

Government Response to the Independent Review of the Tasmanian State Service

To ensure the State Service is in the best shape to deliver the services Tasmania needs, the Government requested Dr Ian Watt AC to undertake a review that would identify structural, operational, service, practice and legislative improvements. We also wanted to ensure that we are doing everything we can to attract and retain the best possible people to the State Service and we develop the long-term capability of all State Service employees.

The State Service needs to have more contemporary practices and processes to prepare for the future opportunities and challenges that our nation and State will face. This will mean substantial change across the service. The roadmap provided by Dr Watt is comprehensive and bold, and provides an opportunity to significantly change the State Service in Tasmania for the better, especially as we continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing impact on our State. There has never been a more important time to ensure Tasmania's State Service is able to provide the leadership, advice and support required to ensure Tasmania continues to thrive.

The Tasmanian Government supports, or supports in-principle¹, all 77 recommendations of the Independent Review of the State Service. We have a proud history of leading the nation in terms of integrated service delivery and we will continue to do this. The reform agenda will focus on actions which have the highest impact on improving the lives of our employees and Tasmanians. The reforms will ensure that boundaries do not get in the way of achieving results and will build the skills and expertise of the State Service, including in data and digital technology. The reforms ensure a better service for Tasmanians by making dealing with Government easier and more productive.

The Government will embark on an ambitious reform program across three stages, with each stage lasting 18 months and all recommendations being implemented within 5 years. The first stage of reforms will focus on:

- Strengthening the mandate for, and enhancement to the capabilities of **Service Tasmania** across in-person, phone and on-line;
- Increasing momentum in **Digital Enhancement** across the service, including the development of a whole-of-service Human Resource Information System and driving the modernisation and integration of core business systems through functional leadership. This will make it easier for the Tasmanian community to do business with the Government;
- Supporting improved **Service Delivery** by continuing to implement a review and evaluation function for the State Service and enhancements to disaster risk assessment;
- Re-writing all **Employment Directions** to ensure that they support a capable, agile and accountable service; and
- Targeted reform of the **State Service Act 2000**, including renewing the State Service Principles to provide a new foundation for a modern service.

Stages 2 and 3 will build on these foundations, covering reforms across all other recommendations of the review. Implementation of the recommendations of the review will be led from the most senior levels of the State Service through the creation of a Secretaries Board, chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

What does it mean?

The implementation of the recommendations of the Review will mean that the State Service will provide better support to the Government and high quality services to the Tasmanian community. The following priorities will be delivered in the first stage of the implementation of the recommendations of the review.

¹ Supported in-principle means that the intent of the recommendation is supported but the specific details may be modified following further consultation with agencies, unions and other stakeholders.

Service Tasmania's role will be strengthened through a clear mandate to, over time, become the single digital service delivery agent for Tasmania. This means that services will be easier to access and they will be targeted to the individual needs of Tasmanians based on important life events. Services will continue to be provided across all three delivery lines, including in-person and over the phone, but will be improved through partnerships with other levels of Government and improvements in call-handling technology.

The Government will also increase its investment in the **Digitalisation** of services across Government. Starting with a whole of government Human Resources System, the State will progressively invest in upgrading and integrating business systems so that bureaucratic boundaries are no longer a barrier to working across Government and data sharing is enabled to provide better services to Tasmanians. The State will immediately scope functional leadership roles for these systems to drive unified strategies for the development of each system over time.

The Government will invest to improve the accountability of **Service Delivery** across the State Service through the continued implementation of a whole-of-service review and evaluation capability. Through this new office, the State will support agencies to build a better understanding of what actually works in terms of improving the lives of Tasmanians and where the greatest value is in terms of working across portfolios.

A very strong message in the review was that the Service's employment legislation, rules and processes are a barrier to delivering the modern, agile service that the State needs. The **Employment Directions**, including rules and process for recruiting, retaining and managing State Service employees, will be re-written to enable the State Service to deliver the services that the State needs.

The review found that the Tasmanian State Service should be grounded in, and driven by strong values and principles that guide everything it does. The Government agrees. Changes to the **State Service Act 2000** will be prioritised, including a re-write of the State Service Principles to provide a contemporary, clear and engaging set of Values and Principles for the Tasmanian State Service.

Context

The Tasmanian Government announced an independent Review of the Tasmanian State Service (the Review) in June 2019 to consider whether the governing framework of the State Service is fit for purpose for Tasmania today and into the future. The Review set out to identify structural, legislative and administrative improvements that will transform current structures, services and practices to deliver a more efficient and effective State Service.

