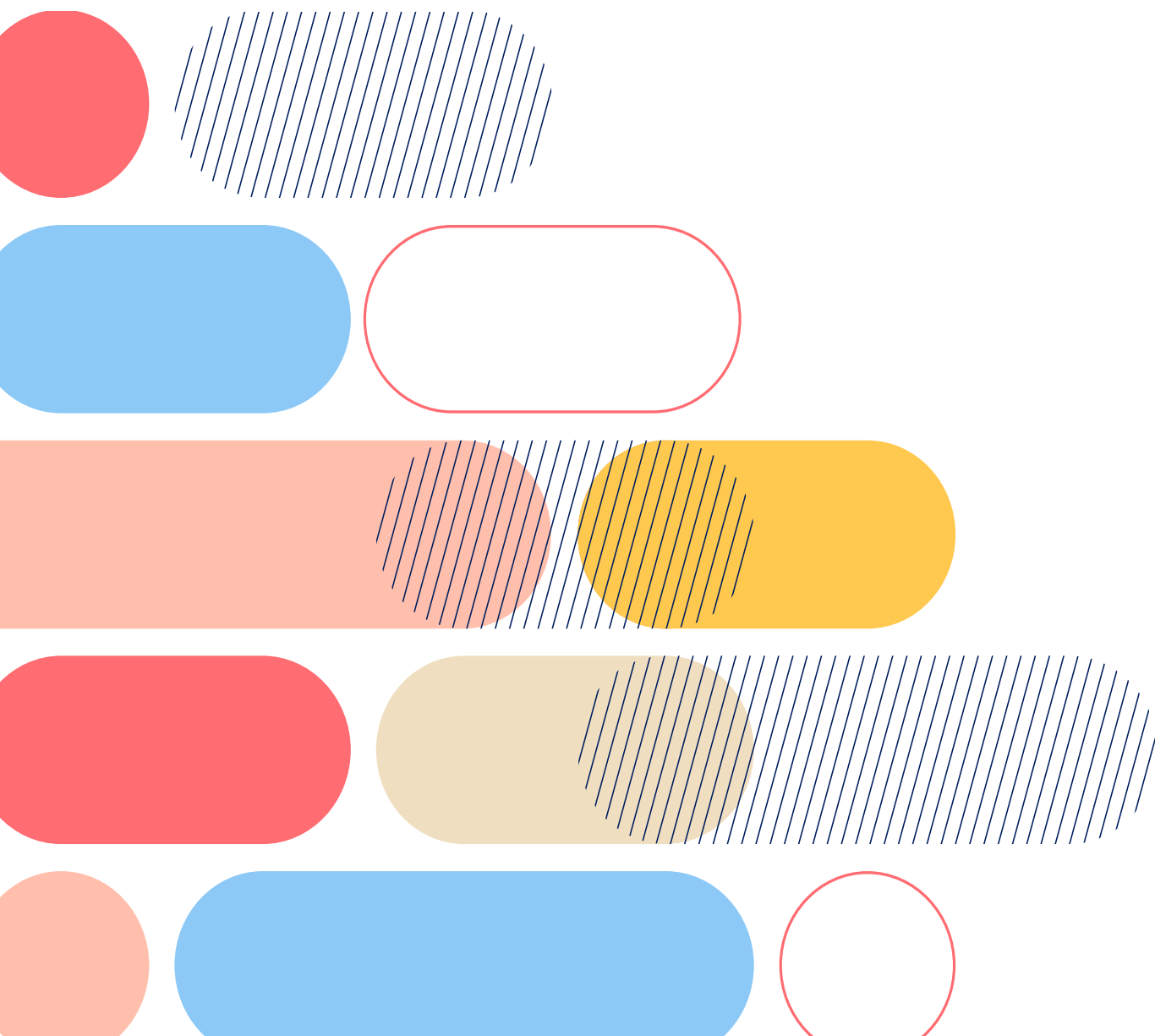




Parliamentary Workplace
Support Service

Corporate Plan 2024–28



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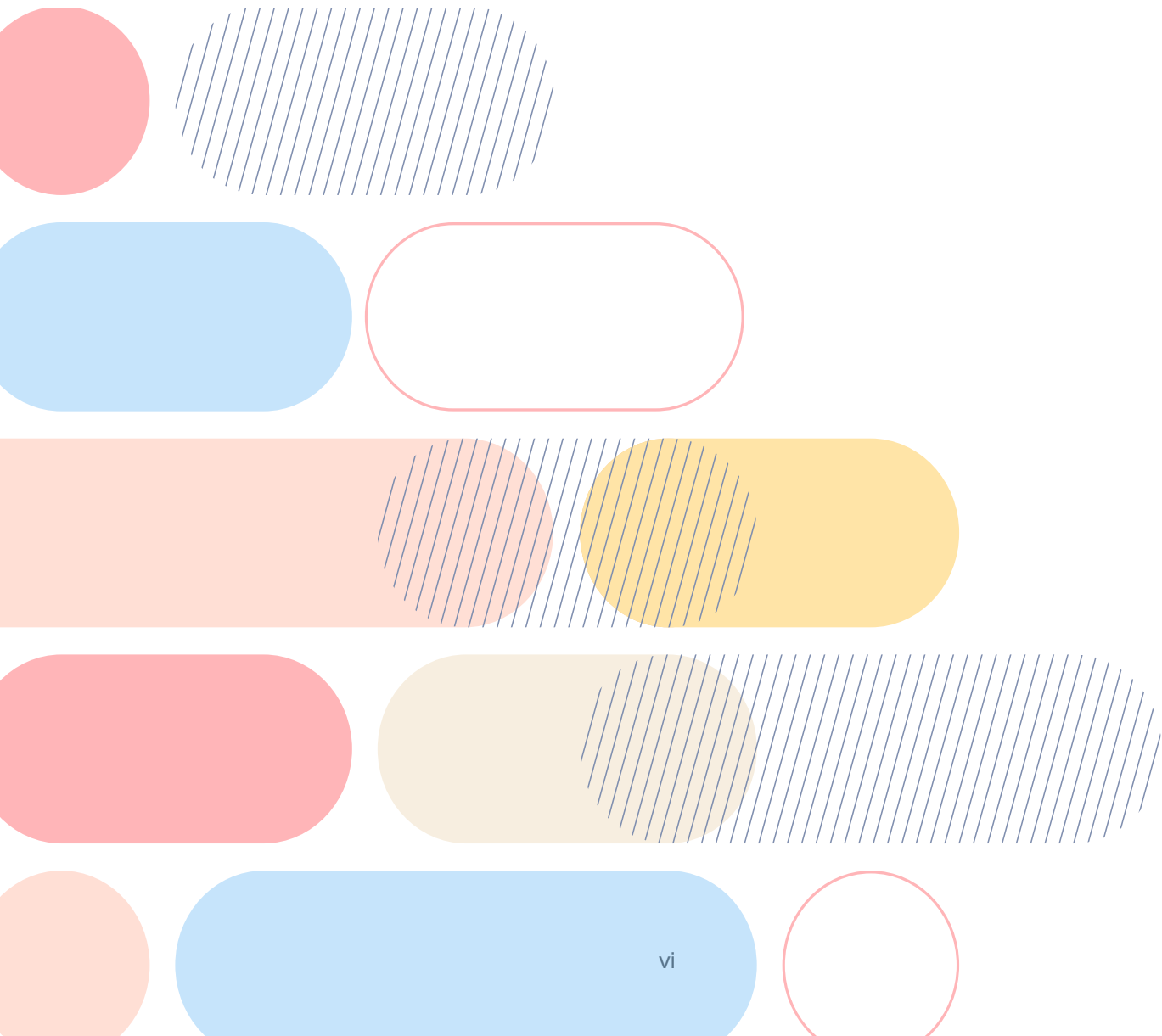
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Acknowledgement of Country

The Parliamentary Workplace Support Service acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledge their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past, present and emerging.



Chief Executive Officer's Foreword

As the accountable authority for the Parliamentary Workplace Support Service (PWSS), I am delighted to present PWSS' first Corporate Plan, covering the four financial years from 2024–25 to 2027–28, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The PWSS has moved from being established as a function of the Parliamentary Service Commissioner to an independent statutory agency established on 1 October 2023 through the *Parliamentary Workplace Support Service Act 2023* (the Act). The legislation enables an expanded Human Resources (HR) function to support parliamentarians in their role as individual employers, and their staff.

In the short time since our establishment, PWSS has worked hard to ensure seamless service delivery. We have instituted one telephone number to contact all services, we are developing the PWSS Academy to offer tailored, and relevant professional development. We are focused on making sure our internal processes are connected and we have the correct governance structures in place to become a trusted and high performing agency. Our Advisory Board has been established, and has met for the first time. Most importantly, we are investing significant effort to build positive working relationships with all parliamentarians, staff and others working in Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces.

This is the first corporate plan of the new statutory agency and outlines how the PWSS will work over the next four years to achieve our vision to work with all of our stakeholders to deliver exemplary parliamentary workplaces.

