Secretary's foreword

I am pleased to present the 2016-17 Department of Social Services (DSS) Corporate Plan that will guide our work over the next four years.

We aspire to be the Australian Government's lead social policy agency and are committed to improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

We are responsible for over one-quarter of the Australian Government's 2016-17 budgeted expenditure.

This plan is our principal planning document, which sets out our vision and mission, outlines our strategic priorities over the next four years and enables us to remain open and transparent in managing our responsibilities including the proper use and management of public resources, consistent with the requirements of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013.

Our focus for 2016-17 includes:

- developing and implementing the Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare; providing longitudinal data on how Australia's welfare system is working; and informing our policy responses for those at risk of long term welfare dependency
- continuing to work with states and territories to support the transition to the full scheme of the National Disability Insurance Scheme from 1 July 2016 across Australia
- addressing the rates of domestic and family violence and sexual assault against women and their children through the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 and implementation of the Women's Safety Package
- development of a Council of Australian Governments report on reforms to housing and homelessness services, taking into consideration our existing work on housing affordability
- transitioning our Department and other government agencies to the Community Grants Hub; aiming to simplify and streamline the grant experience for service providers, the community and Government.

I look forward to working with our Ministers, stakeholders and clients to deliver on the priorities set out in this key document.

Finn Pratt
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Statement of preparation

I, Finn Pratt, as the accountable authority of the Department of Social Services, present the 2016–17 Department of Social Services Corporate Plan (the Plan), as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013. The Plan is prepared in accordance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014.

This Plan has been prepared for the 2016–17 financial year, and covers the four financial periods 2016–17 to 2019–20.

Signed:


Dated: 16 August 2016
1 | About Us

Our vision
We aspire to be Australia’s pre-eminent social policy agency.

Our mission
Our mission is to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

Our purposes
We are a critical source of social policy advice for the Australian Government. We work in partnership with other government and non-government organisations, particularly with the Department of Human Services, to ensure the effective development, management and delivery of a diverse range of payments, policies, programs and services focused on improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

Our purposes reflect four core areas in which we seek to assist people.

1. Social Security
Financial support for individuals and families who are unable to fully support themselves by providing a sustainable payments and concessions system

2. Families and Communities
Stronger families and more resilient communities by developing civil society and by providing family and community services

3. Disability and Carers
Improved independence of, and participation by, people with disability, including improved support for carers, by providing targeted support and services

4. Housing
Improved access to affordable housing, improved community housing and assisting individuals experiencing homelessness through targeted support and services
Our policies and programs are designed around these purposes. We are responsible for over one-quarter of the Australian Government’s 2016-17 budgeted expenditure with the majority of this going towards social security as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: 2016-17 DSS budget allocation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>95.73%</td>
<td>$110.42 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Families &amp; Communities</td>
<td>2.66%</td>
<td>$3.06 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability &amp; Carers</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
<td>$1.75 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>$0.11 billion</td>
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Source: DSS Portfolio Budget Statements 2016-17

**Our values**

Our values reflect those of the broader Australian Public Service and are central to the way we work with our Ministers, Assistant Ministers, colleagues and stakeholders. This includes being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical.

**Our portfolio**

Our Department sits within the Social Services portfolio which works with government and non-government organisations to develop, manage and deliver policies, programs and payments that support and improve the lifetime wellbeing of Australian people and families by encouraging independence and participation.

The portfolio consists of our Department and the Department of Human Services, each administered separately.
Our Department includes two portfolio bodies:

- Australian Institute of Family Studies
- National Disability Insurance Agency.

Our people

We operate across Australia with approximately 80 per cent of departmental staff based in the National Office located in Canberra. The remaining 20 per cent of staff are in the delivery network located within state, territory and regional offices throughout Australia.

The contribution, diversity and expertise of our people are highly valued.

Our staff have embraced the challenge set through the National Innovation and Science Agenda to support innovation and agility in the way we do business. Our Innovation Strategy encourages a culture where innovation is routine rather than the exception which is critical to supporting our vision of being the pre-eminent social policy organisation in Australia. Working effectively as a team towards the same purposes does not mean we are locked into the same way of doing things.

Our organisational priorities

Our organisational priorities focus on what we do as a leading social policy agency to achieve the purposes and outcomes expected of us by Ministers, government and the Australian community. This is how we intend to undertake our day-to-day work in pursuit of our mission:

- ensure that government policies and programs, including the service systems we design, fund and regulate, operate effectively and efficiently, and maximise their contribution to lifetime wellbeing for people and families
- ensure that government priorities are implemented and monitored effectively and efficiently, maintained and evaluated
- provide evidence-based, whole of department, social policy advice to Ministers and government focused on improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia (see Appendix A), in accordance with our approach to policy advice (see Appendix B)
- build productive and collaborative relationships with our stakeholders, including other departments, service providers, and the states and territories, and ensure these relationships work to achieve outcomes in respective areas of responsibility
- create a productive and supportive workplace, manage our financial and other resources effectively, and maintain the capability needed to deliver government priorities into the future.
Our governance
We are organised in four streams, each led by a Deputy Secretary as shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: DSS Organisational Structure as at July 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Security Stream</th>
<th>Families &amp; Communities Stream</th>
<th>Corporate &amp; Delivery Stream</th>
<th>Disability &amp; Carers Stream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Secretary</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary &amp; Chief Operating Officer</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Security Stream**
The Social Security Stream provides social policy advice, policy oversight of social security payments to individuals, as well as welfare reform across the whole social security system. Leadership of strategic, cross outcome policy, data and evidence that supports policy advice. The stream is also responsible for housing policy.

