



▼ I WORK FOR SA

YOUR VOICE SURVEY

SECTOR ACTION PLAN FOR 2022



**Government of
South Australia**

INTRODUCTION

To deliver on the SA public sector's purpose of Making a Difference so South Australia Thrives, we need our workforce to feel engaged and empowered.

The I Work for SA survey is one of the most useful tools at our disposal to measure whether our people feel engaged and supported to do their best work, and to understand how this can be maximised across the sector.

The second I Work for SA – Your Voice Survey ran from 27 April to 4 June 2021. All employees working for the SA public sector, including statutory bodies and state-owned corporations, were invited to participate.

A record number of employees responded to the 2021 survey, with 36 per cent providing their feedback – 15,347 more employees than in 2018.

The results showed there's a lot to be optimistic about as a sector. We have mostly either maintained or improved on our 2018 survey results, with pleasing improvements in leadership, performance management and employee wellbeing.

A review of the 2018 action plan noted that all action areas recorded improvement in 2021.

This sector-level action plan has been developed in response to the 2021 survey results and aims to increase employee engagement, complimenting local agency action plans.

The actions will be delivered throughout 2022 and have been selected for maximum impact across the sector. The initial focus will be on the following three key areas:

- Leadership
- Wellbeing
- Culture

Once these actions have been implemented, our focus will turn to:

- Building empowering workplaces
- Enhancing career development and pathways

The next I Work for SA – Your Voice survey is intended to run in late 2022, which will be our opportunity to measure the impact of the sector's actions.



RESPONSE RATE

2021

36%

= 39,688 employees

2018

22%

↑ 15,347

more people
completed the survey

2021 SURVEY RESULTS – HIGHLIGHTS

Here is a snapshot of the 2021 survey highlights.



HIGHEST SCORING QUESTIONS

- 88%** understood what is expected of them to do well in their role
- 86%** understood how their work contributes to agency objectives
- 85%** were happy to go the 'extra mile' at work when required



COVID-19 RESPONSE

- 71%** felt well-supported with resourcing and arrangements to keep them safe
- 70%** felt their manager cared about their wellbeing
- 72%** believed managers provided sufficient direction about priorities
- 75%** said their workgroup went the extra mile to support each other



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

SECTOR LEVEL

29% ↓ 8
witnessed

17% ↓ 4
experienced

Focus at the agency-level must continue to further reduce these numbers.



AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

SECTOR LEVEL

- 48%** agreed they feel safe to speak up and challenge how things are done
- 51%** agreed work processes allow them to be as productive as possible

AGENCY LEVEL

- 44%** agreed senior managers effectively lead and manage change
- 45%** agreed that recruitment and promotion decisions are fair



2018 SURVEY ACTIONS

All action areas resulting from the 2018 survey have recorded improvement including:

- Leadership
- Performance management
- Bullying and harassment
- Employee wellbeing

2021 SURVEY RESULTS – HIGHLIGHTS

Our results showed overwhelmingly positive responses about our sector's COVID-19 response, including the way employee health and wellbeing was prioritised.

Even though the pandemic continues to add complexity and uncertainty to our work, these findings are a testament to the sector's ongoing resilience.

Especially encouraging were the responses about bullying and harassment. Even though we heard from more employees than ever, we reported a decrease in both the witnessing and experiencing of these types of incidents – down eight percentage points and four percentage points, respectively. This shows that the actions from the last survey, such as the Mentally Healthy Workplaces Toolkit and peer support program have helped move us in the right direction.

Our sector's action plan will continue to provide tools and frameworks to support wellbeing for all employees in every agency.

While it's appropriate to celebrate positive results, it should not be at the expense of the hard work that is still needed to further improve the employee experience within our sector. Although bullying and harassment have decreased, the fact that instances are still occurring means we can do better. Of similar concern, only 48 per cent of respondents feel safe to speak up and challenge how things are done.

At the agency level, our managers' skills and capability need sustained investment to increase inclusivity, invite challenge, effectively lead change and support more effective recruitment processes and outcomes.

Continuous improvement is critical to our ongoing success, and this action plan leverages the opportunities that offer the greatest impact. By delivering consistent frameworks, training and resources for all agencies to use, leaders and employees will be clearer on our sector's expectations and our path to positive change. This will be best achieved when the sector's action plan is considered alongside an agency's response to its local survey results.

ACTION PLAN AT A GLANCE

YOU TOLD US WE NEED TO FOCUS ON...

