



2024-25 Census Action Plan

APS Employee Census

The APS Employee Census is an annual survey which is used to collect confidential attitude and opinion information from APS employees on their experience in the workplace.

The department gains insights from the feedback received through the Census and is committed to taking action to improve our working environment by identifying key areas for improvement and developing a series of actions.

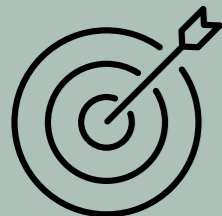
This plan focuses on departmental level actions with more specific actions captured in other tiers of workforce and census action plans.

Our Areas to Celebrate

In 2024, our participation rate in the Census rose to 70% of APS staff with improvements in our results for employee engagement, immediate supervisor and SES manager leadership and wellbeing.

In the 2024 APS Employee Census our staff told us that areas to celebrate are:

- Understanding how our roles contribute to achieving an outcome for the Australian public
- Opportunities to use our skills
- Workplace flexibility arrangements
- The department's support and active promotion of an inclusive workplace culture
- Satisfaction with stability and security of jobs
- Supervisor's ability to always put my safety first
- Receiving the respect deserved from colleagues at work

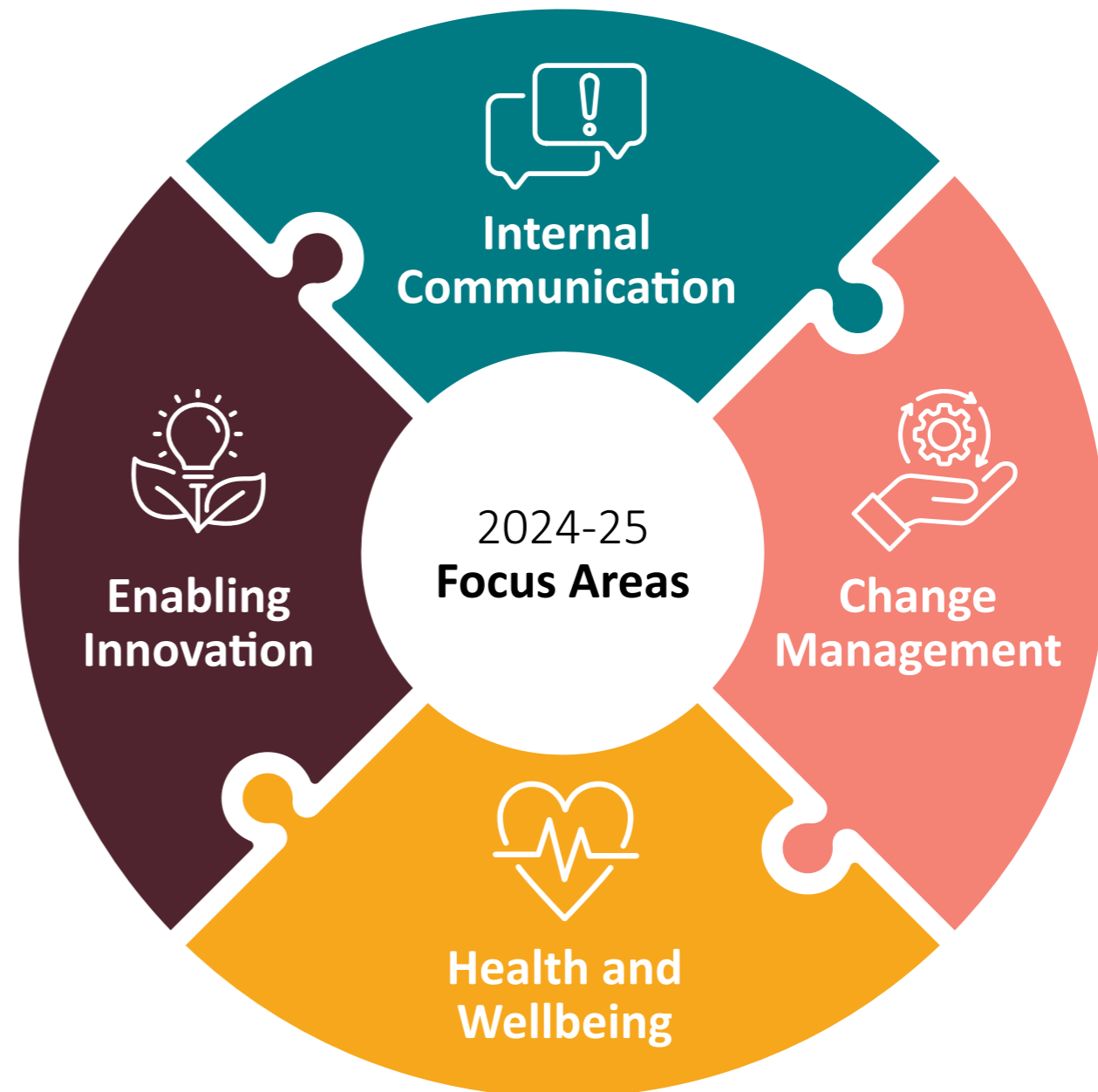


Our Goal

Continually improving our workplace experience and culture allows us to attract and retain the best people, enhance organisational performance and deliver improved outcomes for the agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries and Australian people.

