

# OFFICIAL PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL

## 2023 Employee Census Action Plan

The 2023 APS Employee Census occurred between during 8 May and 9 June 2023, with results made available in late July 2023. At the Senior Management Team's request, the People Committee analysed the results of the Census, and proposed action areas for SMT's consideration. The response rate from our people is high, with 83% of employees participating.

The results of the Census for OPC are very positive<sup>1</sup>.

- 92% of our results are similar to or higher than the APS overall result.
- We rank 6th out of 100 APS agencies on leadership - SES manager index
- We rank 6th on the communication index.
- We rank 7th on the well-being policies and support index
- We rank 16th on the employee engagement index.
- All of these rankings are above the APS overall result for each index.
- Conversely, we rank 52nd on the Enabling Innovation index, sitting just above the APS overall result.
- We rank 60th on the Immediate Supervisor index, just below the APS overall result.

The People Committee analysis of the Census data developed themes for both celebration and maintenance, as well for monitoring and action. The quotes in italics in the Action Plan outlined below are from the comments OPC people made in the free text fields of the Census.

Not surprisingly, these themes clearly align with the focus areas for the OPC Strategic Plan in 2023/24, which is also developed with input from our people.

The OPC Strategic Plan will incorporate the implementation of agreed activities to address the Action and Monitoring areas identified in this Action Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> See OPC Employee Census Highlights Report

# OFFICIAL

## CELEBRATION AND MAINTENANCE AREAS

### Agency goals

OPC people know why our jobs matter and believe we are achieving our goals. One of our highest results (93% positive) is that OPC is successful in meeting its goals and objectives. This result is consistently higher than the APS as a whole, and one we celebrate.

*“One thing OPC is doing really well is meeting its brief and providing a high quality service to the Parliament and the people.”*

### Leadership

OPC is supported by committed, capable leaders at all levels, and particularly at the top. Our leaders clearly articulate our direction and our priorities, create an environment that helps us deliver at our best, and promote cooperation. Our results for leadership are consistently higher than the APS as a whole across a range of measures.

*“The leadership (statutory office holders) in the office are all very strong, clear and committed, and work very well as a team.”*

### Diversity and inclusion

OPC has a great culture, and we have put significant effort in recent years to ensure that everyone is supported to bring their whole selves to work. It is working. 83% of our people believe we are committed to creating a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. Our results in this area have improved over the last three years and we are now achieving similar results to other APS agencies.

*“One thing OPC is doing really well is providing a safe and inclusive environment for all staff.”*

## ACTION AND MONITORING AREAS

### Technology, tools and processes

Our information technology is one of our pain points.

*“I think there are many ways we can improve our technology in order to become more effective and efficient at our jobs.”*

OPC is committed to modernising our technology to ensure we can meet and sustain industry best practice. Many of the features of our current information technology are bespoke, as this was necessary to support our drafting success. Today these platforms need to be updated to meet our enduring technology needs.

We will work to identify ways to modernise our information technology platforms without losing the efficiency advantages that our bespoke systems have given us.

### Change

Change is a constant, now more than ever we are all feeling the effects of change in all aspects of our lives. Working in a post pandemic environment does not mean we are going back to how it was before. It means we are moving and adapting to new ways of working, this is uncomfortable and time-consuming. Resisting change is natural and will continue until we reach alignment on how to perform and thrive in our new working world.

*“If I could change one thing about OPC, it would be openness to new ways of doing things”.*

We know that we need to keep updating our work practices, or risk becoming an out of date, unsustainable, and unattractive workplace. We will work to support our people to identify and adapt to more modern and sustainable ways of working.

### Workloads

We work hard. Our work is essential to Australia’s democracy and society. Our workloads, while similar to most other APS agencies, are a point of pain.

*“If I could change one thing about OPC, it would be supporting people who are so busy keeping up with deadlines.”*

While we have mechanisms in place to ensure our workloads are safe, outlined in the [Fatigue guidelines](#), we will continue to address this issue. We will consider what else can we do to manage our workloads to prevent exhaustion and ensure psychological safety.