



Senator Tim Ayres
Chair
Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator

Thank you for your correspondence dated 14 September 2021 seeking additional information from the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) relating to the ongoing inquiry into the current capability of the Australian Public Service (APS), specifically in relation to the status of the Digital Review and the following questions contained in your correspondence.

Question 1:

When did the DTA complete the Digital Review and provide it to the Secretaries Board?

- Please provide a copy to the committee.
- If it has not yet been completed, what is the reason for the delay and what is the revised timeline?

Answer:

The Secretaries Digital Committee (SDC) has considered draft findings and recommendations, and the DTA is responding to feedback received. The Digital Review will be presented to Secretaries Board once it has been agreed by SDC.

Question 2:

On pages 3-4 of the 5 March 2021 Hansard, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) characterised the Digital Review.

Ms Cvijanovic: ...I think the review Mr Brugeaud is talking about will capture a lot of information about public sector data and digital capability. I think we're talking semantics about whether it's an audit or a review. The review will look at the stock and flow of digital and ICT investments, as well as workforce capability and other things, and the review might make recommendations to the Secretaries Digital Committee about actions that the public sector needs to take to improve the enterprise-wide approach to digital and ICT investments, and all that that means, including in relation to workforce.

Noting the characterisation, please provide a summary of the findings of the Digital Review, with a particular focus on the scope, main areas of analysis, and key insights. In providing this summary, please respond to the following questions:

- What is the total ICT expenditure across the APS, as ascertained by the Digital Review? Please break down the total expenditure as follows:
 - For the financial years 2018-19; 2019-20; 2020-21
 - Across the forward estimates
- Did the audit gather any data on the existing APS ICT capability and how this is distributed between agencies? If so, please provide.
- What were the ICT risks and needs identified?
 - Is the DTA aware of any progress that has been made in addressing these?
- Did the Digital Review contain any recommendations to the Secretaries Board or Secretaries Digital Committee?
- Is the DTA aware of any broader initiatives (relating to the APS Reform Agenda) that will flow from the findings?

Answer:

Consistent with the answer to Question 1, the DTA is still responding to feedback received by SDC. The Digital Review will be presented to Secretaries Board once it has been agreed by SDC. A decision has yet to be taken by the Australian Government on whether the Digital Review will be made publicly available.

Question 3:

On page 3 of the 5 March 2021 Hansard, the DTA advised:

Mr Brugeaud: The review we're conducting is much more extensive. It covers not only spend on ICT and digital systems; it also captures information on workforce policy and processes. And so, whilst the digital review is the foundation for the audit, there may be follow-up reviews that we conduct as we discover more about the current investment in digital and ICT.

Noting this evidence, is the DTA conducting any follow-up reviews or data capture activities?

- If so, please provide details on the nature of the tasks and the timelines for completion.

Answer:

Noting the Digital Review has yet to be finalised, the DTA is not currently conducting follow-up reviews or data capture activities but continues to collect information from agencies to perform its broader functions.

Question 4:

Please provide a list of the agencies that took part in the Digital Review Audit Data Collection Survey.

Answer:

The following agencies have participated in the audit data collection survey for the Digital Review:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Attorney-General's Department
- Australian Public Service Commission
- Australian Cyber Security Centre
- Australian Taxation Office
- Department of Agriculture, Water, and the Environment
- Department of Defence
- Department of Education, Skills and Employment

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Department of Social Services
- Digital Transformation Agency
- Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Department of Finance
- Department of Health
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Department of the Treasury
- Services Australia.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide further information. Should the Committee have further questions, please contact

Yours sincerely

Peter Alexander

Acting Chief Executive Officer

Digital Transformation Agency

27 September 2021