NHMRC

NHMRC Strategic Workforce Plan 2016-2019

December 2016

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A message from the CEO

The mission of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is working to build a healthy Australia. We take pride in the important national role NHMRC plays in supporting the full breadth of health and medical research. To fulfil our commitment to improving the health of all Australians, we need to invest in our workforce. This means ensuring that we have strategies in place to address any workforce capability gaps that may have an impact on the strategies outlined in the *National Health and Medical Research Council Corporate Plan 2015–16*.

NHMR*C Strategic Workforce Plan 2016–2019* (SWP) identifies the workforce capability required by NHMRC to meet its objectives, now and in the future. The SWP provides an assessment of the agency's operating environment and the composition of its current workforce and capabilities. Drawing on this information, the SWP identifies people management strategies to be implemented with the aim of maintaining and developing a workforce capability that meets the agency's and the Government's needs.

NHMRC's workforce is critical to its success and it is our responsibility to be thoughtful and intentional about how we recruit, develop and support our people. The publication of this SWP is an important step forward in our broad-based collaboration on workforce issues across the agency. I look forward to working with each of you to implement this SWP in our continuing efforts to achieve NHMRC's mission.

Professor Anne Kelso AO
Chief Executive Officer

National Health and Medical Research Council

NHMRC and its role

NHMRC's core focus is on funding high quality health and medical research through the administration of the Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA). NHMRC also plays a leading national role in providing public health advice for the community, government and the health profession and in the development of guidelines for ethical conduct in research and in the delivery of health care. In its role, NHMRC must be responsive to government and be a leader in driving innovation in the generation and translation of high quality research. NHMRC awards more than $800m in grants annually and manages a total of $1.7b active grants at any one time.

NHMR*C Corporate Plan 2015-2016* outlines three key themes that represent the agency's planned health and medical research strategy: investment, translation, and integrity. NHMRC will:

- ***Invest*** *in high quality health and medical research and build research capability that supports the best research and researchers.*
- *Support the* ***translation*** *of health and medical research into clinical practice, policy and health systems and the commercialisation of research discoveries.*
- *Maintain a strong* ***integrity framework*** *for research and guideline development that underpins rigorous research.*

NHMRC has current strengths in all areas of its strategic focus, however, there is also a need for the agency to adapt to a range of imperatives and challenges that will have an impact on its workforce needs and its capacity and capability to realise the strategies outlined in the Corporate Plan.

NHMRC's current workforce comprises approximately 200 individuals working across four branches. NHMRC's operations are informed by the advice provided by its Council and Principal Committees. The membership of these bodies includes senior representatives of the scientific and medical community, State and Territory Government Chief Health Officers, the Commonwealth's Chief Medical Officer, industry leaders and community representatives. Supplementing its core workforce, on an annual basis, NHMRC draws on the advice of expert working groups and up to 800 members of the health and medical research community who provide expert peer reviews of funding applications.

NHMRC's corporate and governance structure is shown below in Figure 1.

Figure 1: NHMRC corporate and governance structure
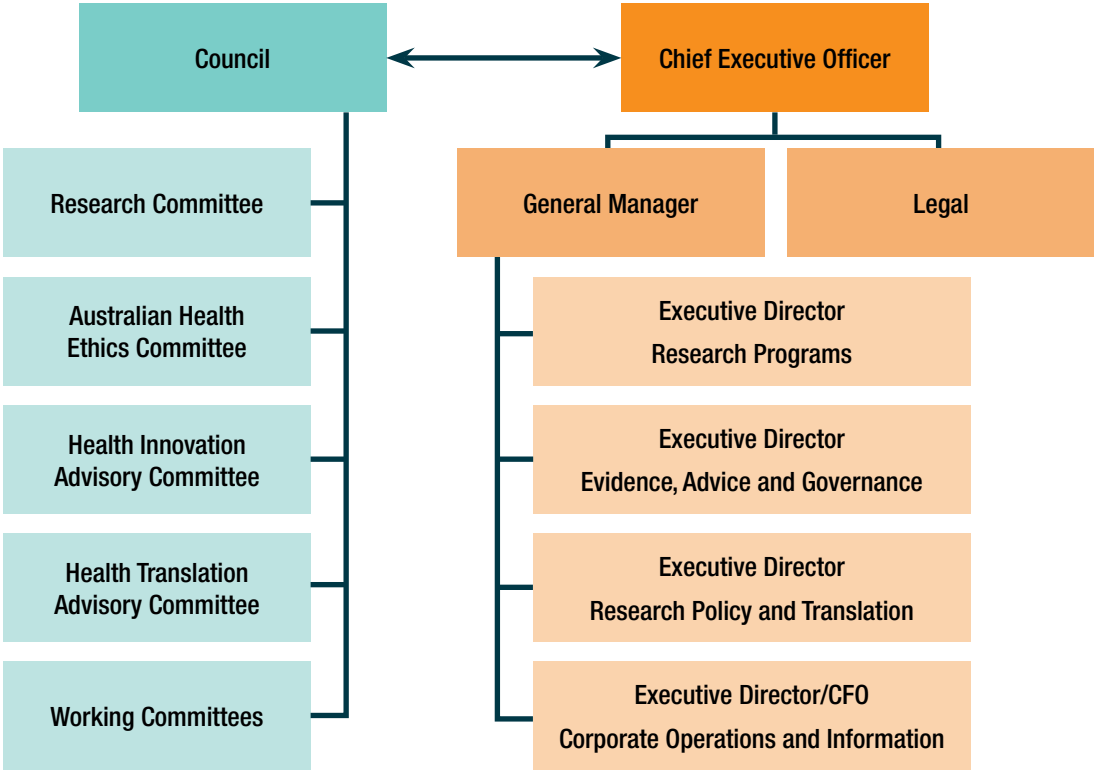
Strategic Workforce Plan

This document details the SWP. The SWP identifies the workforce capability required by NHMRC to meet its objectives, now and into the future. The SWP provides an assessment of the agency's operating environment and the composition of its current workforce and capabilities. Drawing on this information, the SWP identifies people management strategies to be implemented with the aim of maintaining and developing a workforce capability that meets the agency's and the government's needs.

Presented below are:

• A description of the approach used to develop the SWP

• NHMRC SWP

  - Strategic drivers affecting NHMRC's current and future state

  - Planning assumptions—understanding NHMRC's future state

  - Workforce profile

  - Capabilities and gaps

  - Learning and development capability

  - Critical roles

  - Workforce risks

  - Workforce initiatives.

Approach used to develop the Strategic Workforce Plan

Methodology

The methodology used to develop the SWP was guided by the Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) Workforce Planning methodology (outlined in the *Australian Public Service Workforce Planning Guide, 2011*). In particular, the consultation and data gathering focused on:

- Internal and external drivers affecting workforce needs.
- Planning assumptions about the 'future NHMRC'.
- NHMRC's current workforce profile.
- Current and required skills and capabilities and their alignment with the agency's future workforce needs.
- Role types that are critical to NHMRC's success.
- Strengths and opportunities as they relate to NHMRC's goals.
- Risks to the achievement of NHMRC's goals.
- Workforce strategies that NHMRC should undertake to address risks and achieve its goals.

The consultation and data gathering process comprised:

- Meetings with members of the Executive i.e. the Chief Executive Officer, General Manager and Executive Directors.
- Focus groups with Directors.
- Focus groups with staff.
- Administration and analysis of a Skills and Capability Audit conducted as part of the review.
- Review of NHMRC documentation, sample workforce plans from other public sector agencies and a key strategic document outlining the workforce management challenges facing the APS at this time.[1]

Further details of the approach used are outlined below.

Meetings with the senior management team

Individual interviews were held with the following members of NHMRC Executive:

- Professor Anne Kelso, Chief Executive Officer.
- Mr Tony Kingdon, General Manager.
- Mr Tony Krizan, Executive Director, Corporate Operations and Information.
- Dr Tony Willis, Executive Director, Research Programs.
- Ms Samantha Robertson, Executive Director, Evidence, Advice and Governance.
- Mr Alan Singh, Executive Director, Research Policy and Translation.

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1   S. McPhee (2015) *Unlocking Potential: Australian Public Service Workforce Management Contestability Review*

Interviews with members of the Executive focused on gathering information in relation to the strategic direction of the organisation, anticipated impacts on the nature of the work undertaken in the agency and on capabilities required to undertake future work.

