



EXECUTIVE MINUTE

on
JOINT COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REPORT [No.505]
[Inquiry into Policy and Program Design and Implementation]

General comments

Provided is a progress report on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's Transformation Action Plan being delivered under the 4-year Integrated Transformation Program.

Recommendation No: 2

3.71 The Committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry reports back to it on its progress with its Transformation Action Plan within 12 months of the date of this report.

Summary of response: Agreed

Supporting rationale:

The department agrees to the recommendation to report back on the progress of the Transformation Action Plan. Please find below a progress report on the 10 priority actions defined in the Transformation Action Plan.

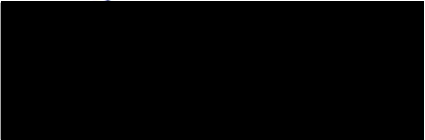
Key Points

- In November 2023, the Transformation Action Plan (TAP) was developed in response to the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) Capability Review and incorporates findings and recommendations from the Independent Financial Review commissioned by the Department of Finance, the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) Cultural Reform Audit, the ANAO Performance Statements Review, and the Australian Public Service (APS) Census.
- In July 2024, the department approved the establishment of the Integrated Transformation Program (ITP), a four-year program bringing together four transformation pillars of work to deliver on the objectives of the TAP by 2027. The ITP comprises 20 projects across four pillars: Transformation Action Plan (TAP), the Statement of Strategic Intent, Organisation Design and Culture.
- The ITP is underpinned by the One DAFF internal communication campaign, which is designed to foster staff engagement and employee advocacy, recognising the critical role these attributes play in a cohesive and high-performing department.

- The ITP is on track to finish ahead of schedule, with all projects expected to be completed by June 2026.
- As of October 2025, we have delivered ten projects, with another six to be delivered by the end of 2025. The four remaining projects will be delivered within existing budget allocations and are scalable based on departmental prioritisation and budget.

Achievements to date

- From a broad perspective, the implementation of initiatives under the ITP has contributed to tangible changes to our department's governance, operational effectiveness and culture. **Attachment A** provides a full overview of the list of achievements of the ITP pillars and projects, and their status.



Justine Saunders APM
Acting Secretary

4 November 2025

Integrated Transformation Program Pillars and Projects – Status as at October 2025

Domain	Priority Action/ Project	Vision	Status	Commentary
TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN (TAP)				
1. Leadership & Culture	1.1 Enhancing our Governance System	We make collective decisions at an enterprise level to deliver on our shared purpose, objectives, and priorities, and meet our significant legislative responsibilities. Our organisational governance arrangements and practices will be coherent, clear, and consistent to facilitate decision-making and accountability for delivery of enterprise-wide outcomes.	Complete	Key Achievements: - Enhanced governance arrangements have been established to ensure collective responsibility for setting, monitoring and clearly communicating enterprise-wide priorities. - Our new arrangements include a new governance framework for the department that provides improved clarity for decision making responsibility to support improved executive decision making. - The system now supports more effective resource allocation and decision-making (including a financial performance management framework) and incorporates the principles of our First Nations Platform.
	1.2 Embed an Enterprise Approach to Program Evaluation	We demonstrate an enterprise-wide approach to evaluation that enhances decision-making, efficiency, effectiveness, and increased delivery capacity, across the department. This includes developing and maintaining an evaluation culture to encourage continuous improvement, assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of policies and programs, and demonstrating progress toward objectives in ways that increase accountability and transparency.	Underway (Scheduled Completion: March 2026)	Key Achievements: - The draft Enterprise Evaluation Strategy has been released for internal consultation via a ‘Have Your Say’ survey. The consultation offers an opportunity for all staff to provide input and feedback into the draft strategy to shape how we conduct ethical and culturally appropriate evaluative practices. - The Enterprise Evaluation Strategy is a foundational component of the department’s enterprise-wide evaluation framework. It aims to drive performance improvement, accountability, and a robust evaluation culture across the department. Next Steps: - Publish the Enterprise Evaluation Strategy and develop an Annual Evaluation Plan aligned with the whole-of-government approach.
2. Collaboration	2.1 Stakeholder collaboration and practice framework	We are committed to strengthening our stakeholder engagement capabilities to improve transparency and how we use stakeholder insights to drive innovation and service excellence. Through our priority action, we are improving: - awareness of best practice engagement principles and methods - consistency in how we engage and collaborate internally, and with stakeholders - genuine partnership and engagement with stakeholders when developing and implementing better policies, programs and services.	Underway (Scheduled Completion: December 2025)	Key Achievements: - Building on the findings of the department’s 2023 APSC Capability Review, we engaged internal and external stakeholders to develop an enterprise-wide engagement maturity assessment. These insights helped us to better understand what we do well, and priorities for improvement through our Framework and capability uplift program. - The Stakeholder Collaboration Framework was published in January 2025 to establish an enterprise-wide engagement and partnership approach. This framework clarifies stakeholder management and engagement responsibilities. - Through our engagement capability uplift program, we are rolling out a range of refreshed resources and learning and development opportunities to support all staff to confidently apply the principles in the Framework. Next Steps: - We will conduct an annual staff and stakeholder consultation to measure our capability growth and identify areas for improvement against whole-of-government maturity indicators outlined in the APS Agency Engagement Maturity Assessment. - As part of our capability uplift program, we will continue investing in our people’s capability by delivering engagement resources and learning and development opportunities. Through this work,