**Families & Communities Stream**
The Families & Communities Stream develops policy and delivers programs for families, children, family safety, homelessness, gambling, multicultural affairs and settlement services. The Stream also delivers housing programs.

**Corporate & Delivery Stream**
The Corporate & Delivery Stream supports the Department through fit-for-purpose corporate services. The Stream also comprises the delivery network and works closely with policy and program areas to reduce red tape through deregulation activities.

**Disability & Carers Stream**
The Disability & Carers Stream shapes policy and services relating to disability and carers (including disability employment services and community mental health) and provides transition oversight and policy direction for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Our governance structure is designed to ensure accountability, transparency and fairness. It includes internal boards and committees, business planning and risk management, operations, quality assurance, fraud control and compliance activities.
Several committees provide advice and support to the Secretary on the administration and overall operation of the Department (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: DSS Committee Structure**

Our risk oversight and management

We recognise risk management is an essential component of sound management and good corporate governance. Our Enterprise Risk Management Framework and Guidelines are reviewed annually, are based on the Australian/New Zealand International Standard on Risk Management (AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009), and align with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy.

We have identified nine Enterprise Risks which pose a potential threat to the achievement of our organisational priorities, purposes and mission. The linkages between our Enterprise Risks and our mission are illustrated by Figure 4.

The Enterprise Risks are identified, monitored and treated by the Executive Management Group.

We undertake regular group and program, and project and operational level risk assessments, including fraud risk assessments.

Risk management at all levels is:

- undertaken within the parameters of our risk appetite and tolerance levels
- core business and the responsibility of all staff
- an essential component of all business activities and systems
- a continuous, developing and proactive process
- a process of understanding and proportionally controlling risk
- a management tool rather than an extra load on normal work practices.
Our risk and compliance functions establish policies, frameworks and processes which:

- support staff to take the right risks in pursuit of our priorities
- balance the tension between activities that create enterprise value, and activities that protect enterprise value
- ensure stakeholders understand and adhere to their obligations
- prevent, detect and deal with fraud and corruption
- effectively identify and manage risks in relation to serious non-compliance, fraud and corruption.

Our Internal Audit Practice is an operationally independent function, which provides assurance to the Secretary that our financial and operational controls are operating in an efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner. The Practice assists management in improving our business performance.

The Chief Internal Auditor and the Internal Audit Practice also support the role and functions of the Audit and Assurance Committee, as required under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. 
Figure 4: DSS Enterprise Risks

- **Improving lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia**
  - **Social Security**
  - **Families & Communities**
  - **Disability & Carers**
  - **Housing**

**Our Organisational Priorities**

- Ensure that government policies and programs, including the service systems we design, fund and regulate, operate effectively and efficiently, and maximise their contribution to lifetime wellbeing for people and families.
- Provide evidence-based, whole-of-department, social policy advice to Ministers and government focused on improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia in accordance with our approach to policy advice.
- Ensure that government priorities are implemented and monitored effectively and efficiently, maintained and evaluated.
- Build productive and collaborative relationships with our stakeholders, including other departments, service providers, and the states and territories, and ensure these relationships work to achieve outcomes in respective areas of responsibility.
- Create a productive and supportive workplace, manage our financial and other resources effectively, and maintain the capability needed to deliver government priorities into the future.

**Our Enterprise Risks**

- Significant program failure
- Significant failure or delay in delivering a government priority
- Significantly fraud or non-compliance event
- Failure to appropriately allocate resources to delivery priorities
- Major implementation problem
- Unpredicted or unmanaged harm to a person under a service DSS regulates
- Major service provider failure
- Selected policy or program model does not deliver outcomes sought
- Unanticipated fiscal outcome
2 | Performance

Our non-financial performance framework (at Figure 5) is the basis for measuring and assessing department and program performance in contributing to government policy objectives.

Figure 5: DSS non-financial performance framework

Each year we will report performance criteria for key results areas across two tiers of program and cross-program outcome indicators for each Purpose Statement (see Figure 6). Details of the program measurement information we will use to report the outcome indicators can be found on our website. We will supplement this reporting by evaluations, reviews and additional analysis.

We do not have targets as contributing payments and services are demand driven. We will report actual performance in our 2016-17 Annual Report. Results for previous years are available in those years’ Annual Reports.