Focus groups with Directors

Focus groups were held with Directors from each Branch including:

- Research Programs Branch.
- Evidence, Advice and Governance Branch.
- Research Policy and Translation Branch.
- Corporate Operations and Information Branch.

The workshops focused on gathering information in relation to the functions of each section, its principal internal stakeholders, the strategic direction of the organisation, any anticipated impacts on the work undertaken by the work area and the range of job types within the section.

Focus groups with staff

Focus groups were held with staff representing the range of work areas across the agency. Focus groups were held separately with staff from each Branch and participants were further divided by classification level, as follows:

- APS 1 to APS 6 staff, Research Programs Branch.
- EL 1 to EL 2 staff, Research Programs Branch.
- APS 1 to APS 6 staff, Evidence, Advice and Governance Branch.
- EL 1 to EL 2 staff, Evidence, Advice and Governance Branch.
- APS 1 to APS 6 staff, Research Policy and Translation Branch.
- EL 1 to EL 2 staff, Research Policy and Translation Branch.
- APS 1 to APS 6 staff, Corporate Operations and Information Branch.
- EL 1 to EL 2 staff, Corporate Operations and Information Branch.

The focus groups were designed to gather information about:

- The type of work undertaken in the work area.
- Anticipated changes and their expected impact on responsibilities and required capabilities and skills.
- Options for flexible work practices.

Information gathered in the staff focus groups was used to inform recommendations and the content of NHMRC *Skills and Capabilities Survey*, described below.

Skills and Capabilities Survey

The *Skills and Capabilities Survey* was completed by Directors across NHMRC. The Survey comprised a series of questions asking about each Section's required and current skills and about the types of learning and development activities that Directors felt may be useful for their team.

The survey was in two parts:

- Required and current skills
- Learning and development.

The two sections of the survey are described in more detail below.

Required and current skills

The survey asked Directors to respond to a series of questions about the skills that may be required for work undertaken in their Section. Questions referred to skills in the following categories:

- Communication
- Working with others
- Planning and critical thinking
- Achieving outcomes
- Having and applying knowledge
- Policy development and implementation
- Governance knowledge and skills
- Grants, funds, procurement and contract management
- Data management, research and analysis skills
- Systems skills.

Directors were asked to rate two aspects in relation to each question on the survey:

- The level of skill that is **needed now** in the Section ('Need Now'),
- The level of skill the Section **currently has** ('Have Now').

The rating scale response options for the level of skill **needed now** were:

- 0 (None): Select if the skill is not needed in the Section.
- 1 (Basic skills): Select if, across the Section, staff need to be familiar with the basic concepts.
- 2 (Average skills): Select if, across the Section, the team needs well-developed skills in this area.
- 3 (Advanced skills): Select if, across the Section, staff need to be seen as a source of expertise across NHMRC.

The rating scale response options for the **current level** of skill were:

- 0 (None): Select if there is no capability in this area in your Section.
- 1 (Basic skills): Select if, across the Section, staff are familiar with the basic concepts.
- 2 (Average skills): Select if, across the Section, the team has well-developed skills in this area.
- 3 (Advanced skills): Select if, across the Section, staff are seen as a source of expertise across the NHMRC.

The data was analysed to identify, at a Branch level:

- The level of the skill/capability that is **required** to perform the work of the Branch effectively.
- The **current** level of skill/capability in the Branch.

Learning and Development

The survey also asked Directors to indicate how useful a range of different types of learning and development activities were likely to be in their Section. The scale used was:

1 = Not at all useful

2 = Moderately useful

3 = Extremely useful.

Questions referred to the following learning and development activities:

- Formal training
- Mentoring
- Buddying
- Exchange or secondment
- On the job training
- Attending conferences
- Time away to acquire skill.

Scenario planning

Workplace Research conducted scenario planning workshops with NHMRC Executive and with Directors. Separate workshops were conducted with each. The workshops provided participants with a summary of information identified through prior consultation, documentation review and the *Skills and Capabilities Survey*, including:

- The internal and external drivers affecting the agency
- The agency's goals and desired future state
- Planning assumptions that are being made about the future state of NHMRC
- An overview of current workforce characteristics
- A summary of the *Skills and Capability Survey* results.

Following a discussion of the information gathered to date, the scenario planning workshops then focused on identifying:

- NHMRC's required future capabilities, drawing on an understanding of external and internal drivers and current workforce characteristics.
- The agency's strengths and weaknesses.
- The opportunities and challenges facing the agency as it moves towards its desired state.
- The critical roles and capabilities that are required to ensure the agency achieves its desired future state.
- The strategies that NHMRC will need to adopt in order to build the capabilities and workforce profile that it needs, based on an understanding of its current state and current and future risks.

All information gathered using the approaches described above was used to develop NHMRC SWP. The components of NHMRC SWP are as follows and are presented below:

- Strategic drivers affecting NHMRC's current and future state
- Planning assumptions—understanding NHMRC's future state
- Workforce profile
- Capabilities and gaps
- Learning and development capability
- Critical roles
- Workforce risks
- Workforce initiatives.

NHMRC Strategic Workforce Plan

Strategic drivers affecting NHMRC's current and future state

The SWP has been developed in the context of a number of broader strategic drivers, both internal and external, that affect the work of the agency. These are summarised below.

Increased focus on priority driven health and medical research

NHMRC awards more than $800m in grants annually through the Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA) and manages a total of $1.7b of active grants at any one time. Traditionally, the allocation of funds to specific areas of research has been driven by the areas of priority, interest and need identified by researchers in their grant applications. Peer reviewers then select the best research proposals for funding. In the future, it is anticipated that there will be an increased focus on setting research priorities (by the Government, NHMRC or the Department of Health) prior to funding rounds which will guide funding decisions. In parallel, in the context of the Government's innovation agenda, an increased emphasis on funding to support medical innovation is expected. These changes are likely to drive a need to establish ratios of medical innovation versus discovery research, and targeted versus investigator initiated research for at least a portion of the funding pool. In line with this trend, NHMRC aims to play a leading role in driving quality research and research innovation in areas of need.

These changes in emphasis will have the following implications for NHMRC:

- An increased need for a strong research policy capability that can draw on science based knowledge.
- A need to identify an approach to drawing on the expertise of the research community to inform priority setting activities.
- An increased need for co-ordination of policy across the agency and with other agencies in the health sphere.

Increased requirement for the translation of research into practice and policy

It is anticipated that, over time, there will be an increasing need for government to derive and be aware of the benefits of its expenditure on research through translation of research outcomes into commercial, policy and practice outcomes and to identify gaps and opportunities across areas of disease and prevention. The push for commercialisation will bring with it an opportunity to increase co-funding arrangements between industry and NHMRC and a need to do a better job of understanding the research that is funded and its impact. NHMRC has the opportunity to tap into an extensive network of external experts and innovators and is uniquely placed to act as Australia's premier centre for the translation of research findings into policy and practice outcomes. This is an area of the agency's activities that could be strengthened.

This change in emphasis will have the following implications for NHMRC:

- An increased need to tap into external expertise and to seek and build relationships with partners in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.
- An increased emphasis on facilitating partnerships between NHMRC-funded researchers and industry to improve researchers' commercial literacy and promote opportunities for research translation and commercialisation.
- A need for the skills of people who can apply scientific understanding to inform policy.
- A need to build new approaches to tracking and documenting research trends, outcomes and impact and to identify relevant metrics and develop an accompanying approach to gathering data.
- A need for critical analysis skills and data analytics skills.
- A need to reach out to experts outside the agency to identify strengths and weaknesses in areas of research that will guide policy development.

Introduction of the medical research future fund

In the 2014-15 Federal Budget, the Government announced the establishment of a Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) to provide a long-term source of funding for medical research. The intention is for the MRFF to build to a point where, from 2022–2023, it can distribute $1b annually in funding.

The introduction of the MRFF presents a policy challenge for NHMRC which must ensure that it remains relevant and nationally influential in the health and medical research arena. NHMRC must demonstrate that it remains Australia's principal institution for the delivery of large scale medical research funding and that it has the capability to deliver the MRFF if required.

Increased competitiveness of grants application process

Over time, there has been steady growth in grant applications (estimated at five per cent growth annually). There has been simultaneous growth in the average number of collaborative and multi-disciplinary grants. At the same time, application success rates have been declining (currently success rates sit at about 14%). The increase in applications and in numbers of unsuccessful applicants creates an additional burden for NHMRC which must devote additional resources to grants administration, stakeholder engagement and communications activities. In an increasingly competitive environment, there is also likely to be greater concern and focus on ethical practices in research.

