

Part 2: Staffing of Agencies

Estimates of Average Staffing Levels of Agencies in the Australian General Government Sector

This Part reports on Average Staffing Levels (ASL) at the portfolio and agency level. Data is presented for two years – the Budget year (2025–26) and the preceding year (2024–25). The ASL reported is updated from the 2024–25 Budget.

Data for 2025–26 reported in Table 2.2 represent ASL estimates provided by general government sector (GGS) agencies. ASL figures reflect the average number of employees receiving salary or wages over the financial year, with adjustments for casual and part-time employees to show the full-time equivalent. It also includes uniformed employees and overseas personnel. The ASL figures exclude external labour. Any minor discrepancies in totals are due to rounding of partial ASL.

Data for 2024–25 reported in Table 2.2 represent the revised ASL estimate provided by GGS agencies. Caution should be taken when comparing these estimates with estimates from other years (in this Budget or previous budgets). Actual ASL outcomes realised by agencies can differ to estimates previously provided by agencies.

The staffing of agencies in 2024–25 and 2025–26

At the 2025–26 Budget across the GGS (excluding military and reserves):

- The ASL estimate for 2025–26 is 213,349.
- The revised ASL estimate for 2024–25 is 209,913 which is 763 above the estimated level (209,150) at the time of the 2024–25 Budget.

Changes in ASL estimates compared to the previous year largely reflect additional conversions of external labour to ASL positions, but also reflect the Government’s decisions since the 2024–25 Budget and the impact of agencies’ recruitment strategies and workforce planning decisions to manage staffing levels within their existing departmental appropriations.

Estimated ASL in 2025–26 reflects the Australian Government’s ongoing investments to resource the public sector to respond to demand for new and expanded government services, policy and regulatory responses. This includes resourcing for frontline service delivery through the National Disability Insurance Agency and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission. The Government has also invested in resourcing to secure our borders and protect Australians, including through the Department of Defence, Australian Submarine Agency, Australian Federal Police, and the Department of Home Affairs.

Measuring the size of the public service

In addition to the ASL estimates published each year in Budget Paper No. 4, the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) also publish estimates of the size of the public service. These data sources are complementary but not directly comparable.

- ASL reported in Budget Paper No. 4 is the annual average number of full-time equivalent employees who work in the General Government Sector (GGS). This measure includes: ongoing and non-ongoing employees; an adjustment for work hours per person; and the employees of agencies in the GGS but not those employed outside the *Public Service Act 1999*.
- In the twice-yearly APS Employment Data release, the APSC publishes headcounts of ongoing and non-ongoing employees, not adjusted for work hours per person, employed under the *Public Service Act 1999* as at 30 June or 31 December each year.
- In the annual Public Sector Employment and Earnings release, the ABS publishes the number of ongoing and non-ongoing employees, not adjusted for work hours per person, employed by the Australian Government. This includes Defence personnel and those employed outside the *Public Service Act 1999*, who are paid over one month, typically the month of June each year.

Reducing reliance on contractors, consultants and labour hire

Since the 2024–25 Budget, the Government has further reduced the Australian Public Service's (APS's) reliance on contractors, consultants and labour hire (collectively known as external labour). Consistent with the Government's election commitments and the *APS Strategic Commissioning Framework*, the Government has agreed additional conversions in 2025–26 of almost 3,000 roles previously undertaken by external labour to public service roles (see Table 2.1). This accounts for 87 per cent of the increase in ASL between the revised ASL estimate for 2024–25 and the ASL estimate for 2025–26.

This represents a further rebalancing of the APS workforce to reduce the reliance on external labour where the work can appropriately be done by APS staff. Since the 2022–23 October Budget, the Government has created over 11,800 public service roles to replace work previously undertaken through outsourced arrangements. This accounts for more than a quarter of the total increase to public service staffing levels since 2022–23.