Our 2024-25 Focus Areas

In 2024-25, we will focus on the following four key themes in response to the feedback received from staff in the 2024 APS Employee Census:





Internal Communication

Our current state:

During 2023-24, the department focused on communication as part of our previous Census Action Plan. We saw strong engagement across key communication channels and campaigns such as One DAFF, increased our communication of key messages and events directly to staff and piloted sessions designed to uplift leadership and communication capability.

Our goal:

Effective communication is vital for a positive, engaged and productive workplace. Internal communication takes many forms from how we articulate and distribute messages at a departmental level to how we communicate within our own work areas. The department strives for a communicative workforce that fosters collaboration and diverse thinking to improve outcomes aligned to the department's Statement of Strategic Intent and Core 4 values.

Actions:

- 1 Continue building and reinforcing the communication capability of our leaders through leadership development programs and performance discussions.
Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 **Lead: Chief People Officer**
- 2 Update new starter information and corporate induction materials to ensure it contains effective and meaningful guidance for new starters on where to access news updates and key information.
Target date: February 2025 **Lead: Chief People Officer**
- 3 Review the department's internal communication channels and implement improvements to increase the effectiveness of our communication with staff.
Target date: February 2025 **Lead: FAS Strategy, Performance and Engagement**
- 4 Develop and implement strategies to improve communication and connections across operational, regional and office-based staff.
Target date: February 2025 **Lead: FAS Strategy, Performance and Engagement**

Success Indicators:

- Improved communication index results in the 2025 APS Employee Census
- Improved communication sentiment in pulse surveys
- Increased engagement across core communication channels such as the Business Bulletin
- Increase in number of staff accessing communication tools, training and education



Change Management

Our current state:

During 2023-24, the department began an integrated transformation program of work in addition to implementing other projects. To help engage, adopt and sustain the changes, we established change advocacy networks, resources and other capability development opportunities. We saw an increase in change awareness across the department, and interest in being involved supporters of change.

Our goal:

The department strives to emphasise collaboration, agility, and better supported leaders and sponsors of change. Improving change management is important to continue to align organisational practice with values and have consistency and efficiency in our approach.

Actions:

- 5 Embed an agency approach to change management by developing, refining and promoting resources and tools to support organisational change management.
Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 **Lead: FAS Transformation Taskforce**
- 6 Implement a strategy to uplift the capability of our leaders and managers by designing and delivering change management training and leveraging our existing change advocacy networks.
Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 **Lead: FAS Transformation Taskforce**
- 7 Strengthen the value, understanding and use of change management resources and networks by better communicating successful change outcomes.
Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 **Lead: FAS Transformation Taskforce**

Success Indicators:

- Improved change management sentiment in the 2025 APS Employee Census
- Improved change management sentiment in pulse surveys
- Active staff participation in change management training once developed
- Increased participation rates in networks and training availability including growth of membership, attendance and engagement



Health and Wellbeing

Our current state:

During 2023-24, the department focused on health and wellbeing as part of our previous Census Action Plan. We introduced and promoted a new EAP provider and increased our focus on early intervention. This focus saw an increase in favourable sentiments in the 2024 APS Census regarding health and wellbeing in DAFF which saw an increase in our overall wellbeing index score.

Our goal:

The department aims to create an environment where people are safe, engaged and valued. Through our Core 4 values, we demonstrate the importance of keeping our people safe and prioritising wellbeing. We aim to reinforce an environment where the safety and wellbeing of our people is an integral element of our culture.

Actions:

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Continue to reinforce and improve our health and wellbeing supports and policies across DAFF by:

- Developing a new DAFF Wellbeing Strategy and program
- Undertake a psychosocial risk assessment across DAFF to better understand and address psychosocial risks
- Strengthen our incident investigation management and work health and safety systems
- Launch and promote DAFF's Early Intervention policy

Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 Lead: Chief People Officer

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Increase promotion and education of health, wellbeing and integrity supports and initiatives to improve awareness and accessibility of these resources, support, tools and training.

Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 Lead: Chief People Officer

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Uplift manager capability to promote and support health, wellbeing and integrity across all aspects of our work.

Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 Lead: Chief People Officer

Success Indicators:

- Improved health, wellbeing and safety sentiment in the 2025 APS Employee Census
- Improved health, wellbeing and safety sentiment in pulse surveys
- Increased engagement with wellbeing communications activities
- Increased use of health, wellbeing and integrity tools and resources



Enabling Innovation

Our current state:

During 2023-24, the department focused on innovation as part of our previous Census Action Plan. We increased our focus on recognising and rewarding innovation by putting a larger focus on innovation in our flagship internal awards program, we also increased communication internally and externally on the work being done regarding innovation in our Biosecurity space.

Our goal:

The department aims to promote an innovative culture, capability and mindset, which encourages ongoing innovation in our daily work and deliver improved outcomes for the agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries and Australian people.

Actions:

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Promote the value and practice of innovation in DAFF by:

- Communicating the importance of innovation and its place in our culture,
- Clearly defining what innovation is in the DAFF context
- Assess and promote how we will constructively manage risk and failure as part of innovation

Target date: Ongoing through 2024-2025 Lead: All SES Officers

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Incorporate an 'innovation' element to the SES key performance deliverables to encourage innovation across all groups, divisions and branches.

Target date: November 2025 Lead: All SES Officers

Success Indicators:

- Improved Enabling Innovation index results in the 2025 APS Employee Census
- Improved innovation sentiment in pulse surveys
- Innovation element introduced in the SES key performance deliverables for the 2024-25 performance cycle