Opportunity to elevate the public profile of NHMRC

NHMRC is the principal enabler of high quality health and medical research in Australia. However, staff commented that the general community has a low level of awareness of its work and impact. Although visibility of NHMRC within the research community is very high, researchers often do not publicly credit NHMRC as a partner in their research and research funded by NHMRC is not always badged as such. There is an opportunity to develop avenues for tying research outputs to the original funding and for leveraging this to publicise the value of public investment in grant funding.

Impact of technological innovation

The digital transformation occurring across the APS and the advent of 'big data' (very large data sets that can be analysed to identify patterns and trends) affords opportunities to NHMRC. Opportunities include the potential to link health records with other data sources to, for example, enable clinical trials focussed on better-defined subsets of patients. Alongside this, NHMRC is increasing its digitisation of records and is adopting improved online systems (to reduce the internal reliance on paper) and cloud-based data warehousing solutions. NHMRC must also address

the requirement to increase the accessibility of data sets and sharing of data domestically and internationally. Digital transformation will also change the type of work performed in the agency (and across the APS) and, as some current work becomes automated, roles need to be redesigned and new roles created.

These opportunities have the specific implications for NHMRC:

- Opportunities to obtain, store and use expanded pools of data bring with them the need to resolve policy questions relating to the IP ownership of data and issues of privacy.
- There is an increasing need for information management skills and a need to identify the best way to bring IT capability into the organisation in a way that best meets NHMRC's needs.
- There is a need to educate NHMRC staff in aspects of information or data management and to ensure that this capability is not concentrated in a few individuals (as is currently the case).
- There is a need for a much stronger capability in the use of data and analytics.
- Digitisation of records will lead to a reduced need to manage physical files.

Structural review of research grants programs

At present, the MREA grant investment that is managed by NHMRC is conducted through more than 15 funding schemes. NHMRC is engaged in a structural review of its research programs with the aims of reducing the very large number of unfunded applications and the attendant workload on the sector, improving opportunities for early and mid-career researchers and increasing creativity/innovation in research proposals. This work is being managed in the Research Policy and Translation Branch. The recommendations arising from this review are expected to lead to major structural reform for the agency's grants programs, leading to the development of a different suite of grant schemes in the future. This change will have implications for the agency's external stakeholders.

The change in emphasis will have the following implications for NHMRC:

- An increased need for effective communication with the research community who will wish to understand the implications of the changes and the availability of funding opportunities for their research.
- A need to ensure that the new suite of schemes is administered effectively and efficiently based on impartial reviews.
- A need to ensure that NHMRC staff understand, and can communicate to stakeholders, the rationale behind and implications of the new research grants structure.

Overhaul of the Research Grants Management System (RGMS)

NHMRC uses an online Research Grants Management System (RGMS) to underpin all grants administration activities. The RGMS is used by both agency staff and researchers (and their host institutions) for grants administration. The current RGMS is based on outdated and unstable technology and NHMRC is actively working on an overhaul of this system. This modernisation project will result in a range of efficiencies (such as greater automation in some grants administration activities like reviewer allocation) and also changes to the user experience, for both applicants/researchers and NHMRC staff.

This change will have the following implications for NHMRC:

- A need to ensure that the new RGMS is robust, effective and well supported with the appropriate ICT expertise.
- A need for staff to develop skills in the effective use of the new RGMS.
- A need for staff to develop higher level skills (e.g. to support quality assurance activities) rather than more routine processing tasks.
- A need for staff to develop skills in explaining the use of the new RGMS to internal and external users.
- A reduction in the need to employ a temporary workforce to support processes that will become automated.

Shift to shared services model

Across federal government, there is a general shift towards the accommodation of corporate support and service delivery tasks within a shared services model where possible. The trend towards engaging other organisations to deliver basic services to government agencies through arrangements such as outsourcing or partnerships creates a shift towards the need for more highly developed skills, rather than lower level administrative skills, within an agency. A number of discreet administrative tasks are undertaken within NHMRC that may be undertaken more efficiently under such a model, including payroll and the administration of travel arrangements. Accordingly, NHMRC is engaged in a process of transitioning to a shared services model for the provision of some corporate services. As a consequence, corporate areas will become more focused on provision of advice and the development of corporate strategies and policies rather than on transactional processing and administrative tasks. This change means that:

- There will be an increased requirement for more advanced knowledge and skills in the agency's corporate area.
- All NHMRC staff will experience a change in services, which is likely to involve a shift towards self-service for some activities.
- There is a need to assist staff to understand and adapt to NHMRC's shared services model.

Planning assumptions—understanding NHMRC's future state

NHMRC Executive and its Directors identified a number of planning assumptions about the future state of NHMRC. The SWP is predicated on these planning assumptions. They are:

Location and purpose of NHMRC

- NHMRC will remain in the Health portfolio.
- NHMRC will continue to deliver grants, provide advice/guidelines and focus on research integrity as its core business.
- There will be no reduction in scope in relation to the agency's core areas of work and NHMRC will continue to deliver its obligations in line with its current charter under the Act.
- NHMRC will be seen by government as the lead agency for grants delivery and as the key source of advice to government on matters relating to health and medical research and in relation to the development and maintenance of public and individual health standards.

The way that NHMRC does its work

- There will be a need to identify more cost effective ways of delivering the core work of the agency (e.g. delivering advice and being an enabler of high quality research), which may require a change in mindset or approach.
- The way in which corporate services are delivered and consumed by the agency will change.
- The implementation of the outcomes of the structural review of the grants program will create a need to change the way things are done (e.g. doing peer review differently).
- There will be an increased use of self-service and self-help technologies used by both NHMRC staff and the agency's external stakeholders.
- The agency will need to increase its digital capability.

Resourcing and funding

- External pressures will continue to impose budget discipline on the agency, however, the administered budget (grants) is probably not going to decrease.
- Any increase in workforce capability will need to be self-funded by the agency.
- If NHMRC takes on any aspect of the MRFF grants work, this may need to be resourced from within.

Recruitment and staff development

- There is a need to ensure that an appropriate level of diversity is represented in NHMRC's workforce, including the achievement of gender equity at all classification levels over time.
- There is a need to recruit people with the right science and policy skills mix and staff with data analytic skills.
- Some staff will need to access opportunities to gain experience and hone skills outside NHMRC.
- NHMRC, as a small agency, is unable to provide an internal career path for all staff.

Capability

- NHMRC must ensure it makes the best use of its science capability.
- There will be an increased need for a more informed, agile and engaged EL and APS workforce with an understanding of both science (and scientific methods) and public policy.
- There is a need to be able to evaluate research outcomes at a high level to get 'success stories' out. This requires the capability to read, interpret and understand science, at times within a public policy context.

Workforce profile

A key component of the development of the SWP was an examination of the current NHMRC workforce profile (drawn from a range of data sources supplied by the agency[2]). It resulted in the identification of a number of key workforce statistics for the organisation. Below, the current workforce profile statistics that are most relevant to the future workforce plan are outlined.

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2 Note that data were obtained at different times as a function of the data source. The date on which data was obtained is indicated for each table.

Classification levels

NHMRC has a high proportion of staff at the EL level (47% across the two EL levels compared to 50% across the six APS levels)—see Figure 1 below. For comparison, the percentage of staff at the EL level across all APS agencies combined is 24.6%[3]. In NHMRC, given proposed increases in automation (e.g. in processing grant applications), it is likely that work at the APS 3 and APS 4 levels will decrease over the coming one to two years. It is also likely that other factors (e.g. increased need for research and analysis) will lead to an increase in the need for staff at the APS 5 and APS 6 levels, proportional to staff at other levels.

