

MS25-000743

TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT – SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

Prime Minister, we recommend you:

- 1. Agree to terminate the appointment of Ms Natalie James, Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, effective from the end of 18 January 2026. Agreed / Not Agreed
- 2. Sign the Executive Council Minute Paper, the box in the Explanatory Memorandum and the Instrument of Termination (Attachment A). Signed / Not Signed
- 3. Note the draft media release advising the termination of Ms James (Attachment B). Signed / Not Signed

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

8/12/25

ANTHONY ALBANESE

Date:

Comments:



KEY POINTS

s 47C , s 47E(c) , s 47F

- 2. Under subsection 59(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act), the Governor-General may, on your recommendation and by notice in writing, terminate the appointment of a Secretary. Under subsection 59(3) of the PS Act, before recommending to the Governor-General the termination of a Secretary, you must have received a report about the proposed termination from me as the Secretary of PM&C. I am required to consult with the Australian Public Service (APS) Commissioner before preparing such a report.

- a. This brief constitutes a termination report for the purposes of subsection 59(3) of the PS Act.

s 47C , s 47E(c) , s 47F

4. Consistent with principles of procedural fairness, I have discussed the proposed termination with Ms James and have given her the opportunity to make any comments before a decision on her appointment is taken.

s 47C , s 47E(c) , s 47F

5. Should you agree to terminate the appointment of Ms James as Secretary of DEWR, sign the Executive Council Minute Paper, the box in the Explanatory Memorandum and the Instrument of Termination (Attachment A).
- a. The termination would be considered at the ExCo meeting on 11 December 2025 and take effect from 11:59pm on 18 January 2026.
- b. A draft media release advising of the termination of Ms James' appointment is at Attachment B. Minister Rishworth and Secretary James have agreed that 15 December 2025 would be an appropriate day to issue the media release. We can work with your office to settle the text of the announcement prior to the media release being issued.
6. I understand that Ms Tania Rishniw, Deputy Secretary, will act as Secretary of DEWR s 47C s 47C You have delegated the power to appoint an Acting Secretary for a period of up to three months to Minister Rishworth where there is a vacancy in the office.
7. I will brief you further on options to appoint a new Secretary of DEWR in due course.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

s 47E(c) , s 47C

Consultation

PM&C DIVISIONS – Cabinet

Dr Steven Kennedy PSM
Secretary
5 December 2025

Policy Officer: Katy Lin
Phone no: s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Circulation

PM&C Secretary; A/g FAS, Government Division, *K Lin*.
PMO Deputy Chief of Staff s 22(1)(a)(ii)

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A EXECUTIVE COUNCIL PACKAGE

~~PROTECTED CABINET~~

Minute paper – for signature

Explanatory Memorandum – for signature

Instrument of termination – for signature

~~PROTECTED CABINET~~



Public Service (Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) Termination of Appointment 2025

I, the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council and under subsection 59(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, terminate the appointment of Ms Natalie James as Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations from 11:59 pm on 18 January 2026.

Dated

2025

Sam Mostyn AC
Governor-General

By Her Excellency's Command
s 22(1)(a)(ii)

Anthony Albanese
Prime Minister

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Minute No. 382 of 2025 - Prime Minister

Subject - *Public Service Act 1999*

Public Service (Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) Termination of Appointment 2025

The instrument would terminate the appointment of Ms Natalie James as Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations from 11:59 pm on 18 January 2026.

Section 59 of the *Public Service Act 1999* (the Act) provides for the termination of the appointment of a Secretary of a Department.

Subsection 59(1) of the Act provides that the Governor-General may, by notice in writing, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, terminate the appointment of a Secretary of a Department.

Before recommending to the Governor-General that the appointment of a Secretary of a Department other than the Prime Minister's Department be terminated, the Prime Minister must have received a report about the proposed termination of appointment from the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department (subsection 59(3)). The report must be prepared in consultation with the Australian Public Service Commissioner.

The Minute recommends the termination of the appointment of Ms Natalie James as Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations s 47C , s 47E(c) , s 47F
s 47C , s 47E(c) , s 47F

The Minute recommends that the termination of appointment be made in the form proposed.

A report about the proposed termination of appointment, prepared under subsection 59(3) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, was received from the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. s 22(1)(a)(ii)


Prime Minister

Authority: Subsection 59(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*

s 22(1)(a)(ii)



PRIME MINISTER

Departmental No. 382 of 2025

Minute Paper for the Executive Council

Executive Council
Meeting No.

Subject

Public Service Act 1999

Public Service (Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) Termination of Appointment 2025

Approved in Council

Recommended for the approval of Her Excellency the Governor-General in Council that, by instrument in the attached form and under subsection 59(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, she terminate the appointment of Ms Natalie James as Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations from 11:59pm on 18 January 2026.


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Sam Mostyn AC
Governor-General

s 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Filed in the Records
of the Council

 Anthony Albanese
Prime Minister

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Secretary to the Executive Council

MEDIA STATEMENT

Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

The Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Ms Natalie James, will conclude her term as Secretary on 18 January 2026.

I would like to thank Ms James for her service as Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. I would like to particularly acknowledge her leadership of the Department in delivering the Government's first-term industrial relations reforms.

I wish Ms James all the best with her future endeavours.

An appointment of a new Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations will be made in due course.

DAY, XX DECEMBER 2025

MEDIA CONTACT: