



Secretaries Board Communique

Date: 21 October 2026

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

Auditor-General update

The Board received an update from Dr Caralee McLiesh PSM, Auditor-General, on the work of the Australian National Audit Office.

High Risk Weather Season

The Board received an update from Pat Hetherington, Interim Coordinator-General, National Emergency Management Agency on preparations for the Higher Risk Weather Season.

Gender Equality and Engagement in the APS

The Board received an update from Cameron Gifford, Acting Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Padma Raman PSM, Executive Director, Office for Women on the Government's gender equality agenda.

Comcare Reform

The Board received an update from Simon Duggan PSM, Secretary of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, on the development of reforms to modernise the Comcare scheme, with a focus on improving recovery and return to work outcomes for injured workers while supporting the scheme's long-term sustainability.

Strengthening SES Cohort Performance Outcomes

The Board noted the update from Jacqui Curtis PSM, Australian Public Service Commissioner, on Senior Executive Service performance arrangements.

APS Bargaining

The board received an update from Alison Stott, APS Chief Negotiator and Jacqui Curtis PSM, Australian Public Service Commissioner, on APS Bargaining.

Strategic Outlook

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

COO Committee

The Board noted the Chief Operating Officers Committee 6-monthly update.

Capability and Workforce Committee

The Board noted the progress report from the Capability and Workforce Committee.

Partnership Priorities Committee

The Board noted the Partnership Priorities Committee 6-monthly update.

Other Business

The Board congratulated Mr Simon Draper PSM on his appointment as Secretary of the Department of Industry, Science and Resources.

Next meetings

The next Secretaries Board meeting is scheduled for 18 November 2026.