



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

All about PM&C: What we do and how we do it



Secretary's Introduction



As a central agency, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) occupies a privileged position. The department advises and supports the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet on a range of issues at the forefront of public policy and government administration. Often these are complex and involve change and rapid developments in many areas.

Within this environment, responsiveness to the elected government is not only a matter of providing timely advice, ensuring implementation of key programs and policies, or drawing together input from across portfolios. While these are very highly valued by the Prime Minister, there is also a clear expectation that the Australian Public Service (APS) will increasingly focus its efforts on providing a greater level of strategic advice, which looks forward to effectively deal with the issues which may affect the nation in the coming years.

To help us better perform this role and deliver on the government's priorities, a structure which bolsters our strategic policy capability has been put in place.

The department comprises five major groups: the Domestic Policy Group; the National Security and International Policy Group; the Governance Group; the Strategic Policy and Implementation Group and the Arts and Sports Group. Our structure and working arrangements reflect close consultation with our staff and our many key stakeholders, draw upon best practice both within Australia and abroad, and take into account the need for our advice to address the long term challenges and opportunities facing Australia.

I am confident that we have the right people, structure and resources in place, to enable us to lead the way in providing professional, high quality and innovative public policy advice to government.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Moran', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Terry Moran AO

Our Functions

The department's **primary role is to provide advice to, and support for, the Prime Minister in her capacity as head of the government and the Cabinet.** The major tasks for the department include developing timely, well-argued, robust and forward looking policy advice, coordination of policy through the Cabinet process, and supporting the implementation of key government programs.

Policy advice and administrative support to the Prime Minister: We provide advice to the Prime Minister on major domestic and international policy, including all matters considered by the Cabinet. In providing this advice, there is a particular emphasis on policy coordination across government. In this area we seek to ensure that the Prime Minister has the best possible advice, which draws appropriately on expertise from across the whole-of-government.

Strategic policy and implementation advice: We use forward looking research and analysis projects to advise the Prime Minister and the government on emerging issues and strategic policy challenges, with a focus on the government's major domestic and international priorities. We also monitor implementation of key government initiatives, policies and programs.

Assistance to Cabinet, its committees and the Federal Executive Council: We ensure that the Prime Minister and Cabinet are given accurate, clear and timely advice that takes into account the views of all portfolios. We provide secretariat support for meetings of the Cabinet and the Federal Executive Council and we manage processes that facilitate the decision-making role of the Cabinet.

Coordination of government administration: We provide services to the Prime Minister and to the government to enable the business of government to be managed in an efficient, effective and coordinated manner. Our department is the primary source of advice on machinery of government matters and interaction between the parliament and the public service, including coordination of the government's legislation program and providing significant support to the reform of the Australian Public Service.

Intergovernmental relations: We seek to facilitate cooperation between the Australian Government and other governments in Australia. We coordinate arrangements for meetings of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and advise the Prime Minister on the implications of proposals for Commonwealth–State relations. We also provide policy advice on Commonwealth–State issues and mutual recognition arrangements, help develop policy relating to intergovernmental engagement and monitor implementation of intergovernmental initiatives.

Government ceremonial and hospitality: We provide high-level support for major events, such as visits by heads of state, ceremonies and State occasions, and coordinate the logistical arrangements for the Prime Minister's overseas visits.

Honours and national symbols: We are responsible for policy advice, operational support and awareness-raising in relation to the Australian honours system and on national symbols.

Support services: We provide a range of support services to the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary, the ministerial team and the government. These services include assisting the Leader of the House and the Manager of Government Business in the Senate to schedule government business in parliament. We provide a range of support services to the offices of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary and the ministerial team. We support the operations of the Prime Minister's official residences and provide staffing and administrative services to former Governors-General, as well as advice and support on arrangements for the Governor-General Designate. In addition, we provide the information technology, human resource and financial management support, record keeping and the physical working environment to support our staff and taskforces.