Figure 2: Staff distribution by classification level (FTE)[4]

% of total NHMRC staff
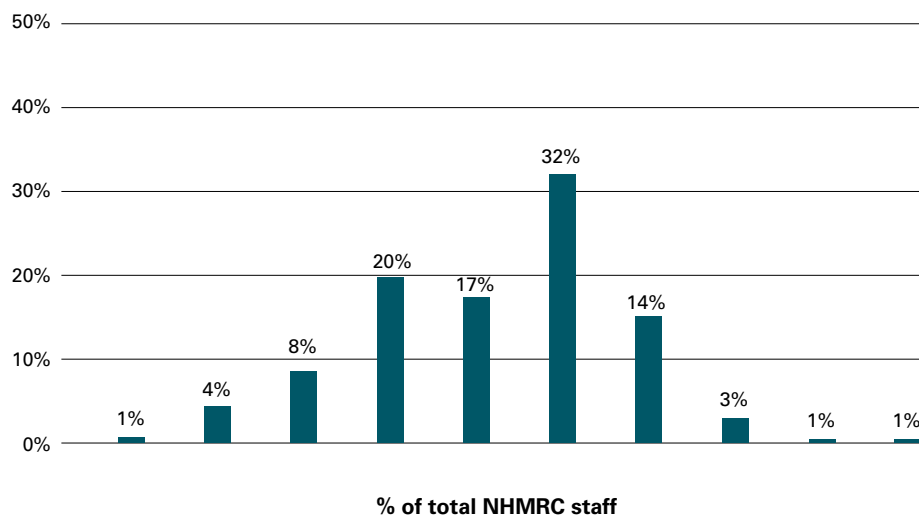
Gender

Women make up approximately two-thirds of NHMRC's workforce (see Figures 3 and 4 below) compared to 58.4% across the APS combined. In NHMRC, the relative proportions of men and women vary by classification level. At the APS levels, the proportion of women outnumber men, while at the EL and SES levels, the proportions of men outnumber women. This mirrors the gender distribution across the APS[5] as a whole, where the highest concentration of women is at the APS 4 and the APS 6 classifications, while for men the highest concentration is at the APS 6 and EL 1 classifications. Given these percentages, there is scope for NHMRC to increase the representation of women at more senior levels.

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3   Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin, State of the Service Series 2014-2015

4   As at 30 November 2015

5   Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin, State of the Service Series 2014-2015
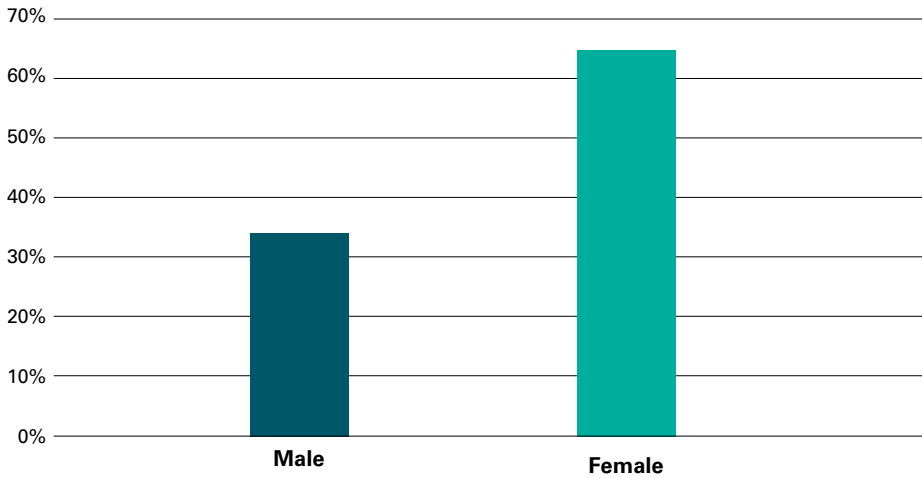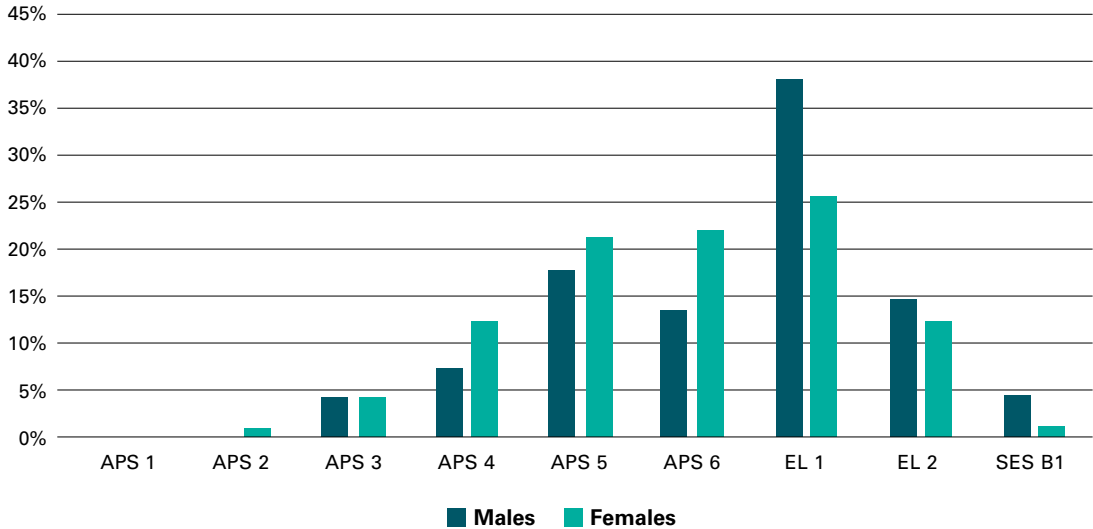
Figure 3: Staff distribution by gender[6]

Figure 4: Staff distribution by gender and classification level

Age of workforce[7]

The average age of staff in NHMRC is 40 years, with 23% of employees aged 50 or over.
For comparison, the mean age of all employees in the APS is 43 years, with 31.7% aged 50 or over[8].
A significant proportion of NHMRC workforce (42%) is aged under 35, compared to approximately 27% in this age category across the APS. This indicates that in NHMRC, overall, the age profile of the agency is relatively young, but also that a large percentage of NHMRC's workforce is of an age that may be associated with a need for flexible working practices to allow the provision of care for children or ageing parents. NHMRC could give consideration to how it could accommodate the flexible working needs of these cohorts.

6   As at 30 June 2015

7   As at 30 June 2015

8   Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin, State of the Service Series 2014-2015

Figure 5: Staff distribution by age

% of total NHMRC staff
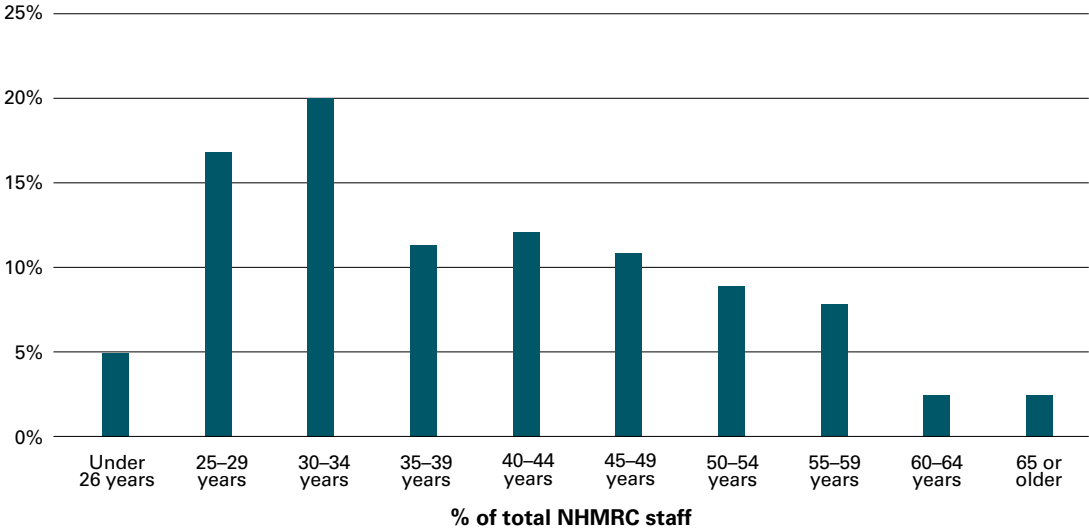
Unscheduled absences

The unscheduled absence rate (personal and miscellaneous leave only) for NHMRC over the 2014–2015 financial year[9] was 13.7 days per full time employee. By comparison, over the same period the unscheduled absence rate for all other APS agencies was 11.6 days per full time employee[10]. NHMRC's rate of unscheduled absences (with and without supporting evidence) for the 12 month period ending 30 January 2016 was 16.4 days per full-time employee. These figures indicate that NHMRC experiences a higher unscheduled absence rate than other APS agencies.

Learning and development

The *Skills and Capabilities Survey* included questions designed to gauge the level of interest in different types of learning and development opportunities. Across the agency, interest was highest in experiential and social learning, with the strongest level of interest expressed in accessing exchange and secondment programs followed by on-the-job training and mentoring.