Domain	Priority Action/Project	Vision	Status	Commentary
				we will leverage our existing knowledge to continuously improve our engagement activities internally, and with our stakeholder networks.
3. Delivery	3.1 Strategic Policy	We provide high-quality, timely and trusted strategic policy advice that is influential outside of our portfolio and focuses on cross-cutting issues with a forward-looking perspective. We improve the economic security of Australians by addressing the strategic policy challenges facing Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries including biosecurity, climate change, net zero emissions, food security and trade. We have clear expectations about our leadership role in providing strategic policy advice across government and staff are authorised and supported to work together to deliver this outcome.	Underway (Scheduled Completion: June 2026)	Key Achievements: - Strategic policy functions across key areas were mapped to identify capability gaps, and comparative analysis with other agencies informing the departments model. A light-touch governance and delivery model was developed, alongside draft standards for consistent, high-quality policy advice. Staff engagement helped update the Statement of Strategic Intent, and the Executive Board endorsed the Strategic Policy Branch's business model, roles, and commissioning process. - A Strategic Policy function was established through a new branch that conducts policy sprints in conjunction with business areas across the department, and improve policy development capability and outcomes. Next Steps: - Continue embedding the Strategic Policy Branch to amplify our policy efforts, explore cross-cutting strategic issues and upskill the department's strategic policy capabilities.
	3.2 Enterprise Performance and Reporting	We will have consolidated corporate, financial, performance and assurance data and other management information that enables us to make decisions and allocate resources confidently to achieve results.	Complete (With continuous improvement ongoing)	Key Achievements: - The Enterprise Performance Framework was released in November 2024 which embeds regular, transparent, accurate and meaningful reporting processes into business-as-usual operations through integrating workforce, financial and business performance and assurance data. Next Steps: - Continue embedding the Enterprise Performance Framework within our business planning process through a range of presentations, workshops and online education tools to improve staff performance information capability across all four phases of the Framework.
	3.3 Improving Regulatory Service Delivery	We apply consistent principles to regulatory service delivery across the department, supported by contemporary infrastructure, that uplifts our regulatory capability and allows for constant improvement of the delivery of regulatory services which stakeholders acknowledge and appreciate. We empower staff to contribute to improving the regulatory system. We have meaningful engagement with our external stakeholders on how we can improve our regulatory service delivery.	Complete (With continuous improvement ongoing)	Key Achievements: - A two-tranche delivery model was adopted, beginning with working groups and stakeholder input via a survey conducted in 2024 targeting biosecurity, food imports, exports, and illegal logging. Co-design pilots and trials led to significant inspection time reductions and improved outcomes, including a 33% decrease for tissue culture and up to 25% for fresh table grapes. Next Steps: - Continue to focus on uplifting regulatory capability and seeking opportunities to streamline, simplifying regulation while maintaining high standards.
4. People	4.1 Workforce Planning and Development - PLANNING		Underway (Scheduled Completion: December 2025)	Key Achievements: - A new Workforce Planning Framework has been released in December 2024 to underpin workforce planning activities by Senior Executives, managers, workforce planning practitioners and corporate, strategy and enterprise planning functions. - The framework has successfully embedded workforce planning into quarterly business cycles and better aligned it with risk management processes.