Our Structure

The department is organised into five broad groups which each contribute to providing advice and support to the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Domestic Policy Group

The Domestic Policy Group works to ensure coherence in the development of economic, productivity and social policies.

Industry, Infrastructure and Environment Division

This division is responsible for advising on industry, infrastructure and environmental policies across seven portfolios and coordinating whole-of-government approaches to policy development in these areas. Policy areas include climate change, water, environmental assessment, communications and broadcasting, industry and innovation, competition policy and regulation reform, energy and resources, transport, rural and regional services, transport, and agriculture, and natural resource management.

Economic Division

This division is responsible for advising on domestic and international economic conditions, budget outlays, taxation policy, superannuation, Commonwealth-State financial relations, monetary policy, financial markets, corporations law, wages policy and industrial relations matters.

Social Policy Division

This division is responsible for advising on health, and ageing policy, programs and financing; sport and youth policy; employment, education and skills development; and whole-of-government advice on Indigenous affairs policy.

Office of Work and Family

This division is responsible for advising on new policies designed to assist families and communities, including early childhood development and child care, workforce participation, families, women's issues, community services, social security, housing, disability, carers, seniors, veterans, immigration, citizenship and disaster recovery. Through the Social Inclusion Unit, the division also develops national strategies to address poverty and social exclusion, and provides secretariat support to the Australian Social Inclusion Board.

COAG Unit

The COAG (Council of Australian Government) Unit is responsible for coordinating COAG meetings and meetings of its supporting Senior Officials group. The Unit also provides policy advice on Commonwealth-State issues including the COAG Reform Agenda and activities of Ministerial Councils, the COAG Reform Council, the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision and mutual recognition arrangements. It takes a strategic role to ensure the work on COAG reforms is delivered in a timely manner. The Unit also provides support to a range of interdepartmental COAG-related activities at the Commonwealth Government level.

Strategic Policy and Implementation Group

The Strategic Policy and Implementation Group has a focus on ensuring that forward looking policy is prioritised in the face of the day-to-day demands of government, as well as overseeing the implementation and ongoing delivery of key programs, policies and initiatives.

Strategy and Delivery Division

The Strategy and Delivery Division identifies long-term strategic issues and directions and undertakes projects on complex and cross-public policy challenges involving evidence-based analysis, research, consultation and external environment scanning. It also plays a role in the analysis of the delivery of government policy objectives and the improvement of implementation and service delivery.

The division provides high-quality strategic policy and implementation advice to the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and Cabinet Committees by working closely with other areas in the department, the broader public service and the wider policy community. The division's policy focus is primarily across the domestic policy arena, including industry policy, environment and climate change, education, community services and health.

Implementation Division

This division works closely with areas across the department to assist the Prime Minister and the Cabinet to manage and deliver the government's strategic priorities, and to strengthen implementation planning and capacity across the APS. The division is also responsible for implementing the government's APS reform and delivery agendas, and arranging community cabinet meetings as part of its broader focus on community engagement.

National Security and International Policy Group

The National Security and International Policy Group provides advice on Australia's foreign policy, trade and treaty matters, defence, intelligence, nonproliferation, counter-terrorism, law enforcement, border security and emergency management matters; coordinates security-related science and technology research matters; and plays a leadership role in the development of improved information management and integrated, whole-of-government national security policy.

National Security Adviser

Mr Duncan Lewis AO DSC CSC was appointed National Security Adviser (NSA) by the Prime Minister on 4 December 2008.

The NSA provides direct advice to the Prime Minister on policy matters relating to the nation's security, including international policy issues. In carrying out his duties, the NSA engages with the heads of Commonwealth departments and agencies, relevant Commonwealth ministers, heads of State and Territory departments and agencies, as well as key representatives from business, industry, academia and international partners.

Deputy National Security Adviser

The Deputy NSA supports the work of the NSA across the breadth of her national security and international policy development, advice and coordination responsibilities.

National Security Chief Information Officer (NSCIO)

The NSCIO was appointed to realise the vision of a secure, coordinated and effective national security community. The work of the NSCIO includes harmonising the broad policy, governance and legislative arrangements currently in place to improve

interoperability and collaboration, and to provide oversight of the national security information management environment.

