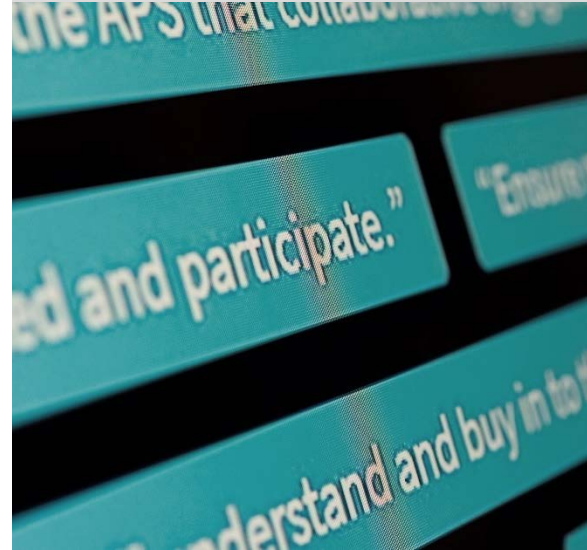


APS200
April 2019

In conversation
with the
APS Review



APS200

29 April 2019

What is the APS200?

The APS200 was established as a forum following the 2010 Moran review 'Blueprint for Reform' to act as role models and drive reforms in their agencies.

Members are secretaries, agency heads and deputy secretaries from across the APS.

Event purpose: engage the leadership cohort in change, and inspire commitment to take action.

Event attendees: 128

The objective of the event was for participants to collaborate on the role they have in leading change and their commitment to act to achieve a fit-for-purpose APS of the future.

Participants heard from David Thodey, Chair of the APS Review panel and panel members, Alison Watkins and Gordon de Brouwer about the case for change and the role of this group.

During the APS200 event, participants were asked to respond to three questions, reflecting in pairs and sharing their responses via an online polling platform.

- Q1: Of the changes the public service needs, what most excites you, and why?
- Q2: What are you most concerned about?
- Q3: If there is one thing you can do to make a contribution to the future of the APS - what is it?

Participants were also asked to write on cards, one word to describe the APS now, and the APS of the future (see word cloud, page 11).

*"Be engaged.
Talk about this to
teams positively."*

*"Help staff lift
their gaze from
today to
tomorrow."*

*"Be more
ambitious for
Australia."*

*"Collaborate
with curiosity,
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goodwill."*

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Insights

- This group has indicated **strong desire for change and a commitment to action** – maintaining momentum is important to keep this group engaged, and to influence those within the group who do not yet see themselves as personally responsible for transformation.
- Not all APS200 members currently prioritise transformation – over one third of this cohort don't have **transformation as a high priority** – this will need to improve to achieve broad change.
- How to incentivise and embed horizontal **collaboration** is a challenge – the APS200 see their potential for positive impact but collaboration is highest on their concerns of how to achieve it.
- Their primary **constraints** are the APS 'authorising environment' – suggesting there is strong pressure to deliver for government or priorities, rather than to prioritise APS health.
- **Strategic allocation of funds and resources** were identified as having the highest impact and highly challenging to achieve, whereas clear wins for this cohort are **dynamic ways of working** and **secretaries' board**.
- There is alignment with the broader cross-section of the APS on **common purpose, strategic recruitment** and **empowered managers** – but with wide differences on networked enabling systems, open APS and dynamic ways of working.

Q1. Of the changes the public service needs, what most excites you, and why?

Importance of having a shared motivational vision shared across the APS, as stewards of the APS

The building of a more flexible aps operating model through looking for hubs of opportunities for working together in common priorities horizontally across agencies. Also the highlighting of examples of where this is already occurring well as an example

Investing in capability and talent especially in digital skills and leadership - not outsourced but building from within

Opportunity to work as a team

To enunciate a vision that unites us and serves the next generation

Investment in workforce

A license to change the future without dwelling on the past

Holding a mirror to ourselves

Professional streams introduction and investment

Let's stop being the bouncer and start being the DJ

Not wasting taxpayer's money

Our professional streams idea that deepens our skillsets recognising that interdisciplinary teams are needed to solve our problems of the future and this harnesses the best of the aps. We are at our best in crisis but how do we do this as bay?

The fundamental importance of policy advice that integrates social, economic, security, technological and other issues

Building public confidence in government and improving public discourse on policy

To be part of an actually joined up APS.

Less bureaucracy

Technology as enabler for better service, better evidence for policy/delivery, more sophisticated measures of what is good

Opportunity to better harness data and leverage digital to influence more robust timely and informed policy - informed by quality data and designed in collaboration with the wider sector/community.

