

REPORT SNAPSHOT

Diversity, equity and inclusion in the ACT Public Service

Why did we do this audit?

The ACT Government has expressed a commitment to implementing the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion in the ACT Public Service (ACTPS). These principles seek to recognise and include the unique differences, contributions and needs of staff in the workplace in a way that is fair and equitable and allows them to participate in decision-making. The audit considered the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate's activities to develop whole-of-government frameworks, strategies and plans for diversity, equity and inclusion and support ACT Government agencies to implement them; and the activities of three agencies (the Education Directorate, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate and the Emergency Services Agency) to recognise and implement the principles at key stages of the employment lifecycle.



What did we find?

- The overarching *ACT Public Service Respect Equity and Diversity Framework*, which was first implemented in 2010, is out-of-date. It does not refer to current responsibilities, legislation, frameworks, strategies or plans developed since 2015.
- There is variability in how the numerous whole-of-government frameworks, strategies and plans relevant to diversity, equity and inclusion identify and articulate strategies objectives and outcomes; actions with timeframes for implementation; and performance measures with targets.
- The ACTPS has two whole-of-government employment targets, for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (3 percent by 2026) and people with disability (9 percent). Considerable effort is needed across the ACTPS to meet these employment targets. The ACTPS does not have employment targets for other diversity groups.



What are the key issues?

- The Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate has recognised the need for a more cohesive approach and an overarching strategy for ACTPS inclusion and belonging. This needs to be progressed as a matter of priority.
- More effective performance and accountability arrangements are needed to ensure the principles and practices of diversity, equity and inclusion are implemented across the ACTPS.



- Annual State of the Service Reports are a key mechanism for reporting on diversity, equity and inclusion matters in the ACTPS. However, reporting on such matters is dispersed throughout the reports, and this makes it difficult to quickly obtain a snapshot of activity and progress across the ACTPS.

What did we recommend?

- The Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, in progressing the development of an overarching ACTPS inclusion and belonging strategy, ensure that the strategy specifically recognises and reflects key contemporary concepts, such as belonging and intersectionality; and the broad range of different diversity groups represented in the ACTPS and their specific needs.
- The Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate should establish mandatory workplace diversity training requirements for all staff; and diversity, equity and inclusion training requirements for managers and supervisors, and ACTPS staff involved in recruitment.