I am optimistic our proactive and engaged approach will support parliamentarians and their teams to build effective offices and contribute to building safe and respectful work environments across all Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces.



Leonie McGregor
Chief Executive Officer
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service



Corporate plan on a page

Our performance

Our Vision

Parliamentary workplaces are exemplary, recognised as safe and respectful and attract professional and high performing staff.

Our purpose

To drive cultural change by being trusted advisors providing trauma aware human resource advice and support to Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplace participants. We act independently and confidentially to support all those who work or volunteer in a safe, respectful, and inclusive culture. We work to provide education and learning opportunities to support a professional workplace.

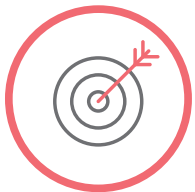
Outcome

Support Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplace participants to build and maintain safe and respectful workplaces, including by supporting positive cultural change and providing human resource functions to Parliamentarians and their staff.

Key activities

1. Employment life-cycle matters such as job-design, recruitment, probation, performance management, HR advice, reviews of office structures and workplace resourcing.
2. Providing HR and work health and safety services, including the development and implementation of policies, practices and management of safety risks to support a safe workplace; prevention and local resolution of workplace complaints; and advice on suspensions, terminations, and other general employment matters
3. Delivering trauma informed confidential and qualified support services, operating a 24/7 service
4. Establishing the PWSS Academy to provide targeted, tailored education and coaching to parliamentarians and their staff.
5. Developing reporting frameworks and data collection to support the ongoing delivery of targeted and relevant services for those working in Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces, and to allow assessment of impact and change over time.
6. Developing policies to support a safe and respectful workplace environments.