Table 2.1: Estimates of additional conversions of external labour to ASL of agencies in the Australian Government General Government Sector

Portfolio	2025-26 ASL estimates reflecting conversions of external labour ^a	Total conversions of external labour to ASL from the 2022-23 October Budget
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	0	665
Attorney-General's	0	267
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	0	280
Defence	267	1,298
Education	0	30
Employment and Workplace Relations	0	264
Finance	37	143
Foreign Affairs	0	233
Health and Aged Care	50	770
Home Affairs	0	30
Industry, Science and Resources	0	74
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	29	142
Parliamentary Departments	0	0
Prime Minister and Cabinet	0	135
Social Services	2,603	7,458
Treasury	0	13
Total	2,986	11,802

a) This data is included in the updated estimates for 2025–26 ASL estimates in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Estimates of ASL of agencies in the Australian Government General Government Sector

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	6,171	6,373
Australian Fisheries Management Authority	177	179
Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority	195	195
Cotton Research and Development Corporation	21	21
Fisheries Research and Development Corporation	43	46
Grain Research and Development Corporation	130	130
Regional Investment Corporation	93	93
Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (trading as AgriFutures Australia)	81	86
Wine Australia	51	53
Total	6,963	7,175

Attorney-General's		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Attorney-General's Department	2,009	2,009
Administrative Review Tribunal ^a	927	993
Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission	842	879
Australian Federal Police	7,956	8,151
Australian Financial Security Authority	462	462
Australian Human Rights Commission	196	165
Australian Institute of Criminology	21	38
Australian Law Reform Commission	25	26
Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre	616	787
Federal Court of Australia	1,474	1,512
High Court of Australia	78	78
National Anti-Corruption Commission	225	266
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	140	140
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	179	176
Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman	304	334
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	517	526
Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security	50	80
Office of the Special Investigator	162	120
Total	16,184	16,723

a) The Administrative Review Tribunal was established as a non-corporate Commonwealth entity on 14 October 2024, replacing the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, which was abolished on the same date.

Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	4,731	4,589
Australian Institute of Marine Science	442	466
Australian Renewable Energy Agency	2	2
Bureau of Meteorology	1,824	1,802
Clean Energy Finance Corporation	175	190
Clean Energy Regulator	400	400
Climate Change Authority	65	65
Director of National Parks	431	452
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	272	272
Murray-Darling Basin Authority	382	354
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust	63	63
Total	8,787	8,654

Defence		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Defence – Civilian	19,237	19,863
Department of Defence – Military	58,850	59,373
Department of Defence – Reserves	21,540	21,690
Department of Veterans' Affairs	3,488	3,490
Australian Submarine Agency	665	883
Australian War Memorial	341	321
Defence Housing Australia	609	643
Total	104,730	106,263

Education		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Education	1,639	1,613
Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority	102	96
Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited	69	69
Australian Research Council	140	140
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency	110	109
Total	2,060	2,027

Employment and Workplace Relations		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations	4,167	4,085
Asbestos and Silica Safety and Eradication Agency	21	21
Australian Skills Quality Authority (National Vocational Education and Training Regulator)	226	252
Comcare	646	646
Fair Work Commission	417	417
Office of the Fair Work Ombudsman	970	997
Safe Work Australia	104	101
Total	6,551	6,519

Finance		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Finance	1,872	1,855
Australian Electoral Commission	971	1,039
Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation	528	558
Digital Transformation Agency	271	270
Future Fund Management Agency	342	350
Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority	65	52
Parliamentary Workplace Support Service	59	67
Total	4,108	4,192

Foreign Affairs and Trade		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	6,956	6,954
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research	90	90
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	1,160	1,128
Tourism Australia	207	207
Total	8,413	8,380

Health and Aged Care		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Health and Aged Care	6,967	6,726
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission	1,598	1,918
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	143	153
Australian Digital Health Agency	561	524
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	560	561
Australian National Preventive Health Agency	0	0
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency	178	178
Australian Sports Commission	527	529
Australian Sports Foundation Limited	23	23
Cancer Australia	79	75
Food Standards Australia New Zealand	120	121
Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority	1	1
National Blood Authority	75	75
National Health Funding Body	28	28
National Health and Medical Research Council	205	205
Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care	22	22
Organ and Tissue Authority	30	30
Professional Services Review	40	40
Sport Integrity Australia	178	178
Total	11,334	11,386

Home Affairs		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Home Affairs	15,245	15,354
National Emergency Management Agency	425	425
Total	15,670	15,779

Industry, Science and Resources		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Industry, Science and Resources	3,380	3,323
Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation	1,493	1,479
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	5,945	5,495
Geoscience Australia	751	757
IP Australia	1,100	1,100
National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority	183	195
National Reconstruction Fund Corporation	58	81
Total	12,909	12,431

