Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
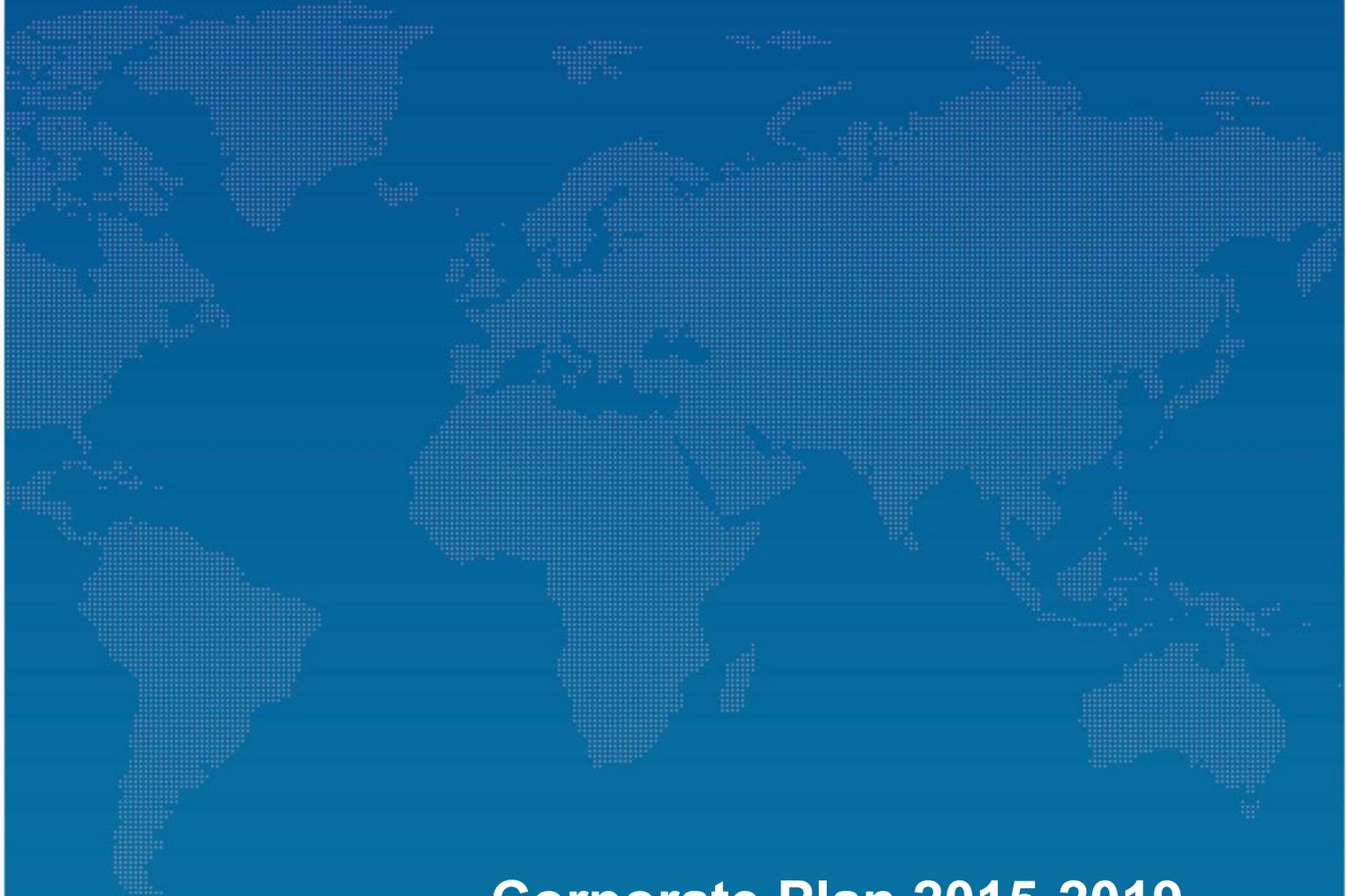
Corporate Plan 2015-2019

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

August 2015

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Contact

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Secretary's message

Secretary, Peter Varghese AO

The corporate plan of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade articulates how the department will deliver on and measure its performance in delivering the Government's foreign, trade and investment, and development priorities.

