



Australian Government

Comcare

COMCARE CAPABILITY REVIEW RESPONSE

July 2024





Chief Executive Officer response

Our jurisdiction is undergoing a significant shift in the way it supports safe and healthy workplaces.

Organisations look to Comcare for assistance with addressing the growing emphasis on psychosocial safety and mental health, as well as good compliance with legislation.

Over the next 4 years, Comcare will play a key role in supporting our jurisdiction by focusing on 2 strategic priorities:

1. Prevent work-related injuries
2. Deliver better return to work outcomes

The Self-initiated Capability Review (Capability Review) presented to me in December 2023 was the catalyst for numerous engaging conversations across our Executive leadership and workforce to refresh our strategic priorities and aspirations to meet these emerging challenges.

This Capability Review and the work that followed highlights that we must respond to the issues of today while adapting in preparedness for the future. This important work relies on focused and prioritised effort across Comcare.

Our response to the Capability Review is focused on what we can do today – and over the next 4 years – to make a real impact in preventing workplace injuries and delivering better return to work outcomes.

The new Comcare Strategy 2024–2028 has been developed to ensure we are getting the most value from the effort we invest. It is about building on the important work we are already doing, and continuing to evolve our services with our clients' needs at the centre of what we do and how we act.

This response to the Capability Review and the 5 areas for capability improvement highlight how Comcare is committed to strengthening organisational capability to position us to deliver against our aspirations.

I look forward to leading Comcare as we work with government and our stakeholders to promote and enable safe and healthy work, now and for the future.

Greg Vines
Chief Executive Officer
Comcare



Acknowledgement of country

Comcare 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, the cultures and the elders past and present.

Healing Hands
by Dion Devow of DDesigns

Recommendations against the Capability Review Framework

Leadership and culture

Leadership and governance

1.

Review Executive structures to ensure it is appropriately structured, capable and resourced effectively to achieve organisational outcomes.

2.

Review of governance arrangements following review of Executive structure to achieve greater clarity, limit the number of duplicative efforts and ensure decision making is at the correct level.

Collaboration

Internal collaboration

3.

Assess systems in place across the agency to ensure staff and leaders have regular opportunity to connect outside their group and gain deeper understanding of the business.

Delivery

Implementation

4.

Consider increasing inhouse capability to support efficient and effective delivery, including human centred design and change management capability.

Workforce

Strategic workforce planning

5.

Accelerate work on the People Strategy and strategic workforce planning with particular attention to alleviate the pressure from recruitment and stabilising critical roles.

Enabling functions

Financial management

6.

In addition to the work to uplift the financial planning capability, consider opening discussions with the portfolio Department on options for funding in regards reinvestment, outside cost recovery.

Capability: Leadership and culture

Element: Leadership and governance

Recommendation 1

Review Executive structures to ensure it is appropriately structured, capable and reoccurred effectively to achieve organisational outcomes.

Recommendation 2

Review governance arrangements following review of Executive structure to achieve greater clarity, limit the number of duplicative efforts and ensure decision making is at the correct level.

Our focus

To deliver on the Comcare Strategy, the Executive team requires the capacity, capability and support to lead their people, fulfill their critical roles, and deliver on its aspirations.


A Comcare Strategy Office positioned alongside major enterprise projects like the Service Transformation and Enablement Program (STEP), and led by a dedicated Executive will contribute to Comcare’s ability to effectively and efficiently deliver on its priorities.

The Comcare Strategy Office will drive the delivery of the Strategic Roadmap, and in doing so, will contribute to a better-balanced set of responsibilities across the executive team.

In terms of governance, a Strategy Forum is being established as a supplement to the Executive Committee fortnightly cadence.

To streamline decision-making, in the future a further review or redesign of the Executive structure will be undertaken in the second half of this year, alongside adjustments to supporting committees and working groups.

Action through our strategy

Strategic priority	Workstream	Scope summary	Contributing initiatives on our roadmap
 <p>Uplift leadership, effectiveness and efficiency</p>	Uplift Comcare leadership	Effective leadership will be a key enabler to deliver the strategic priorities. This work will continue to strengthen leadership capabilities at all levels, with consideration to collaboration, strategic alignment, effective decision-making and a talent development program.	<p>Uplift and embed leadership and talent development program.</p> <p>Establish baseline for new leadership, effectiveness and efficiency performance measures.</p>
	Optimise Comcare structure, governance and operating model	Optimise Comcare’s structure so that it can better deliver on its core functions as well as its strategic priorities. This includes establishing the Comcare Strategy Office, enhancing and streamlining governance arrangements and making operational improvements to support compliance to emerging obligations.	<p>Implement enhancements to Comcare structure and governance.</p> <p>Develop fraud and corruption framework.</p> <p>Establish and embed Comcare Strategy Office.</p> <p>Implement information management operational approaches in line with Archives Act.</p> <p>Embed fraud and corruption framework into operations.</p> <p>Improve procurement and contract framework.</p>

Capability: Collaboration

Element: Internal collaboration

Recommendation 3


Assess systems in place across the agency to ensure staff and leaders have regular opportunity to connect outside their group and gain deeper understanding of the business.


