



Secretaries Board Communique

Date: 10 July 2024

The Secretaries Board met today at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to discuss the following matters.

Strategic Outlook

The Board discussed government priorities, emerging risks and strategic issues.

The Board received an update on geostrategic issues from Ms Jan Adams AO PSM, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Mr Matt Yannopoulos PSM, acting Secretary of the Department of Defence.

The Board received an economic and budget update from Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Secretary of The Treasury, and Mr Nathan Williamson, acting Secretary of the Department of Finance.

Secretaries Board Sub-Committees

The Board considered current sub-committees arrangements and confirmed the following four sub-committees would support the Board in its functions:

- (a) Secretaries Digital and Data Committee;
- (b) Partnership Priorities Committee;
- (c) Capability and Workforce Committee (formerly Future of Work Committee); and
- (d) Secretaries Talent Council.

The Board agreed also that the Chief Operating Officer Committee would continue to operate under its current arrangements.

Long-Term Insights Briefing: Pipeline of Future Topics

The Board endorsed the forward pipeline of topics for future Long-term Insights Briefings (LTIBs). The purpose of LTIBs is to make available (a) information about medium-term and long-term trends, risks, and opportunities that affect or may affect Australia or Australian society and information and (b) impartial analysis relating to those trends, risks and opportunities.

Simplified Trade System Taskforce

The Secretaries Board noted the achievements of the Simplified Trade System (STS) Implementation Taskforce working across government to deliver an integrated and user-focused reform program and

considered lessons from this approach to support cross-agency collaboration and reforms in other areas. Secretaries Board noted the STS Unit in Austrade will work in partnership with agencies to continue business-focussed, central coordination of cross-border trade reforms from 1 July 2024.

State of Evaluation in the Australian Government Project

The Board noted that the Australian Centre for Evaluation (ACE) will commence the development of an inaugural *State of Evaluation in Australian Government Report* to be delivered to the Board in late 2024. The ACE was established within the Australian Treasury in July 2023 to help put evaluation evidence at the heart of policy design and decision-making.

Partnership Priorities Committee

The Board noted the progress report from the Partnership Priorities Committee.

Strategic Commissioning Framework Implementation

The Board agreed minor updates to the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework and noted service-wide reporting of 2024-25 targets is underway.

Future of Work Sub-Committee – Terms of Reference update

The Board endorsed the Future of Work Sub-committee's updated Terms of Reference and agreed to change the name of the Committee to the Capability and Workforce Committee.

APS Integrity Action Plan implementation progress update

The Board noted an implementation update from the Australian Public Service Commissioner, Dr Gordon de Brouwer, on the report '*Louder than Words: An APS Integrity Action Plan*'.

Next Meeting

The next Secretaries Board meeting is scheduled for 14 August 2024.