Homeland and Border Security (HBS) Division

HBS provides advice, coordination and leadership on integrated, whole-of-government policy matters, priorities and strategy in the areas of strategic national security policy, critical infrastructure protection, e-security, non-proliferation, counter-terrorism, law enforcement, border security and emergency management issues.

Defence, Intelligence and Research Coordination (DIRC) Division

DIRC provides advice, coordination and leadership on integrated, whole-of-government policy matters, priorities and strategy in the areas of defence, intelligence coordination and cooperation matters, and national security, science and innovation policy and programs.

International Division

This division provides advice, coordination and leadership on Australia's foreign policy, trade, aid and treaty matters and priorities, including bilateral relations, relationships with regional and international organisations, free trade negotiations and whole-of-government priorities for the overseas aid program. It also incorporates the International Strategy Unit, which focuses on developing innovative and forward-looking advice on policy challenges in the medium to long term across the foreign and international security domains.

Governance Group

The Governance Group oversees the department's support functions, and also takes a leadership role in providing advice on public governance and reform across the APS.

The Governance Group also provides support to the Prime Minister and Cabinet through its leadership of and contribution to whole-of-government activities such as that undertaken by the Office of the Commonwealth Co-ordinator General and various taskforces like that established for Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2011.



Corporate Services Division

This division manages human resources, ICT and financial management functions for the department, which includes management of information technology, telecommunications, reporting, compliance, personnel services and policies, health and safety, records management, library, resource and capital management, procurement and contract process management, finance, staff recruitment, learning and development, and departmental security.

Cabinet Division

This division provides the Secretariat for Cabinet, Cabinet committees and the Federal Executive Council, oversees programming of Cabinet business, and manages access to and custody of Cabinet documents. The division also manages a regular program of Community Cabinet meetings.

Government Division

This division provides advice on legislation programming, parliamentary affairs, ministerial arrangements, machinery of government, public service issues, legal and constitutional matters, litigation, administrative review, royal commissions and other inquiries, archives, electoral matters,

privacy, territories, access to government information (including Freedom of Information), matters relating to the arts, national collecting institutions and cultural heritage, matters relating to Australian and foreign honours and the use of national symbols.

Ministerial Support Division

The Ministerial Support Division manages a range of support functions for ministerial offices in the Prime Minister's portfolio. The division coordinates all aspects of ministerial correspondence, corporate governance, risk management, internal audit, senate estimate coordination, briefing and support services for ministerial offices and supports the operations of the Prime Minister's official residences. The division also provides government ceremonial and hospitality support, including coordination of logistical arrangements for the Prime Minister's overseas visits.

Arts and Sports Group

The Arts and Sports Group provides policy advice, oversees governance arrangements for the arts and sports portfolio agencies, including the Australian Sports Commission and the National Portrait Gallery, and administers a range of programs contributing to the government's broad strategic policy objectives, including social inclusion, promotion of excellence and access to cultural capital.

The Office for Sport

The sports function in PM&C will ensure strong collaboration and links across a number of portfolios which are impacted by sports, sports participation, the bidding for and hosting of major sporting events. The Office for Sport works closely with the Australian Sports Commission, Australian Sports Foundation and the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority on the development of Australian sport through increasing participation; strengthening sporting pathways; and ensuring Australia's continued success in international competition.

The Office for Arts (OFTA)

OFTA provides advice, develops policy and administers programs and legislation to support the performing and visual arts, film and television, the creative industries, the collections sector and Indigenous arts and culture, including delivery of Indigenous programs through a network of staff located around the country. OFTA has responsibility for key initiatives including the Prime Minister's Literary Awards, arts training and education, regional access programs, the return of Indigenous ancestral remains and secret sacred objects and tax incentives for film and the arts. OFTA also manages the National Portrait Gallery and Artbank, the national art rental scheme.

