TURNING UP THE VOLUME

- key recommendations
- our strategy
- our services
1 Key recommendations
We recommend building on strengths in recruitment and focusing on retention and advancement.

**Indigenous employment today**

Indigenous Australians remain under-represented in the APS—currently 2.6% with a target of 3% by 2018. To enable this, we would need to recruit an additional 2,500–3,000 across the Commonwealth.

But the challenge is not just about ‘bums on seats’. We invest heavily in recruitment only to lose 16% after the first year of employment, and are losing employees at a faster rate than we are recruiting. Many of our Indigenous employees hit a career ceiling at the APS 3–4 level. Only 1% of our SES are Indigenous. We have a retention and advancement problem which will undermine our ability to meet our 3% target and provide meaningful opportunities for all employees.

We need to turn up the volume: build on our strengths and raise the bar across the APS if we are going to make progress and meet the expectations of Government and the community.
We recommend building on strengths in recruitment and focusing on retention and advancement

So, where to from here?

1 Build on strengths
   a. Continuation of the graduate program and review of cadetships and traineeships
   b. Deliver efficiencies through centralized recruitment where viable, including higher levels (APS 5+)
   c. One APS—Raising the bar across the service to create parity with non-Indigenous representation

2 Prioritise retention and advancement
   a. Interventions that support employees to align their capabilities to their professional aspirations
   b. Start to build a leadership pipeline
   c. Pilot advancement and mobility programs at the APS 5–6 and EL classifications

3 Work with agencies for tailored strategies
   a. An APSC advisory service that can work one-on-one with agencies to evaluate strengths and identify focus areas
   b. Build the capacity of HR managers

Indigenous employees by location
2) Our strategy
APSC approach

Rigorous assessment of evidence base—at the individual agency and whole of government level
- Analysis of APSED, Census, exit interviews, anecdotal evidence.
- Analysis of other APS-wide interventions and competing services in the market.

Stakeholder engagement at a range of levels to gauge interest, relevance and raise awareness.

Development of service offer based on four criteria: efficiency, APSC expertise, whole of service relevance, impact.

- Over 99,367 people reached through our APS Indigenous careers Facebook page
- Quarterly Indigenous Employment HR Forum, with over 30 agencies represented
- Enhanced understanding about the experiences of our Indigenous employees through regional forums
- A new Indigenous Careers portal, with over 14,774 pageviews
- 1,100 Indigenous employment engagements
- Over $9 million in savings to Government per year
- Established network of Indigenous community stakeholders
- Structured and more effective linkages with HR managers
- Pathways accounts for 89% of all APS Indigenous employees recruited

TURNING UP THE VOLUME
The APSC has many years of experience and expertise in Indigenous employment matters in the APS.

- We work with Indigenous employees, HR practitioners and senior leaders.
- We can reduce red tape and provide cheaper outcomes for the Government through centralised approaches.
- We have established trust in the Indigenous community.

The APSC has expertise in employment matters — talent and performance management, strategic HR, organisational capability and more.

We can make significant gains by working together. Centralised processes can offer significant savings and efficiency gains to the Government. The key is to ensure they also provide good value outcomes.
TURNING UP THE VOLUME

Build on strengths

a. Continuation of the graduate program and review of cadetships and traineeships
b. Deliver efficiencies through centralized recruitment where viable, including higher levels (APS 5+)
c. One APS—Raising the bar across the service to create parity with non-Indigenous representation

Prioritise retention and advancement

a. Interventions that support employees to align their capabilities to their professional aspirations
b. Start to build a leadership pipeline
c. Pilot advancement and mobility programs at the APS 5–6 and EL classifications

Work with agencies for tailored strategies

a. An APSC advisory service that can work one-on-one with agencies to evaluate strengths and identify focus areas
b. Build the capacity of HR managers

So, where from here?

We recommend building on strengths in recruitment and focusing on retention and advancement.

The Indigenous experience

"In Indigenous affairs, among people who write policy for Indigenous people, we heard racist statements on a daily basis. One staff member was told ‘just let the discriminatory stuff go past you it’ll be right’ by a non-Indigenous section manager. We had other staff in tears when other people make open statements about Aboriginal organisations being so hopeless... when these kinds of comments are allowed to continue on a daily basis... you are forced to operate in a space which doesn’t value you at all."