Our culture and capabilities

Strategic objectives

1. Professionalism
2. Trusted Partnership
3. Result-orientation

Leadership

Be Dynamic, Be Respectful, Have Integrity, Value others, Empower people.

Values

The APS Values, Achievement, Leadership and Accountability
Valuing People, Collaboration.

Capabilities

We are committed to growing capability across three key themes:

1. Strengthening the culture in parliamentary workplaces
2. Building skills, the PWSS craft and expertise
3. Improving enabling services and service delivery

Our risks

Unauthorised release of client information

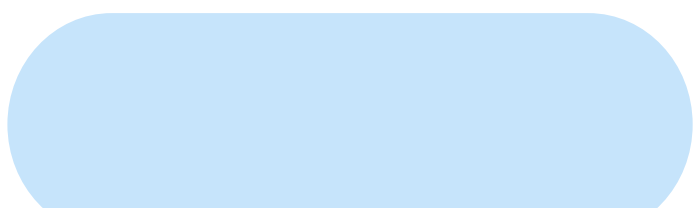
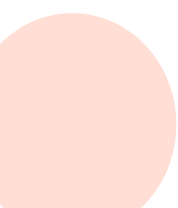
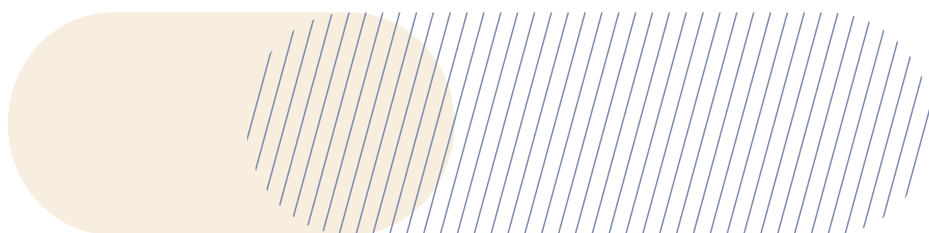
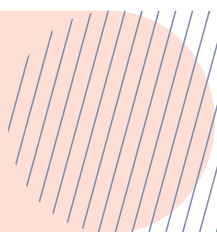
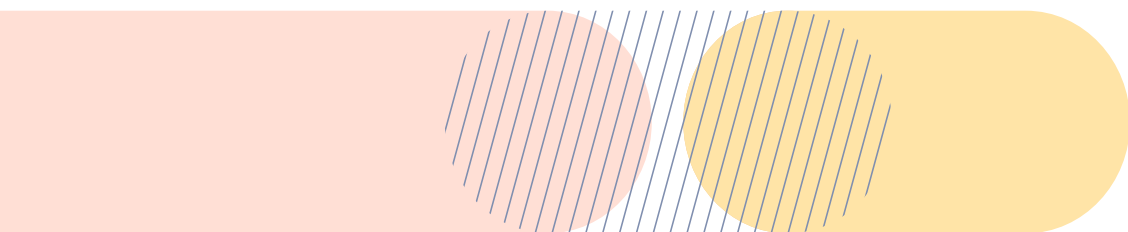
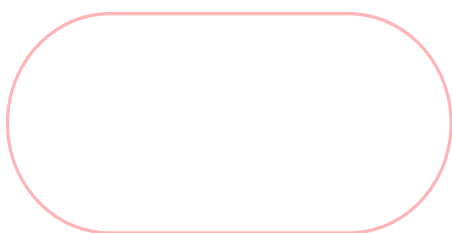
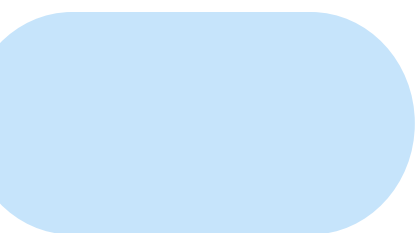
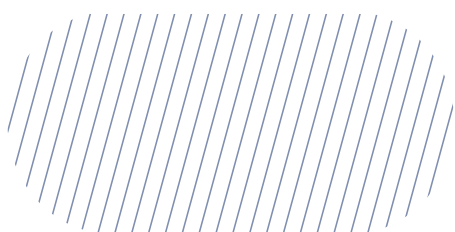
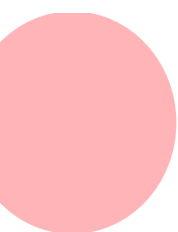
Not having the right people, capability, and culture

Lack of confidence and trust in the service

Death or serious injury (including mental health injuries) associated with PWSS operations (for staff and clients)

Staff do not act with integrity and public and government trust is reduced

Non-Compliance with legislative requirements



Purpose and role

Vision

Parliamentary workplaces are exemplary, recognised as safe and respectful, and attract professional and high performing staff.

Purpose

To drive cultural change by being trusted advisors providing trauma aware human resource advice and support to Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplace (CPW) participants. We act independently and confidentially to support all those who work or volunteer in a safe, respectful, and inclusive culture. We work to provide education and learning opportunities to support a professional workplace.