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	2,325	2,278
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	4,413	4,413
Australian Communications and Media Authority	665	696
Australian Film, Television and Radio School	159	160
Australian Maritime Safety Authority	490	492
Australian National Maritime Museum	141	141
Australian Transport Safety Bureau	110	110
Bundanon Trust	50	50
Civil Aviation Safety Authority	832	832
Creative Australia	151	159
High Speed Rail Authority	28	28
Infrastructure Australia	39	41
National Archives of Australia	376	361
National Capital Authority	66	68
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia	250	231
National Gallery of Australia	217	217
National Library of Australia	419	413
National Museum of Australia	222	216
National Portrait Gallery of Australia	55	55
National Transport Commission	44	44
Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility	1	1
Old Parliament House	121	101
Screen Australia	105	105
Special Broadcasting Service Corporation	1,369	1,369
Total	12,648	12,580

Parliamentary Departments		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Parliamentary Services	1,010	1,017
Department of the House of Representatives	162	179
Department of the Senate	180	179
Parliamentary Budget Office	48	44
Total	1,400	1,419

Prime Minister and Cabinet		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet	1,247	1,102
Aboriginal Hostels Limited	369	375
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	194	194
Australian National Audit Office	410	423
Australian Public Service Commission	388	336
Indigenous Business Australia	235	237
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation	167	167
National Australia Day Council Limited	14	14
National Indigenous Australians Agency	1,413	1,520
Net Zero Economy Authority ^a	60	158
Northern Territory Aboriginal Investment Corporation	37	37
Office of National Intelligence	395	437
Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General	87	96
Outback Stores Pty Ltd	179	183
Torres Strait Regional Authority	169	169
Workplace Gender Equality Agency	59	58
Total	5,423	5,506

a) The Net Zero Economy Authority was established as a non-corporate Commonwealth entity on 11 December 2024.

Social Services		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of Social Services	2,918	2,905
Australian Institute of Family Studies	102	98
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission	18	22
National Disability Insurance Agency	8,856	10,022
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	911	892
National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People ^a	3	10
Services Australia	30,218	29,612
Total	43,026	43,561

a) The National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People was established as a non-corporate Commonwealth entity on 13 January 2025.

Treasury		
	2024-25 ASL	2025-26 ASL
Department of the Treasury	1,601	1,475
Australian Bureau of Statistics	3,163	3,482
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	1,752	1,608
Australian Office of Financial Management	52	51
Australian Prudential Regulation Authority	893	907
Australian Securities and Investments Commission	2,188	2,555
Australian Taxation Office	19,705	20,994
Commonwealth Grants Commission	34	34
Housing Australia	197	208
Inspector-General of Taxation	35	35
National Competition Council	1	1
Office of the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board	13	12
Office of the Australian Accounting Standards Board	39	32
Productivity Commission	187	187
Royal Australian Mint	239	239
Total	30,099	31,819

Note: The ASL for the Australian Secret Intelligence Service, Australian Security Intelligence Organisation and Australian Signals Directorate have not previously been included in ASL collections for national security reasons, and therefore are not included in the tables.

Historical Estimates of Average Staffing Levels of Agencies in the Australian General Government Sector

Table 2.3: Estimates^(a) of the total ASL in the General Government Sector

	ASL excluding military and reserves	Military and reserves	Total ASL
2006-07	167,596	71,026	238,622
2007-08	175,531	72,686	248,217
2008-09	175,422	75,144	250,566
2009-10	178,970	79,351	258,321
2010-11	181,018	80,873	261,891
2011-12	182,505	79,132	261,637
2012-13	179,953	76,678	256,631
2013-14	177,258	76,595	253,853
2014-15	166,261	76,874	243,135
2015-16	165,648	77,399	243,047
2016-17	166,181	78,314	244,495
2017-18	165,276	78,497	243,773
2018-19	165,491	78,815	244,306
2019-20	166,762	80,540	247,302
2020-21	168,912	81,671	250,583
2021-22	171,938	81,074	253,012
2022-23	181,062	79,903	260,965
2023-24	197,108	79,632	276,740
2024-25	209,913	80,390	290,303
2025-26	213,349	81,063	294,412

a) To provide continuity with previous years, ASL estimates are revised ASL estimates published in the following Budget year, except for 2025–26 which is the ASL estimate.