What the Report Said

The Final Report of the Review found that TSS employees are passionate and committed to delivering better outcomes for all Tasmanians. It is, however held back by its current design. The review makes 77 recommendations across 5 key domains, principles and values, leadership, capability, workforce and service delivery. The final report and a summary of the findings of the review are available at www.dpac.tas.gov.au

No	Recommendation	Government Response	Stage 1			Stage 2			Stage 3		
			Jun-22	Dec-22	Jun-23	Dec-23	Jun-24	Dec-24	Jun-25	Dec-25	Jun-26
Service Delivery											
1	That the Government undertake a full horizon scanning process every two years as part of the process of updating the Disaster Risk Assessment.	Support	Service Delivery								
17	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.	Support	Service Delivery								
18	The Review and Evaluation Unit should develop a whole-of-government Review and Evaluation Framework for government consideration.	Support	Service Delivery								
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.	Support				Service Delivery					
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.	Support				Service Delivery					
64	That the government adopt a life events framework as the basis for the integration of services across agencies.	Support				Service Delivery					
70	Develop standards for person-centred service delivery for use in the TSS.	Support				Service Delivery					
71	That the TSS capture the learnings from successful place-based initiatives and develop a framework for place-based and co-designed initiatives in Tasmania.	Support				Service Delivery					
72	That the Department of Treasury and Finance undertake an audit to map the premises that are owned or leased by the TSS and identify options for improved integration of services and programs and the co-location of TSS employees over time.	Support				Service Delivery					
73	That the TSS work with TasCOSS to develop a shared community sector population outcomes framework.	Support				Service Delivery					
74	That the government designate a functional leader for system management of externally provided services and establish an expert panel to support the development and delivery of contemporary outcomes-based purchasing models.	Support				Service Delivery					
State Service Act 2000											
2	Develop and implement the concept of a single state service to help build better capabilities, increase collaboration and deliver improved outcomes for the Government and the Tasmanian community.	Support	State Service Act 2000								
3	Amend the State Service Act 2000 to replace the existing State Service Principles with a clear Object, State Service Values and State Service Principles. That TSS leadership conduct an open process of engaging with stakeholders and TSS employees to help define the shared values of the TSS.	Support	State Service Act 2000								

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4	That the SSMO develop key indicators to measure progress towards the embedding of values across the TSS and aligns the State Service Survey to provide data for these indicators.	Support				State Service Act 2000					
6	Amend the State Service Act 2000 to broaden the legislative function and powers of heads of agency to include development of capability and delivery of programs across the State Service and collaboration to achieve outcomes with other heads of agency.	Support	State Service Act 2000								
12	That the government endorse stewardship as a key principle for the TSS by inclusion in the amended State Service Act 2000.	Support	State Service Act 2000								
43	Amend the Act to include the power to make, in regulations, the timeframe for an employee to notify their intention to apply for a review under section 50(1) of the Act. Make a regulation prescribing a timeframe for lodging a notice of intention to seek a selection review.	Support				State Service Act 2000					
48	Amend the State Service Act 2000 and any associated employment directions, policies, practices and standards to allow for the appointment of an employee into the TSS for a limited period where a head of agency considers that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is necessary to respond to an emergency the required task must be completed in a timeframe that precludes the appointment through the usual recruitment process or it supports the agency to partner with an external organisation. 	Support				State Service Act 2000					
60	Amend the State Service Act 2000 and/or the Industrial Relations Act 1984 to prevent the use of review powers under both Acts to consider the same employment-related decision.	Support in Principle				State Service Act 2000					
Whole of Service Prioritisation											
5	That the Government task some or all of the TSS heads of agency collectively with addressing a small number of whole-of-government or cross-government priorities that require a collaborative approach to facilitate delivery of better outcomes.	Support				Whole of Service Prioritisation					
7	That the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, in full consultation with relevant portfolio ministers and the Premier, develop and undertake departmental secretaries' annual performance agreements and assessments.	Support				Whole of Service Prioritisation					
8	That the Premier undertakes the annual performance agreement and assessment of the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, informed by discussions with ministers (as the Premier sees appropriate) and consolidated advice from other departmental secretaries.	Support				Whole of Service Prioritisation					
9	Consider heads of agency contributions to developing the TSS as a genuinely single state service, including the delivery of cross-portfolio outcomes (such as whole-of-government priorities) and whole-of-government capability development, in agency heads' performance assessments.	Support	Whole of Service Prioritisation								
10	That the government task heads of agency as a group to drive the capability review and improvement framework, functional leadership and digitalisation and some or all of the cross government priorities. Provide a small amount of additional resourcing to the Department of Premier and Cabinet to support the heads of agency work and associated follow-ups.	Support	Whole of Service Prioritisation								

