

Secretary Meeting Brief – *Off the Cuff*

9 October 2015, 12.30-1.30pm

AGD Training rooms, 3-5NC

Acknowledgement of country

- I would like to start by acknowledging the Ngunnawal people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet.
- I would also like to pay my respects to their elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present today.

Welcome

- It's nice to have you all here today – in person or via the live stream.
- I have lots to talk about today and, as usual, I am happy to take any questions or comments afterwards.

Machinery of Government changes

- It's been a busy time with the recent changes to our Ministerial arrangements and gearing up to Estimates.
- I spoke to staff in the Ministry for the Arts and the Classification Branch and Copyright section a couple of weeks ago and I'd like to reiterate my thanks to them all for the great work they have done here at AGD.
- The work of Arts has added to the diversity of work performed here at AGD. It has been a pleasure to oversee work that makes a positive difference to Australia's culture and cultural heritage. Some of the key achievements of the Arts include:
 - PM's Literary Awards and Book Council awards
 - Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan Scheme

- Increased private support within the arts sector
- The Attorney-General's Department has had policy responsibility for copyright policy since the first Commonwealth Copyright Act came into force in 1907.
- Both Classification and Copyright sections have been at the forefront of the highest quality policy thinking and law reform, as well as Classification Branch having a well-deserved reputation for being focussed on customer service in relation to its fee paying clients.
- Both of these areas are well versed in the challenges and opportunities that the digital environment provides, and are well-placed to continue to discharge their current functions and provide high-quality advice to government in their new department.
- As I have already said to affected staff the Department of Communications and the Arts is a great department and I am confident that these sections will continue to make great contributions in their various responsibilities.

Ministerial travel

- As you may be aware, Minister Keenan travelled to the United States last week to attend the Leaders' Summit on Countering ISIL and Violent Extremism.
- The Minister also met with his US ministerial counterparts and heads of law enforcement and intelligence agencies.
- An enormous amount of effort went into ensuring the Minister and his office were adequately prepared ahead of this trip and I want to thank those areas of the department that provided briefings, often within short timeframes.
- Successful ministerial travel is only made possible by the hard work of our staff. Thorough briefing and attention to detail when organising travel

enables our ministers to focus on the job at hand and achieve the best outcomes with our international counterparts.

- Thank you to Samantha Byng, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for their exceptional effort in driving the work required to ensure the Minister was well positioned to provide an update on Australia's progress in countering violent extremism and [REDACTED] for his tireless logistical work to ensure a successful visit.
- Australia's Regional Summit to Counter Violent Extremism was held in June to build regional capacity to counter the threat posed by terrorist propaganda.
- The Minister announced the launch of two significant initiatives agreed at the summit:
 - firstly, the establishment of a regional network for civil society organisations to foster peer-to-peer learning and partnerships, including with the private sector, to assist with identifying and better utilising leaders and influencers across the region to reach target audiences.
 - also, the development of a compendium of regional counter narratives which will amplify effective messages across the region.
- These initiatives will complement the important and ongoing work throughout the region and globally to counter terrorist propaganda and prevent the radicalisation of vulnerable people.
- Sam and her team have also been instrumental in driving the implementation of these critical measures to counter the threat posed by terrorist propaganda. I am very grateful for their efforts in driving this important body of work.

Focus on culture and Diversity Governance model

- In various forums this year I have spoken to you all about the importance of a united culture, and celebrating a workplace that values individual experience that drives innovation.
- You may have noticed that we are doing a lot of work around inclusion and equality in the workplace, including the unconscious bias cultural audit that's underway, the research on barriers to employees with disability, White Ribbon Day coming up in November, and my efforts to become a Male Champion of Change.
- At last count we had about nine initiatives on the run and when this was brought to my attention I was both pleased to see how active we are in this space, and a bit worried about how all these separate and enormously important initiatives fit together.
- With that in mind, I am pleased to announce the introduction of a Diversity Governance model that will provide greater visibility of the outstanding work the networks and champions do across the department.
- The governance model will comprise of a Diversity Council and a Diversity Committee.
- I will chair the Council and it will be attended by our senior level Champions.
- The Diversity Committee will be chaired by David Fredericks and will include our network chairs, employees who support the Champions, representatives from across the three business groups.
- I hope that this new governance structure will increase collaboration between the networks and provide a consultative forum for all diversity related issues. It won't change the everyday functioning of the networks but will provide a platform to discuss the linkages between the different networks, and programs like the ones I mentioned earlier.

