



- Flags
- One, two, three
- Going places
- Protests
- Rodent reduce
- Maatsuyker ish
- Mapping Kaka
- Medical Mothe
- 'Come to col
- Passports
- What do you t
- Operation A j
- Animals
- Banned for 'ob
- Colours
- Faces
- Flags
- One, two, thre

Capability Review Action Plan

National Archives of Australia acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to the people, their cultures and Elders past, present and emerging.

© Commonwealth of Australia (National Archives of Australia) 2024

This product, excluding the National Archives of Australia logo, Commonwealth Coat of Arms and any material owned by a third party or protected by a trademark, has been released under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence (CC BY 4.0). Excluded material owned by third parties may include, for example, design, layout and images obtained under licence from third parties and signatures. The National Archives of Australia has made all reasonable efforts to identify and label material owned by third parties.

You may distribute, remix and build on this work. However, you must attribute National Archives of Australia as the copyright holder of the work in compliance with its attribution policy available at naa.gov.au/copyright. The full terms and conditions of this licence are available at creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0. Inquiries relating to copyright should be emailed to copyright@naa.gov.au.

Published by National Archives of Australia

(02) 6212 3600 \ archives@naa.gov.au \ naa.gov.au

Front cover image: Visitors exploring the digital wall in the Connections / Mura gadi exhibition at National Archives of Australia in Canberra



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia

Director-General's Foreword



During my first year as Director-General, I chose to self-initiate a Capability Review of National Archives (Capability Review). The Capability Review was undertaken by independent reviewers, as part of the Australian Public Service Commission's Capability Review Program.

Today, I am pleased to present this Capability Review Action Plan for National Archives of Australia (National Archives).

National Archives, in its various forms, has been the sole authority for Commonwealth records for over 70 years and was established under the *Archives Act 1983* (Archives Act). Today, we are operating in a complex environment of reduced trust in government, rapid technological advancement and declines in social cohesion. It is critical that we continue to uphold our role in strengthening trust in democracy and improving government transparency by making the evidence of government activity and decisions readily accessible to the Australian people.

We do this by:

- leading and setting information management standards in the Commonwealth and supporting Australian Government agencies to create and keep records of government activities
- preserving the most significant records of the Australian Government and authorising disposal of records with no ongoing value to government or community
- making the national archival collection accessible to the public, to enrich and inform Australians of who they are today and into the future.

National Archives has long been a leader in the archival sector, evidenced by our strong national and international reputation. Like all archives globally, we are witnessing a shift from traditional paper-based records to vast digital collections. This requires a fundamental reimagining of how we fulfil our remit and maintain relevance as we aim to provide a digital first archival experience to facilitate access to the ever-growing record of the Commonwealth.

Director-General's Foreword

Enhancing strong archival capability is essential to the success of the sectors within which we operate. Through our deep technical capabilities, including the capabilities of our conservators and reference archivists, we continue to deliver every day through our services for researchers and the community, and our school programs.

Since the review was initiated, we have worked hard to improve what we do, how we do it and to develop the capability we need for the future. Today, our governance is firmly supported by evidence-based decision-making, our internal and external collaboration has been further enhanced, and our finance and ICT management have been reshaped.

Importantly, we have also engaged across the organisation to develop detailed actions addressing the findings of the Capability Review. This active engagement with staff will continue as we assess our performance over time through reporting on our Corporate Plan and through our annual APS Employee Census.

The findings of this Capability Review have enabled us to identify our key challenges, allowing us to establish a set of practical actions which contribute to existing efforts to improve our capability.

We will continue to align our programs of work to the 5 pillars of the National Cultural Policy – *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*. Importantly, in line with Pillar 1 of *Revive*, National Archives will continue to adopt a 'First Nations First' approach as we acknowledge the important role that archival documents can play in redress and truth telling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We remain committed to 2-way engagement and active consultation with communities.

The commitment under *Revive* to modernise the *Archives Act 1983* also remains a significant focus. This commitment ensures we can manage the national archival collection in a way that reflects the digital age.

The actions we've identified in response to the Capability Review focus on 2 themes: *what we achieve* and *how we operate*. I am pleased to report that our 2024 APS Employee Census results have confirmed the actions we're pursuing are already having a positive impact.

The findings of this Capability Review have enabled us to identify our key challenges, allowing us to establish a set of practical actions which contribute to existing efforts to improve our capability. I am confident that our Action Plan will enhance our ability to meet the needs of government, serve the Australian public and preserve our history for generations to come.

I thank the Review team for their frank assessment. I also thank the many National Archives staff who have contributed their time and input to developing our Action Plan.

Simon Froude
Director-General
National Archives of Australia

16 October 2024

Response themes and actions

THEMES

In response to the Capability Review, we have identified two overarching themes to drive action. Each theme has high-level actions that outline detailed activity taking place across National Archives. Our achievements will be supported by our Corporate Plan 2024-25 and our agency strategy. We will report on these themes in future annual reports with evidence provided by staff through the APS Employee Census.

Our two overarching themes are:

1. What we achieve



2. How we operate



Image: National Archives staff at the 2024 opening of the new National Archives Northern Territory Office.

ACTIONS

The high-level actions and focus for each theme are:

1. What we achieve

We continue to bring value to government and the community by:

- building partnerships and engagement within the public sector and across the Australian community including through an integrated agency engagement program to assist and improve government information capability and maturity
- delivering on our role in government accountability and integrity through refining our resource *Six actions to manage information with integrity* which is a straightforward guide for Australian public servants to help build trust in government through information management.

We meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by:

- contributing to truth telling including by enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to find information about themselves, their Country and their history through the Bringing Them Home Name Index, which is increasingly used for redress and reparation requests
- developing MOUs with Link-Up organisations, Aboriginal Land Councils and key state government organisations to increase access to records no matter where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are located
- improving our cultural capability and staff awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples perspectives to support engagement
- prioritising preservation and access for at-risk records relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- designing our new Northern Territory Office with a culturally appropriate space to access records and working spaces suitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Response themes and actions

We lead in digital archiving by:

- building the digital literacy and digital capability of our people through a digital archiving staff enrichment program, including the Digital Archiving Community of Practice
- ensuring our technology and systems support the digital world within which we operate today and into the future by collaborating with national and international projects and partners such as the Digital Preservation Coalition and the Aus-EaaSI project
- collaborating with Charles Sturt University to develop a graduate certificate focused on digital archiving, to help cultivate digital archivists of the future.



2. How we operate



We live the APS Values by:

- placing equal focus on what we achieve and how we achieve including embedding our new values of Inclusion, Collaboration and Innovation, launched in July 2023, into every aspect of how we work
- guiding and assisting departments and agencies to meet their archival obligations through the annual Check-up survey which provides agencies with an understanding of their maturity levels against the *Building trust in the public record* policy.

We enhance our governance and decision-making by:

- embedding an evidence-based approach to policy and practice including through establishment of an Enterprise Portfolio Management Office to centrally coordinate transformation programs
- continuing our transformation journey through a mid-strategy review of *Strategy 2030*, setting a clear strategic direction over the next 5-year horizon.

We deliver with the user in mind by:

- embedding human centred design into our project methodologies and uplifting staff capabilities through targeted training programs
- ensuring national access to the collection through a national footprint with offices in every state and territory, and through online and offsite programs and services.

We drive innovation by:

- sharing and enhancing our innovation experiences through transformation projects and valued strategic partnerships across the sectors we operate in
- fostering innovation at all levels through 'Our Values', which includes Innovation as a core behaviour that underpins how we interact with each other, the public and our stakeholders.



Australian Government

National Archives of Australia