The environment in which the department operates is undergoing significant change. Global uncertainty — driven by weak global demand and shifting strategic currents — continues to present significant challenges. As the Indo–Pacific's economic and strategic weight increases, regional cooperation and a commitment to open economies will be crucial to expanding prosperity and narrowing strategic risk.

The department is committed to using its core assets - its staff and its overseas network of posts – to advance Australia's core interests in this more complex global environment. Now more than ever, Australia's economic prosperity is influenced by regional and international conditions and developments, and defined by our ability to shape and respond to them. This also demands the department's close engagement on key economic and productivity debates in Australia.

The department has an ambitious agenda to deliver over the next four years. This corporate plan, prepared in the 2015-16 reporting period, outlines how the department will perform its functions for the period 2015-16 to 2019-20, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b)/95(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The larger result of the Corporate Plan, as outlined in the department's *2015-2019 Strategic Framework*, is to help make Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous.

Peter Varghese AO

Secretary

Purpose

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the department) works to make Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous by promoting and protecting our interests internationally and contributing to global stability and economic growth, specifically in the Indo-Pacific region.

In partnership with government and non-government organisations, business and community groups in Australia and overseas, the department leads the Government's efforts to shape the regional and international environment, progress Australia's international security priorities and strengthen global cooperation in ways that advance Australia's interests.

The department works to open up new markets and generate conditions for increased trade and investment to strengthen Australia's economy and create jobs. It helps lift living standards and reduce poverty in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. The department projects a positive and contemporary image of Australia as a destination for business, investment, tourism and study and provides high-quality passport and consular advice to Australian citizens.

Over the next four years (2015-2016 to 2019-2020), the department will achieve its purpose through:

› promoting a stable and prosperous regional and global environment by cultivating and deepening our engagement with bilateral and regional partners and multilateral institutions;

› improving market access for Australian goods and services, attracting foreign investment to Australia and supporting Australian business abroad;

› delivering an innovative aid program, centred on the Indo-Pacific region, which contributes to sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and regional stability;

› providing a secure, efficient and responsive passport service, and prompt, effective and courteous consular services to Australian citizens travelling or living abroad;

› building personal networks and institutional links to enhance Australia's influence, reputation and relationships internationally and promote Australia's economic cultural, educational, scientific and other national assets;

› leading the Government's response to international crises including humanitarian emergencies in the Indo-Pacific region;

› strengthening international frameworks and norms that promote human rights, gender equality, democratic principles and the rule of law, international security, and open and transparent global markets;

› broadening knowledge and understanding within the Australian community and globally of the Government's international policies and programs and the department's role; and

› keeping government communications secure, Australia's global property assets in good order, and ensuring the security and health of our staff.

The department's highly skilled and motivated staff, its network of overseas posts and its efficient and accessible systems will ensure that the department continues delivering on making Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous into the future.

Operating environment

The international environment for advancing Australia's interests will become more complex and contested over the life of this corporate plan. The department will play a lead role in protecting and pursuing Australia's interests in a world in which:

› the boundaries between domestic and international agendas are further disappearing;

› greater economic integration and strategic competition will characterise the Indo-Pacific region;

› this region will become the fulcrum of geo-strategic and economic shifts of lasting importance; and

› a broader range of domestic and international non-state actors will be engaged in foreign, trade and development policy development and outcomes.

Within a constrained budgetary environment, the department will continue to advance Australia's national interests abroad while engaging and shaping key policy debates at home.

In the Indo-Pacific, emerging powers' growing economic weight will be accompanied by their growing capacity to project their strategic interests in ways that interact with ours. In a more multipolar region, Australia's security will depend more on how the region's major powers manage their relationships and how effectively Australia reacts to, and influences, key political, economic, and social developments.

Globally, we are likely to see further challenges to the post-war institutions, laws, principles and norms of international behaviour that comprise the existing international order. International cooperation will be more contested and our ability to secure multilateral outcomes will be stretched. Some regional and global institutions, such as the G20 and East Asia Summit, may have bigger roles in securing Australia's stability and prosperity and require commensurate diplomatic effort.

