Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

INCOMING GOVERNMENT BRIEFING 2025

About the Department

Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Secretary
Jim Betts

The Hon Catherine King MP
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
Australian Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Congratulations on your election and reappointment, and welcome back to the portfolio for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

This portfolio is crucial to delivering on the commitments made by your Government to the people of Australia.

Your Incoming Government Briefing is attached and comprises two volumes:

- The 'Your priorities' volume, s47C, s47E(d)

- The 'Your portfolio' volume, which provides information on the department and your portfolio, including structure, significant roles, programs, budget and financials, and legislation.

As always, I can be contacted directly at any time, and my office is available to assist yours with any questions or requests as needed.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with you to deliver your priorities and the Government's agenda.

Yours sincerely

Jim Betts

13 May 2025

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Website: www.infrastructure.gov.au • ABN 86 267 354 017

OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE

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Establishing your office

Our first priority is to assist you in establishing your office.

While you reach agreement with the Prime Minister's office on the number of staff allocated to your office, and staff are being appointed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* in the first three months, the department will support the establishment of your office through the provision of a 'transition team'.

Where you hold a number of portfolios, there will be discussions across relevant agencies and with the Department of Parliamentary Services and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet about how best to service your office, including which agency will take a lead support role.

The department provides a range of services to support you and the effective operation of your office.

Within the next 48 hours: Senior staff will be in contact with you and your office in the next day or so to commence discussions about your immediate and ongoing support requirements. Your incoming Chief of Staff will be separately provided with a detailed overview of available services.

The department will provide you and your Chief of Staff with a networked laptop, mobile phone and iPad. We have a dedicated Premier Support function to assist with your IT and mobile communications needs 24/7 in your Parliament House and Ministerial Offices. We will arrange for ICT access and provisional security clearances for your transition team.

Within the next 2 weeks: The department will support your media team with media services; support you to select one or more Departmental Liaison Officers to help manage the flow of briefing and correspondence between your office and the department; provide access and support to use the Parliamentary Document Management System (PDMS+) and the Cabinet system (CabNet+); and arrange briefings for staff on security and document handling.

These departmental services are in addition and separate to services provided by the Department of Parliamentary Services at Parliament House and the support provided by the Department of Finance's Ministerial and Parliamentary Services, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority. The services provided by these agencies may include briefing your key staff on Cabinet and security issues; determining your Parliament House office location and when it will be set up for you; allocating your Commonwealth Parliamentary Office/Ministerial Office (this can take two weeks); coordinating secure communications for all your offices; and arranging a car with a driver.

The primary points of contact to assist you with establishing your office are:

Maree Bridger	**Kate Feros**
Chief Operating Officer	Assistant Secretary, Government Services
Phone: (02) s22(1)(a)(ii)	Phone: (02) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Mobile: s22(1)(a)(ii)	Mobile: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Premier Support: s22(1)(a)(ii) , mobile: s22(1)(a)(ii) |
s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au

About the department

The functions and work of the department touch the lives of Australians every day.

We work with our partners to enable connected, productive, safe, sustainable and culturally vibrant communities in our cites, regions and territories to improve the lives of Australians. Across the department and with our portfolio entities, we work collaboratively to deliver our programs, projects and services in the major infrastructure, transport, communications and arts sectors, supporting our regions, cities and territories.

This includes:

- steering nation-wide infrastructure projects that sustain economic and social development, disaster resilience and recovery, and create long-term productivity benefits for producers, businesses and communities;

- striving for the safe use of the transport network and supporting our transport modes to achieve long-term commercial sustainability, productivity improvements and decarbonisation;

- connecting and empowering communities across Australian cities, regions and territories to improve productivity and liveability;

- ensuring Australia's media policy settings are fit-for-purpose and Australians have access to the benefits of modern telecommunications and postal services; and

- working with the arts and cultural community realise the economic, cultural, educational and social importance of a vibrant sectors.

The department has a national footprint with people located in each state and territory capital city, regional areas, and non-self-governing territories. This broad coverage fosters greater collaboration both within the department and with our partners, strengthening our diversity and, most importantly, contributing to better outcomes for all Australians.

The department is working across government and with First Nations communities and organisations to deliver on our commitments under the National Closing the Gap Agreement, including the implementation of the four Priority Reforms to transform the way in which we work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations.

