

Internal communications narrative

CED workforce management and voluntary redundancies

The context: why this is happening

[Taken from WoG comms plan] The ACT Public Service (ACTPS) has grown significantly in recent years, with staffing levels increasing by approximately 30% since 2018–19. The current number of employees across the ACT Public Service (ACTPS) exceeds the number of funded positions. At the same time, the separation rate from the ACTPS has decreased.

For the ACT Government this means current costs are higher than the forecast budget for next year, with employee expenses remaining the primary financial pressure on the ACTPS budget. The same is true for CED - workforce costs account for around half of CED's regular expenses.

To support the long-term sustainability of the public service and to deliver on Government priorities, there is a whole-of-government approach to balance workforce size with full time equivalent (FTE) available funding.

This multifaceted approach includes managing the addition of staff into the ACTPS, encouraging mobility and proactively reducing overall FTE through voluntary redundancy (VR) opportunities.

CED has already taken meaningful steps to reduce workforce budget pressures by taking early, disciplined action to tighten spending controls and improve oversight before issues escalated.

This included implementing an FTE cap on our workforce last year. This has helped stop growth and keep our workforce size stable.

However, this alone will not support the ongoing financial challenges, and we need to reduce the size of our workforce to a more sustainable level to future proof the organisation.

The approach: what this means for CED

CED will run a voluntary redundancy program as a further step to align the size of our workforce with our budget, and to ensure financial sustainability for the Directorate going forward.

This will focus on voluntary participation only through expressions of interest. This will not be targeted to specific areas or individuals.

As part of a holistic approach, we will also provide options for mobility within CED and across the Service.

Note: identified areas of the CED workforce will be **excluded** from the voluntary redundancy program. These areas include Transport Canberra Bus Operations (including Transport Officers and Support School Transport), Transport Canberra Fleet Services, and positions identified to transfer to Digital Canberra (DCBR) on 30 June 2026.

- We have decided to exclude Bus Operations from the Voluntary Redundancy round. A new Bus Network will commence in July, that has been carefully designed around current workforce capacity. The public transport network is an essential and critical service for the community, particularly given the global supply issues currently being experienced around liquid fuels. We recognise this may be disappointing for some, but it is a government and community priority to deliver our new bus network.
- Staff that will transition to DCBR are proposed to do so on 1 July 2026. They have been excluded from this voluntary redundancy round as they will be Digital Canberra employees but may be part of any future workforce management approach outside of CED.

What “voluntary” means

Voluntary redundancy gives team members the opportunity to nominate if they would like to leave the ACTPS under agreed conditions. Self-nomination will occur through an Expression of Interest process.

This approach is being used because it provides choice for our people and supports a fair and transparent process.

Note: expressions of interest do not mean that a voluntary redundancy must be taken, or that one will be given. The EOI process enables both the individual and the Directorate to consider whether a VR is the right outcome. Nominations will be considered by an assessment panel to determine if it is appropriate to grant the VR. Decisions will consider safety of our people and the community and ensure the Directorate can continue to deliver on key priorities for Government, as well as essential services. Individuals who are assessed as appropriate for a VR will then be able to make an informed decision as to whether they wish to take one.

What this means for our people

We recognise this is a challenging and disruptive time for our team members.

For those who do not nominate or are not approved for a voluntary redundancy, we know there may be concerns about workload and role clarity, team changes and ongoing organisational change.

These risks are recognised, including potential psychosocial impacts, and will be actively managed through:

- clear work program prioritisation - CED will continue to review work programs in line with government priorities to identify areas where work may be streamlined or stopped with a focus on impact rather than activity. We will do this in consultation with our Ministers.
- supporting managers to redesign their workforces and service delivery if required – CED will actively support the realignment of roles to fill service delivery gaps that may result through this process.
- leadership support and communication.

Additionally, a portion of all saved salary budget will be retained within affected branches for the responsible Executive to invest as the team requires (branch redesign, capability uplift, work level uplift).

We want a sustainable workforce where we can properly invest in the capability of the people we have.

Our commitment to employees

Throughout this process, CED is committed to:

- **Transparency**
Keeping employees informed, clearly communicating the process and providing the ability for all employees to have their questions answered
- **Fairness and consistency**
Applying clear, evidence-based criteria in all decisions
- **Support and wellbeing**
Recognising the personal impact of change and ensuring support is available
- **Respect**
Treating all employees in line with ACTPS values

This approach reflects a broader goal to support the ACTPS to remain effective, sustainable and able to deliver for the community now and into the future.

What happens next

- employees will receive clear information about the process
- time will be provided to consider options
- support will be available to help employees make informed decisions

Further updates will be shared as decisions are made and implementation progresses.