Greater investment in learning and development and talent management to better shape the emerging leadership team

Harnessing our extraordinary talent and influence around collaborative outcomes

Leadership with a focus on supporting people, not just managing issues

Q1. Of the changes the public service needs, what most excites you, and why?

Tech and data driving not just policy but culture, esp genuine collaboration

Opportunity to really work together as one APS.

Better collaboration and new ways of working across agencies/agendas

Digital transformation for service and integration

Being really accountable, including for collaboration

Horizontal integration of priority setting and implementation

Focus on collaboration focussed on outcomes if supported

Helping lead meaningful change

Two things: a conversation about the shared vision and the ability for technology to unleash our policy capabilities

The opportunity to head in a shared direction

Transformational technology change

Strengthening connections to the community and understanding their needs and aspirations

Remove levels in the hierarchy

The opportunity to really invest in the development of capability

Driving structure, processes, culture and behaviours that embed collaboration

Collaboration especially across jurisdictions

The focus on behaviours needed for the change

the chance to improve

Empowering managers

Increased investment in leadership

Collaboration

Relying on evidence based policy

The next gen technology and the advanced it will enable.

Increased focus on capability and professionalisation

Collaboration, attentiveness and the capacity to reward effort

Great leadership

New authorising environment if it can be achieved!

Using technology to connect with and provide better service to citizens and business

Flexible aps operating model

Q2. What are you most concerned about?

APS is more than Departments. How can we drive change across all entities? If Secretaries' Board is essential to drive change, how does it need to behave and communicate? Who does it need to hear from?

The overall system must be able to remove people - including senior people - who are destructive to collaboration and constructive progress.

The challenge of cabinet government institutional structures pulling along portfolio lines while the APS is trying to move to a more collaborative model.

That all the emphasis goes on frameworks process policy and systems. No matter how good they all are only people can drive change. So we need to make this about our people and behavioural change.

Need Secretaries Board to reflect whole of APS not just policy Departments

Investment in capability and talent continuing to be focussed on economists, lawyers and accountants and being surprised that we haven't got any new results...

We are not ambitious enough

How to get the incentives right to encourage collaboration

Only takes a couple of leaders who haven't bought into the change to stop the transformation

Getting ministers engaged is hard - most don't care about building capability in the APS, even ministers responsible for the APS.

That the cynics (25%) kill off the enthusiasm of the 75% who want to lead this and stay enthusiastic.

How to cope with collaboration across so many agencies

Need some core investment in key underlying enabling services across APS - not having this is holding us back with agility and flexibility

Implementation with right incentives and ways to measure

The momentum for change is hard to build and maintain

Commitment over political cycles and agendas

Our capacity and incentives for collaboration

This being usurped by other burning priorities

That people living in a newly empowered environment will not be supported when mistakes are made

How we can help the people see themselves in this significant change

Reaching common objectives

Need to have courage

Regardless of election outcome the government of the day being convinced there is something in this reform for them. It will be tricky to make it something they want for Australia

Not being ambitious enough for Australia's future

We need to develop a strong and simple narrative that will inspire our workforce

The pathology of the busy

Q2. What are you most concerned about?

Getting overwhelmed by complexity

Lack of alignment - a small number who don't believe in collaboration do a lot of damage to being a better APS

Identifying 'what binds us' to create our common and unified sense of purpose

Making this actually real for our leaders and staff

Importance of technology and the implementation and security risks. What is best practice globally?

Underinvestment in IT and in cyber defence threatens us fully benefiting from digital transformation

Aligning implementation into achievable initiatives that are understandable, actionable and won't take a 10 year time period

An erosion of standards and norms around the conduct of government

Collaboration should be for a purpose not lip service

Concern that we will only see success if 'everything' changes rather than realising each review helps us improve...as this one will if we prioritise specific changes.

Relationships With Ministers and the APS

I think there is scope for us to be more active in running the APS according to what we feel is most efficient and will enable us to drive delivery of the best service to Ministers and the Aust community.

Getting cut through and the focus needed collectively to drive this change amongst other high priorities

Trying to do much.

The appetite to make the changes required for true collaboration to be the default setting.

How will the silos of Ministers and some APS 200 allow (and encourage) true ideas and collaboration

The incentives for collaboration, both across agencies and even within agencies, won't be strong enough to enable change

That we don't make good enough use of narrative or story telling to know what we're trying to achieve at a higher level is what are the burning platform? We're too focussed on solving smaller issues

Decision making slowness and paralysis at the top of organisations and the service. If something is a good idea, we should just get on with it.

That it's not viscerally important to all leaders - to change that leaders who aren't on board and driving this need to be fired

That there will not be the authorising environment that will allow us to make the changes we see necessary

Overly focused on FEs and Budgeting.