Performance criteria and outcome indicators described in this Corporate Plan should be read along with program financial, performance and target information published in our 2016-17 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) to provide our complete performance story. Both the Corporate Plan purpose performance criteria and PBS program performance criteria will be reported in our 2016-17 Annual Performance Statement.
Figure 6: DSS performance criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose 1</th>
<th>Purpose 2</th>
<th>Purpose 3</th>
<th>Purpose 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Security</strong></td>
<td><strong>Families &amp; Communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disability &amp; Carers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support for individuals and families who are unable to fully support themselves by providing a sustainable payments and concessions system</td>
<td>Stronger families and more resilient communities by developing civil society and by providing family and community services</td>
<td>Improved independence of, and participation by, people with disability, including improved support for carers, by providing targeted support and services</td>
<td>Improved access to affordable housing, improved community housing and assisting individuals experiencing homelessness through targeted support and services</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes - What did we achieve?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability of the payment system</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intermediate outcomes - How well did we do?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extent to which payments are targeted to people unable to fully support themselves</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Extent to which delivery meets program objective</strong></td>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>Outputs - How much did we do?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery measures</strong></td>
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</table>
Purpose 1 Social Security

Financial support for individuals and families who are unable to fully support themselves by providing a sustainable payments and concessions system

Activities

We respond to need across people’s lives by administering a payments and concessions system that provides for a range of payments and access to concessions, including family payments, student payments, income support payments for people of workforce age, people with disability and carers, and for seniors. Additional payments and non-cash benefits include Commonwealth Rent Assistance and concession cards.

The payments and concessions system is targeted to provide support to those who are most in need and to assist people to become and remain financially self-reliant over the life course. Payments and financial assistance are delivered by the Department of Human Services and the Department of Veterans’ Affairs. The payments and concessions system is part of a broader suite of government welfare support provided by other Commonwealth agencies, including health care, student loans, employment assistance and tax concessions. State, territory and local governments also contribute to the welfare safety net through financial and in-kind support, subsidies and concessions.

Environment

The sustainability of the payments and concessions system and the capacity of people to self-provide over the life course are contingent primarily on broader economic performance. Factors such as labour market conditions, financial system stability, availability and alignment of education and job opportunities, and increasing longevity all impact people’s capacity to support themselves financially, both in the short term and over the life course. These factors are outside our direct influence.

The performance of the payments and concessions system is contingent on structural elements such as the extent to which work and self-provision are incentivised, long term welfare dependence is minimised, and the capacity of the system to respond to economic and demographic challenges.

Priorities

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- manage reform of the social security system to improve sustainability, coherence and responsiveness to our changing socio-economic context, making work and individual responsibility more central, and minimising long term welfare dependence
- develop and begin to implement an ‘investment approach’ to Australia’s social security system, detailing the lifetime liability of the social security system and informing our policy responses for those at risk of long term welfare dependency
- rebalance the pension asset test parameters to make it fairer and better targeted, while helping to ensure the pension system is sustainable into the future
- change social security portability rules to reinforce and strengthen the residence based nature of the Australian social security system
- implement measures to encourage and support working age Australians, particularly young people, into work
- improve the assessment process for carer payments.
Performance

Performance against Purpose 1 Social Security will be reported annually by four collective performance criteria described in Table 1, comprising indicators of cross-program and program outcomes.

Performance reporting will be supported over the period of the Corporate Plan by relevant findings from the Try, Test and Learn fund, and analysis drawing on actuarial and administrative data.

Table 1: Performance Criteria for Purpose 1 and contributing programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>1.1 Family Tax Benefit</th>
<th>1.2 Child Payments</th>
<th>1.3 Income Support for Vulnerable People</th>
<th>1.4 Income Support for People in Special Circumstances</th>
<th>1.5 Supplementary Payments and Support for Income Support Recipients</th>
<th>1.6 Income Support for Seniors</th>
<th>1.7 Allowances and Concessions for Seniors</th>
<th>1.8 Income Support for People with Disability</th>
<th>1.9 Income Support for Carers</th>
<th>1.10 Working Age Payments</th>
<th>1.11 Student Payments</th>
<th>XP (Cross Program) Rent Assistance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Outcomes – What did we achieve?</td>
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<td>Performance criteria</td>
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<td>Sustainability of the payments system</td>
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<td>Average future lifetime cost (in current year dollars) of total welfare payments to individuals</td>
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<td>Extent to which payment recipients have improved financial self-reliance</td>
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<td>Expected average proportion of future years not receiving income support payments</td>
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<td>Percentage of recipients who are not receiving income support within 3/6/12 months after exiting student payments</td>
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<td>Percentage of recipients who exit income support within 3/6/12 months</td>
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<td>Percentage of recipients reporting employment income</td>
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<td>Percentage of recipients receiving a part rate of payment due to the income or assets test</td>
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<td>Intermediate outcomes – How well did we do?</td>
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<td>Performance criteria</td>
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<td>Outcome indicator</td>
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<td>Extent to which payments are targeted to people unable to fully support themselves</td>
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<td>Percentage of the targeted population supported financially because they are unable to fully support themselves or require assistance with the direct costs of raising children</td>
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<td>Percentage of recipients aligned to specific policy objectives or payment conditions</td>
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<td>Extent to which delivery meets program objective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program performance criteria and associated milestone/standard (PBS)</td>
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<td>Payment accuracy (PBS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of recipients with debts by type and status</td>
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<td>Percentage of recipients receiving Family Tax Benefit by payment method</td>
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</table>
Purpose 2 Families and Communities

Stronger families and more resilient communities by developing civil society and by providing family and community services

Activities

We support families, children and youth, as well as migrants and humanitarian entrants settling in Australia, to improve their lifetime wellbeing by building on their strengths and addressing barriers to independence and participation in the community. Assistance is provided through Paid Parental Leave and a program of grants, procurements and subsidies to organisations to support individual, family and community functioning. Funding is targeted to assisting people and families, early intervention and prevention, and strengthening community capacity to provide support and meet local needs.