Our focus

The Comcare Strategy Office will drive and coordinate the realisation of the strategic priorities, while at the same time support and enable initiatives across Comcare and encourage new ways of working and collaboration.

New ways of working across Comcare will be instigated through co-design, regular showcases and the establishment of multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs), a strong enabler for increased collaboration.

Action through our strategy

Strategic priority	Workstream	Scope summary	Contributing initiatives on our roadmap
 <p>Prevent work-related injuries</p>	Develop new Prevention Strategy	<p>Create a whole-of-Comcare prevention strategy that will define the key initiatives that Comcare will undertake up until 2028, with a particular focus on psychological injury prevention. The following should be considered as part of the scope of this work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The foundations of Comcare’s prevention-led operating model (roles of different business groups). > The ‘business case’ for prevention (strategic narrative regarding the benefits for investing in injury prevention). 	<p>Evaluate and close out 2022–2025 Prevention Strategy.</p> <p>Develop Prevention Strategy.</p>

Strategic priority	Workstream	Scope summary	Contributing initiatives on our roadmap
 <p>Deliver better return to work outcomes</p>	Develop new Return to Work Strategy	<p>Develop a strategy for how Comcare will improve return to work outcomes. The resulting document will detail the activities and the roles that each business group need to undertake. Through discovery, the strategy should explore the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Publishing transparent return to work outcomes. > Positioning Comcare as a rehabilitation authority. > Exploring the feasibility of a return to work inspectorate. > Insights on what employers need. > Best practices from licensees. > Initial definition of service offers to agencies. 	<p>Develop whole of Comcare Return to Work Strategy.</p>

Capability: Delivery

Element: Implementation

Recommendation 4

Consider increasing inhouse capability to support efficient and effective delivery, including human centred design and change management capability.


Our focus

The Comcare Strategy Office will include dedicated capability for service design (including human centred design) and change management.

The service design function will embed existing good practice methodologies and help drive service design capability across Comcare, enabling different parts of the business to incorporate customer experience and co-design as well as providing targeted support to key initiatives. Comcare recognises that a service design delivery capability will be necessary as part of STEP.

The change management function will implement a framework for enterprise change management and provide centralised change management expertise.

Action through our strategy

Strategic priority	Workstream	Scope summary	Contributing initiatives on our roadmap
 <p>Delivering client-centric services</p>	Improve complaints resolution	Through an insights-led approach, this work includes the design and implementation of improvements to complaints resolution with the goal of limiting the risk of appeals and psychosocial impacts to Comcare employees and claimants. This workstream should also consider how feedback via complaints can be leveraged to inform service delivery improvements.	<p>Develop and implement complaints resolution and insights approach.</p> <p>Map complaints to service blueprint.</p>
	Optimise content and channel performance	Create more accessible client insights that can drive service improvements by enhancing and implementing standards, governance and reporting for all Comcare channels.	<p>Develop and implement external content modernisation framework.</p> <p>Establish baseline for new Client-centric services performance measures.</p> <p>Establish channel ownership, governance and reporting.</p>
	Establish Comcare's service design capability	As part of the Comcare Strategy Office incrementally establish and mature enterprise service design capabilities that will ultimately support delivery of the Comcare Strategy and Strategic Roadmaps. This includes strategically piloting service design approaches on key initiatives to demonstrate the benefits of this approach.	<p>Establish service design 'service offer' and 'ways of working'.</p> <p>Pilot Service design approaches in priority initiatives (including MDTs).</p> <p>Enhance and embed service design capability (i.e. Communities of practice, service design L&D, targeted project support).</p> <p>Create panel to access people with lived experience (claims).</p>

Capability: Workforce

Element: Strategic workforce planning


Recommendation 5

Accelerate work on the People Strategy and strategic workforce planning with particular attention to alleviate the pressure from recruitment and stabilising critical roles.

Our focus

Delivery of the People Strategy is identified as one of the key initiatives on the Comcare Strategic Roadmap. The initiative to 'enhance workforce planning and organisational design capability' also feature, reflecting the importance of this work to uplifting Comcare's capabilities.

