced, will directly feed each other.*”

Some teams feel that while hybrid working brings many benefits, it also means we have to work a bit harder for true collaboration. It is clear though, that putting in the extra effort for true collaboration is something the majority of teams think is worth it and needed.

We have various comments and questions about how to better work together and the value that it brings. Even if directorates and teams sit separately physically or structurally, they need to work together to deliver the best outcomes.

Structure will only do so much, and if it is aligned to enabling people the best opportunity to work together then that will help a lot.

What we have heard is that people want to work together. They want to share ideas and information to get the best outcomes and not have several teams doing the same thing.

We have also heard that while people are concerned and nervous waiting for the report, they also see huge opportunities to make things easier.

HR & Staffing

Without doubt, the most questions and concerns as well as ideas and opportunities have been linked to HR and Staffing. One of my main goals all along has been to have the minimal impact possible on staff and no disruption to service delivery to the community.

Understandably, we have seen a lot of concern about what happens when teams are merged and the speed at which these changes will happen.

Respecting current and future needs and processes, wherever possible taking into account people's preferences and ensuring mobility options exist and of course merit based processes will go a long way towards supporting a smooth transition.

Through this process, we have also heard from a lot of people looking forward to the opportunities that may come with the changes for them to change roles by choice. MoG changes often provide the opportunity for development and experiences that people have been looking for.

Leadership & Accountability

“Leadership and accountability is clearly important. People have expressed their desire for accountability at all levels to promote a culture of responsibility and help with a clear understanding of roles and expectations.”

We received a lot of feedback about leadership and accountability throughout this process. Linking to this were also a lot of comments regarding clear and realistic expectations.

Putting decision making and accountability at the right level will have numerous benefits at all levels. It will allow a reduction in red tape, create space to use the wonderful staff in the ACTPS to the greatest extent possible and allow workloads to be better balanced.

We have heard that there is a desire for strong leadership, to support staff being able to have work/life balance and provide clear direction around roles and responsibilities to allow people to really have the appropriate level of control and autonomy over the work they do.



Lunchtime Sessions

ACTPS 2025
TASKFORCE

Introduction

People are committed to delivering the best service possible to our community and are focussed-on customer-centric approaches.

As part of the consultation and discovery phase, the ACTPS 2025 Taskforce undertook a series of lunchtime sessions with small groups of people from the directly affected Directorates at the non-SES level.

The goal for these sessions was to have a candid and frank discussion on any topic the attendees wanted to raise. They were encouraged to share concerns, ask questions, provide ideas and pass on feedback.

The sessions provided an opportunity to focus on specific operational issues and opportunities relevant to the participants' roles and provided the Taskforce a broader understanding of how the ACT Public Service (ACTPS) operates currently.

The attendees were a mix from all directly affected Directorates fostering collaboration and a shared sense of commitment and understanding going forward.

As with all the engagements with ACTPS staff, people at the small group sessions were committed to delivering the best service possible to our community and a focus-on customer-centric approaches.

I would like to thank those that attended and contributed to these sessions and am happy to share the key insights gathered from these sessions.

Caroline Edwards
Chair - ACTPS 2025 Taskforce

What we
Heard!

Lunchtime
Sessions

64



attendees.



220 LONDON
CIRCUIT.

BOWES
STREET.



REDUCE

DUPLICATION



COMMITTMENT
TRACKING



STRONG
LEADERSHIP &
SUPPORT

CUSTOMER



CENTRIC APPROACH

MORE

COLLABORATION



480

NORTHBOURNE
AVENUE.



DIRECTLY
AFFECTED
DIRECTORATES

6



SESSIONS

Systems & Processes.

“Good systems and processes are the backbone of effective outcomes, allowing us to function smoothly, respond to challenges and serve the community in the most efficient way possible.”

As expected, systems and processes were a hot topic during the sessions.

Where possible, staff would like to see standardised processes across the ACT Government and where differing processes or systems are coming together, that these be effectively integrated.

Enabling processes should be cohesive with a focus on content versus function.

Staff would like to consider the intersectionality from the beginning to ensure the efficient management of ICT requirements as well as avoiding creating, or in some cases replicating the silos that currently exist.

The teams were passionate about accountability and oversight and ensuring that solid processes are in place to track the progress of the MoG changes to ensure that they stay on track.

Leadership, Roles & Responsibilities.

“Strong leadership and clear roles and responsibilities will help to reduce duplication, gaps in service delivery and support better coordination across government.”

Leadership and clear roles and responsibilities are going to be vital. The participants discussed how everyone can be an advocate for change, regardless of level or role.

Clear responsibility is essential, particularly for systems and processes so that decisions can be made quickly and with authority to support the ability to capitalise on opportunities and mitigate risks.

There is a keenness for strong, clear leadership around decisions as they are made and prioritisation. This will also help ensure staff are working on key government commitments.

Communication & Culture.

Maintaining and sharing the positive cultures that have been built will be one of the most important processes as directorates navigate these changes.

The most discussed theme was culture and support.

The flow of information and communication once decisions are made by Government was discussed in all groups.