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11	That heads of agency advise the government, within 3 months, on the appropriate organisation and structure of heads of agency meetings and the arrangements to support its oversight of the delivery of whole-of-government priorities and the broader requirements of the Report.	Support	Whole of Service Prioritisation								
Digital Enhancement											
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.	Support	Digital Enhancement								
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.	Support	Digital Enhancement								
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.	Support				Digital Enhancement					
24	That the TSS incorporate platform-based functional leadership into the digital services governance framework and replaces the Digital Service Board with Heads of Agency meetings.	Support	Digital Enhancement								
25	Amend the terms of reference of the Deputy Secretaries Digital Service Committee to include the Chief Information Officer as a member.	Support	Digital Enhancement								
26	That the TSS progressively eliminate 'manual only' business processes, and the government funds a small, centrally funded resource to drive the digitalisation of existing business processes.	Support				Digital Enhancement					
34	That the Department of Health continue to develop the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) to provide the foundation for a whole-of-government system, with clear whole-of-government business requirements for accurate and timely reporting to heads of agency, the Head of the State Service, the Employer and Parliament.	Support	Digital Enhancement								
Leadership Development											
13	Update the TSS Senior Executive Leadership Capability Framework to include an explicit recognition of stewardship and to align with the broader capability framework proposed for the TSS.	Support				Leadership Development					
14	That the government establish and fund a talent development and management program to identify and develop future leaders of the TSS and future senior executives. The SSMO should manage the program.	Support	Leadership Development								
15	That the TSS establish a network of former Tasmanians who are currently filling public sector leadership roles elsewhere in Australia and draw on them for informal ideas and advice.	Support in Principle							Leadership Development		

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Capability Development											
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.	Support				Capability Development					
Partnerships											
27	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 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. 	Support in Principle							Partnerships		
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.	Support in Principle				Partnerships					
29	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.	Support in Principle				Partnerships					
30	The existing graduate program for relevant agencies be extended to include a placement in TasCOSS or another community sector organisation.	Support in Principle				Partnerships					
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.	Support							Partnerships		
32	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.	Support in Principle							Partnerships		
33	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.	Support							Partnerships		
Employment Directions											
35	Operational employment-related decisions be delegated to heads of agency unless centralised decision-making can be justified in terms of high risk to the government or the service. The Head of the State Service provide advice to the Employer on decisions that should be made centrally and the risks that this approach is seeking to manage. That the Head of the State Service develop and implement a reporting framework to ensure that heads of agency are accountable for complying with directions and policies established by the Employer.	Support				Employment Directions					

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36	That review of the capability and role of SSMO be completed and implemented as a priority.	Support	Employment Directions								
37	That the Employer progressively revoke all superfluous employment directions with necessary material translated into TSS practice guides or other suitable instruments. That the SSMO, in consultation with state government agencies, rewrite remaining employment directions as standards-based directions, with increased flexibility for agency decision-making and process design.	Support	Employment Directions								
55	Amend Employment Direction 5 to be standards based, allowing the relevant head of agency to tailor an investigative process based on the circumstances surrounding an alleged breach.	Support	Employment Directions								
56	Rewrite Employment Direction 5 to allow for a simple, local process to be used where the facts are clear and not disputed and the agency seeks to impose a low-level sanction (i.e. reprimand or that the employee engages in counselling for their behaviour).	Support	Employment Directions								
57	Amend Regulation 29 of the State Service Regulations to include dismissal of an employee for reasons of serious misconduct as specified in the Fair Work regulations.	Support in Principle	Employment Directions								
58	That the government create a shared capability for the investigation of Code of Conduct breaches.	Support	Employment Directions								
59	Rewrite Employment Direction 6 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · separate the processes for managing employees who have lost essential qualifications or accreditation from the process for assessing employees who are unable to perform the duties of their position for other reasons · create a relatively simple process for the loss of qualification/accreditation · prescribe the minimum standards to be met by agencies when otherwise assessing the ability of an employee to perform their duties. 	Support in Principle				Employment Directions					
Capability Development											
38	That the TSS develop a whole-of-government framework for recording, reporting and analysing workforce data to inform workforce planning.	Support				Workforce Planning					
39	That all state government agencies ensure they have workforce plans in place by the start of 2023, which will be refreshed every 12 months thereafter and reviewed every 3 years.	Support				Workforce Planning					
40	Develop centrally a whole-of-TSS workforce plan by the end of 2023 that targets identified workforce challenges and supports whole-of-government priorities. Whole-of-service workforce plans should be refreshed every 12 months and renewed every 3 years.	Support				Workforce Planning					
Workforce Recruitment											
41	Increase the number of placements available in the graduate, cadet and traineeship programs to create more employment opportunities for young people in the TSS.	Support in Principle				Workforce Recruitment					
42	That the SSMO work with agencies to develop and facilitate a consistent approach to group recruitment, allowing for the appointment of suitable candidates over time to positions in the TSS.	Support				Workforce Recruitment					
44	Split the current Statement of Duties for TSS employees into a Statement of Classification and a Statement of Duties.	Support				Workforce Recruitment					