Our Priorities

- Finalising the establishment of the PWSS as an independent statutory authority
- Completing the independent review of resourcing in Parliamentarian offices
- Establishing the PWSS Academy and delivering education and training to build capability across the Parliamentary workforce
- Developing the capability to report on indicators of cultural change including diversity and inclusion
- Delivering best practice HR advice, support, and complaint resolution in a timely manner
- Working with our Advisory Board to support strategic policy development
- Establishing the PWSS Consultative Committee
- Continuing to build and broaden our positive stakeholder relationships
- Responding to any changes to legislation including proposed establishment of the Independent Parliamentary Services Commission (IPSC)

Key Activities

The key activities of the PWSS are undertaken in support of its legislated functions which include:

- Human resources functions
- Support functions
- Complaint resolution functions
- Policy development functions
- Education and training functions
- Review functions
- Reporting



Human Resources function

The PWSS undertakes a range of activities to support its Human Resources function. These activities include the provision of a broad range of advice and support on employment life cycle matters such as job-design, recruitment, probation, performance management, HR advice, reviews of office structures and workplace resourcing.

PWSS also provides HR and work health and safety services, including the development and implementation of policies, practices, and management of safety risks to support a safe workplace; prevention and local resolution of workplace complaints; and advice on suspensions, terminations, and other general employment matters.

Support function

Prior to the PWSS legislation being passed in October 2023, PWSS operated as a counselling and support service, and has continued to provide support through this well-developed function. A team of dedicated case coordinators deliver trauma informed confidential and qualified support services, operating a 24/7 counselling service that is available for all those working in a CPW.

Complaint resolution function

PWSS is able to assist all current and former CPW participants to resolve complaints involving any alleged relevant conduct. PWSS works with all relevant and affected parties to resolve complaints matters in a timely and sensitive way, bringing in relevant expertise when required.

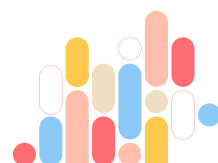
Policy development function

To support the scale and scope of the cultural change that PWSS wants to achieve, there is a focus on development of policies that when implemented will assist in driving change over both the long and short term.

To date work has commenced on development of policies to support safe and respectful workplace environments, including the development of a policy focused on reducing harm in the workplace caused by impairment due to alcohol or other drugs.

Education and training function

The PWSS Academy was launched in April 2024 to facilitate access to the Professional Development Program (PDP) for MOP(S) Act staff. The PWSS Academy brings diverse learning material together in a single 'learning hub' to improve accessibility and the user experience. The most frequently requested internally facilitated training courses are those that are delivered to an individual office or party, eg. Shared Values and Behaviours, Safety and De-escalation Strategies, Managing Vicarious Trauma, and Wellbeing and Performance under Pressure.



Future planned initiatives include:

- A pool of Executive Coaches to support MoP(S) Act employees who are navigating complex leadership or management issues.
- A professional development strategy, informed by the findings of the Independent Review of Resourcing in Parliamentary Offices, that clearly identifies the key capabilities, competencies and skill requirements for MoP(S) Act employees across diverse settings, and connects learning and development to career pathways.
- Partnerships with universities and research institutions to develop leading practice in parliamentary workplace education content and delivery.

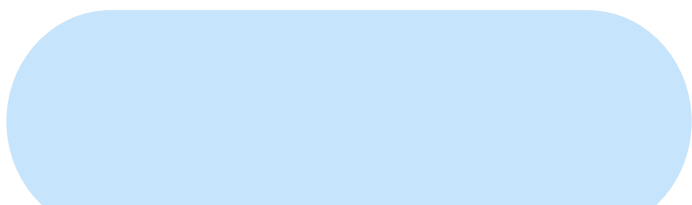
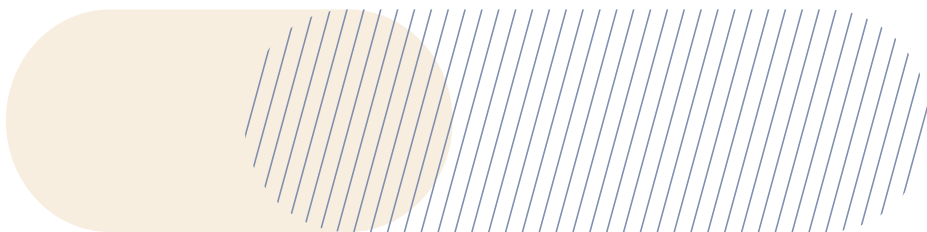
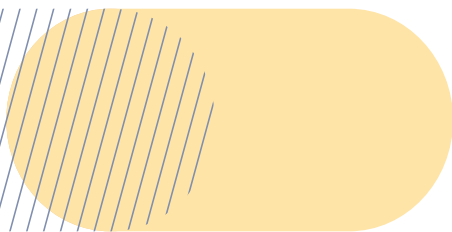
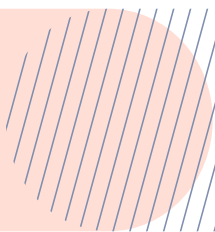
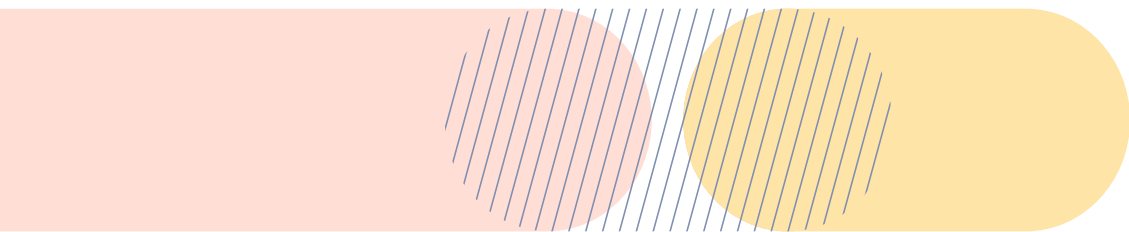
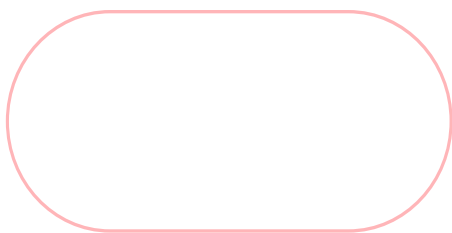
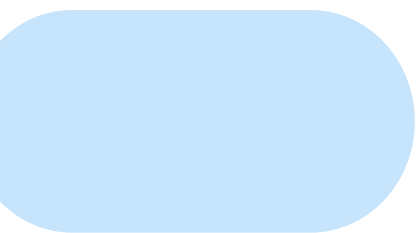
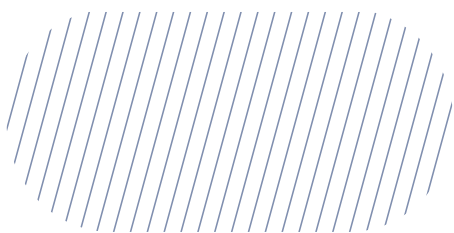
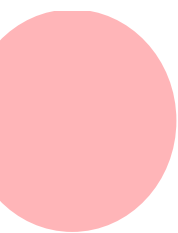
Review function