There is a desire for reassurance and support to be regularly passed on and clear messaging that as a result of the MoG, most people will keep doing the same or similar work.

Staff would like a clear roadmap and associated timing, when possible, to allow people to prepare and follow the progress of the changes.

The groups discussed the need for great cultures to be kept and shared, for all staff (full-time, part-time, contractors etc) to be supported and for areas where there are cultural challenges to work through these to allow a smooth transition.

Expertise & Change Management.

“Navigating change can be challenging, but leveraging the expertise and change management skills already present in the directorates will contribute significantly to a smooth transition.”

The small group sessions were a further demonstration of how many talented and committed people there are working in the ACTPS and what a broad range of skills and expertise is out there.

Through these lunchtime sessions and all of the site visits I've been fortunate enough to do, I have been able to discuss change management with many staff and hear of the expertise and experience in this space.

Leveraging this experience will be crucial for directorates as we move through the transition process to assist in navigating the changes in a way that supports staff, business continuity and importantly, services to the community.



Online Survey

ACTPS 2025
TASKFORCE

Introduction

As part of the consultation and discovery phase, the ACTPS 2025 Taskforce ran a survey for all staff. Staff could choose to remain anonymous.

The survey provided yet another avenue for staff to provide ideas, concerns and feedback.

The staff survey questions were:

1. Please tell us what things your workplace does well?
2. What would be the most important change that could make your workplace better?
3. What would you like to see prioritised as part of changes to the ACTPS?
4. What challenges might get in the way of making changes to directorates happen smoothly?
5. What is the main way you want to be kept informed about the progress being made on upcoming changes to the ACTPS?

The following questions were optional:

- What is your employment status?
- Which of the following best describes your role within the ACTPS?
- Which directorate/s do you work in?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about that wasn't already covered in the survey?
- Do you agree to provide your name and email address for the purpose of sharing your identifiable feedback with the Taskforce?

There were 882 completed responses to the staff survey, with the majority of responses coming from the 5 affected directorates.

The insights, comments and ideas captured in the survey have helped to inform my thinking and helped to shape my recommendations. Thank you to those who took part - your input was invaluable.

What we heard!

More ✓
communication
and cohesiveness

Clear pathways for
providing feedback

Avoid duplication

Improved automation 

More automated processes

Reduction in number of
Ministers the directorate
reports to

More centralisation

More stable occupancy in
senior executive
management roles

More certainty on positions -
especially when people move
within the ACTPS 

Break down silos between
teams within each Directorate
and across each Directorate

Access to technology which
meets the needs of the workforce

Clear governance



Upgrades to technology and
network connections

Appropriate resourcing

Improve contract management
and procurement systems



Opportunities for
innovation in delivering
services to community

Strategic
planning & research 

Provide better leadership
focused on positive
outcomes for the
community



Clear communication
regarding expectations of roles

Active leadership, happy to have
difficult conversations

Career Development



Improve efficiency

Don't expect
people to act and
not get paid

Consistent systems

Determine true (valid) priorities ✓

✓ Sufficient shared services support -
especially procurement and legal.



Early investment in technology
to stay current and efficient



Leadership and Strategic Direction

“Leadership and the communication of strategic priorities was a regular theme with staff feeling that they would benefit from more strategic direction from leadership, as well as more long-term planning.”

There is a desire for more transparent and consistent communication from executives, particularly regarding significant changes such as Machinery of Government (MOG) adjustments as well as other ACT Public Service (ACTPS) wide issues.

Staff provided feedback suggesting stronger leadership from the SES level would be beneficial, specifically having difficult conversations and holding people to account for deliverables.

More streamlined processes, including executive clearance processes and coordination between directorates was raised, as well as ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately.

Teams would like to see more of their executive and other senior leaders in person with time to actively engage and discuss issues.

Empowerment and Decision Making

“More delegation will allow senior leaders to focus on strategic priorities and enable more effective prioritisation. It can also support enhanced innovation, increased accountability and staff development.”

The empowerment of middle management emerged as a theme from the survey.

Those at the SOGA and SOGB level particularly feel that this is crucial for creating a responsive and dynamic environment.

By giving them authority to make decisions, they can address issues more swiftly and effectively, without needing to wait for higher-level approval.

This empowerment encourages them to take ownership of their roles, drive change, and implement innovative solutions that can improve processes and outcomes.

They also feel it helps to develop their leadership skills and prepares them for higher responsibilities in the future.

Process Improvement and Efficiency

“Staff were basically unanimous in calls for improved technology, consistent processes and more centralisation of functions. They believe there are extensive efficiencies to be gained in the space.”

Optimising IT and ICT systems can greatly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of information management.

Staff felt that improved systems can facilitate better data storage, retrieval, and collaboration.

Key processes such as human resources, procurement, and finance currently take a significant amount of time for staff and leadership and involves duplication and red tape.

Staff felt that encouraging innovation and automation where possible could enhance productivity and free up staff to focus on higher value activities.

Improved systems and processes were the most highly raised challenges.

Work Environment and Culture

“The siloed approach that is currently present across directorates presents heightened risk and prevents staff from seeing and recognising their collective successes when serving the Canberra community.”