Commonwealth leadership and assistance provided to organisations reinforces the aims of the payment and concessions system in providing support to those who are most in need and to assist people and families to become more self-reliant over the life course. The Commonwealth leads national policy initiatives of mutual interest at all levels of government. Initiatives for which the states and territories have significant responsibility include child protection services, early childhood services, family services and placed-based community initiatives.

We work across the Commonwealth and with state and territory governments to foster inclusive social norms that strengthen social cohesion - such as mutual respect, trust and belonging - while addressing threats to family and community harmony, such as domestic and family violence, child abuse and neglect, sexual assault against women and children, and racism and discrimination.

Environment

A complex range of factors influence the functioning of people in families and communities, and their capacity to improve their circumstances. These include social norms and attitudes about violence and abuse, employment and education, and racism and other forms of discrimination; and the key role that parenting, relationship and financial management skills can have in contributing to positive outcomes for families and children across the life course.

Priorities

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- address the rates of domestic and family violence and sexual assault against women and their children through the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 and implementation of the Women’s Safety Package, as well as providing programs that respond to women and children experiencing domestic and family violence
- expand the Cashless Debit Card trial to gain further evidence of whether limiting cash available to welfare recipients helps address disruptive behaviours that contribute to high unemployment, low participation, long term welfare dependency and intergenerational disadvantage among vulnerable Australians
- provide advice to the Minister for Social Services on key aspects of the Australian Government’s gambling policy, including on the implementation of recommendations from the Review of Illegal Offshore Wagering
• identify and promote evidence-informed prevention and early intervention approaches to engage individuals and families at points of vulnerability over their lifetime
• deliver settlement support for humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants in their first five years of life in Australia to enable their capacity to be fully contributing members of the community and reduce welfare dependency
• contribute to maintaining Australia’s social cohesion by ensuring relevant programs help build capacity to support and strengthen communities.

Performance

Performance against Purpose 2 Families and Communities will be reported annually by three collective performance criteria described in Table 2, comprising quantitative and qualitative indicators of cross-program and program outcomes.

Performance reporting will be supported over the period of the Corporate Plan by relevant findings and analyses as they become available from the Cashless Debit Card Trial evaluation and analysis of actuarial, administrative and client survey data.

Table 2: Performance Criteria for Purpose 2 and contributing programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Outcomes – What did we achieve?</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Families and Communities</td>
<td>Extent to which assisted individuals and families have improved individual and family functioning</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Paid Parental Leave</td>
<td>Percentage of assisted individuals and families with improved circumstances in areas relevant to individual/family needs</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Social and Community Services</td>
<td>Percentage of assisted individuals and families who achieve individual/family goals related to building capacity and connections</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XP Cross Program</td>
<td></td>
<td>XP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intermediate outcomes – How well did we do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance criteria</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome indicator</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of contribution to implementing national initiatives</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of progress in implementing the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of progress in implementing the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020</td>
<td>XP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent to which payments and service provision meet program objective</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program performance criteria and associated milestone/standard (PBS)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of satisfaction with services</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of community and service system capacity and capability improvement</td>
<td>XP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of assisted clients who are from priority groups or disadvantaged communities</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of new parents supported to take paid parental leave</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Purpose 3 Disability and Carers

Improved independence of, and participation by, people with disability, including improved support for carers, by providing targeted support and services

Activities

Under the auspices of the overarching National Disability Strategy 2010-2020, we deliver a number of targeted programs – and also work across the Commonwealth, with the National Disability Insurance Agency, and with state and territory governments and sector stakeholders – to support people with disability, carers and people with or at risk of mental illness. The focus is on early intervention and prevention, client choice and control, and the effective and efficient delivery of community supports and services.

As the overarching policy framework for disability reform in Australia, the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 aims to improve lifetime outcomes for the 4.3 million Australians with disability and to drive a more inclusive approach for mainstream policies, programs and infrastructure.

Environment

The responsiveness, quality and affordability of general and specialised supports for people with disability is dependent on an efficient market, including the availability of an appropriately skilled and trained workforce, and on social norms and workplace culture that can impact the capacity of people with disability to participate in society.

Priorities

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- continue to implement the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020, specifically delivery of the strategy’s second implementation plan, *Driving Action 2015-18*, in 2016
- in collaboration with states and territories, continue to implement the large-scale transition to the full scheme National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) from 1 July 2016 supporting the full rollout across Australia, including data collections and analysis to help inform full implementation
- progress establishment of a national Quality and Safeguards system for the NDIS, due to commence from 1 July 2018
- provide oversight of the developing market for the NDIS, including clarification of the market-related roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments and the National Disability Insurance Agency, and to the development of a range of market indicators
- continue development of a new framework for Disability Employment Services (DES) for implementation when current DES contracts cease in March 2018
- progress development of the Australian Government’s Integrated Plan for Carer Support Services
- lead work for the Council of Australian Governments’ Disability Reform Council on a national approach to advocacy and the NDIS
implement a national trial of the Individual Placement Support model to improve employment and/or education support for disadvantaged young people with mental illness

establish a Job Access Gateway as a central entry point into DES for employers and people with disability

conduct a business reallocation process for DES, helping to ensure participants have the best support and assistance possible to prepare for, achieve and keep employment

implement changes within the current DES contract that seek to reduce red tape for providers and increase employment outcomes for job seekers with disability

promote and support high quality employment outcomes for people with disability in viable Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) as the enterprises transition to the NDIS supported employment market

continue to provide payments, via the Business Services Wage Assessment Tool (BSWAT) Payment Scheme, to supported employees whose wages were assessed in ADEs using the BSWAT Tool; and assist ADEs to transition supported employees to alternative wage tools.