We aim to provide you with high-quality advice on policy, implementation and delivery. Our advice is evidence-based and informed by research, consultation, analysis and broader governmental objectives. We identify trends, gaps and emerging issues as well as risk in markets and society.

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Outcomes

Outcome 1
Improved infrastructure across Australia through investment in and coordination of transport and other infrastructure

Outcome 2
An efficient, sustainable, competitive, safe and secure transport system for all transport users through regulation, financial assistance and safety investigations

Outcome 3
Strengthening the sustainability, capacity and diversity of Australia's cities and regions including northern Australia, including through facilitating local partnerships between all levels of government and local communities; through investment in infrastructure and measures that stimulate economic growth; and providing grants and financial assistance

Outcome 4
Good governance and service delivery in the Australian territories including through the maintenance and improvement of the laws and services for non-self governing territories, and the overarching legislative framework for self-governing territories

Outcome 5
Promote an innovative and competitive communications sector, through policy development, advice and program delivery, so all Australians can realise the full potential of digital technologies and communications services

Outcome 6
Participation in, and access to, Australia's arts and culture through developing and supporting cultural expression

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Leadership team

The department's executive comprises the Secretary and six Deputy Secretaries. Deputy Secretaries support the Secretary and oversee portfolio policy, regulatory and operational responsibilities across all business divisions.

Jim Betts,
Secretary

Jim commenced as Secretary in July 2022.

Jim has more than 35 years public service experience in government agencies across the UK, Victoria, New South Wales and now the Australian Public Service.

Prior to becoming Secretary, Jim was a partner at strategy consultancy EY Port Jackson Partners, having previously led the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) from 2019 to 2021 where as Secretary he oversaw the state's infrastructure program and led development of two State Infrastructure Strategies. From 2013 to 2019, Jim was Chief Executive Officer of Infrastructure NSW and, before that held a number of senior Victorian Government roles including Secretary for the Transport Department and Director of Public Transport.

Jim is a Commissioner on the National Transport Commission and sits on the Boards of Roads Australia and Infrastructure Partnerships Australia. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Modern History (Hons) from Oxford and a Masters in Management Science from Imperial College, London.

02 s22(1)(a)(ii) | s22(1)(a)(ii)
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Jessica Hall,
Deputy Secretary
Infrastructure

Jessica is the Deputy Secretary for Infrastructure.

This role includes responsibility for over $120 billion of Commonwealth investment in transport infrastructure including Commonwealth-only infrastructure projects, such as Western Sydney International Airport, land transport infrastructure jointly funded with other jurisdictions, and Olympic and Paralympic sports infrastructure; as well as road and vehicle safety policy and regulation.

Previously, Jessica was First Assistant Secretary in several roles across the department, including in Surface Transport Policy during COVID, where she negotiated opening state borders to the movement of freight. She has had senior roles in the science, and education portfolios, including reforming the international students market in Australia, and has amassed over 20 years of experience in addressing economic, regulatory and social policy matters within the Australian Public Service.

Jessica has completed an Executive program in infrastructure financing at Harvard Kennedy School, and attained Masters degrees in both International Law and Asian Studies.

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Marisa Purvis-Smith,
Deputy Secretary
Transport

Marisa is the Deputy Secretary for Transport.

This role includes responsibility for International Aviation, Technology & Services, Domestic Aviation & Reform, and Surface Transport Emissions and Policy Divisions. Between November 2024 and April 2025, Marisa led the Aviation Response Taskforce responsible for the Government's response to Rex Airline's voluntary administration. This is now included within Transport Group.

Marisa brings a wealth of experience, including a strong understanding of government, regional and community issues, including as Deputy Secretary of Water Infrastructure and Northern Australia and First Assistant Secretary, Regional Development, Local Government and Regional Recovery. Prior to joining the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, Marisa worked in the federal Treasury in a range of roles, including tax policy, tax costings and analysis, Commonwealth-State relations, and economic forecasting.

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David Mackay,
Deputy Secretary
Regions, Cities and Territories

David is the Deputy Secretary for Regions, Cities and Territories.

This role includes responsibility for over $3 billion in grants programs, for governance, infrastructure, and service delivery in Australia's non-self-governing territories, and for policy advice on economic growth and living standards in Australia's regions and cities. The group comprises approximately 400 staff located in cities and regional centres across Australia, and in the external territories. Prior to this role, David served as First Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Investment, and for Cities.