Educational profile of NHMRC staff

As a group, NHMRC's staff are more highly educated than staff across APS as a whole[11], with two thirds of NHMRC respondents having attained a Bachelor Degree or higher, compared to the APS overall rate of just over half. Most commonly, the qualifications obtained by NHMRC staff were in the field of medicine and health sciences (just over a third of NHMRC respondents).

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9   *Unscheduled Absence Monthly Report for the National Health and Medical Research Council, September 2015.*

10 2014-2015 State of the Service Report

11 *Source: 2016 APS Employee Census*

Flexible working arrangements

During consultations, staff were asked about access to flexible working arrangements. It was found that:

- Access to part-time work was commonly available but that the remaining portion of an full time equivalent load was not backfilled, meaning the work was not done or that others picked it up

- There is keen interest in other forms of flexible working arrangements, particularly in the form of support for non-standard hours to allow people to accommodate other responsibilities

- Staff have limited access to online systems from home (email is available as is access to the agency's shared drive but this is impractically slow and impedes work efficiency)

- Staff and Directors were particularly positive about the idea of an exchange program or secondment program between NHMRC and other agencies within the Health portfolio.

Organisational capabilities and gaps

Based on an analysis of its characteristics, goals and operating environment, it is clear that NHMRC faces a need to build organisational and workforce capability in a number of areas that are of great relevance to its future success. There is a need and an opportunity to build capability in the organisation in the following areas:

Leadership and communication

- Improved mechanisms for **internal communication** in the organisation:
  - Below the Director level, there appears to be limited understanding of strategic issues affecting the agency or of agency plans.
  - There a need to develop communication mechanisms to assist staff to understand and adapt to NHMRC's planned changes (such as a shift to a shared services model). This need will steadily increase.
  - Staff are keenly interested in hearing about the CEO's activities and NHMRC's successes. There is a significant opportunity to boost staff morale and pride in the organisation through increasing the visibility of the CEO and her activities (and of the Executive more broadly).
- The capacity to **represent the agency externally** at senior levels:
  - At present, it is usually the CEO who represents the agency at external events. There is an opportunity for this responsibility to be shared across the Executive and, as appropriate, Research Scientist group.
  - At present, only the CEO engages with the media. There is a need to become a more visible organisation in the community which may require the identification of an additional media spokesperson.

Management and corporate skills

- A higher level of strategic and technical knowledge and skill across the agency in relation to **project planning**.
- A higher level of strategic and technical knowledge and skill across the agency in relation to **finance and accounting**.
- A higher level of strategic and technical knowledge and skill across the agency in relation to **procurement and contract management**.

- An understanding of and an ability to develop and implement **risk management plans**.

Analytical capability and information management

- A stronger level of capability in the collection and use of **data and analytics.**
- The ability to **review, evaluate** and undertake **critical analysis** (particularly in relation to guidelines development).
- The ability to build new approaches to **tracking and documenting research trends**, outcomes and impacts.
- An increased knowledge of **records management** processes and/or systems.

ICT skills

- A need for appropriate and effective **ICT expertise to support the new RGMS**.
- A need for staff to develop **skills in the effective use of the new RGMS**.

Stakeholder engagement

- A need to draw on the expertise of the **research community** in identifying trends that can **inform priority setting activities**.
- The ability to **facilitate interaction** between NHMRC funded researchers and industry (e.g. to promote research translation, a stronger mutual understanding and opportunities for collaboration between these parties).
- The ability to **reach out to experts outside the agency** to identify strengths and weaknesses in areas of research to guide policy development.
- The capacity of NHMRC staff to **understand and communicate to stakeholders** the rationale behind and implications of the new research grants structure and the use of the new RGMS.
- A need for NHMRC to develop its **engagement with the Minister's Office** to increase its policy influence and understanding of government priorities.
- A need for all levels of staff in NHMRC to develop their **engagement with central agencies and other external agencies** (including across jurisdictions) to increase NHMRC's policy influence.
- The ability to **draw on expert advisory committees** and the Assigners Academy to obtain up to date information about trends and issues in the health and medical research fields.
- A capacity for NHMRC staff to **manage difficult calls from members of the public or research community** (e.g. in relation to public health advice or grants processes).

Science communication

- The ability to use an understanding of **scientific methods and research findings to inform policy**.
- The capacity to **identify and publicise positive stories** that illustrate the value of an investment in research.

Policy

- A stronger **policy development and advice capability** that can draw on science based knowledge.

Critical roles

The Executive and Directors identified critical roles that will be key to achieving NHMRC's strategic goals. Critical roles are those with one or more of the following elements:

• Hard to fill

• Critical or core to the organisation's competitive advantage

• Long lead times to competency

• Forecast to undergo significant change

• High number of vacancies in the last 12 months

• Core to new business initiatives

• Constitute a significant proportion of the workforce.

The following roles or role components (functions/tasks/responsibilities) are considered to be critical to the effective and efficient working of NHMRC now and into the future:

CRITICAL ROLES/CAPABILITIES FOR NHMRC
Relationship managers (building relationships with the research community, vendors and the Department)
Media skills (including social media)
Communication (capacity to package and deliver messages to the agency's stakeholders and to its staff)
Science communication
Science knowledge and skills (primarily the capacity to draw on a general science background and apply it in a policy, advice/guidelines or stakeholder engagement context)
Data analytics capability
Leadership skills
Policy skills
Contract management (including in relation to guidelines development)
Project management
Guideline management (developers/users with an understanding of what constitutes a quality product, and the capacity to negotiate in relation to product development and quality)
Corporate roles (HR, CIO, Finance, CFO)
ICT skills (to support the operation of the Research Grants Management System and web management)
Ethics and integrity
FOI
Governance
Legal skills
Executive Directors with the following capabilities: • Ability to maintain a good relationship with the Department • A good understanding of research grants • Ability to network in the sector • Financial and corporate knowledge
CEO of appropriate standing and capability

Note: Many of the critical roles and capabilities listed above need to be distributed **across jobs, levels and work areas** in NHMRC, rather than being invested in specific jobs or single work areas.

Relevant labour market trends

NHMRC will need to consider workforce supply factors in two key areas, namely:

• Science skills

• ICT and data analytics skills.

Science skills

Historically, NHMRC has employed a high proportion of staff with a science background (primarily in health and medical sciences) and, based on its ongoing core focus on delivering grants, providing advice/guidelines and focusing on research integrity, the agency will continue to experience demand for staff with these skills. Labour market research[12] indicates that while the supply of medical science graduates is very strong, employers report that a relatively small proportion of applicants (approximately 20%) are identified as suitable. Common reasons given by employers for unsuitable assessments include a lack of experience, lack of qualifications in the specific area required and a lack of communication skills. There is likely to be competition amongst some public sector employers for experienced health and medical science graduates with strong communication skills. These are the types of employees required by NHMRC.

ICT and data analytics skills

Looking forward, NHMRC intends to build its digital, data analytics and ICT capabilities to achieve business goals (such as an increased emphasis on automated processing). There is a tight labour market in Australia[13] for:

• Cloud specialists

• IT developers

• Digital analysts

• HR business partners

• Business analysts

• Procurement and purchasing specialists

• Digital marketing analysts

• Social media marketing and communications specialists.

These skill sets are required in the APS to allow agencies to access and harness technology, develop new business models and contract non-government providers to deliver services. The NHMRC competes directly with a number of other Canberra-based employees for these skills. Organisations such as the Departments of Defence and Australian intelligence and security agencies exert a particularly high and increasing demand for these capabilities in the Canberra area. A recent (2013[14]) APS stocktake of skills shortages across the public sector indicated that 35% of agencies were experiencing a moderate or severe shortage of ICT skills. Labour market research[15] indicates that demand for ICT professionals has experienced recent robust growth. Demand for personnel with data analytic capabilities is also likely to increase given the developing strategic intent of many organisations (in the public and private sectors) to tap into the potential represented by improved access to large, complex datasets.