LEADERSHIP

SO WE'RE TAKING ACTION BY...



Implementing a new framework for all SA public sector leaders which defines what good leadership looks like.

Setting clearly defined leadership standards to attract, promote and develop the right people and hold them to account.



Launching new short courses from March 2022, designed for quick and lasting impact. These courses will equip leaders to coach employees to do their best work, successfully manage hybrid working, respond to rapid change, prioritise customers, nurture wellbeing, and promote inclusivity.

Adapting the South Australian Leadership Academy's core programs to meet the changing needs of the sector.



Our leaders are empowered to set and give clear direction and are skilled in guiding employees through change.

WELLBEING



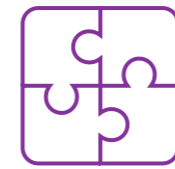
Establishing an advisory service in partnership with Wellbeing SA so agencies can seek specialised intervention when requiring extra support to create thriving workplaces.

Piloting a leading online mental health awareness tool for employees and managers, with 24/7 access to resources and training.



Expanding the successful Mentally Healthy Workplaces initiative to incorporate all aspects of wellbeing, including specific support for frontline workers.

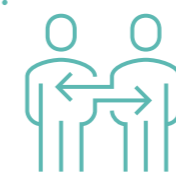
Introducing custom wellbeing resources and training programs in targeted areas such as bullying and harassment, and mental health awareness.



Embedding all new initiatives to nurture wellbeing into the sector's leadership induction processes and professional development programs.

You have more support and resources to manage and nurture your wellbeing, with a tailored approach for employees in frontline roles.

CULTURE



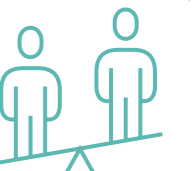
Launching a simplified Integrity Framework before June 2022 to define the expectations of all employees, including leaders, on the values and behaviours required to appropriately serve the SA community.

Improving the experience, representation and inclusion of all employees through a new sector-wide Inclusion Strategy, with a particular focus on employees living with a disability.



Setting the standard for effective and transparent recruitment practices through better tools and resources.

Training employees who take part in the sector's recruitment and talent management, so standards are aligned to best practice, consistently upheld and applied.



Government of South Australia

Our sector is respectful and inclusive, and this culture begins with fair and transparent recruitment processes.

LEADERSHIP

Key survey results

.....
44% feel that senior managers effectively lead and manage change
.....

.....
45% feel that senior managers keep employees informed about what's going on
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.....
45% feel senior managers in their agency actively engage with employees
.....

.....
47% believe senior managers provide clear direction for the future of the agency
.....

More than half of our sector's agencies nominated leadership as a key area of need, and this was confirmed in the survey results. Leadership questions attracted lower scores, particularly in terms of setting direction, communication, change management and visibility.

While the area of leadership achieved a two-percentage point increase from 2018's results, it was also the lowest scoring focus area at the sector level.

To achieve an engaged and high-performing workforce, leaders must be strong and effective. They must also provide clarity about the future and navigate their teams through change.

We want to improve the confidence of our leaders to do this well by providing development and support that strengthens their leadership capability and skills. By improving the consistency of how leadership is applied across the sector, it will positively improve the overall employee experience, enabling employees to do their best work.

Where we are heading...

Our leaders are empowered to set and give clear direction and are skilled in guiding employees through change.

Deliverables



Leadership Series
Q1, 2022

New short courses designed for quick wins will upskill employees on current sector challenges such as managing hybrid teams, responding to rapid change, and how to prioritise customers.



New Core Leadership Programs
Q3, 2022

The South Australian Leadership Academy's existing program will be adapted to deliver dynamic content that equips leaders with the necessary skills to succeed in increasingly complex roles.



Simplified Leadership Framework
Q4, 2022

By defining what good looks like, this framework will set the standards for existing and aspiring leaders of our sector.

WELLBEING

Key survey results

.....
54% think their agency cares about their health and wellbeing
.....

55% believe they are able to strike the right balance between their work and home life
.....

60% believe their workgroup has the tools and resources to perform well
.....

61% are satisfied with the policies and practices in place to help them manage their health and wellbeing
.....

74% believe they are provided with the tools and equipment to do their job safely
.....

More than half of the sector's agencies indicated employee wellbeing was a high priority and critical to their success. Employees who are supported to nurture their wellbeing are more likely to be engaged, motivated and feel safe at work.

