

Talking Points

Workforce Management in the ACT Public Sector

Date: 28 May 2026

Key messages:

- The ACT Public Service is carefully managing workforce growth to ensure it aligns with available funding and government priorities, including prioritising the services delivered to Canberrans.
- Over coming months, Directors-General will continue to implement workforce measures appropriate to their directorate, to better align staff to priority areas, reshaping the workforce to provide stability in the long term.
- In addition to mobility opportunities to align staff with Government's priority areas, voluntary redundancies may be available to directorates that need to reduce their staffing levels to fit within budgets.
- Directors-General, based on the allocated budgets for their directorates and resourcing requirements, will decide if their directorates need to participate.
- This approach forms part of the multi-year whole-of-government expenditure reform process which commenced in the 2025-26 Budget. This includes reprioritisation and budget control measures, which ensures government expenditure is directed to priorities and delivers value for the community.

Talking points:

- Expanded central funding for severance payments has been made available if Directors-General decide their directorate needs to access voluntary redundancies.
- This funding will support Directors-General to make the long-term workforce decisions they need to ensure their directorate is financially sustainable, without worsening their directorate budgets.
- The voluntary redundancy approach will follow the steps outlined in ACTPS enterprise agreements, including consultation with affected staff.
- Participation from staff is voluntary, and decisions will be guided by the need to maintain delivery of priority government work and essential services.
- Staff will be supported through the process, through clear communication, access to relevant information and appropriate support services. The psychosocial wellbeing of our staff is a priority.
- The approach will be gradual and managed so that there is time to consult with staff and limit disruption to delivering for the Canberra community.
- The ACT Public Service plays a valuable and critical role for the community. These measures are ensuring it remains fit for purpose and sustainable for the future so that it can continue to deliver frontline services along with other priorities.
- Staff will not be expected to do more with less. A key part of creating efficiencies across the ACTPS is about reducing workload pressures.

- Directorates will also identify opportunities to streamline or stop certain activities or work programs to ensure that workloads do not exceed safe working capacity. Risk assessments will support any voluntary redundancies.

Questions and answers:

How many jobs are you targeting?

This is not about targeting jobs. It is about ensuring directorates fit within their current budgets as determined by Government. Each Directors-General will determine whether VRs are required in their directorate to fit within their funded FTE.

How much money has been made available for directorates and what are the anticipated savings it will generate?

There is no set target for voluntary redundancies. Funding will be available for Directors-General to access if they need to reduce the size of their FTE to fit within budget.

How long will the expanded central funding be available?

Over the next two years, Directors-General will determine if and how VRs may be used to ensure they operate within their budgets.

What happens if not enough people apply for Voluntary Redundancies? Will there be forced redundancies?

There are currently no plans for forced redundancies.

Which directorates will access the voluntary redundancies?

It is up to the Director-General of each directorate to determine if their directorate has unfunded positions and needs to implement voluntary redundancies to balance the size of its workforce.

Have voluntary redundancies been offered because of the Budget deficit?

This is about responsible financial management. The focus is on aligning workforce size with available funding and priorities of government to ensure continued delivery for the community.

Does this mean that the budget is in worse shape than we expected?

No. This is about aligning workforce size with available funding to deliver the priorities of government and services for the community.

Will there be a recruitment freeze while VRs are being offered?

No, there won't be a recruitment freeze as frontline roles and roles aligned to government priorities will still need to be filled. This is where mobility strategies across the ACTPS will be important.

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