Groupthink

We have not articulated what the problem is that we are trying to fix

Needs to be a shared approach across portfolios

Lack of capital

Q3. If there is one thing you can do to make a contribution to the future of the APS – what is it?

Don't take things personally...

Be and remain engaged

Take personal responsibility

Drive respectful collaboration.

Focus externally.

Learn new skills

Enable my team to remember that we are all working for the benefit of the community

Need to be more courageous

Identify the leaders of the future who engage with risk, believe in and are capable of working in a digitally driven, truly connected public service and empower them wherever possible

Identify and seek resources for a technology-enabled policy/regulatory/program solution to meet a GOVT initiative

Be positive.

Never blame anyone else. Ever.

Trust in our staff and empower them to also drive the change

Develop the HR capability of APS

Positive role modelling

Be open and learn from things that go wrong.

Help drive an APS vision

Encourage forward thinking...a view of the challenges Australia will have...rather than get bogged down in minutiae

Visibly be the change

Call out bad behaviour

Build the case, excitement and commitment for change and stay the course

Be an active participant in driving collaboration and hold myself and others to account for working in a WoG manner

Encourage mobility between agencies to ensure stagnation is refreshed by different backgrounded people

Continue to demonstrate that collaboration outside the APS creates better outcomes for the whole community.

Design and implement a new all of federal government architecture based on common business platforms aligned around excellence in the citizen experience

Demonstrate by example - with an IGB developed with stakeholders focused on substantive change for the country.

Q3. If there is one thing you can do to make a contribution to the future of the APS – what is it?

I can bring transformation to my own (medium sized) agency over the course of my term. Think global, act local.

Use experience and insight to contribute to new collaborative groups formed to advise the reformed Secretaries Board

help staff lift their gaze from today to tomorrow.

Create the space for SES and ELs to think hard about whether they really do see themselves as part of APS or just as part of our agency, and dig down to where we can collectively see our agency work as part of a much bigger whole.

Speak about the excellence in the APS we see every day, and reminding people constantly that we can improve...we do all the time, so let's do this.

Be bold in recruiting on a permanent basis non-APS talent with relevant skills.

Lead the change

Get better at change management

Prioritise transformation and make a committed, energetic and tangible investment in driving change

Collaborate collaborate collaborate.

Take responsibility and be accountable

Engage and encourage cynics and if cannot be convinced remove them

Be a transformational leader

Help staff at all levels to own and be active in the change process - sustain

it.

Be a visible, passionate advocate for change, make it my top priority as a leader

Collaborate with curiosity, trust and goodwill

Actually model the changed behaviour needed as well as identifying when it's occurring and using that as an example for others to build on

Explicitly raise the question of what the big problem we're trying to solve is and then lead a conversation about how we harness skills across the APS to solve it

Lead by example. Action not just words.

Believe in the APS and all the good for which we stand

Believe in it and act on it

Lead with courage- don't avoid the hard conversations

Ensure that collaboration across agencies becomes the norm

Don't accept the status quo - call out what needs to change

Be brave

Lead by example. Embrace the change.

Be committed to the change and lead through the hurdles to a reformed organisation

Inspire

Engage more with ELs

Q3. If there is one thing you can do to make a contribution to the future of the APS – what is it?

Help build the APS talent we need for the future

Encourage discussion and support innovation

Demonstrate accountability: set the tone

Collaborate collaborate collaborate -repeat

Be engaged. Talk about this to teams positively.

Engage my staff in the conversations.

Demonstrate enthusiasm and look for ways to make it work

Ensure my staff understand and buy in to the change

Drive cultural change

Take responsibility for change - don't wait

Investing in the next generation of leaders

Advocate for, model, and build in others, adaptive leadership

build the capacity to change in my organisation

Be courageous but respectful

Bring together the best and brightest that are passionate about what they do.

Lead by example the collaboration needed to address change

Be more ambitious for Australia

clear obstacles so change can happen

Focus more on forgiveness rather than permission

Align my team to the vision and bring them on the journey

Stay connected and participate.

Design and lead a cross-agency project that demonstrates the collaboration we need to solve complex problems

Drive the change

Challenge at every opportunity

Be courageous

Model behaviours we want to see

Demonstrate to the APS that collaborative engagement with citizens on policy and delivery works

Ensure my staff are fully engaged

Stay energetic and enthusiastic

Inspire and motivate our people to swing in behind the change.

Talk the talk, walk the walk.....

Drive a focus on people capability and strategic HR

Lead early wins working in a different way

Be the change

Keep an open mind...with a focus on what we can do, not why it won't work.

Lead a service-led transformation

Be a voice for change!

The APS in one word...

Participants were also asked to write on cards, one word to describe the APS now, and the APS of the future

Now



Future