Wellbeing was significantly impacted for employees who had experienced harassment or bullying, or both. (37% compared to 68%). The wellbeing scores were also lower for frontline service delivery staff, who make up a significant proportion of our public sector (57% compared to 61% overall).

A manager's skills and awareness in promoting positive wellbeing had the biggest impact on an employee's ability to thrive at work, which is why this area requires an all-of-sector focus.

To thrive at work, employees must be resilient, adaptive to change, and able to juggle the constant shifts in work and personal lives. We are committed to creating an encouraging environment and providing practical tools which will help employees overcome challenges and empower confidence to speak up when concerned.

Where we are heading...

You have more support and resources to manage and nurture your wellbeing, with a tailored approach for employees in frontline roles.

Deliverables



Agency Advisory Service Q2, 2022

In partnership with Wellbeing SA, this service will work closely with agencies requiring specialist support and intervention to improve the health and wellbeing of its workplaces.



Expanding Mentally Healthy Workplaces Q3, 2022

Established following the 2018 survey, this successful initiative will increase its scope to incorporate all aspects of wellbeing and will provide custom-designed support for the sector's frontline workers.



Tailored Wellbeing Resources and Training Q3, 2022

Awareness, education and training will be made available to all employees so they can manage their wellbeing, feel safe to speak up against bullying and harassment, and understand how they can contribute to workplace culture and performance. These resources will be integrated into the South Australian Leadership Academy's core leadership programs.

CULTURE

Key survey results

.....
49% believe that in their agency, recruitment and promotion decisions are fair
.....

49% feel that senior managers model the behaviours expected of employees
.....

65% believe that their workgroup's everyday actions are guided by the Public Sector Values
.....

The SA Public Sector Values set the standard of behaviours expected of every employee in every agency. How we model and uphold these behaviours is a key driver of engagement across our workforce and contributed to the low scores on leadership in the survey.

Encouraging employees to live the sector's values must be fostered at an agency level. It's the role of senior leaders to continually align the sector's purpose, values and behaviours with their agency's day-to-day work in a way that's relevant to their team.

However, the survey's responses also identified the need for a consistent sector-wide approach to improve the perceived fairness of recruitment processes. While perceptions of the fairness of recruitment processes increased by six percentage points since 2018, it was still one of the lowest scoring questions in 2021.

The survey also highlighted the need for senior managers to be better at modelling the behaviours and ensuring it's incorporated into performance discussions in a manner that's meaningful and authentic.

Where we are heading...

Our sector is respectful and inclusive, and this culture begins with fair and transparent recruitment processes.

Deliverables



Integrity Framework Q1, 2022

Unifying all employee conduct information under one framework so that employees are clear on the expected standard and understand the possible consequences if they fall short.



Inclusion Strategy Q2, 2022

Working in tandem with the sector's survey plan, it will build a culture of inclusivity, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for employees living with a disability.



Consistent Recruitment Processes Q4, 2022

By year's end, the sector will have a more defined and coherent approach to recruitment processes to increase transparency and attract and retain the best skills and talent in every agency.



Training and Education Q4, 2022

Any employee involved in the recruitment or management of talent within the sector will be expected to complete new purpose-built training, so our hiring processes are fairer, more transparent, and strengthens our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

NEXT PHASE ACTIONS

Key survey results

.....

48% think it is safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done in their agency

.....

51% believe the work processes in place allow them to be as productive as possible

.....

65% believe that their agency focusses on improving the work they do

.....

Empowered to deliver

To get results, the public sector needs effective processes and to foster a workplace culture where everyone feels safe to speak up to improve how we work.

The leadership and wellbeing actions within this plan are expected to help employees confidently challenge how things are done, and the proof of their success will be in the next survey's results.

Empowering our employees to deliver also means removing unnecessary obstacles that cause frustration and create barriers to getting the work done.

The Easy to Do Business Council was established last year to streamline internal and external processes and deliver improved customer experiences, and its recommendations will be sought on how we can best empower our people. Until such time, no further sector-wide actions have been identified for this key theme.

Enhancing career development opportunities

Helping our employees to grow their careers within the public sector was another area of improvement that agencies consistently prioritised in their local action plans.

As part of a sector-wide review of recruitment processes that's already underway, we are considering what employees will require to support their career aspirations, including professional development and promotional opportunities.

Our aim is to develop the sector's capability in talent management and succession planning, and to create more open and transparent conversations with employees on their career pathways. More specific actions will be defined following the completion of the recruitment review.