Performance

Performance against Purpose 3 Disability and Carers will be reported annually by three collective performance criteria described in Table 3, comprising quantitative and qualitative indicators of cross-program and program outcomes.

Performance reporting will be supported over the period of the Corporate Plan by relevant findings from the NDIS evaluation and the Young Carers Bursary Program evaluation as they become available.

Table 3: Performance Criteria for Purpose 3 and contributing programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Outcome indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Disability, Mental Health and Carers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 National Disability Insurance Scheme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XP Cross Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance criteria</th>
<th>Outcome indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>3.1 3.2 XP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcomes – What did we achieve?**

**Extent of improved independence and participation**

- Percentage of assisted job seekers in employment three months following participation in Employment Services
- Extent of employment outcomes for people assisted through Disability Employment Services
- Percentage of assisted people with disability, mental illness and carers with improved knowledge, skills, behaviours and engagement with services

**Intermediate outcomes – How well did we do?**

**Performance criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>3.1</th>
<th>3.2</th>
<th>XP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progress in implementing the National Disability Strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of contribution to create an effective and sustainable National Disability Insurance Scheme</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent to which service provision meets program objective</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Program performance criteria and associated milestone/standard (PBS)
- Extent of satisfaction with services
- Percentage of assisted clients who are from priority groups
Purpose 4 Housing

Improved access to affordable housing, improved community housing and assisting individuals experiencing homelessness through targeted support and services.

Activities

We administer Commonwealth Rent Assistance, provide incentives to non-government housing providers to deliver affordable housing to low and moderate income households, and work with other Commonwealth agencies, states and territories to develop policy options to improve the supply of social and affordable housing, and reduce the level of homelessness and housing instability.

Environment

Supply and availability of affordable and stable housing for low and moderate income households is highly contingent on policy tools under the control of other Commonwealth agencies and tiers of government, including housing market performance, financial, regulatory and tax settings, planning and zoning policy, and the availability of stable employment for low and medium income households.

Priorities

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- report to the Council of Australian Governments on reforms to housing and homelessness services in the context of existing work on housing affordability
- work with states and territories to implement the 2015-17 National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, focusing on services for people who are affected by domestic and family violence, and youth homelessness
- through the Affordable Housing Working Group:
  - report on the current state of affordable housing, focusing on both social housing and the affordable private rental market for low income households
  - examine the feasibility of, and make recommendations for, how the states and territories and the Commonwealth can progress innovative financing models to facilitate sustainable long term private sector investment at a scale to increase the supply of affordable housing
- support implementation of a compulsory rent deduction scheme for welfare recipients in social housing to help tenants sustain their tenancies and reduce the risk of eviction
- continue to streamline the legislative framework for the National Rental Affordability Scheme to simplify its operation and reduce regulatory burdens.
Performance

Performance against Purpose 4 Housing will be reported annually by four performance criteria described in Table 4, comprising quantitative and qualitative indicators of cross-program and program outcomes.

Table 4: Performance Criteria for Purpose 4 and contributing programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>4.1 Housing and Homelessness</th>
<th>4.2 Affordable Housing</th>
<th>XP (Cross Program) Rent Assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Outcome indicator</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of improvement in rental affordability for low and moderate income households</td>
<td>Percentage of Commonwealth Rent Assistance income units in rental stress before and after receiving Commonwealth Rent Assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) households in rental stress before and after NRAS discounted rent</td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate outcomes – How well did we do?</td>
<td>Performance criteria</td>
<td>Outcome indicator</td>
<td>Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of contribution to national initiatives</td>
<td>DSS contribution to Commonwealth/State agreements for housing and homelessness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent to which payments are targeted to people unable to fully support themselves</td>
<td>Percentage of Commonwealth Rent Assistance income units paying enough rent to receive the maximum rate of assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent to which delivery meets program objective</td>
<td>Program performance criteria and associated milestone/standard (PBS)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of participant compliance for the relevant NRAS year (PBS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 | Capability

Policy

Long term policy planning

Analysis of longer term policy challenges for improving lifetime wellbeing using our wellbeing planning frame (at Appendix A) has identified five enduring issues:

- **greater welfare independence and improved social mobility** so people and families, particularly the most vulnerable, access developmental, educational and work opportunities to improve their lifetime outcomes
- **greater self-provision and intergenerational equity** so people have the personal, social and economic means to self-provide over the life course
- **improved quality of family functioning** so families function to support the welfare of family members
- **strengthened social cohesion for communities at risk** so our society is cohesive and supports the social and economic connectedness of people, families and communities
- **better service delivery models for the future** so our service models are responsive, sustainable and evidence-based and leverage whole of system resources.

We will continue to align our policy planning, priorities and performance (at Figure 7) to address these longer term policy challenges.