Domain	Priority Action/ Project	Vision	Status	Commentary
		To be an employer of choice who attracts, develops, and retains a diverse workforce with critical skills. We have a strong understanding of our current and future state workforce, key risks and gaps using modern and integrated workforce data solutions. We identify workforce change, priority areas, critical jobs, common themes, cultural barriers and operational alignment to build a fit-for-future workforce. The workforce strategy supports us attaining representation of First Nations staff to 5%.		- The Workforce Strategy 2024-2027 released in December 2024 has been developed to outline the department's approach and key initiatives to attracting, developing and retaining the talent necessary to achieve its goals. Next Steps: - Finalise Workforce Planning data needs analysis identifying immediate and long-term information and data gaps impacting workforce planning maturity.
	4.1 Workforce Planning and Development - REPORTING		Underway (Scheduled Completion: June 2026)	Key Achievements: - Integration of Aurion data into automated dashboards now enables up-to-date workforce insights. - A key milestone was the release of the inaugural SES Workforce Report in December 2024, replacing manual processes with timely, tailored reporting. This provides senior leaders with real-time visibility of key workforce metrics. The report is designed to support informed, data driven decision-making on their workforce. This is the first iteration, with plans for continuous enhancements, including the integration of additional data sources. These improvements will provide a more comprehensive workforce view, enabling deeper insights to inform strategies and achieve strategic objectives. Next Steps: - Further work will be undertaken on the integrated data model and visualisation products incorporating data from our workforce and finance systems. This will enable precise tracking of expenditure variances, fostering greater budget discipline and resource optimisation.
5. Resourcing & Risk	5.1 Financial Management Capability Uplift	The functions and activities we deliver are appropriate, cost efficient and align with enterprise level priorities. The revenues (appropriation and cost recovered) received to deliver these activities match with sustainable long-term finances. We have established and connected ways to set priorities, assess risks, and be adaptive to change to manage resources within the department's budget allocation. Our people have the capability, financial architecture, and governance to support financially sound business decisions.	Underway (Scheduled Completion: June 2026)	Key Achievements: - A new financial capability program has been developed and rolled out across the department. The program includes monthly live learning sessions, self-paced training and updated mandatory courses for all staff. - Upgrades and improvements have been made to the department's financial systems and new financial reporting templates have been developed. - The department released an updated Financial Management and Accountability Framework that has been embedded into SES responsibilities. - A rolling 10-year asset management plan was developed that outlines our priorities to replace and maintain core ICT, property and operational capabilities. - The department finished 2024-25 in a strong financial position, recording a net cash operating surplus of \$0.3 million for the financial year. The department is actively managing our Budget position to ensure we continue to deliver on Government priorities in accordance with our Corporate Plan. Next Steps: - Work is continuing on the department's financial systems enhancements. - A rolling four-year medium-term financial sustainability strategy is being developed that identifies opportunities for improvement in finance (people, process, system, culture) that outlines how to progress these actions through to 2026 and beyond. - Further work is being undertaken on the department's cost centres, finance user instructions and the PBS Outcome and Program Structure. - Reviewing and improving our budgeting and forecasting methodology to strengthen forecasting accuracy, initially focusing on immediate issues and moving to a preferred model in 2025-26.
	5.2 10-year Digital Sustainment	We will form a foundation of secure, robust and sustainable ICT, providing contemporary	Complete	Key Achievements:

Domain	Priority Action/ Project	Vision	Status	Commentary
	Investment Roadmap	and innovative digital government services that deliver on our key objectives. We will have long term strategies and plans for ICT investment to address critical risks, build contemporary digital capabilities, uplift sustainment and drive down long-term costs.		The department developed and delivered a 10-year Digital Sustainment Investment Roadmap in June 2024. The roadmap is a strategic initiative by the department to modernise and sustain its digital and ICT capabilities over the next decade. The roadmap was delivered in June 2024 and is now being used to guide the departments investment planning. The roadmap was also a key milestone in the delivery of the ICT and Cyber Security Strategies.
	5.3 Data Maturity Project	Information and data will be central to our operational service delivery, performance monitoring, risk management, research, strategic policy, emergency response and regulation setting. This core capability will support government, industries and the public to meet strategic objectives and priorities in a changing world.	Underway (Scheduled Completion: December 2025)	Key Achievements: - A Data and Analytics Hub was launched to provide staff information on artificial intelligence, data governance and whole of government data legislation, strategy and initiatives. - A Baseline Assessment of DAFF's data maturity was assessed using the APS Data Maturity Assessment Tool. - An Enterprise Data Governance Framework and Enterprise Data Strategy was drafted with consultation currently being finalised. Next Steps - The department will publish the departments Data Strategy 2025-27, Enterprise Data Governance Framework and finalise the Governance for Indigenous Data.
STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT (SOSI)				
	Statement Design and Launch	The department's vision is to build a more sustainable and prosperous Australia through strengthened biosecurity, productive and resilient agriculture, and expanded trade. It reflects a commitment to economic growth, climate sustainability, and protecting Australia now and into the future. The vision also emphasises working collaboratively as One DAFF with stakeholders, including First Nations peoples, to deliver shared outcomes for all Australians, especially those in regional and rural areas.	Complete	Key Achievements: The Statement of Strategic Intent was released in August 2024. This is our renewed strategic vision to engage with stakeholders and inform the Corporate Plan through business planning.
ORGANISATION DESIGN (OD)				
	Build a Strong Corporate Centre	The Organisation Design Pillar aims to renew the departments operating model to create a fit-for-purpose, contemporary organisation. Its vision is to build a high performing, connected, and agile department that works as One DAFF to deliver strategic outcomes and meet stakeholder expectations. This includes strengthening the corporate centre, uplifting strategic policy and regulatory capabilities, and aligning structures to reduce duplication and improve collaboration.	Complete	Key Achievements: Building a strong corporate centre was delivered through three streams of work. We built a strong corporate centre to provide better leadership, alignment, and coherence to the way we deliver enabling services and enterprise planning, performance and evaluation, and governance. This will help us be better positioned to effectively evaluate our department's performance.
	Build a Strong Corporate Centre (Stream 1)		Complete	Key Achievements: - In Stream One, we stood up a Business Partner model for key corporate functions and established better ways to deliver our corporate services. - Stream One focused on: - Changes within Finance and Investment Division where we built upon on and formalised the existing Finance Business Partner model.