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12 ANZSCO 2346-11 Medical Laboratory Scientist, Australia, April 2016, *Department of Employment*

13 McPhee (2015)

14 2012-2013 APS State of the Service Report

15 Labour Market Research – Information Technology (IT) Professions Australia December Quarter 2015, *Department of Employment*

Workforce risks

NHMRC's current and future environment and needs present a series of workforce risks that need to be managed. These workforce risks are identified below and in a later section, strategies designed to mitigate these risks are presented.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	IMPACT
Lack of internal communication and shared understanding of strategic issues	There is a significant opportunity to increase the visibility of senior NHMRC leaders to staff The concept of 'leadership at all levels' is not well developed in NHMRC Below the EL 2 and EL 1 levels, there is little understanding of NHMRC's goals and plans Different work areas do not have a good understanding of work occurring in other areas and staff operate in a siloed environment	There is a lost opportunity to motivate and engage staff through the development of stronger relationship with a more visible Executive team It will be difficult to bring staff successfully through organisational change Decisions made at lower levels are not informed by a strategic understanding and do not take into account the broader context Staff cannot see the links between strategy and workforce decisions Staff are unprepared for planned changes because they do not understand them
Lack of connection with external stakeholders	Staff at lower levels are not strongly aware of NHMRC's role in the community Staff do not fully understand the importance of external stakeholders or their perspective Insufficient understanding of the health and medical research sector by a number of staff There is an opportunity to increase engagement with the Minister's Office Focus of funding remains researcher driven Low profile of the agency within the broader community Only the CEO engages with the media Limited capacity to represent NHMRC externally Researchers do not give credit/acknowledgement to NHMRC	NHMRC loses its premier role in health and medical research Reputational risk to NHMRC Lost opportunities to build NHMRC's profile Lost opportunities for policy influence Lost opportunities to gain strength through building alliances Unable to implement Government priorities in health and medical research funding Not capitalising on the evidence base to inform future research
Lack of a strong strategic HR function	NHMRC's HR function does not yet play a pivotal role in driving and enabling strategic change There is a shortfall in higher level HR capabilities in the areas of: • Change management • HR policy • Strategic advice • Learning and development • Recruitment and selection • Workforce planning • Organisational and job design	NHMRC loses opportunities to build its performance by coupling the strategic management of its workforce with its business planning NHMRC cannot support the implementation of recommendations arising from the workforce plan The agency cannot transition to a more strategic focus in its people management when the transition to a shared services/outsourced model is made

RISK	DESCRIPTION	IMPACT
Shortfall in specific areas of capability	Skills gaps exist in the following key areas: • Science communication • Media and digital communications (web and social media) • Data analytics • ICT (need broad skills to run RGMS and website and specific skills to start up new capabilities for the agency) • Critical thinking, evaluation and analysis • Policy skills that can be applied in a research/ advice/science environment • Understanding of the operations of government and of the Minister's Office • Leadership skills at APS 6, EL 1 and EL 2 levels • Governance, FOI and ethics • Provision of high level scientific support for the CEO • Use of the RGMS There will be a shortfall in higher level capabilities required in the corporate area when the agency makes its transition to a shared services/outsourced model. These will be in the areas of: • Project management • Contract management • Financial modelling and analysis • Procurement • Risk management • Corporate policy	Key functions are not supported NHMRC cannot meet its statutory and other obligations NHMRC limits its scope to engage and promote its interests externally Unable to effectively manage change associated with the agency's transition to a shared services environment
Lack of talent management and development strategies at the Executive level	Members of the Executive do not have sufficient opportunity to devote time to the development of new skills or areas of knowledge. Succession planning at the Executive level does not occur. At the Executive level, skills gaps exist in the following key areas: • Provision of high level political support for the CEO • Capacity to represent NHMRC externally and in the media • Skill in engaging with, motivating and developing cohesion within the staff body	Lack of influx of new ideas and capabilities needed for business leadership NHMRC misses opportunities to promote itself more widely and raise its public profile NHMRC is heavily reliant on the CEO for the maintenance of its public profile, creating a significant point of risk NHMRC is a less unified, energised and motivated organisation Staff feel removed from the Executive team

RISK	DESCRIPTION	IMPACT
Insufficient mechanisms for building individual and organisational capability	Succession planning tends not to occur	Potential for loss of specific skills should key individuals leave
	There are cohorts of staff with specific skills (e.g. a good understanding of the research sector) but there is no mechanism to pass these on	Loss of corporate memory and knowledge
	Poor mechanisms for managing and retaining corporate knowledge	Staff have limited opportunities to build expertise and knowledge or maintain currency of skills
	Core business (such as guidelines development) is contracted out	Morale and business continuity are negatively affected by outsourcing
	Skilled work is outsourced and NHMRC is overly reliant on industry to maintain the capability it needs	Decisions are not informed by past experiences
	Women are under-represented at senior levels	NHMRC cannot access the skills/knowledge it needs to do its work
Lack of capacity	New work is taken on with no additional resourcing or reduction in workload	Lack of surge capacity
	Urgent tasks take effort and time away from core business or planning/strategic activities	Burnout in some areas
	No redundancy is built into systems or workforce	Staff capability not fully utilised
	NHMRC's flexible work practices are not well developed, constraining the contribution that some staff members can make and the attractiveness of work in the agency	Inability to manage core business or be strategic
	NHMRC experiences significant peaks and troughs in line with the annual research cycle which creates resourcing challenges	NHMRC is unable to contribute to management of or capitalise on opportunities presented by the MRFF
		Staff shortages due to planned and unplanned leave mean work is not undertaken. Pressure is then put on remaining staff which perpetuates the cycle of absence
		A lack of flexible workforce management arrangements reduces NHMRC's capacity to offer roles that appeal to the career preferences of today's workers (such as catering for portfolio careers based on project work rather than linear upwards promotion, or providing greater flexibility in relation to work hours and location).

Workforce initiatives

This section identifies workforce initiatives and strategies designed to mitigate the risks described above.

INITIATIVES	STRATEGIES
Enhancing internal communication and shared understanding of strategic issues	Institute regular 'town hall' style meetings between the Executive and all staff, at the Branch level and at the Section level to communicate and explain plans and developments (upwards and downwards)
	The Executive team to meet regularly to discuss and address whole of NHMRC matters; outcomes to be communicated to staff
	Identify and communicate success stories that staff can take pride in
	Begin a regular newsletter to staff that includes a message from the CEO and a summary of all speaking engagements

INITIATIVES	STRATEGIES
Enhancing connections with external stakeholders	Develop strategies to allow NHMRC to promote its work and relevance across the community
	Collaborate with other agencies such as the ABS, IP Australia, AIHW to establish MOUs in relation to data sharing and the identification of successes that can be used for promotion
	Build the agency's media capability, including a role that does the 'leg work' to identify and pursue media opportunities
	Identify success stories, make better use of NHMRC's '10 of the best' and follow up researchers to identify what has happened five to ten years on
	Make better use of final reports as a source of success stories and follow up with and interview researchers
	Build capacity at the Executive level and in the Research Scientist cohort to represent the agency externally
	To enhance the provision of strong strategic scientific advice, consider identifying eminent individual(s) (e.g. at the professorial level) who may assist in representing the agency in external fora (for example in engaging with domestic and international research institutions and bodies)
	Build engagement with the Minister's Office with the goal of increasing NHMRC's policy influence and understanding of government priorities
	Build engagement with central agencies such as PM&C and Finance, particularly with policy development areas
	Engage across jurisdictions and establish and maintain relationships with COAG, State Health and medical research bodies to build influence in setting the national research agenda
	Relationship building starts at lower levels: attract staff to NHMRC who have policy experience in the health and medical sector in other jurisdictions
	Identify ways to draw on the agency's network of 20,000 researchers, expert advisory committees, Research Translation Faculty and Assigners' Academy more effectively (beyond an administrative capacity) to make use of their expertise in developing health and medical advice, building relationships with stakeholders and maintaining contact with cutting edge research developments
	Identify opportunities to partner with NHMRC's domestic and international allies (e.g. medical colleges, professional scientists, research agencies and agencies with which NHMRC has co-funding arrangements)
	Identify opportunities to increase commercial literacy within the research community and to facilitate the development of relationships between this community and industry
	Develop NHMRC's capacity in identifying areas of research need and use this to shape the research policy agenda
	Build an internal culture of service and professionalism through 70/20/10 development initiatives
	Ensure that staff with a public contact role have training in how to manage calls from members of the public or researchers and deal with difficult interactions
	Develop a plan to train NHMRC staff in the effective use of the new RGMS and the peer review process and in explaining the use of the new RGMS to internal and external users
Implementing a strong strategic HR function	Develop or recruit capability in priority areas of HR (change management, HR policy, strategic advice, learning and development, recruitment and selection, workforce planning, organisational and job design)
	Build a HR function that can strengthen the organisation by: identifying and prioritising workforce issues; providing data-driven insights to inform decisions about workforce management; and demonstrating its impact on business outcomes with sound data and analysis
	Ensure that HR experts have a 'seat at the Executive table' and contribute to decision making