Performance data development

Over the period of this Corporate Plan, we will be continuing program performance reporting for grant agreements through the Data Exchange. The Data Exchange reflects the focus on both smarter and more efficient ways of collecting data from service providers, and more useful reporting of data about the outcomes achieved for individuals, families and communities. The Data Exchange applies to the majority of client-based programs in our Department, as well as programs from other Commonwealth agencies such as the Department of Health and the Attorney-General’s Department.

The Data Exchange will provide a better understanding of the collective impact of departmental and client-based programs, including client pathways within and across a broad range of government services such as Families and Children, Settlement Services, Mental Health, Family Law and Commonwealth Home Support.

We will also begin to use data arising from the actuarial analyses of the Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare. As the Data Exchange matures, this will become an increasingly important source of performance information for us.

Evaluation

Our focus is to ensure our investment in evaluation activity is of strategic value to our Department and the Government. We have centralised all evaluation activities into our Policy Office to provide this strategic oversight. This will assist us to move towards cross-cutting performance assessments focused on the impacts of a range of activities with the same or similar policy objectives.

We have developed a four year Evaluation Plan, updated annually, providing greater clarity about how our evaluation investment contributes to measuring our performance.
Figure 7: DSS policy planning and performance framework
Research and data development

Our research capability supports strong evidence-based policy advice. A priority over the course of this Plan is to undertake a stocktake of research to identify themes, risks and protective factors that work to improve lifetime wellbeing, as well as identify what works to improve service outcomes. These assessments will be framed within our long term policy priorities, challenges and responses. They will produce clear, identifiable evidence-based measures that can be implemented through various service delivery models to assist in improving the long term wellbeing of people and families in Australia.

We have launched the National Centre for Longitudinal Data (NCLD) to support the management of critical national data assets. To that end, a major review of Australia’s longitudinal data architecture is underway with the primary objective of articulating a long term national vision for longitudinal surveys and administrative data, and associated support and enabling mechanisms to maximise value from these assets. A secondary objective of the review is to articulate options for the NCLD’s role in this future system, this may result in changes to the NCLD’s role and functions. The review will deliver its report to the Government in late 2016.

Priorities

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- establish strong social policy development and evaluation practices, focussing on policy performance and external collaboration
- continue to improve and develop our performance data infrastructure and holdings, including the Data Exchange and longitudinal data assets, ensuring we have a strong policy performance regime
- implement an overarching policy capability development strategy to ensure we have a robust framework for understanding and assessing our policy work and capabilities.

Workforce

The critical capabilities crucial to achieving both current and future outcomes addressing current or emerging gaps in our workforce are:

- data reporting, modelling and analysis
- policy development and analysis
- project and program management
- stakeholder engagement
- risk management
- change management.

We have developed a catalogue of training to address the majority of critical capability needs. Data analytics skills will be strengthened via strategic recruitment and graduate recruitment processes, to mitigate identified gaps.

Workforce planning is part of our annual business planning and risk management framework. This provides a platform to identify critical capability gaps for current and emerging organisational priorities.
A workforce capability strategy that aligns with organisational, performance and workforce planning frameworks will be completed by the end of 2016. This strategy will support the delivery of learning and development programs in 2016-17.

Diversity and inclusion is a priority for us. We will continue to strive to be an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians and people with disability.

**Priorities**

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- target learning and development opportunities to enable an agile workforce able to be deployed to higher priority work across our Department
- develop capability profiles for all departmental job roles (mapped to the APS job family model) to ascertain the capability requirements and expectations
- continue to align our training programs to the 70:20:10 framework of experiential, social and formal learning in the workplace.

**Technology**

In line with our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy 2015-2017 and the DSS Innovation Strategy, our priority is to provide enhanced support to citizens and to improve their lifetime wellbeing through the delivery of services tailored to their needs.

We continue to drive this change by evolving our technological capability in line with the Digital Transformation Office’s agenda and with our citizens in mind. We are dedicated to developing innovative ICT solutions using an evidence based approach supported by quality data. This includes increasing our focus on mobile capability and user-centred design, particularly when it comes to our reporting capabilities and providing modernised reports that are intuitive and user driven.

**Regulatory Reform**

Our regulatory capability will continue to shape effective, proportionate and targeted regulation. A key focus over the next four years will be to embed regulatory improvements directed to support productivity and innovation in the business and community sectors.

**Priorities**

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- continue to contribute to the Government’s Regulatory Reform Agenda
- embed best practice regulation across our policies and programs
- ensure our policies and programs do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operations of service providers or burden consumers
- communicate clearly and effectively, and be open and transparent in our dealings with service providers
- ensure our regulatory actions are proportionate to the risk being managed, and develop streamlined and coordinated compliance and monitoring approaches
Program Design

Our program design and delivery drives consistency in grant administration by developing and maintaining standardised tools to support best practice in grants management. Support is offered through all stages of the process, making the most of intelligence, aiming to reduce duplication and ensure the most effective approaches are used to identify and respond to community needs in line with government expectations.

Priorities

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- establish and embed the Community Grants Hub as one of two Australian Government grants administration services, delivering simpler and consistent grants administration
- facilitate strategic engagement between our Department and the social services sectors, leveraging opportunities, evidence and engagement to target more effective programs and maximise outcomes.