Insight

The draft CAEPR report identifies a number of reasons why Indigenous people join the APS including: a desire to contribute to community, a desire to make a useful difference—that is, to help improve government policy and programs, to serve their community, and to contribute to activity on Indigenous issues, attractive working conditions, a useful initial step.

Does your organisation make the most of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to attract and retain the best?
The Indigenous experience:
• Indigenous employees are less likely to have tertiary qualifications
• Over a third of the Indigenous APS workforce is under 35
• Similar caring responsibilities to the rest of the APS
• Slightly higher employee engagement
The representation of Indigenous employees in the APS needs to more closely resemble that of non-Indigenous employees.
**Insight**

The draft CAEPR report identifies five reasons Indigenous employees leave the APS: unmet expectations, influence of politics, poor career and supervision experiences, racism and bullying, being undervalued. Does your organisation’s strategy respond to these issues?

Source: Draft findings from the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research Report, "Understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee decisions to exit the Australian Public Service", ANU, 2016.
Our services
TURNING UP THE VOLUME

What we have done to date hasn’t been as effective as we need it to be, to meet our targets and community expectations

• We need to be bold and try something different
• We need to take more risks and accept that some of these things may not be successful
• We need to learn along the way

Leap of faith

Start small, scale-up if successful

• We are proposing to pilot a number of recruitment, retention and advancement programs
• We are going to start small; then scale up
We win where we invest

**Recruitment is still required**
An anticipated increase of around 40% at the graduate level (as compared to a 10% increase in investment to undertake a twice annual intake) and the introduction of recruitment of ongoing and non-ongoing at the APS 6 and EL levels will help agencies meet the Government’s 3% target.

**Retention and advancement is the focus**
Retention and advancement—investment in a pilot career board that will provide targeted career support to high performing Indigenous employees at the APS 6–EL levels and build a leadership pipeline.

**Stewardship**
One-on-one advisory services to APS agencies to enhance individual employment strategies and provide better practice ideas for the management of Indigenous employees in the agency.

**Insight**
Where we invest, we can make significant gains over time.
## Our services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Recruit & Return** | - Graduate Pathways 2.0  
- Recruitment and mobility at 5–6 level and EL through four pilot measures:  
  - Lateral recruitment through ongoing and non-ongoing special measures  
  - Targeted 'return' campaign for ex-APS employees  
  - Reverse Jawun  
  - Pilot transfer and secondment programs—mobility within and external to the APS  
- Review traineeships and cadetships |
| **Retain & Advance** | - Pilot career model for APS 6–EL 2  
  - Provide targeted training and development activities for up to 30 Indigenous employees over two years  
  - Development activities would include: secondment, training, mentoring and career planning  
  - Work with senior leaders in the APS and other sectors  
- Design an EL 2–SES transition program to be piloted in the 2018–2020 MOU  
- SES capability including recruitment enhancement and training |
| **Connectedness** | - Build stronger connection networks for support to employees and managers:  
  - Development on-boarding guidelines  
  - Using contemporary avenues to reach people  
  - Quarterly HR forums and events  
  - Development of online portal for HR managers  
- Advisory Services  
  - Drawing on expertise across the APS, provide one-on-one independent advice to agencies on their Indigenous employment strategies and initiatives to build the capability of HR managers across the services  
  - Provide expert advice on areas of strength and areas of focus for improvement  
  - Provide support to agencies in meeting their reporting requirements to Government |
| **Learn** | End of program evaluation and annual performance audits |
Implementation

Phase 0
Negotiation and engagement with agencies

Phase 1
Implementation of Graduate and some lateral recruitment programs; Advisory Services; Outreach services;
Design of Advancement program

Phase 2
All services in implementation. Design of EL 2–SES transition pilot program

Phase 3
All services being implemented. Evaluation to be undertaken of full service offer

Phase 0: 2016–17
Phase 1: 2016–17
Phase 2: 2017–18
Phase 3: 2018–19
Thank you

Contact
Indigenous Employment Team
Employment Strategy
Australian Public Service Commission
Level 6, Aviation House
16 Furzer Street, PHILLIP ACT 2606
+61 2 6202 3888
www.apsc.gov.au