EA Bargaining update

- You would have seen that the Notice of Employee Representational Rights (NERR) was issued last month, symbolising the beginning of our next round of enterprise agreement bargaining.
- I understand David Fredericks has been talking to groups of staff about the results of the ballot survey and about the negotiations ahead of us.
- The recent changes in government have raised some questions about whether the bargaining policy will be relaxed or changed and, as we can't tell whether this is likely, we must continue with our negotiations in line with the policy as it stands.
- I encourage you to be engaged with the process and to put forward your ideas or ask questions via the enterprise agreement mailbox (enterpriseagreement@ag.gov.au).

New CIO

- Our new CIO, Matthew Boyley, is commencing on Monday.
- Matt joins us from the Department of Industry and Science where he is currently the CIO, and he has previous experience in senior ICT roles in AFP and PM&C.
- The role of the CIO is crucial for the department's success, and as such the CIO will become a standing member of my Executive Board.
- Among other things, Matt will be working with the AGS National Manager of IT Services to maximise synergies between AGD and AGS ICT platforms, which I am sure will help us as we continue in our consolidated environment.
- I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jo Corcoran for her leadership of Information Division over the last two years. Jo has led important projects

such as the deployment of secure communications to support crises such as the MH17 crash and the Sydney Siege.

- Jo was instrumental in establishing the AGD Service Centre, and has supported major changes such as the Arts machinery of government transfer and the establishment of royal commissions and the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce.
- I thank Jo for her leadership and look forward to her continued contribution to ICT strategy and delivery of ICT services in the department.

Document search protocol

- The Protocol for Official Searches for and Extraction of Documents has recently been updated.
- The protocol guides our approach when conducting official searches for documents as part of audits, investigations, parliamentary processes, legal processes, reviews etc.
- The protocol is designed to ensure all staff follow a logical and thorough procedure when searching for and extracting documents and recording both the method of search and the outcome.
- I ask that you read the protocol on the intranet and apply it when undertaking official searches for documents.

AGD work in the media

- The work of AGD often attracts a lot of media attention and criticism – e.g. CVE; criminal justice; national security laws; and inter-country adoption work.
- We need to recognise that when we work on the highest priority work, work that impacts on the public in a significant way, work that goes to our safety,

to critical issues about what sort of society we live in and work that balances security and safety with individual rights and freedoms, you'll draw criticism.

- It's a reflection of the importance of our work.
- I and the Deputy Secretaries strongly stand by this work and the teams that are working on these issues.
- It's not always easy, but we're very proud of our work in these areas and, while it's important to listen carefully to any valid criticisms and suggestions for improvement, we should not become defensive.
- I want to encourage you to be proud of our work and committed to delivering on these important issues for the Government and the Australian Public.

EL1 and EL2 Recruitment

- I'd like to update you on the EL1 and EL2 bulk recruitment processes. It has been around three years since we've been able to recruit at this level and it is quite a process to coordinate.
- Last week we finalised the EL2 round and notified applicants of the outcome. Congratulations to those who are newly promoted.
- We are in the final stages of moderating the EL1 round and we will soon be in a position to notify applicants of the outcome.
- It is important to remember that there will be many more found suitable than vacant positions available. Despite the lift on the Interim Recruitment arrangements, we still have to manage our staffing levels to be within our affordable budget.
- Merit pools from recruitment processes will be in place for 12 months from the date the opportunity was advertised in the Gazette.