Emerging economies, especially those in the Indo-Pacific, are expected to underpin global economic growth. Our exports and economy should benefit as we bed down existing free trade agreements (FTAs) s and capitalise on new opportunities to improve market access for our goods and services, attract foreign investment, and support business. This should support the Australian economy's transition away from mining investment-led economic growth to a broader growth base. While the overall global environment for trade and capital flows will have its challenges, including slowing economic growth in China, Australia should be well placed to capitalise on the emergence of billions of new Asian consumers.

Governance in the Indo-Pacific will continue to be challenged by the region's various development challenges. Poverty will remain a part of our international environment, and a challenge for our aid program, particularly in the South Pacific and parts of Southeast Asia. Our aid investments will need to respond to crises as well as contribute to longer-term goals of sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and regional stability.

The international community will continue to be vulnerable to terrorist attacks from radical groups such as Da'esh and those they inspire in our neighbourhood and domestically.

As more Australians travel overseas, the department will play a key role in supporting their security and welfare through its passport and consular services.

Performance

This section sets out the department's core activities in achieving its purpose and sets out benchmarks and indicators of progress over the next four years. This should be read in conjunction with the 2015-16 Portfolio Budget Statement, the 2015-16 Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement and the 2014-15 Annual Report.

Success will be measured against the extent to which the department's advice on and implementation of its foreign, trade and investment, and development policy makes Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous. With each priority, the department's performance will be judged by the extent to which our advice and implementation is regarded by ministers and parliamentary secretaries as timely and of high quality.

Promoting a stable and prosperous regional and global environment

The department cultivates and deepens Australia's engagement with bilateral and regional partners and with multilateral institutions, with a particular focus on the Indo-Pacific region. The department thus helps government actively shape the international environment through strategic development of strong bilateral relationships; coalition-building with other nations with common interests; and an activist approach to using regional and global institutions and forums to create rules and norms that promote stability, peace and prosperity.

The Indo-Pacific is rapidly entrenching its position as the centre of gravity of the global economy and the crucible of emerging geo-strategic competition. Developments here will have the greatest direct impact on Australia and provide the context in which we pursue both our global and bilateral interests.

Major operational activities

› Leading whole-of-government development and implementation of strategies to promote Australia's interests internationally.

› Using overseas missions to build strong bilateral relationships and for high-quality information-gathering, analysis and advocacy in support of government policies.

› Developing networks and coalitions of like-minded international partners in pursuit of shared objectives to maximise Australia's influence.

› Providing timely, high-quality advice to ministers and parliamentary secretaries on international developments and appropriate policy responses.

› Creating and exploiting opportunities to advocate Australian interests internationally through high-quality support for ministerial visits to key partners and international forums.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › other departments' views on coordination and promotion of Australia's interests internationally › examples of coordination and leadership to advance Australia's interests internationally › ability to shape outcomes which reflect Australian interests, including through coalition-building with international partners.	Annually

Improving market access for Australian goods and services, attracting foreign investment and supporting business

Through its economic diplomacy strategy, the department will work to open new market access opportunities for Australian exports of goods and services and investment, resolve trade and investment barriers, foster conditions and networks that will attract productive foreign investment to Australia and support Australian business in their overseas commercial endeavours.

We will advance these objectives through the negotiation and implementation of trade agreements at bilateral, plurilateral, regional and multilateral levels, sustained efforts bilaterally to address regulatory obstacles to trade and investment, continuing support for a strong multilateral trade rules system and advocating for global and domestic reforms that deliver trade liberalising, pro-growth and market-based policy outcomes.

Major operational activities

› We will implement the FTAs with China, Korea and Japan, encouraging Australian business to fully utilise the opportunities arising from the agreements. Concluding the regional Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with India and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement are key priorities.

› Multilaterally, the department will support efforts to conclude the Doha Round of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations and the Trade in Services Agreement. We will seek to advance negotiations to accede to the WTO Government Procurement Agreement and support efforts to bring into force the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation. We will advance Australia's trade interests through active participation in the WTO's dispute settlement system.

› Bilaterally, the department will advocate and negotiate for the interests of Australian business and address 'behind the border' barriers to Australian exports and investment.