Pending the establishment of the IPSC, the Chief Executive Officer of the PWSS can commission a workplace review in appropriate cases. In considering whether a workplace review should be commissioned, the PWSS will keep in mind the purpose of a workplace review and whether it is appropriate in a particular case. The purpose of a workplace review is to assess allegations on the balance of probabilities and make recommendations, where allegations are sustained, to improve future conduct and the culture of the CPW.

Reporting

PWSS will produce an annual report that will cover the reporting requirements as set out in section 22 of the Act. The report will provide information on the gender and diversity characteristics of parliamentarians and MOPS employees, gender equality in pay, workplace culture, safety, and the progress made in preventing and responding to misconduct in CPWs. This report will provide transparency and support ongoing improvements in these critical areas, and will be achieved through collecting, analysing and reporting information on CPWs, including data on diversity characteristics of parliamentarians and MoP(S) Act staff.





Operating Environment

Varied, unique and complex workplaces

CPWs are varied and unique places to work; the workplaces are geographically dispersed, operating under a variety of employment arrangements and have different cultures. These workplaces include staff working in Parliament House, as staff for parliamentarians or for Parliamentary Departments, staff in electorate offices dispersed across Australia, parliamentarians, and others such as the media and the staff of other tenants in Parliament House.

The workplaces we support are busy environments impacted by dynamic events including federal elections and reshuffles. They are open to public scrutiny and at times attract significant media attention.

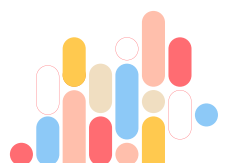
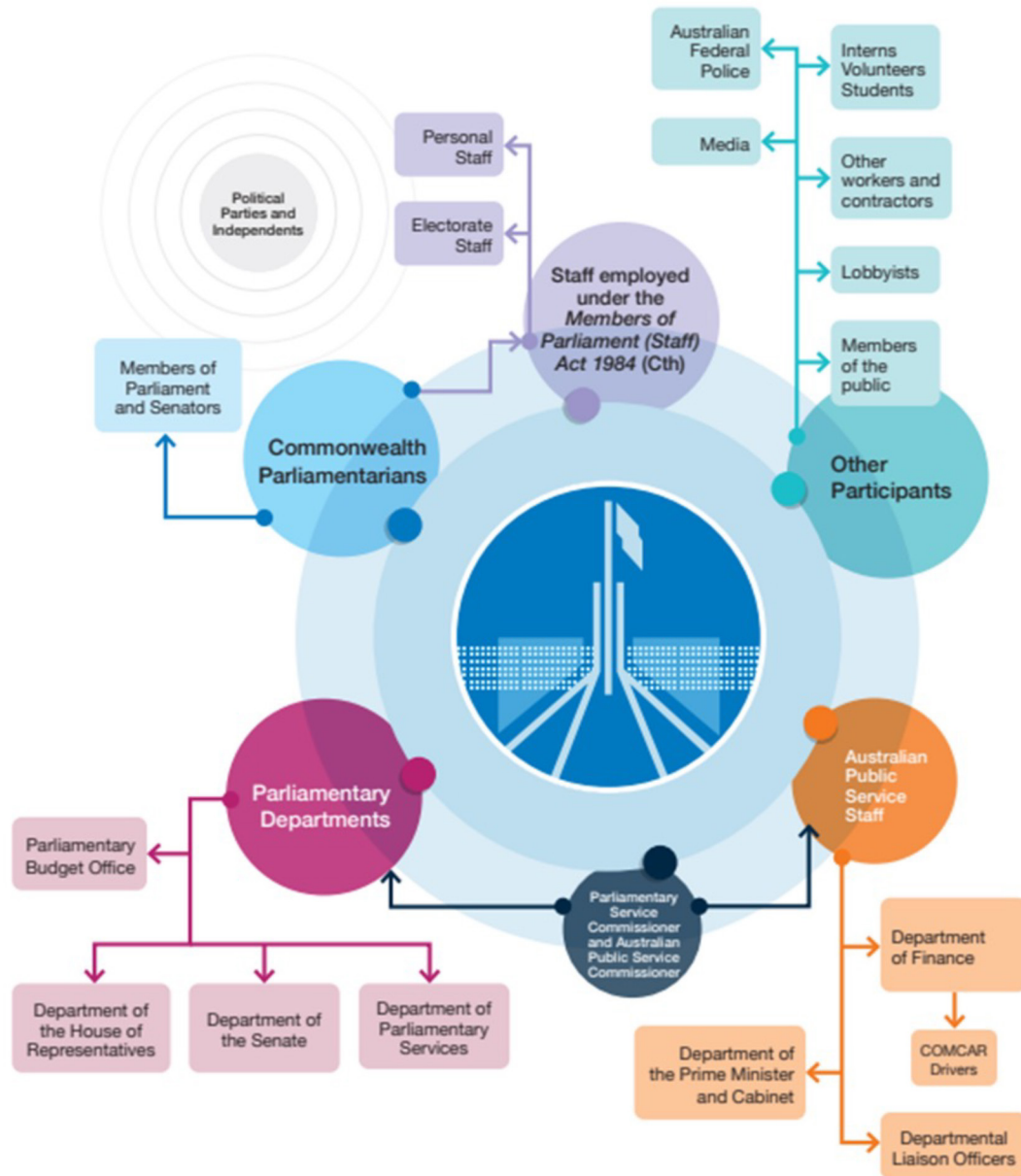
There have been a number of reviews, reports and incidents that have resulted in both parliamentarians, their staff, and the communities they serve identifying a need for change in parliamentary workplaces. Just like those in other workplaces, the people working in parliamentary workplaces should not feel unsafe at any time in the workplace and should have certainty around their employment arrangements. PWSS will be working to secure improvements across these workplaces, as their success is integral to the success and strength of our democracy.