Domain	Priority Action/ Project	Vision	Status	Commentary
				○ Changes within Human Resources where we designed the approach for this model, and worked within HR to put it in place. ○ Changes within Communications and Media where we made some structural changes to support the new model. ○ Established a new function to support project and change management with a new Enterprise Program Management Office.
	Build a Strong Corporate Centre (Stream 2)		Complete	Key Achievements: ● In Stream Two, we matured the model and finalised remaining changes, ensuring it met the nuanced and complex needs of each business area. These changes are supported by: ○ New service level agreements that clearly define how the Business Partner Model will operate. ○ New ways of working to maximise the benefits of the model and improve efficiency and collaboration across the department.
	Build a Strong Corporate Centre (Stream 3)		Complete	Key Achievements: ● Stream Three focused on strengthening the Strategy, Enterprise and Engagement Group’s operating model. This work focused on two main areas: ○ Reviewing the size and structure of the SEE Group divisions to ensure alignment with our Value Proposition. ○ Integrating the important work of the temporary Transformation Taskforce into our regular operations, following its conclusion at the end of 2024.
	Uplifting Strategic Policy Capability		Complete	Key Achievements: ● A Strategic Policy function has been established through a new branch that will conduct policy sprints in conjunction with business areas across the department and improve policy development capability.
	Building Regulatory Capability		Complete	Key Achievements: ● As part of our continued focus on regulatory practice improvement we established an Office of the Chief Regulatory Officer. This role ceased in May 2025 but the need for an enterprise focused regulatory stewardship function remains a priority for the department. This work is continuing under the leadership of the Tier 3 Regulatory Practice Committee and overseen by the Deputy Secretary Regulatory Stewardship Oversight Group.
CULTURE				
	Census Action Plan	The Culture Pillar aims to foster values and behaviours that support the department’s transformation by building a strong, positive organisational culture. It envisions a workplace where staff feel valued, connected to purpose, and empowered to contribute to improved outcomes. This vision is being realised through initiatives like the Census Action Plan, culture audit, and pulse surveys that guide the roadmap to the desired culture.	Underway (Scheduled Completion: November 2025)	Key Achievements: ● We implemented the 2024-25 Census Action Plan in November 2024. This was developed in response to the department’s 2024 APS Census results and sets out a path for improvement in four key areas of focus: internal communication, change management, health and wellbeing and enabling innovation. ● The department recorded improved Census results this year across leadership (SES and immediate supervisor), enabling innovation, inspiring new ideas, internal communication, integrity and well-being categories, as well as employee engagement, with 78% of staff recommending DAFF as a great place to work; and 90% saying they are willing to go the extra mile when needed. DAFF recorded a 72% participation rate - an increase of 2% on the previous year.

Domain	Priority Action/ Project	Vision	Status	Commentary
				Next Steps: Project is progressing for closure.
	Culture Audit	The Culture Pillar aims to foster values and behaviours that support the department’s transformation by building a strong, positive organisational culture. It envisions a workplace where staff feel valued, connected to purpose, and empowered to contribute to improved outcomes. This vision is being realised through initiatives like the Census Action Plan, culture audit, and pulse surveys that guide the roadmap to the desired culture.	Underway (Scheduled Completion: November 2025)	Key Achievements: - The culture audit has provided valuable insights into DAFF’s workplace behaviours, highlighting a cautious and risk-averse culture. It laid the foundation for a Culture Action Plan to strengthen constructive behaviours and support a more collaborative and innovative environment. These findings have been integrated into broader transformation efforts, including SES performance updates and the new Workplace Respect Policy. - The Department's Culture Action Plan is under development and will be published in November 2025. Next Steps: - Project is progressing for closure.