OFTA works closely with 11 portfolio agencies:

- Australia Business Arts Foundation
- Australia Council
- Australian Film, Television and Radio School
- Australian National Maritime Museum
- Bundanon Trust
- National Film and Sound Archive
- National Gallery of Australia
- National Library of Australia
- National Museum of Australia
- Old Parliament House - Museum of Australian Democracy
- Screen Australia

Taskforces

From time to time, the department convenes and oversees the work of taskforces, often as a way of addressing complex or urgent developments in policy or service delivery that cut across many parts of government, or as a mechanism for managing significant one off projects or events such as that established for CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting) 2011.

Taskforces are a way for the department to facilitate collaboration, and may draw upon the expertise of seconded staff from other public service agencies, external consultants, or groups of external advisers or experts. Our taskforces also draw upon the skills of our own staff, whether they take a role in providing policy input, secretariat support, or in managing the operational, corporate and governance activities for taskforces.

How we work



We strive to improve the standard of executive decision-making, by providing the Prime Minister and the Cabinet with advice and support that:

- is timely, accurate, robust, and innovative
- is responsive to the directions set by the Government
- presents a whole-of-government perspective
- is strategic and forward looking
- is relevant and responsive to changing circumstances
- ensures compliance with legislative obligations, and
- gives assurance that policies are being delivered in an effective and coordinated manner.

Our people

PM&C attracts high calibre individuals who seek to participate in decision making at the heart of the nation. Our staff are drawn to PM&C by the opportunity to work at the centre of government and are driven by the desire to help shape the future of Australia.

"PM&C is the best place to start for a successful career in the public service. The work is varied and interesting, the conditions are great and the department has an excellent reputation" 2011 Graduate

"I chose PM&C because of its broad range of portfolios, from domestic policy through to national security and international policy. Gaining an insight into the machinery of government and the coordinating role of a central agency was highly appealing" 2011 Graduate

PM&C draws a range of talented, professional, motivated and highly skilled people from a diverse range of backgrounds and academic disciplines including economics, arts, law, political science, international relations, information technology and social science. The diversity of our people is what enables us to deliver the best advice to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.

We understand that our people are our most valuable asset, so in turn we are committed to fostering a supportive and friendly working environment with a range of attractive conditions including:

- competitive salaries and excellent conditions of service
- excellent career advancement opportunities
- ongoing learning and development opportunities
- flexible and family-friendly work arrangements including an in-house school holiday program
- a comprehensive health and wellbeing program including fitness classes, flu vaccinations and health seminars, and
- flexible salary packaging arrangements.

How we work (continued)

Professional development opportunities

PM&C is full of possibilities when it comes to building your career. We offer our people the opportunity to develop both personally and professionally, with chances to work across a range of policy areas, overseas or throughout the APS generally. There are opportunities to represent the department on both the domestic and international fronts, in a variety of forums dealing with a range of policy and reform issues.

We encourage our staff to work with their managers and identify areas for learning and development through our inclusive performance management system. We encourage our staff to actively pursue development opportunities through a range of specialised activities including training, on-the-job experiences, seminars and leadership programs.

Our values

As Australian public servants, our people are committed to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and good governance. Our staff are committed to providing high quality apolitical advice and support to the elected government consistent with the APS values and the APS Code of Conduct.

PM&C is characterised by an environment which encourages and supports all staff to:

- be accountable for their actions
- act with integrity, trust, honesty and respect
- commit to excellence
- apply imagination and innovation to their work
- value a diversity of views, skills, backgrounds and perspectives
- maintain confidentiality
- learn and improve
- cooperate
- ensure the efficient, effective and ethical management of people and resources, and
- promote a safe and enjoyable working environment.

Our leaders

At all levels within the department, we value leaders who:

- have a record of achievement
- understand and clearly communicate the government's requirements and priorities
- get the best from people and help them to reach their potential
- place a priority on problem solving, and develop options for action
- are responsive, strategic and proactive in identifying emerging issues
- focus on results, and
- build support and reach agreement through a collegiate and inclusive approach.

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