› The department will continue to provide high-quality economic analysis and contribute to the Government's major domestic economic reforms. We will work to attract foreign investment to Australia, and secure and protect investment access for Australia abroad. We will contribute to increasing tourism to Australia through work with partner governments and international organisations.

› The department will provide support to Australian business engaged in global trade and investment through implementation of the department's Charter for Business, practical support on the ground overseas, well targeted trade finance policies and sharing analytical insights through our Business Envoy publication.

› The department will contribute to whole-of-government outcomes sought in the G20, focused on pro-growth economic policies, and trade and investment liberalisation.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › the impact of the department's advice and advocacy to deliver trade and investment outcomes for Australian business › the achievement of Australian economic interests in bilateral, regional, plurilateral and international outcomes	Annually
Surveys	Qualitative and quantitative business surveys on businesses' satisfaction with the department's support	Annually

Delivering an innovative aid program

The Government's aid policy, *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability*, and the performance framework, *Making Performance Count: enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of Australian aid* were released in June 2014. They establish the rationale, direction and performance framework for an effective aid program.

The aid program's purpose – to promote Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction – acknowledges that economic growth is the most sustainable way to reduce poverty and lift living standards.

The department is pursuing new approaches to aid delivery to improve impact and value for money. Our innovationXchange has a key role in this, engaging creative thinkers across the public and private sectors to promote and encourage the use of innovation in the aid program.

Major operational activities

We are pursuing this purpose by focusing on two development outcomes:

› strengthening private sector development; and

› enabling human development.

The program focuses on the Indo-Pacific, and investments are directed to six priority areas addressing regional barriers to growth and key poverty challenges.

Figure 1: Aid program strategic framework
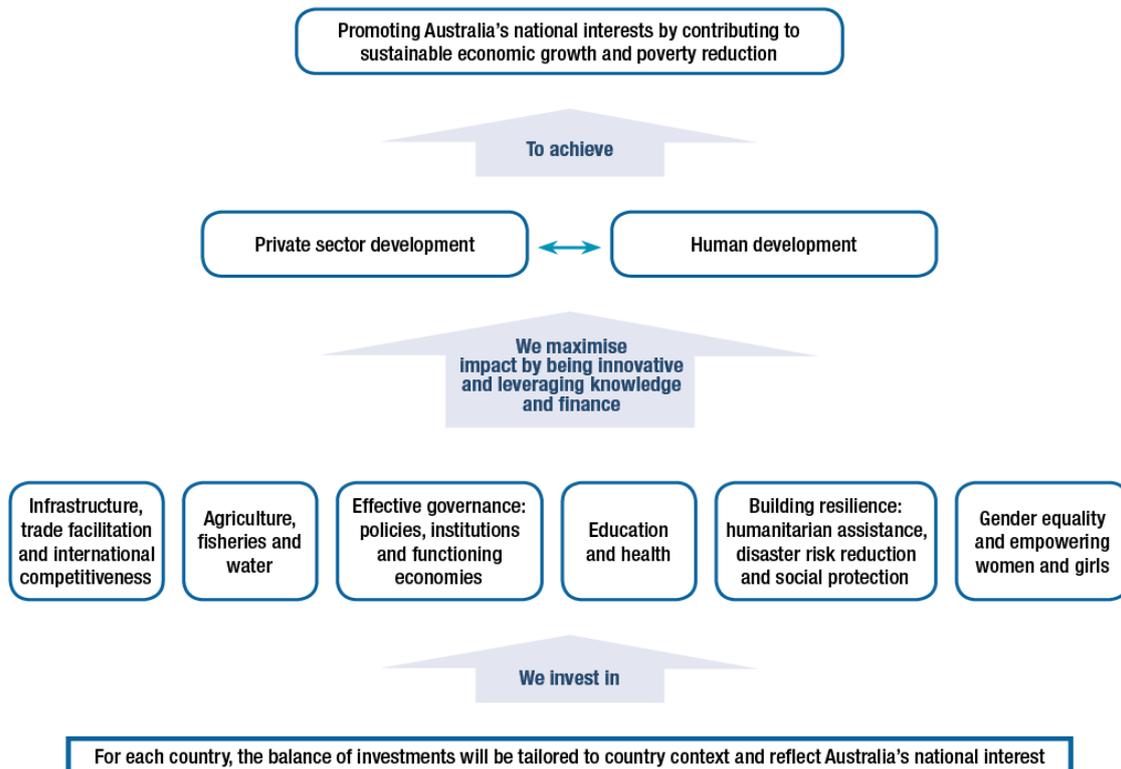
Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Performance of Australia Aid Report	Assesses the performance of the aid program against the ten strategic targets as outlined in the Government's development policy	Annually