Broader Culture Change

Culture change is difficult and takes strong leadership, goodwill, and patience. The government has committed to implementing all the recommendations of the Jenkins report with some of these recommendations being implemented by other departments. It is expected that the culture of CPWs will evolve positively as these recommendations are implemented and the PWSS will continue to adapt its support and training in line with the changes to these workplaces.



Commonwealth Parliamentary Ecosystem



Capability

Our people are the heart of our organisation. We have a professional, dedicated, and skilled workforce that is diverse in qualifications, characteristics, and location. We are developing a range of strategies focused on building the capabilities of our staff to ensure we continue to deliver on our vision and purpose, and our organisation aims to foster a culture of independence, discretion, confidentiality, and responsiveness.

Delivery

The PWSS is focused on delivering a high quality, reputable support service to all people connected to CPWs, taking a client-centric and trauma-informed approach. Services will be guided by comprehensive policies and underpinned by standard operating procedures and assurance measures.

Through the PWSS 'no-wrong door' approach we want to simplify access pathways for anyone that contacts the service by referring them to more relevant services where appropriate.

The PWSS will seek feedback and assess the impact of our services to ensure we are aligned with parliamentary priorities and contributing to broader cultural change while promoting an internal culture of continuous improvement.

The PWSS will continue to build structures to enable our staff to efficiently access important information so that they can address client needs, solve problems, gain insights, and collaborate with colleagues, while ensuring confidentiality.

Our Craft

We are committed to service delivery excellence and are focused on achieving the most pragmatic outcomes for everyone in the parliamentary workplace using best-practice methodology. We do this through:



Professionalism

Our Mindset:

We value continuous learning and ongoing improvement. We are deliberate about developing and enhancing our own capability, and that of everyone in the parliamentary workplace.

We are curious about different perspectives, and embrace the diversity.

We are discrete, we maintain confidentiality and are apolitical in all respects.

We are open and transparent in our approach.



Our Behaviours:

We respect and welcome diverse perspectives, and ensure our offerings address the unique contexts and circumstances of our clients.

We are impartial and ethical in our dealings.

We communicate with clarity to understand and be understood. We welcome discussion, questions, and respectful conversation.

We see feedback as integral to continuous improvement.

We demonstrate our leadership through visibility, authentic, inspiration, empowerment and trust.

Trusted Partnership

Our Mindset:

We are confident in our knowledge, experience, and ability to add value for our clients.

We are a trusted partner and maintain confidentiality.

We are courageous and engage authentically.

We understand the complex and unique environment of the CPW.



Our Behaviours:

We are trusted partners: our credibility stems from the depth of our experience and our ability to empathise with our clients.

We exercise discretion in our judgements and in every interaction.

We explore issues to get to the heart of the matter.

We leverage our knowledge and expertise to provide evidence-based recommendations.

We have open and honest conversations, learn from our mistakes and hold ourselves accountable.

Result-orientation

Our Mindset:

We drive a culture of achievement.

We ensure ideas and intended actions become a reality.

We are client and solutions focused using a collaborative approach with colleagues.

We are open minded and adaptable.

We welcome feedback, and value the opportunity to learn from our experiences.

We value and utilise the expertise of our colleagues.