Action through our strategy

Strategic priority	Workstream	Scope summary	Contributing initiatives on our roadmap
 <p>Uplifting leadership, effectiveness and efficiency</p>	Deliver the People Strategy	Deliver priorities in the People Strategy in line with 4 priority areas of agility, capability, wellbeing and stewardship. This workstream contains a number of different initiatives that will ultimately improve Comcare's ability to strategically manage its workforce and support staff through services and wellbeing initiatives.	<p>Deliver on priorities outlined in the people strategy in line with four priority areas of agility, capability, wellbeing and stewardship.</p> <p>Enhance our workforce planning and organisational design capability.</p> <p>Enhance our psychosocial safety approach and capability.</p> <p>Develop internal case management system.</p>

Capability: Enabling functions

Element: Financial management

Recommendation 6


In addition to the work to uplift the financial planning capability, consider opening discussions with the portfolio Department on options for funding in regards reinvestment, outside cost recovery.

Our focus

Various initiatives have been prioritised on the Comcare Strategic Roadmap, that will strengthen Comcare’s financial foundations. These include:

- > optimise premium settings to drive improved outcomes
- > review and implement cost recovery framework recommendations
- > improve funding options for transformative strategic projects.

Action through our strategy

Strategic priority	Workstream	Scope summary	Contributing initiatives
 <p>Uplifting leadership, effectiveness and efficiency</p>	<p>Review and implement cost recovery framework recommendations</p>	<p>Review and implement the recommendations from the Cost Recovery Review. This will include considerations relating to enhanced governance, methodology, cost recovery workbook and compliance to Australian Government Cost Recovery Policy.</p>	<p>Implement cost recovery improvements, including benchmarking for administrative cost ratio.</p>
	<p>Improve funding options for projects</p>	<p>Explore options to improve funding arrangements, with the objective of supporting the financial sustainability of Comcare. This will require analysis on funding opportunities, improvements to project funding processes and, potentially, Executive engagement with Government where external funding sources are sought.</p>	<p>Uplift strategic financing and budgeting capability. Enhance initiative scoping and costing capability.</p>



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COMCARE STRATEGY 2024-2028 SUMMARY

Our Purpose – Promote and enable safe and healthy work

Key activity

Aspiration

Strategic Roadmap Focus Areas

Our strategic priorities



Prevent work-related injuries

Be a leader in prevention of psychological injuries in particular, and increase our influence, appropriately sharing insights to more effectively drive positive change with employers and employees.

We are a national leader in prevention of psychological injuries and illness, actively sharing learnings and resources that can be applied by workplaces and used by other regulators. We influence policy and seamlessly collaborate to unify and promote our prevention approach.

- Optimise regulatory and safe work approaches.
- Enable employers to prevent work-related injuries.
- Improve prevention through insights, innovation and influence.



Deliver better return to work outcomes

Improve return to work outcomes focusing on psychological injuries, influencing and collaborating to deliver support and interventions that better meet the recovery needs of employees.

We partner with our stakeholders to provide leading return to work guidance and services, significantly improving return to work outcomes for employees.

- Improve the claims experience and operations.
- Enable employers to improve return to work outcomes.
- Improve return to work outcomes through insights, innovation and influence.

Are enabled by



Making data-driven decisions

Uplift technological capabilities to enable easy access to meaningful insights from data that support both strategic decisions and day-to-day operations, and **transparent and consistent engagement.**

We are a data-led organisation, appropriately leveraging technology and AI to derive and apply insights in our strategy setting and day-to-day operations. Our technology is accessible, building the client experience through the capacity for self-service.

- Generate insights through data and analytics.
- Improve data infrastructure and technology.
- Build internal capability and innovate.



Uplifting leadership, effectiveness and efficiency

Reinforce the organisation's purpose, with impact through empowered leadership and decision making at all levels. Optimise our governance, performance, funding and resource allocation models.

We have strong alignment on our purpose and take individual ownership to lead and make informed decisions. We have clear governance with responsive quality assurance and a forward plan of the resourcing required to deliver on our priorities.

- Improve leadership and governance effectiveness.
- Enhance our people experience.
- Strengthen funding and cost-recovery arrangements.
- Enhance foundational ICT.



Delivering client-centric services

Uplift our organisational capability to co-design and deliver services that anticipate and meet client needs and adapt to changing circumstances.

We use feedback and insights about clients' preferences to shape our strategy and embed positive connections. We co-design accessible services to provide clients with a personalised experience that is continuously improved.

- Improve services through client insight.
- Deliver platforms for the future.
- Develop and embed service design approach.

Through



Earning and strengthening trust internally and with our stakeholders

Earning an strengthening trust and upholding our values to act with integrity and respect, strive to have a positive impact, and collaborate and innovate, are foundational to the way we work.