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45	That the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Treasury and Finance develops options for reducing the impact of establishment controls on the efficient recruitment to positions in the TSS.	Support				Workforce Recruitment					
46	That the Head of the State Service and heads of agency develop a standard approach to the management of fixed-term transfers across the TSS.	Support				Workforce Recruitment					
Workforce Capability and Performance											
47	That the SSMO work with human resource directors or equivalents from all agencies to develop communities of professional practice across the TSS.	Support				Workforce Capability and Performance					
49	That the SSMO continue to explore options for the creation of an internal mobility register with relevant unions.	Support				Workforce Capability and Performance					
50	That the SSMO lead the development and implementation of a whole-of-service TSS employee capability framework.	Support				Workforce Capability and Performance					
51	That the TSS develop tools, including an employee self-assessment tool, to support the embedding of the employee capability framework (see recommendation 46) into capability development across the TSS. That the TSS reorganise existing training and professional development programs where appropriate to align with the employee capability framework.	Support				Workforce Capability and Performance					
52	Remove the term 'Performance Management Plan' from the State Service Act 2000 and rewrite Employment Direction 26 to include essential elements of agency-based performance management systems.	Support				Workforce Capability and Performance					
53	That the SSMO work with agencies to create an ongoing whole-of-service community of practice to support the implementation of performance management systems across government. That the embedding of performance management systems in agencies be included in the performance assessment of heads of agencies and this be required in performance management assessments for all relevant managers. That the Head of the State Service audit the implementation of agency performance management systems 2 years after the introduction of the new employment direction on performance management.	Support				Workforce Capability and Performance					
54	That all agencies, in collaboration as appropriate, implement the Auditor-General's recommendations on the management of underperformance concurrent with a centrally led review of Employment Direction 26 and related processes.	Support				Workforce Capability and Performance					
Flexible Employment											
61	That the SSMO develop a short set of principles for TSS employees to work away from the office, drawing extensively on existing arrangements and resources and taking into consideration benefits and cautions to provide a consistent, underlying basis for individual agency policies.	Support				Flexible Employment					
62	That the Department of Premier and Cabinet prepare a business case for developing regional office hubs in consultation with the Department of Treasury and Finance as a priority, including consideration of potential regional locations.	Support				Flexible Employment					
63	Heads of agency provide advice on possible targets for the number of added appointments to be made to the TSS outside Hobart.	Support in Principle				Flexible Employment					

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Service Tasmania											
65	Designate and fund Service Tasmania as the agent for the delivery of a specified range of transactional services for the TSS, including a renewed and extended clear mandate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> partner with others to improve the customer experience and enhance sustainability of the service network be the single digital service delivery agent for the TSS, requiring all digital services to be either developed on, or integrated with, a single platform to be built and maintained by Service Tasmania. 	Support	Service Tasmania								
66	That Service Tasmania accelerate the current actions under its Strategic Plan 2020-25 to enhance service delivery partnerships with the Commonwealth, local government and, where appropriate, the private sector.	Support				Service Tasmania					
67	Formally capture the lessons learnt from establishing and expanding call centre capabilities in response to COVID-19 and develop a business case for the possible consolidation of call centres into a unified capability for the State.	Support	Service Tasmania								
68	That Service Tasmania develop a robust costing model apportioning all costs to an internal or external service delivery function and the Department of Treasury and Finance regularly review and assess the reasonableness of the model's assumptions and results.	Support	Service Tasmania								
69	Establish Service Tasmania as a state agency supported by an advisory board following the development of a new costing model and governance.	Support in Principle							Service Tasmania		
Program Coordination											
75	That the Head of the State Service chair a small subcommittee of heads of agency that oversees the implementation of recommendations and informs and advises heads of agency as a whole, and provides regular updates to the Premier and Cabinet.	Support in Principle	Program Coordination								
76	That the Government provide funding for the Department of Premier and Cabinet to establish a designated unit to monitor and support the implementation of recommendations across the TSS over a 3-year period.	Support in Principle	Program Coordination								
77	Implementation should be largely complete within 3 years and fully complete within 5 years. A short independent review of progress should be undertaken after 2 years and again after 4 years.	Support in Principle	Program Coordination								