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# ABOUT

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Australian public and successive Australian governments have been well served by a highly professional Australian Public Service (APS). The APS has consistently engaged with the key policy, program, service delivery and regulatory challenges of the day, and sought to understand current management, governance and technological developments.

However, new technology and global developments are transforming the Australian economy and society. This will continue and accelerate over the decades ahead, posing new opportunities and challenges for citizens, business and the broader community.

The Government is determined to ensure Australia capitalises on the opportunities this provides to drive innovation, increase productivity, create jobs, improve citizens' experience of government, and deliver better services. The APS has a critical role in assisting government manage and respond to new and emerging challenges — both in policy and implementation. But it must be best placed to harness the opportunities, with the necessary in-house capability to both develop and implement solutions.

The APS must retain the key competencies and capabilities to discharge its responsibilities.

The recent Innovation and Science Australia report, *Australia 2030: prosperity through innovation*, concluded the APS has to transform to meet the challenges of a digitally-enabled economy. This means improving the capacity of the APS to innovate, collaborate, and to use data and technology more effectively.

The structure, approach and operations of the APS reflect a framework for public administration shaped largely by the 1974-1976 Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration, and refined by subsequent inquiries and reforms. It is therefore timely to ask whether the APS's capability, culture and operating model are suited to harness the

opportunities of a transformed Australian economy and society, in an increasingly complex global context.

## Objective

The Government is establishing an independent review to ensure the APS is fit-for-purpose for the coming decades. The APS needs to be apolitical and professional, agile, innovative and efficient — driving both policy and implementation through coherent, collaborative, whole-of-government approaches. It must have the capability to meet core responsibilities and deliver functions, and to understand and deploy technology and data to drive improvement.

This will enable the APS to best serve the Australian government and people: providing security, driving productivity and jobs in the economy, improving citizens' experience of government, and delivering fair and equitable support where it is most needed. A modern APS will be an employer of choice, providing enriching work for its employees, nurturing talent and being an exemplar of innovation and adaptability.

The review will identify an ambitious program of transformational reforms to ensure the APS is fit-for-purpose for the coming decades, and to guide and accelerate future reform activities.

## Scope of review

This review will examine the capability, culture and operating model of the APS. It will make practical recommendations to ensure the APS is ready, over the coming decades, to best serve Australia in:

- driving innovation and productivity in the economy
- delivering high quality policy advice, regulatory oversight, programs and services
- tackling complex, multi-sectoral challenges in collaboration with the community, business and citizens
- ensuring our domestic, foreign, trade and security interests are coordinated and well managed
- improving citizens' experience of government and delivering fair outcomes for them
- acquiring and maintaining the necessary skills and expertise to fulfil its responsibilities.

In examining these issues, the review will consider the suitability of the APS's architecture and governing legislation. It will also consider how the APS monitors and measures performance, and how it ensures the transparent and most effective use of taxpayers' money in delivering outcomes.

The review will focus on all Departments of State and any entity which engages staff under the *Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*. Parliamentary departments are not within the scope of the review.

Recommendations will include implementation and change management strategies.

## Leadership and governance

The review will be led by an independent panel of six individuals with public and private sector experience, both in Australia and internationally.

The panel will be supported by a secretariat in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The panel will report to the Prime Minister through the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, who will be supported by the Australian Public Service Commissioner.

The review will examine leading domestic and international public and private sector practice. It will have close regard to reform activities already underway across government, particularly the work of the APS Secretaries Board. It will also examine and draw upon previous reviews to improve the APS, including implementation experiences and lessons learned.

The panel will consult widely, both within and outside the APS, including with an advisory group of current Commonwealth ministers and a reference group of eminent individuals with a diverse range of domestic and international, public and private sector expertise.

## Deliverables

The review will report in the first half of 2019.



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