Teams felt that the siloed approach plays a big role in duplication, errors and a failure to meet strategic goals. They would like the leadership teams to work together to break down the silos and create opportunities for directorates to work together.

Team culture is clearly one of the most important things to the staff across the ACTPS with this theme also being raised in every townhall session.

Teams feel that we should create a culture of accountability and focus on solutions rather than blame.

They support a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and would like transparent, consistent recruitment and other processes that help prevent conflicts of interest and nepotism.

Collaboration was also at the top of the list, with a heavy belief that increased collaboration across directorates is required to achieve results.

Staff Development and Resources

“Establishing clear pathways and mobility options for staff allows them to see and plan for a future within the ACTPS. Internal promotions, lateral moves and opportunities for cross training can greatly help staff develop and advance their careers.”

Staff were clearly passionate about development, both for themselves and their teams, as well as levels of resourcing when compared to expectations.

They felt that adequate staffing and resources is vital for maintaining a manageable workload and avoiding burnout.

Acknowledging resourcing challenges, they felt that setting realistic deadlines was key going forward. They felt these pressures were heightened by the fact that some staff are on temporary contracts which contributes to anxiety and unrest over job security.

Regular assessment of workload and resources is necessary to ensure that people are able to safely provide their best work.

APPENDIX 4 - RECOMMENDATIONS

Number	Recommendation
1	EPSDD and TCCS come together with Access Canberra and the Better Regulation team from CMTEDD (Better Regulation Taskforce) to form a new Directorate called the City and Environment Directorate. The new directorate should reflect the Principles for Design and Implementation of Machinery of Government Changes set out in Part 2, the Key Attributes set out above and the other recommendations of this Report.
2	Health and Community Services Directorates come together to form a new Directorate called the Health and Community Services Directorate. The new directorate should reflect the Principles for Design and Implementation of Machinery of Government Changes set out in Part 2, the Key Attributes set out above and the other recommendations of this Report.
3	The Administrative Arrangements to bring the MoG into effect is made as soon as possible with a commencement date of 1 July 2025.
4	The recruitment of Directors-General for the City and Environment Directorate and the Health and Community Services Directorate commence immediately and that there be an open recruitment process to fill the Deputy Director-General positions in the affected Directorates.
5	Movement of staff and SES Band 1 and Band 2 officers be moved in the new structure in accordance with the following principles: a. the Director-General to be responsible; b. staff to follow function; c. Director-General to match unplaced staff within the new structure; d. SES movements – EBMs and EGMs – to be similarly managed; e. excess SES officers to be managed in accordance with existing procedures; and f. mobility rounds to be offered.
6	MoG implementation teams be established in both the City and Environment Directorate and Health and Community Services Directorate as soon as possible and preferably well in advance of the 1 July 2025 effective date.
7	Establishment of a time limited Digital and IT Directorate to manage all Digital and IT functions across the ACTPS commencing on a date to be determined and to be reviewed after an initial two-year period.
8	The Yarralumla Nursery, Capital Linen Service and Canberra Memorial Parks be transferred to Economic Development in CMTEDD for a program of reform to transform them to 100 percent ACT owned corporate commercial bodies with social enterprise objectives to be pursued with respect to employment of disadvantaged Canberrans.
9	An overall principle of driving towards standard processes and procedures, with policies to be adopted to progress the principle of one service, facilitating collaboration and mobility between works units, freeing up staff from the performance of unnecessary administration and improving financial visibility. This process should commence immediately, be service wide and be factored into business planning.

10	The ACTPS set in a train a program of reform during the course of 2025-26 to achieve greater mobility of staff, reduced administration in recruitment practices and increased ability to respond to operational demands.
11	The ACTPS move to a standard tool and frameworks for financial accountabilities and reporting for all directorates, standard monthly reporting in a template format to be considered by the Strategic Board in an item to be brought by the Under-Treasurer. Confer increased authority on CFOs and strengthen financial accountabilities for financial delegates and require that each report regularly through to their Director-General as the accountable person under the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i> and enhanced regular reporting to the Treasury. Include in performance agreements and appraisal processes of all officers with significant financial delegations, a requirement that budgets be complied with. This move to be accompanied by increased communications and where appropriate training to assist managers to improve budget discipline.
12	Each current Government strategy/policy/framework and action plan be carefully considered either as part of a gradual review or as each comes to a conclusion to assess whether the continuation or revision and renewal of that strategy warrants high priority, is capable of being progressed in a timely way (for reasons of budget or capability), will deliver outcomes for the community, and if the staff who would otherwise perform these roles are more appropriately moved to other functions.
13	Where the establishment of a Coordinator-General or other specific office is under consideration, the better practice would be to provide for a flexible model of engagement with a tenure which is time limited and subject to regular reconsideration. The new offices which are the subject of 2024 election commitments, namely the Government Landscape Architect and the Strata Commissioner should be engaged using the most flexible model possible to as to enable change in the event of changed priorities or circumstances. A separate review of statutory offices be considered to ensure that the functions and roles remain current and that the resource expended warrants the outcomes achieved.