David has also held senior executive roles in the Attorney-General's Department, in the Department of Health and Ageing, and in the Department of Finance. He has served in senior leadership roles in the New Zealand Treasury, and in McKinsey & Company's Australian public sector practice.

David is the Commonwealth-appointed Director of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, and is a Councillor of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (ACT). He holds degrees in Arts and Communications from the University of Sydney and Monash University, is a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and is an alumnus of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government.

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James Chisholm,

Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media

James is the Deputy Secretary for Communications and Media.

This role includes responsibility for broadband, telecommunications, media and digital platform industry policy, infrastructure investment and consumer policy, radio-communications policy, online safety as well as oversight of the government's shareholding interests in Australia Post and the National Broadband Network.

Prior to joining the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, James was the Chief Executive Officer of the Net Zero Economy Agency. James previously worked in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in a number of roles leading on matters including environment; energy and climate policy; resilience and climate management; agriculture and water; industry policy; infrastructure; regional development; communications; tax and employment policy; trade; and digital technology.

James spent a number of years in the Department of Treasury in the areas of competition policy, financial markets policy and international finance and development. James has also worked as a lawyer in the private sector and at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

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Stephen Arnott,

Deputy Secretary

Creative Economy and the Arts

Stephen is the Deputy Secretary for Creative Economy and the Arts.

Stephen has more than 20 years' experience in the Australian Public Services in arts, screen, creative industries, communications and technology policy areas.

Stephen was promoted to the Senior Executive Services in 2009. He was awarded a Public Service Medal in 2005 for his work reforming Australia's symphony orchestras. Previously Stephen helped run a small business providing data security services to corporate clients in Sydney. Stephen has a doctorate in French Philosophy from the University of New England where he lectured in both philosophy and psychology for a number of years.

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Maree Bridger,

Chief Operating Officer

Maree is the Chief Operating Officer.

Maree has worked in the Australian Public Service for 17 years across a range of policy, program, regulatory, corporate and service delivery functions and she has held senior roles at Services Australia, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the Australian Customs Service.

Prior to joining the Australian Public Service Maree had 17 years in the private sector and held a variety of roles at the Shell Company, Osborne Computers and Austar United Communications. She also spent eight of these years working as a management consultant, with a specific focus on organisational change, strategic planning, maximising competitive advantage and building organisational capability.
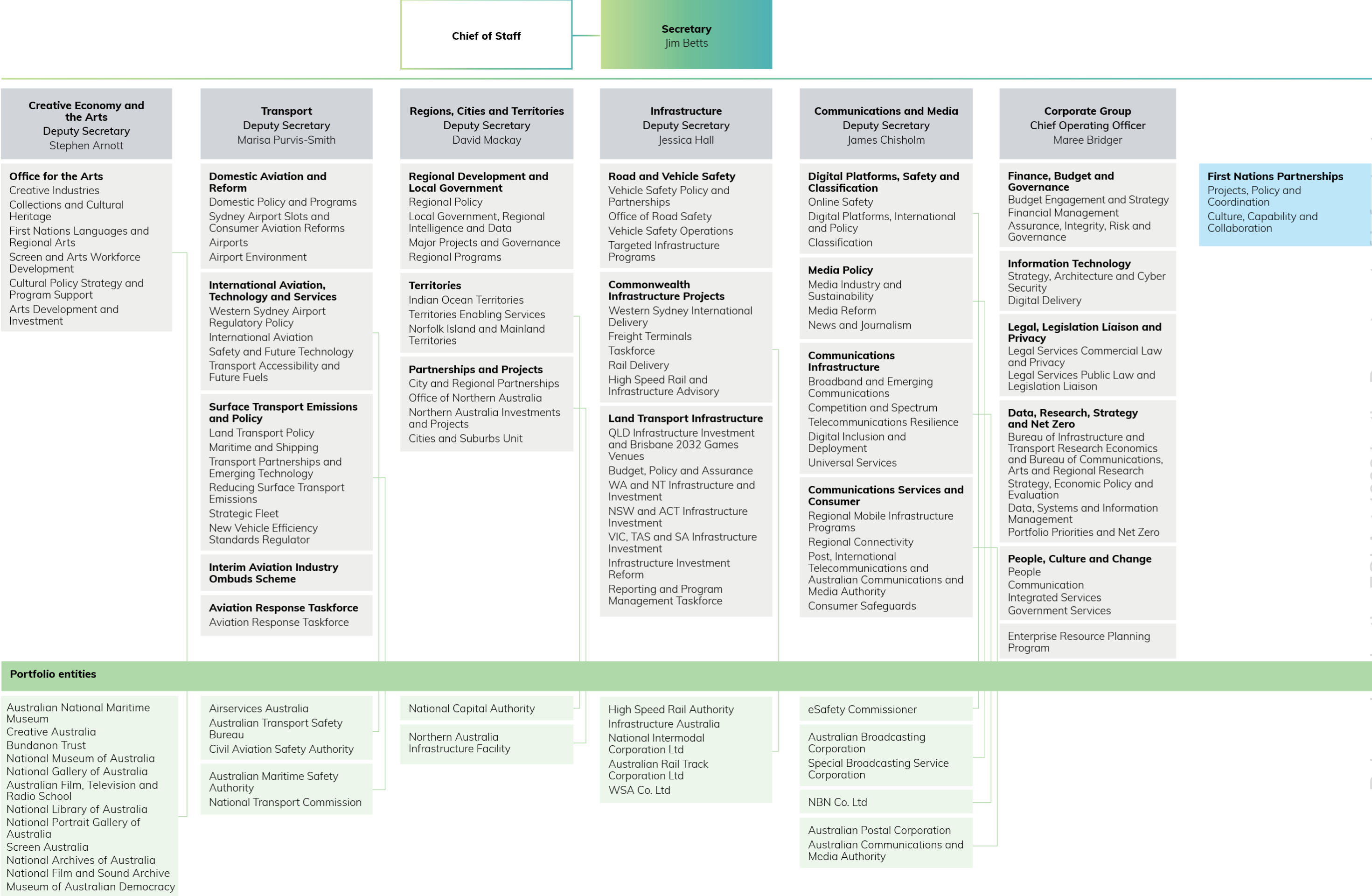
Maree has a Bachelor of Economics from ANU, an Executive MBA from the AGSM at UNSW and is a Certified Practicing Accountant.