We actively ensure stakeholders are kept informed.



Our Behaviours:

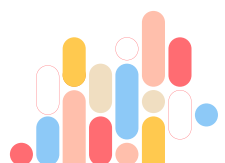
We strive to achieve the best possible outcomes.

We collaborate and leverage our network of relationships to present holistic, integrated recommendations.

We centre our clients and tailor our services to address individual circumstances and needs.

We work through challenging situations, solve problems, and optimise what is possible.

We are flexible and respond positively to change.



Collaboration and Cooperation

External Engagement

The PWSS aims to be a trusted organisation, and we are determined to build positive working relationships with all parliamentarians, their staff and those working in CPWs.

We have met with nearly every parliamentarian in the current Parliament and many of their staff, and we will continue to make these meetings a priority.

The PWSS is represented on the Parliamentary Heads meeting, the Parliamentary Administrative Advisory Group, Access and Inclusion Champions Group, the Reconciliation Action Plan Champions Group and the Australian Public Service Chief Operating Officer Committee.

Staying Connected

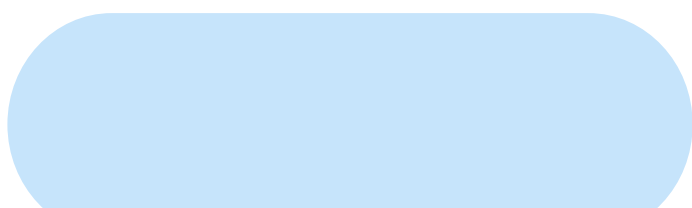
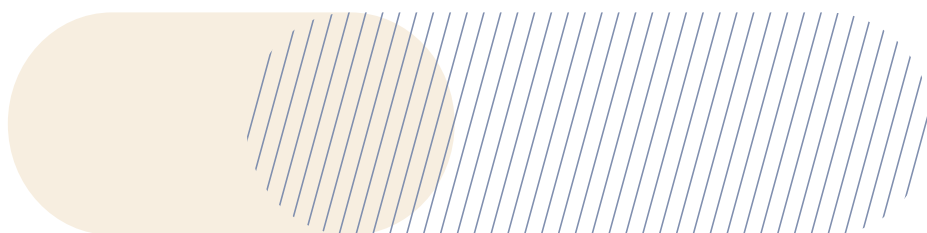
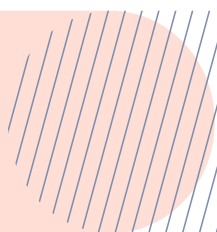
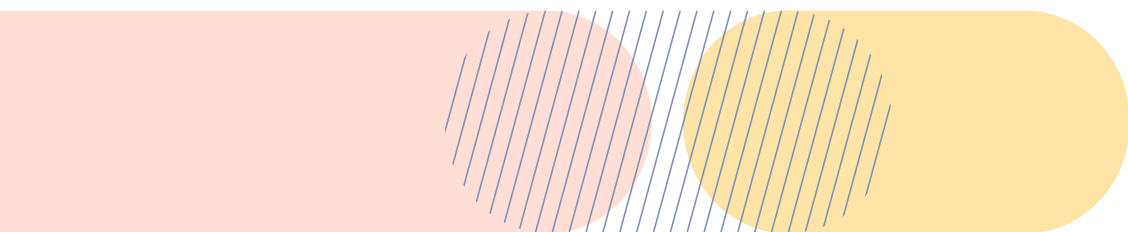
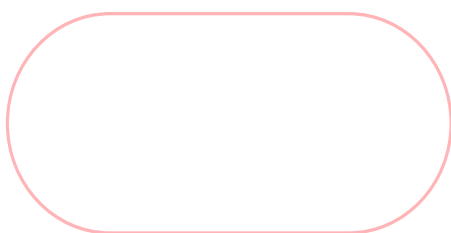
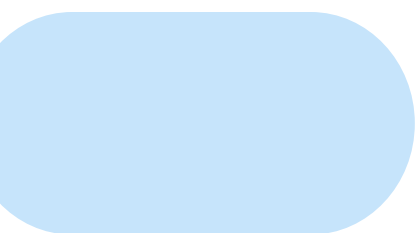
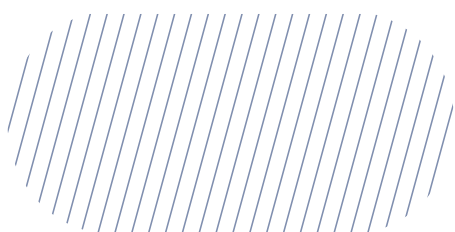
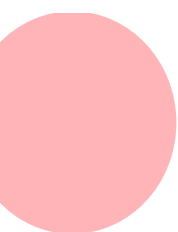
CPWs are diverse, and they are unique. Some participants work solely in Parliament House while many others work in remote locations with few other staff present.

The PWSS provides multi-channel service with clients able to call, e-mail, text or arrive in person to receive support. Channels of communication are available for support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The PWSS will continue to review these channels and examine options to allow clients of the PWSS to more easily connect to relevant teams and create a 'no-wrong door' system.

Cooperation and relationships

PWSS cannot improve Parliamentary Workplace culture on its own. Parliamentary workplaces are high paced, high demand and have high public profiles. For the PWSS to support the cultural change that is the foundation of our mandate, it will require the development of strong relationships and a strong commitment to transparency, collaboration and building trust with all people. This work has begun and remains at the forefront of our Craft.