Delivery

Our delivery arm implements Australian Government programs and services at a local level. Our focus is on:

- working in a connected, consistent and efficient way to ensure quality program management and delivery service for government
- contributing local knowledge and intelligence to inform national policy and program development and investment decisions
- building assurance mechanisms and strong working relationships with Policy Office, Program Office and Corporate areas
- strengthening quality partnerships to drive innovation in program delivery, integration of services, community cohesion and improved wellbeing outcomes for individuals and families.

A number of initiatives will influence the future direction of our delivery including the Investment Approach, the tight fiscal environment and a long term expectation of managing grants on behalf of other Commonwealth agencies. Preliminary scoping work has identified opportunities to strengthen the service system to better support our strategic priorities and optimise our readiness for shared services.

Priorities

Over the period of the Corporate Plan we will:

- embed a lead State approach that will foster stronger relationships with policy areas through enhanced local intelligence and insights and early engagement in policy and program design
- invest in Learning and Development across Delivery, including the development of a two year leadership strategy for Executive Level delivery staff and development of a comprehensive core competency training package, guided by experienced and high performing network staff, building core capabilities in our grants and contract management workforce
• implement a targeted Remote Service Delivery Model aimed to test place-based tailored service and identify potential for success across remote and perhaps regional locations
• support and expand strategic programs including the Innovation Challenge and Delivery Exchange.

Financial management and capital intentions

In terms of major capital projects, we will continue the delivery of the Government’s Streamlining Grants Administration initiative and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Accommodation Project (see Table 5).

Digital Transformation Agenda

As part of the 2015-16 Federal Budget, the Australian Government committed to support the Digital Transformation Agenda and is investing in digital transformation activities to drive innovation and make it easier for individuals and businesses to access government services.

The Streamlining Grants Administration (SGA) initiative is aimed at delivering a better user experience for grant applicants and recipients enabling government to deliver grants more efficiently and effectively. The SGA initiative will produce a standardised and scalable common grants management process across government, thereby replacing multiple existing systems and processes. As part of this initiative, two administrative hubs will be established, one for individuals and community organisation grants in our Department and the other for business grants in the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.

ACT Accommodation Project

As at 30 June 2016, our new National Office base building works in Tuggeranong were approximately 35 per cent complete. These works are on track to achieve practical completion and handover in August 2017. The new building has been designed to deliver greater flexibility and adaptability for our accommodation needs into the future.

Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare

We are currently implementing the Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare. This is designed to improve lifetime wellbeing by increasing the capacity of people to live independently of welfare, decreasing the Commonwealth’s long term social security costs and addressing the risks of intergenerational welfare dependency.

The Australian Priority Investment Approach to Welfare involves actuarial analysis of Commonwealth social security data to forecast the future lifetime social security cost of the Australian population, and to identify groups at risk of long term welfare dependency.

Each year, expert actuaries will assess changes in social security costs and assist us in determining which policies work for whom. The Government will then be able to invest in evidence-based policy interventions to improve the outcomes of those identified groups, particularly groups most likely to benefit from being supported into stable, sustainable employment.
### Table 5: Forecast capital expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital item(s)</th>
<th>Forecast 2016-17</th>
<th>Forecast 2017-18</th>
<th>Forecast 2018-19</th>
<th>Forecast 2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$'000</td>
<td>$'000</td>
<td>$'000</td>
<td>$'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Transformation Agenda</td>
<td>26,368</td>
<td>8,221</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property - ACT Accommodation</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>8,031</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Approach to Welfare</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Capital Budget</td>
<td>14,763</td>
<td>16,937</td>
<td>17,059</td>
<td>17,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52,334</strong></td>
<td><strong>33,655</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,934</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,091</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Financial management

Our Department is responsible for over one-quarter of the Australian Government’s 2016-17 budgeted expenditure. To demonstrate our continued commitment to strong budget and financial management, over the period of the Corporate Plan we will continue to:

- promote and support existing governance structures that have been designed to ensure accountability, transparency and fairness
- deliver positive financial operating results within the Australian Public Service financial compliance framework
- undertake regular internal budget reviews so that we allocate the limited resources available to the highest priority areas
- focus on workforce management and ensuring there is sufficient capability and expertise available to meet the delivery of the Government’s priorities.

We are committed to delivering the Government’s Common and Shared Services agenda, including through the provision of whole of government Information Technology and Communication and Grant services, and will have increased responsibility for revenues for these services.
Appendix A - DSS Wellbeing Planning Frame

Our Wellbeing Planning Frame is intended to promote evidence-based discussions within our Department and with our partners about long term policy challenges and opportunities for improving lifetime wellbeing of people and families. A range of key policy questions intended to guide our policy focus are presented in four domains that address individual, family and community functioning, and readiness for people and families to transition across significant life events. Two cross-cutting domains address broad socio-economic and individual risk factors that have potential to impact these four domains.

The Frame assists us to identify and monitor long term social, economic and fiscal trends that impact our operating context and lifetime wellbeing. We do this by developing key measures that shed light on Australia’s progress and any emerging challenges we face. Together, the domains and measures will help us to plan for the future and strengthen our capability to provide relevant evidence-based policy advice to the Government.

These domains and questions are intended to guide our policy focus and are not indicators of our performance. Trends in these domains may be influenced by the action of a range of Commonwealth agencies, state/territory governments, non-government organisations, and broader economic and social dynamics.
Figure A1: DSS Wellbeing Planning Frame

Wellbeing Planning Frame

Access to opportunity
Are the external conditions right so people and families can access opportunities to control their own wellbeing?

