INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE
TASMANIAN STATE SERVICE

JULY 2021

FACT SHEET 3
CAPABILITY

The Tasmanian State Service Review (TSSR) Final Report made 77 recommendations across 5 domains:

- principles and values
- leadership
- capability
- workforce
- service delivery.

This fact sheet has been compiled as a suite of 5, to provide summary information and the relevant recommendations regarding one domain.

What should we strive for?

The State Service works together in key areas to get the best out of its collective resources. It collaborates to build the best capabilities possible and shares resources purposefully to meet the priority needs of government and the community.

The sharing of resources delivers efficiencies that are reinvested into more mature infrastructure and better services. Together with a nimble employment framework, this helps make the service more agile.

The State Service is modernising its services through digitalisation, capturing efficiencies that are reinvested in improved services. The ease of dealing with government is enhanced through the ability to access an increased range of integrated services online. Face-to- face options are still available and support is provided for individuals who have barriers to working online or have limited access to technology.

Capability across government is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for meeting future challenges. Systems and processes are integrated, supporting services to work together for common clients or to meet common objectives. Programs and projects are constantly improving through a regular review of the outcomes that they are achieving.

The culture and systems of the Tasmanian State Service encourage and support the development of partnerships with external stakeholders where there are common objectives and goals. The knowledge shared, together with the trust and familiarity built through partnerships provides a strong and resilient foundation for working towards shared objectives and responding to emergencies or major disruptions to the State's communities, economy and environment.

Where are we now?

With the exception of performance audits conducted by the Auditor-General, there is no systematic approach to reviewing the capabilities of state agencies or the delivery programs across the Tasmanian State Service. There is no regular program of advice to government on capability within the service and whether agencies are well placed to meet current and emerging challenges for the State. Capability is general considered within individual agencies, making cross-portfolio capability development difficult.

There is limited capability to share data, constraining the service's ability to understand the complex relationship between services and outcomes of individuals, families and communities.

With a few exceptions (e.g. family violence), capability sharing across the State is largely opportunistic and being driven by the availability of new integrating technologies as opposed to a deliberate strategy to align and integrate services. Small pockets of limited capability still feature predominantly within government departments (particularly the smaller agencies) with only limited efforts towards the development of more mature, stronger capabilities through shared capabilities.

There is some progress towards the digitalisation of services, but the pace of change is slow, meaning that Tasmania is falling behind other jurisdictions.

There is an opportunity to enhance the systematic approach to developing 'ideas' partnerships with others, including the sharing of knowledge and shared planning to meet common challenges across sectors and levels of government.

What do we need to do?

The Review makes a number of recommendations to:

- develop a whole-of-service capability review and improvement framework

- enhance the State's data sharing and analysis capability

- prepare the business case for a shared service for transactional corporate services

- introduce a functional leadership model for capability across the TSS

- build momentum in the digitalisation of the TSS

- continue to build intellectual partnerships with others.

The recommendations

Recommendation 16

Develop an agency capability review and improvement framework for government and undertake an initial 3-year cycle of agency capability reviews based on that framework. Develop a simplified version for small agencies.

Fund a small unit in the Department of Premier and Cabinet to develop the framework and help manage the reviews and their outcomes.

Recommendation 17 (Interim Report Recommendation 8)

Establish a small review and evaluation unit with additional resourcing in the Department of Premier and Cabinet, managed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Treasury and Finance and overseen by a cross-portfolio steering committee of heads of agency, to annually review a small number of programs or groups of programs considered high risk or critical.

Recommendation 18

That the Review and Evaluation Unit (see Recommendation 17) develop a whole-of-government review and evaluation framework for government consideration.

Recommendation 19

That the government develop and fund a stronger whole-of-government capability for sharing, linking and analysing data and assign a functional leader to deliver services to, or build capability across, all agencies.

Recommendation 20

That the government fund the Department of Treasury and Finance to review the potential scope, costs and benefits of consolidating transactional services in government into a shared service.

Recommendation 21

That the government implement and fund a functional leadership model to develop capability across the TSS.

That heads of agency lead the development of a functional leadership program for key whole-of-government capabilities, including clear governance for identifying capabilities for functional leadership, for empowering functional leaders and for holding them to account.

Recommendation 22

That the government, through the heads of agency, develop a platform-based functional leadership model for the ongoing development and integration of consistent core business systems across all agencies.

Recommendation 23

That the government agree on a set of capabilities to form the first stage of implementation of a functional leadership model for capability development.

Recommendation 24

That the TSS incorporate platform-based functional leadership into the digital services governance framework and replace the Digital Services Board with heads of agency meetings.

Recommendation 25

Amend the terms of reference of the Deputy Secretaries Digital Services Committee to include the Chief Information Officer as a member.

Recommendation 26

That the TSS progressively eliminate 'manual only' business processes, and that the government fund a small, centrally funded resource to drive the digitalisation of existing business processes.

Recommendation 27 (adapted from Interim Report Recommendation 6)

That the Department of Premier and Cabinet develop an overarching 'ideas' partnership agreement with the University of Tasmania focused on areas of mutual benefit and with the broad objectives of improving outcomes for Tasmanians.

That under the auspices of the new partnership, the TSS and UTAS explore opportunities, including to:

- build a shared capability to link and analyse administrative data

- work together on whole-of-service workforce planning

- consider the TSS's potential 'surge' capacity needs and the UTAS faculty structure required.

Recommendation 28

That the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Department of State Growth work together on the design and delivery of a program of short-term secondments of TSS employees into industry and vice versa.

Recommendation 29

That the Department of Communities Tasmania work with TasCOSS to design and deliver a program of short-term secondments of TSS employees into the community sector and vice versa.

Recommendation 30

Extend the existing graduate program for relevant agencies to include a placement in TasCOSS or another community sector organisation.

Recommendation 31

That the TSS review the current reference groups between government and the community sector to ensure they support the community sector population outcomes framework (see Recommendation 73) and establish an annual forum of government, relevant community sector organisations and peak bodies to refresh the coverage and membership of these reference groups.

Recommendation 32

That the Department of Premier and Cabinet work with the Australian Public Service Commission to design and deliver a program of short-term secondments between the Commonwealth and State.

Recommendation 33

That the State Service Management Office play an overall coordination and advice role in the secondment agreements proposed and developed. A small amount of funding should also be provided to support the initiative.