APS Census Results

- Results of the APS Employee Census have recently been presented to me and I'm pleased to share that they tell a very good news story.
- 70% of us participated in this year's census – a slight increase from last year's 68% participation rate.
- This is the first employee census I have been a part of as Secretary here at AGD and I am really pleased to see that it's not just me who enjoys working here!
- Our results have improved across the board, including in all three focus areas from the 2014 Census: bullying and harassment, learning and development, change capability.
- Our results around bullying and harassment are not where I'd like them to be – there is still room for improvement. I'm pleased to see that the proportion of people reporting instances of bullying or harassment has increased. Without this, it's difficult to address the issue.
- Of particular note in 2015 are the positive results in relation to job and agency engagement, senior leadership and performance management.
- Over the next twelve months I want us to focus on maintaining and improving the positive culture we have established here at AGD. While the census shows that you think AGD is a great place to work, we shouldn't be complacent and should continue to strive for excellence and look for ways to improve in all aspects of our work life.

Rachael Jackson – AHRI nomination

- As my final piece of information today, I'm very pleased to announce that Rachael Jackson, Assistant Secretary of People Strategy Branch is a finalist in the Dave Ulrich HR Professional of the Year Award, and is the only representative from Government in this category.
- Due to be presented on 1 December, this prestigious award from the Australian Human Resources Institute recognises HR leaders who demonstrate excellence through their achievement of business outcomes.
- Rachael has a strong public sector background and has made a significant contribution in driving cultural and organisational change here in AGD.
- She has responsibility for overseeing the broad range of HR functions as well as security and organisational change and culture.
- She demonstrates a passion for aligning organisational strategic objectives and meeting future workforce needs.
- Rachael provides me with a lot of support and advice and is instrumental in the functioning of this department.
- Congratulations Rachael and all the best at the upcoming awards. We know you'll be up against some tough competition, especially with a KFC representative in the finals! They might not win many culinary awards but they sure win their fair share of corporate ones.

Open to questions

- I'd now like to open to the floor and provide you all with the opportunity to ask questions of myself, of my executive team.

If asked:

Functional and Efficiency Review and Portfolio Stocktake

- Mr Laurie Glanfield AM commenced the Department's Functional and Efficiency Review on 17 August 2015.
- Laurie brings extensive experience to the Review, having headed the NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice for over 20 years as well as, more recently, the NSW Department of Finance and Services.
- The Review assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's operations, programmes and administration to ensure we are aligned with Government's forward priorities.
- A final report for the Review will be delivered towards the end of the year.
- The Functional and Efficiency Review is part of a programme of reviews being managed by the Department of Finance through its Efficiency through Contestability Programme.
- As part of this Programme, the Department is also coordinating a Portfolio Stocktake. The Stocktake identifies functions undertaken across the portfolio and considers opportunities for more efficient or alternative delivery.

MOG Corporate Staff

- The general principle of 'staff follow function' applies to MoG changes, as do the principles of 'finances follow function' and 'records follow function'.
- While identifying programme funding and related staff can be relatively straightforward, mapping of support functions, like corporate or legal services, can be more difficult.
- As a general rule, the number of corporate staff who are moved will be proportionate to the number of programme staff leaving the agency.

- We are still in discussions with the Department of Communications and the Arts to understand how many staff will be affected and what corporate roles they are looking to fill.
- I'm hoping that we will have more clarity around this next week and will be able to talk to individuals who are affected and to corporate areas more generally.
- If you are concerned about this or have any questions I encourage you to contact Rachael Jackson.

Corporate Services Review

- The Corporate Services Review sought to find ways to increase operational effectiveness and efficiency since consolidation of AGS and AGD.
- We looked to identify services that were common to both parts of the organisation and explore how we might align them more strategically to best meet our objectives and to reduce duplication of effort.
- We have received the final report from the Corporate Services Review and I have asked the respective heads of AGD and AGS corporate services (Finance, HR, IT, Governance and Communications, Security, Library Services) to report back on options for implementation.
- Executive Board is scheduled to consider options after Senate Estimates later this month.