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Chief of Staff

Secretary
Jim Betts

Creative Economy and the Arts
Deputy Secretary
Stephen Arnott

Office for the Arts
Creative Industries
Collections and Cultural Heritage
First Nations Languages and Regional Arts
Screen and Arts Workforce Development
Cultural Policy Strategy and Program Support
Arts Development and Investment

Transport
Deputy Secretary
Marisa Purvis-Smith

Domestic Aviation and Reform
Domestic Policy and Programs
Sydney Airport Slots and Consumer Aviation Reforms
Airports
Airport Environment

International Aviation, Technology and Services
Western Sydney Airport Regulatory Policy
International Aviation
Safety and Future Technology
Transport Accessibility and Future Fuels

Surface Transport Emissions and Policy
Land Transport Policy
Maritime and Shipping
Transport Partnerships and Emerging Technology
Reducing Surface Transport Emissions
Strategic Fleet
New Vehicle Efficiency Standards Regulator

Interim Aviation Industry Ombuds Scheme

Aviation Response Taskforce
Aviation Response Taskforce

Regions, Cities and Territories
Deputy Secretary
David Mackay

Regional Development and Local Government
Regional Policy
Local Government, Regional Intelligence and Data
Major Projects and Governance
Regional Programs

Territories
Indian Ocean Territories
Territories Enabling Services
Norfolk Island and Mainland Territories

Partnerships and Projects
City and Regional Partnerships
Office of Northern Australia
Northern Australia Investments and Projects
Cities and Suburbs Unit

Infrastructure
Deputy Secretary
Jessica Hall

Road and Vehicle Safety
Vehicle Safety Policy and Partnerships
Office of Road Safety
Vehicle Safety Operations
Targeted Infrastructure Programs

Commonwealth Infrastructure Projects
Western Sydney International Delivery
Freight Terminals Taskforce
Rail Delivery
High Speed Rail and Infrastructure Advisory

Land Transport Infrastructure
QLD Infrastructure Investment and Brisbane 2032 Games Venues
Budget, Policy and Assurance
WA and NT Infrastructure and Investment
NSW and ACT Infrastructure Investment
VIC, TAS and SA Infrastructure Investment
Infrastructure Investment Reform
Reporting and Program Management Taskforce

Communications and Media
Deputy Secretary
James Chisholm

Digital Platforms, Safety and Classification
Online Safety
Digital Platforms, International and Policy
Classification