INITIATIVES	STRATEGIES
Resourcing specific areas of capability	Develop or recruit capability in specific priority areas, such as analytics, trend analysis, governance, FOI, ethics, policy development, media/digital communications and use of the RGMS
	Develop or recruit capability in priority areas of corporate services such as project management, contract management, procurement, risk management, corporate policy
	Develop or recruit people who have experience of working in Ministerial offices and a strong understanding of Parliamentary and Cabinet processes and the operations of government
	Buy in new capability for time-limited project work (e.g. in relation to IT projects)
	Enhance the agency's capability in 'public service skills' e.g. governance, policy through targeted 70/20/10 development initiatives
	Develop attraction strategies that are targeted to specific sectors to bring staff with specific skill sets to NHMRC e.g. science communication graduates, data analytic practitioners
	For specific roles, identify the level at which science skills will be brought in to the agency; identify the right balance between attracting and growing these skills
	Review NHMRC's retention strategies and target them to critical roles in the agency
	Identify what it is that NHMRC can offer new staff and ensure that this is clearly communicated throughout the recruitment and selection process—its 'value proposition'
	Recruit staff with a science background with the clear expectation that they will be applying science literacy in a communication, advice or policy area
	Build NHMRC's analytic capability to develop the capacity to make use of 'big data' opportunities, identify trends, areas of need and associated priorities
	Make better use of NHMRC's research scientists as a bridge to the research community e.g. assisting in policy implementation arising from the structural review of grants; assisting the research community to adapt to changes in the grants process; monitoring trends and developments in health and medical research; identifying opportunities for NHMRC to contribute in relation to the MRFF and the innovation agenda; and contributing to the setting of research priorities
Implementing talent management and development strategies at the Executive and SES levels	Undertake succession planning at the Executive level and take steps to identify and build talent in high performing individuals at the EL 1 and EL 2 levels
	Implement a development program focused on change management and leadership capability at EL 1 and EL 2 levels
	Encourage mobility at the SES level to ensure periodic renewal in senior ranks; embed succession planning and renewal at the Executive and SES levels
	As a reward and development initiative, encourage Executive level staff to spend dedicated time engaged in critical thinking and acquiring knowledge in new areas of relevance to NHMRC's work—this should be formalised in individual development plans
	Provide learning opportunities for members of the Executive (e.g. involving mentoring relationships with Executive staff in other agencies) to assist them to develop their leadership and people management skills
	Provide media training for members of the Executive to enhance their capacity to represent the agency in a public capacity
	Schedule public engagements for members of the Executive to increase the agency's profile in relevant public domains

INITIATIVES	STRATEGIES
Building enhanced individual and organisational capability	Build NHMRC's Learning and Development capability to support the need for skill development in identified areas and to meet new challenges
	Develop and implement an agency-wide Learning and Development Plan incorporating identified priority areas and the development of high potentials, with a strong emphasis on the 70/20/10 approach to adult learning
	Instigate mentoring, shadowing and coaching programs targeted at staff at APS 6 and above
	Review and strengthen the agency's policies and practices in relation to study leave as an avenue for building staff capability
	Ensure that adequate handover arrangements are an integral part of mobility planning
	Develop strategies to increase the numbers of senior women in the agency
	Develop exchange programs with other agencies and across NHMRC; make better use of secondment opportunities
	Before outsourcing skilled work, consider opportunities to draw on or build internal capacity (possibly through partnering more closely with external providers)
	Ensure that every staff member's annual learning and development/performance management plan includes the acquisition of at least one new specific skill or area of knowledge
	Implement an appropriate knowledge management system that will meet NHMRC's needs; educate all staff in its use
Ensuring business capacity	Ensure that annual business planning incorporates resource planning to cater for workload peaks and troughs and includes flexible employment strategies such the use of contractors
	Continue to identify opportunities to improve business efficiency, particularly for lower level staff
	Undertake a prioritisation review; critically review all new proposals and identify whether or not NHMRC has the capacity to take them on
	Conduct a comprehensive skills audit to capture the location of critical skills in the agency that can be harnessed as needed
	Bring together and share resources from different parts of the agency to relieve pressure points as needed e.g. to support the work of the Research Programs Branch as it implements changes resulting from the structural review of grants; develop mechanisms to monitor and communicate this need across Branches/Sections
	Implement targeted job rotation within NHMRC to enhance individual's skills
	Introduce arrangements for hosting graduate placements through programs run by the Department of Health and its portfolio agencies and/or the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
	Improve remote access to NHMRC's online systems
	Develop and implement a more diverse portfolio of flexible working options for staff
	Establish a limited secondment brokerage service to expand NHMRC's capacity (the secondments should offer targeted opportunities within NHMRC that are available to the private and not-for-profit sectors, and to state and territory jurisdictions); monitor the APSC's development of a secondment brokerage service and, as this develops, identify opportunities for NHMRC to participate
	When requests to move to part-time status are approved, undertake a resourcing exercise to fill the remainder of the FTE in a job sharing arrangement

Attachment A: Findings from the Directors' survey

NHMRC *Skills and Capabilities Survey* was completed by Directors across NHMRC. The survey comprised a series of questions asking about each Section's needed and current skills and about the types of learning and development activities that Directors felt may be useful in their Section.

The survey was in two parts:

- Needed and current skills
- Learning and development.

Needed and current skills

Below, the results from NHMRC Directors' *Skills and Capabilities Survey* are described.

Table 1 below shows the number of times a Director indicated that a **Skills Gap** exists in their Section. A Skills Gap exists where there is a discrepancy between the level of skill needed for the work of the Section and the level of skill currently possessed across the Section. Two levels of Skills Gap (Significant and Extreme) are shown in the table below:

- A **Significant Skills Gap** exists where a skill is needed at an *Average or Advanced* level but the current level is *Basic or None*. In the table below, the numbers in the cells represent the number of Directors who identified a Significant Skills Gap in their Section. The cells are also colour coded as follows:

Significant Skills Gap in 3 or more Sections	Significant Skills Gap in 2 Sections	Significant Skills Gap in 1 Section	No Significant Skills Gap

- An **Extreme Skills Gap** exists where a skill is needed at an *Advanced* level but the current level is *Basic or None*. In the table below the number of asterisks (*) in each cell indicates how many Sections reported an Extreme Skills Gap.

Table 1: Number of times a skills gap was identified, by Branch

	Research Programs	Evidence Advice and Governance	Research Policy and Translation	Corp. Ops, Information and Legal
Communication				
1. Writing skills	0	0	0	2*
2. Critiquing or editing written material	0	0	0	1
3. Giving presentations	1	0	0	2
4. Representing NHMRC in external forums	1	0	0	1
5. Engaging with the media	0	1	1	0
6. Developing website content	0	0	0	2
7. Understanding and interpreting scientific information	0	0	1	2

	Research Programs	Evidence Advice and Governance	Research Policy and Translation	Corp. Ops, Information and Legal
8. Explaining scientific information	0	0	0	1
Working with others				
9. Working with external agencies (commonwealth/state/territory)	1	0	0	1
10. Working with the research sector	0	0	1	2
11. Understanding business/industry needs and commercial imperatives	2	0	1*	2
12. Understanding public health needs and perceptions	1	0	1*	2
13. Persuading, influencing and negotiating skills	1	1	1	0
Planning and critical thinking				
14. Understanding the goals and future directions of NHMRC	0	0	1	1
15. Identifying new ideas and opportunities for innovation	1	1	1*	1
16. Critically analysing information and drawing conclusions	3***	0	0	0
17. Assessing the quality of evidence	2*	1	1*	0
18. Developing risk management plans	1	0	2*	2
Achieving outcomes				
19. Working to a deadline and finishing tasks as expected	0	0	1	0
20. Developing project plans	0	0	0	4
21. Managing projects that have goals and timeframes	0	0	0	1
22. Identifying and managing resources (including financial resources)	2	0	1	3*
23. Reviewing and evaluating outcomes	1	1	1*	2*
24. Checking quality or accuracy	0	0	1*	2*
25. Developing new practices, systems or processes	0	0	1	3
26. Adopting or applying new ways of working	1*	0	2	2
Having and applying knowledge				
27. Knowledge of a field of scientific research	0	0	0	1
28. Transferring specialist knowledge and skills to others	0	1	0	0
29. Drawing on others' specialist knowledge or expertise	1*	0	0	2
30. Financial skills and accounting knowledge	0	0	2	3*
31. Legal skills and knowledge	0	0	2	0
32. Staff management skills and knowledge	0	0	1	0
33. Knowledge of ethics and integrity frameworks	0	0	1	1
Policy development and implementation				
34. Formulating and writing policy	1	0	1	1
35. Evaluating and analysing policy	2*	1	1	0
Governance knowledge and skills				
36. Knowledge of legislation, regulations and guidelines	0	0	1	1
37. Understanding compliance regimes, models or methods	0	0	1	1
38. Understanding Parliamentary and Cabinet processes	3	2	2*	1

