



SHARED SERVICES PROGRAM

Lessons learned

The Australian Public Service (APS), through the Shared Services Program is learning from the experiences of Australian Government departments, states and territories, international governments and the private sector to roll out shared services.

Other organisations with shared services

Public and private sector organisations world-wide are adopting shared service programs to enhance, standardise and achieve efficiencies through economies of scale for their corporate services and Enterprise Resource Planning systems.

Fourteen agencies, including six hubs, have transitioned under the Program to date, with other in-scope agencies currently undertaking consolidation and planning activities in preparation for transition.

Commonwealth, state and territory agencies in Australia and governments in Northern Ireland and New Zealand have introduced similar shared services programs.

Organisations that have reviewed their implementation phases acknowledge shared services can work well following some initial hurdles.

Governments that have successfully implemented shared services include:

- ACT Government
- Government of South Australia
- Assembly of Northern Ireland
- NSW Government through HealthShare NSW

What we have learned

Strong leadership is essential

Governments and organisations have shown us that a lack of senior leadership buy-in and failure to champion initiatives within agencies will likely hamper the success of the Program.

By reporting regularly to the Secretaries Board we will help ensure that the Program is led with authority.

We will also invest time into regular top down communication that ensures the Program has the appropriate champions to encourage implementation and maintain momentum.

Up-front funding

Funding is necessary to enable the hubs to improve the quality and efficiency of services through automation, to provide transition assistance to agencies, and to achieve an overall reduction in base funding for corporate services and software solutions in the long term.

To address this, funding from the Public Service Modernisation Fund has been made available to assist the hubs develop the appropriate capability and to assist agencies with the transition process.

It's a long-term game

A transformation of this magnitude requires a significant investment of time to ensure phases, and the activities within them, are being completed successfully.

Research has shown that transactional services may take up to four years to consolidate and standardise.

Agency culture and attitude towards large scale changes will also take time to adapt and require an ongoing change and communication program of work.

A staged approach is required

Transition should be staggered in order to gradually introduce changes, learnings and encourage adoption.

The Program has sought to limit the initial focus to core transactional services, and stage implementation by consolidating and standardising processes and systems.

Over time, the APS will develop as an intelligent customer of corporate services and be better placed to engage the market and leverage additional services and expertise as required.

For more information about the Program:

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