Media Policy
Media Industry and Sustainability
Media Reform
News and Journalism

Communications Infrastructure
Broadband and Emerging Communications
Competition and Spectrum
Telecommunications Resilience
Digital Inclusion and Deployment
Universal Services

Communications Services and Consumer
Regional Mobile Infrastructure Programs
Regional Connectivity
Post, International Telecommunications and Australian Communications and Media Authority
Consumer Safeguards

Corporate Group
Chief Operating Officer
Maree Bridger

Finance, Budget and Governance
Budget Engagement and Strategy
Financial Management
Assurance, Integrity, Risk and Governance

Information Technology
Strategy, Architecture and Cyber Security
Digital Delivery

Legal, Legislation Liaison and Privacy
Legal Services Commercial Law and Privacy
Legal Services Public Law and Legislation Liaison

Data, Research, Strategy and Net Zero
Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics and Bureau of Communications, Arts and Regional Research
Strategy, Economic Policy and Evaluation
Data, Systems and Information Management
Portfolio Priorities and Net Zero

People, Culture and Change
People
Communication
Integrated Services
Government Services

Enterprise Resource Planning Program

First Nations Partnerships
Projects, Policy and Coordination
Culture, Capability and Collaboration

Portfolio entities

Australian National Maritime Museum
Creative Australia
Bundanon Trust
National Museum of Australia
National Gallery of Australia
Australian Film, Television and Radio School
National Library of Australia
National Portrait Gallery of Australia
Screen Australia
National Archives of Australia
National Film and Sound Archive
Museum of Australian Democracy

Airservices Australia
Australian Transport Safety Bureau
Civil Aviation Safety Authority
Australian Maritime Safety Authority
National Transport Commission

National Capital Authority
Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility

High Speed Rail Authority
Infrastructure Australia
National Intermodal Corporation Ltd
Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd
WSA Co. Ltd

eSafety Commissioner
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Special Broadcasting Service Corporation
NBN Co. Ltd
Australian Postal Corporation
Australian Communications and Media Authority

Department budget

	2025–26 ($ million)
Total resourcing	**16,557**
Administered	**15,881**
Departmental	**676**
Departmental appropriation	511
Departmental (capital)	16
*Non-operating resourcing (Prior year appropriations, section 74 external revenue, special accounts)	149

*These amounts do not contribute to the department's ordinary operating funding.

Other funding administered by the department

	2025–26 ($ million)
Administered funding paid to states and territories through the Treasury and National Partnership payments (not included in the total resourcing)	15,150
Funding paid through the department to portfolio entities	2,766

In 2023 the department commissioned independent financial analysis to inform a Functional Review (the Review) of the department, which was completed in 2024. Undertaking the Review was a recommendation of the 2023 capability review of the department by the Australian Public Service Commission.
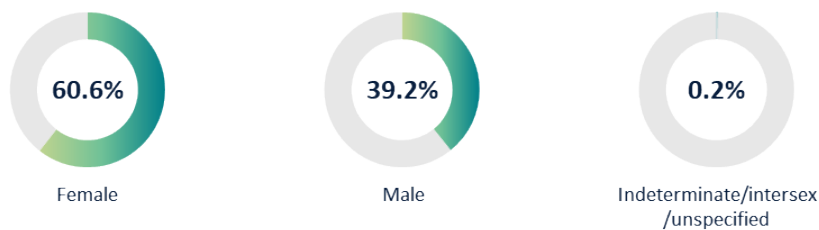
s47C, s47E(d)

Departmental staff

As at 31 March 2025 the department had a total employee headcount of 2,426 people[1], excluding staff on long-term unpaid leave or temporary transfer to external agencies. Over 78.2 per cent of these staff are located in the ACT, but the department has staff located in all other states and territories as well as internationally.

Staff levels

4.7%	**49.8%**	**45.5%**
Senior executive	Executive level	APS

Department gender split

60.6%	**39.2%**	**0.2%**
Female	Male	Indeterminate/intersex /unspecified

Ongoing vs non-ongoing

Non-ongoing **4.00%**

Ongoing **96.00%**

Location of staff

Pacific Ocean Territories | 16
Indian Ocean Territories | 2
Northern Territory | 13
Queensland | 191
Western Australia | 27
New South Wales | 123
Australian Capital Territory | 1,896
South Australia | 25
Victoria | 113
Tasmania | 16
Overseas | 4

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[1] While the above section refers to ASL as a way of aligning staffing data more readily to the department's budget allocation, this data is based on headcount – the actual employees of the department.

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