» Job vacancy and employment rate
  Do people and families have access to jobs to generate employment income to control their wellbeing?

» Long-term job seekers
  Are there sufficient job opportunities to ensure people are not unemployed for long periods?

» People experiencing long-term income deprivation
  Do people and families have adequate income over the long-term to control their wellbeing?

» Housing stability
  Do people and families have access to stable housing to control their wellbeing?

» Adequacy of care and support arrangements
  Do people and families have access to specialist care and support to control their wellbeing?

Cross-cutting domains

Individual risk factors
What individual risk factors have the potential to negatively impact lifetime wellbeing?

» Alcohol and drug dependence
  Is there a reduction in the incidence and impact of drug and alcohol misuse on people and families?

» Violence rates
  Is there a reduction in the incidence and impact of domestic and community violence on people and families?

» Chronic gambling rates
  Is there a reduction in the incidence and impact of chronic gambling on people and families?

» Physical and mental health status
  Do people and families have adequate health to pursue opportunities?

» Contact with criminal justice system/incarceration rate
  Is there a reduction in the incidence and impact of incarceration and contact with the criminal justice system on people and families?

» School attendance
  Is there an increase in the school attendance rate of children and young people?

» Adult obesity rates
  Is there a reduction in the incidence and impact of adult obesity on people and families?
Long-term policy domains - impacted by cross-cutting domains

**Independence**

Do people and families have the personal capacity and motivation to make choices that contribute to wellbeing?

- **Financial self-reliance**
  Can people and families be self-sufficient at key transition points or when circumstances/roles change?

- **Household income from private income**
  Are people and families financially self-reliant across all life stages?

- **Dependence on government income support**
  Are people and families financially reliant on government income support? Are people exiting income support to employment?

- **Adult and child functioning**
  Do adults and children have the skills to build strong relationships and communities, establish healthy boundaries and adapt to changing circumstances?

- **Choice and control**
  Are people able to responsibly exercise choice and control?

**Life readiness**

Are people and families able to make successful transitions across significant life stages and events?

- **Age-appropriate development**
  Are children developmentally on track to start/complete school?

- **Youth participation in education and employment**
  Are school leavers and young people engaged in either education or work?

- **Post-school qualifications**
  Are more working age people attaining a post-school qualification?

- **Readiness for retirement and ageing**
  Are people ready for retirement and ageing transitions as financial, care and support needs change?

- **Carers**
  Are carers able to successfully transition into and out of carer responsibilities?

**Family functioning**

Are families functioning to support the wellbeing of family members over all life stages?

- **Growing up in well-functioning families**
  Are children and young people growing up in well-functioning families?

- **Children on care and protection orders**
  Is there a reduction in the number of children at risk of serious harm?

- **Access to ongoing family support**
  Do people have family networks to support their independence?

**Strong communities**

Are people and families living in environments and communities that support lifetime wellbeing?

- **Participation in community activities and volunteering**
  Are people and families involved in community activities and volunteering?

- **Supportive environments**
  Do people and families feel safe in their community and have a positive sense of belonging?

- **Support networks**
  Do people and families have support networks to support their independence?
Appendix B - DSS Approach to Policy Advice

This appendix represents a statement to Ministers, other agencies and external stakeholders on our approach to developing our policy advice. It is designed in the context of Australia’s existing social support system and is intended to set a high benchmark for the quality of our policy advice. This document provides a consistent, rigorous and systematic basis for policy development, and articulates our role, focus and approach to advising government action.

Our role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Our Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Ministers</td>
<td>We support the role of our ministers as decision-makers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We understand the economic, social and fiscal environment in which the government operates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We understand the government’s objectives, and respond diligently and in a timely manner to requests for policy advice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We work hard to implement the government’s decisions efficiently and effectively. Subsequent policy advice reflects decisions already taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Development</td>
<td>We develop evidence-based innovative policy advice that is practical, timely and apolitical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We recognise our role in ensuring the long term integrity of policy development within our areas of responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence-based and whole of department</td>
<td>Our advice reflects a thorough understanding of the issues and evidence, and carefully considers the views of experts, stakeholders and other agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We are forward-looking and provide considered advice on future issues, opportunities and challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We explain and test assumptions that underpin our policy advice and carefully explain our reasoning where a view is not backed by robust evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We consult internally and work hard to develop and promulgate a robust departmental view.</td>
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</table>

Our focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Our Approach</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving lifetime wellbeing</td>
<td>Our policy advice is focused on improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families, within a frame of encouraging independence and economic and social participation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We understand that people’s needs and circumstances change across their lives and are influenced by the broader social and economic context.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We give policy priority to those people and families who are most likely to have poor lifetime outcomes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>We understand the role that education, employment and well-functioning families play in promoting lifetime wellbeing, and that acting early can prevent poor lifetime outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We recognise the role that community behaviours, civil society and economic opportunity play in promoting wellbeing.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our focus on lifetime wellbeing occurs in the context of promoting Australia’s diverse multicultural society.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our focus on lifetime wellbeing recognises the importance of ensuring sustainability and equity.</td>
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## Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Significance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of government</td>
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### Proposing action

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<th>Domain</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Approach</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action will help, and is cost effective</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Action is connected and practical</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Success and failure</td>
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