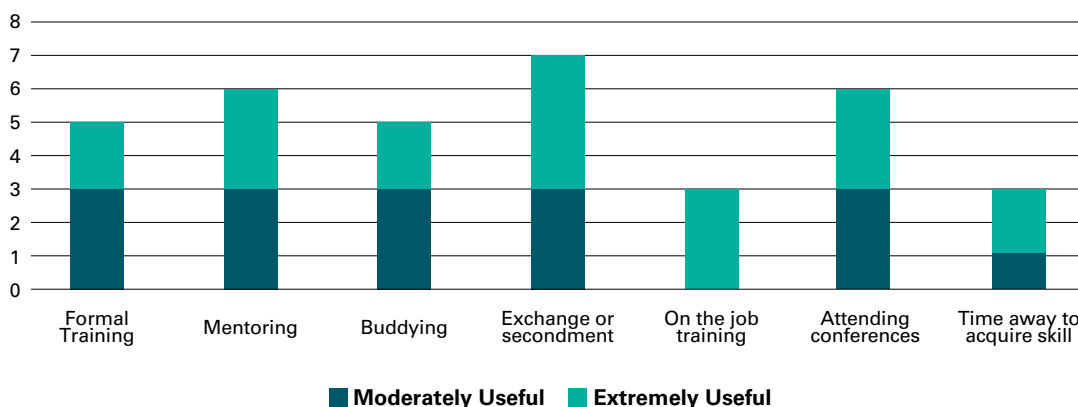|	Research Programs	Evidence Advice and Governance	Research Policy and Translation	Corp. Ops, Information and Legal
39. Knowledge of records management processes and/or systems	3	1	2	2
40. Providing secretariat services	0	0	0	0
41. Developing and maintaining standard operating procedures	0	0	0	2*
Grants, funds, procurement and contract management				
42. Grants administration and management	0	0	0	1
43. Compliance and quality checking	0	0	0	0
44. Conducting performance reporting	0	1	0	0
45. Understanding procurement and contract management	0	0	0	3
Data management, research and analysis skills				
46. Collecting and storing data	2*	0	0	2*
47. Analysing data and identifying patterns and trends	3*	0	0	1*
48. Analysing research outcomes and impacts	1*	1	0	1*
49. Understanding research methodologies	0	0	0	1
Systems skills				
50. System administration skills on any system	0	0	0	1
51. Identifying and resolving problems with IT systems and tools	0	1	0	0
52. Designing IT systems	1*	0	0	0
53. Undertaking digital publication activities	0	1*	0	2*

Learning and development

The figures below show the number of Directors who indicated that each training type was likely to be Moderately Useful (coloured blue) or Extremely Useful (coloured red) in their Section. Separate figures are presented for each Branch and then for the agency as a whole.
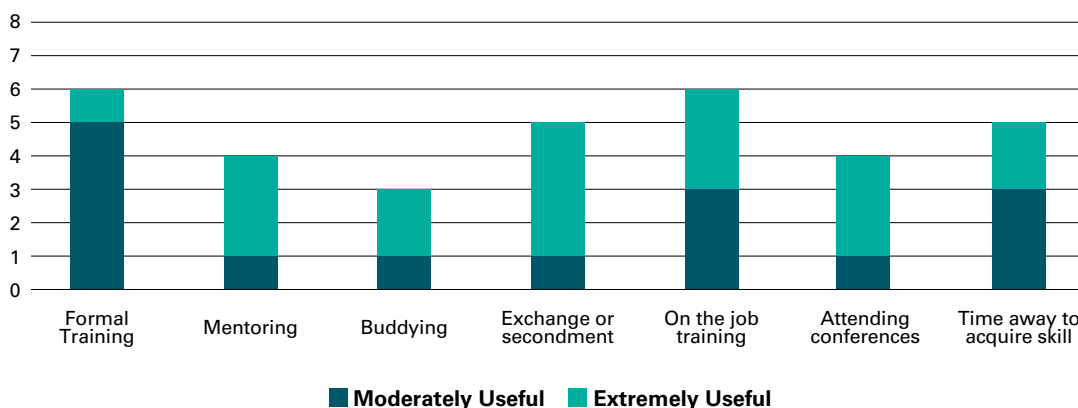
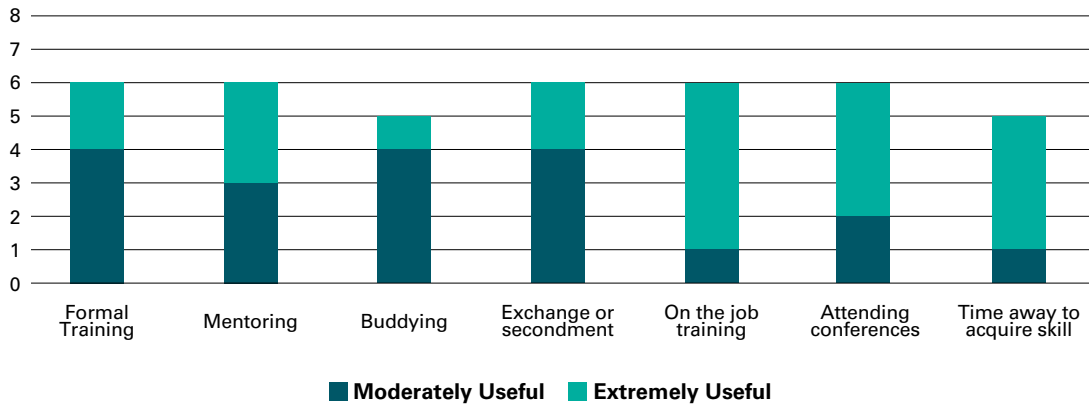**Research Programs**

Legend: ■ Moderately Useful ■ Extremely Useful

Evidence Advice and Governance

Legend: ■ Moderately Useful ■ Extremely Useful

Research Policy and Translation

Legend: ■ Moderately Useful ■ Extremely Useful
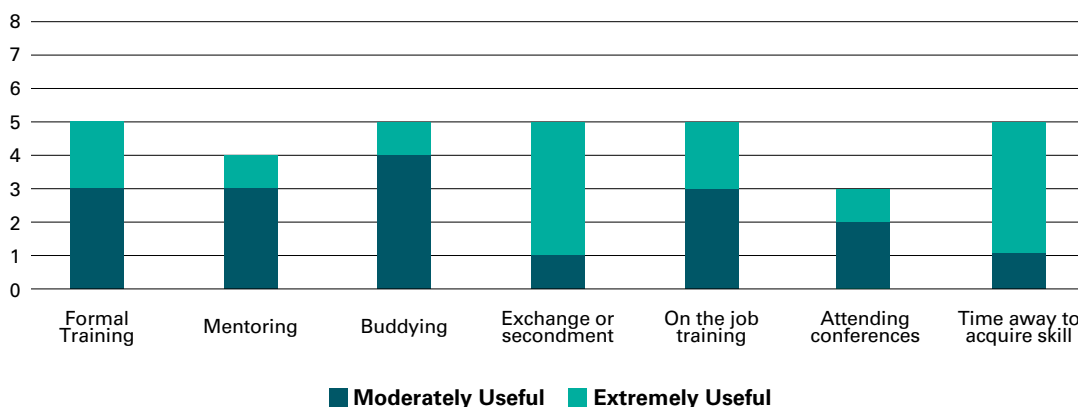
Corporate Ops, Information and Legal

Legend: ■ Moderately Useful ■ Extremely Useful

Categories: Formal Training, Mentoring, Buddying, Exchange or secondment, On the job training, Attending conferences, Time away to acquire skill

Whole of NHMRC

Legend: ■ Moderately Useful ■ Extremely Useful

Categories: Formal Training, Mentoring, Buddying, Exchange or secondment, On the job training, Attending conferences, Time away to acquire skill