Risk

Risk Management

The PWSS manages risks in accordance with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and our Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Framework. The agency's risk appetite and tolerance is overseen by PWSS Executive and the Audit and Risk Committee provides advice on the appropriateness of the system of risk management.

The PWSS has an overall moderate risk appetite, which reflects the importance of being able to engage with risk to allow for progress and innovation and assist in solving complex matters in a flexible and nuanced way. The PWSS' risk appetite is low in relation to fraudulent conduct, the unauthorised disclosure of official or personal information, and the health, safety, and wellbeing of our staff.

The PWSS maintains a positive risk culture through open and honest communication about risk management at all levels, having a supportive environment for escalating risk issues and a shared understanding of the value and importance of effective risk management. The PWSS' positive risk culture supports proactive delivery of our corporate objectives and priorities.

Enterprise Risk	Mitigation Strategies
Unauthorised release of client information	<p>Ensure information is only shared with consent of the client and on a need to know basis.</p> <p>Ensure ICT system is compliant with cyber security requirements and the implementation of robust data breach response policies.</p> <p>Internal processes regarding confidentiality and complete a conflict of interest declaration</p> <p>All staff aware of the APS Values and their obligations under the APS Code of Conduct.</p>
Not having the right people capability and culture	<p>Hire staff who have the right training and/or experience.</p> <p>Ensure training is available for to staff so skills stay up to date.</p> <p>Provide targeted wellbeing support to staff.</p> <p>Establish a values driven culture with regular team health checks.</p>



Enterprise Risk	Mitigation Strategies
Lack of confidence and trust in the service	<p>Touch base with stakeholders including through surveys to check satisfaction and identify improvements.</p> <p>Ensure staff provide advice in line with the Craft.</p> <p>Training for new staff and acting on feedback to facilitate a continuous improvement culture.</p>
Death or serious injury (including mental health injuries) associated with PWSS operations (For Staff and Clients)	<p>Policies and systems are in place to assist with prevention of injury or illness to our staff.</p> <p>Training is available and completed by staff to develop their understanding of their safety obligations.</p> <p>We consult and communicate with staff on our WHS policies and procedures.</p> <p>Our clients, delivery partners and their contractors are required to comply with all relevant WHS legislation.</p>
Staff do not act with integrity and public and government trust is reduced	<p>Relevant policies, procedures and AAI's are periodically reviewed.</p> <p>Our fraud control plan and fraud risk assessment are reviewed every two years or when significant changes occurs.</p> <p>We promote adherence to the APS Values and Code of Conduct and regular fraud awareness training is conducted.</p>
Non Compliance with Legislative requirements	<p>Relevant policies, procedures and AAI's are periodically reviewed.</p> <p>Our fraud control plan and risk assessment are reviewed every two years or when significant changes occur.</p> <p>We promote adherence to the APS Code of Conduct and regular fraud awareness training is conducted.</p> <p>Our financial activities are documented and reviewed through governance and assurance mechanisms.</p> <p>We have policies and procedures in place to minimise financial risk.</p>



Performance measures

Our performance

The following measures are consistent with the PWSS Portfolio Budget Statements 2024-25.

Performance Information

Activity — Parliamentary Workplace Resources Review

Performance measure	Target			
	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Delivery of Parliamentary Workplace Resources Review	50%	100%	N/A	N/A

Methodology

Measured through percentage of completion of final report.

Rationale

The report is due to be delivered in the second half of 2024.

Collection and reporting

The review has gathered information from parliamentarians and their staff to inform the final report to Government. This includes collection of qualitative data through face-to-face and online interviews, and quantitative data through an online survey.

The report will be provided to the Prime Minister and Special Minister of State.



Activity — Implementation of recommendations

Performance measure	Target			
	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Number of recommendations from the Set the Standard Report the PWSS is responsible for have been implemented relevant to the PWSS	10%	70%	100%	N/A
Methodology Measured through percentage of completion for each recommendation and aggregated for overall implementation.				
Rationale The agency aims to implement outstanding recommendations with extensive consultation with those affected. Implementing considered complex recommendations takes time.				
Outputs Data will be reported in the Annual Report and used to ensure we are accountable.				

Activity — Service delivery

Performance measure	Target			
	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Ensure service delivery is targeted, useful and meets client's needs	70% satisfaction	70% satisfaction	70% satisfaction	70% satisfaction
Methodology Stakeholder satisfaction survey conducted annually.				
Rationale Surveying users of the service annually will build a picture over time and assist us to continually improve the services offered.				
Outputs Data will be reported in the Annual Report and used internally to improve service offerings.				



Activity — Pro-Integrity culture

Performance measure	Target			
	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
All staff complete a conflict-of-interest declaration prior to an offer of employment	10% ¹	100%	100%	100%

Methodology

Measured through register of conflicts of interest.

Rationale

Builds trust and confidence in the service being provided by the PWSS and minimises risks associated with information leaks.

Outputs

Data will be reported in the Annual Report.

¹ Note - all staff have completed extensive conflict of interest forms but the requirement to complete them before an offer of employment is made was introduced in late 2023.

APS Strategic Commissioning Framework

PWSS is not required to set a target as our outsourcing of core work is minimal and operates in line with the framework Principle 4: *Use external support in limited circumstances*.