Providing passport and consular services

Passport services

With demand forecast to remain strong in the next four years, the department will continue providing a secure, efficient and responsive passport service to Australian citizens.

Major operational activities

› We will further develop the technology and business processes that underpin the Australian passport system, making best use of innovations in biometrics, electronic transactions, document security, data validation and fraud detection and prevention to remain a world leader in passport technology. Enhanced data capture and high speed production initiatives will facilitate accurate and streamlined processing with better surge capacity. Increased use of the concept of the 'known client' will complement other smart work practices.

› We will continue to pursue our national and international security goals, and will work closely with relevant Australian agencies, foreign governments and the International Civil Aviation Organization to curb misuse of passports by criminals and terrorists.

› Our experience in producing Australia's premier identity document will enable us to contribute to the national digital transformation agenda particularly through the establishment of a trusted digital identity derived from our strong enrolment process. Within the next four years, we will develop the world's first 'Cloud Passport' - a virtual travel identity – for travel between Australia and New Zealand and potentially wider use in the longer term.

Key performance measures and assessment

The department's performance measurement and assessment of its passport service will take into account the extent to which client service level standards, as set out in the Passport Office Client Service Charter, are met.

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › the accessibility of passport services to clients and service delivery › the feedback from key partner governments and organisations on the standard and interoperability of Australian passports and services	Annually
Review	The department will review: › the absolute number and the accuracy of passports issued › the time taken to process regular and urgent applications	Ongoing

Consular services

With a high demand for consular assistance, the department will continue providing access to appropriate consular advice and/or assistance for Australians who experience significant difficulties overseas.

Major operational activities

› We will make the department's consular services available 24/7, through the Government's network of overseas posts and our staff in Australia. We will provide clear, timely and accurate information to all Australians, to assist them to make decisions about their travel overseas and to minimise risks.

› We will implement the *Consular Strategy 2014-16* as a framework for providing modern, efficient and cost-effective support to Australians who experience significant difficulties overseas. We will help Australians better understand the consular role so that they are more able to look after themselves overseas. We will capitalise on new technologies to enhance service delivery.

› We will further develop our processes for obtaining regular direct feedback and will use the information gathered to drive continuous improvement. To broaden public understanding of the consular role, we will publish an annual 'State of Play on Consular Services' report that will include data on recent trends and selected case studies.

› We will improve our cooperation and dialogue with private sector groups to expand our messaging and to build better partnerships. We will work with the newly formed Consular Consultative Group to support effective stakeholder outreach on consular matters.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › the delivery of high-quality, timely and effective consular services to clients	Annually
Review	The department will review: › the timeliness and accuracy of providing information, response to incidents and updates to travel advice › the quantitative measures of website visits, social media users and subscribers to travel advice	Annually

Enhancing Australia's influence

In order to strengthen Australia's influence, reputation and relationships internationally, the department will advance targeted public diplomacy initiatives which promote our economic, artistic and cultural, sporting, scientific and education assets. The objectives of the department's Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014-16 are to:

(i) promote Australia's competitive investment environment, open and resilient economy, predictable regulatory framework and commitment to trade liberalisation, tourism investment opportunities, strong education and training credentials, and excellence in science, technology and innovation;

(ii) build understanding of Australia's role in and commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, including deeper integration, sustainable development and gender equality;

(iii) strengthen Australia's influence in shaping the international architecture in ways which advance our core national interests and underpin prosperity in our region; and

(iv) promote Australia as a contemporary, creative, successful, diverse and tolerant nation; and an attractive place to study, work, visit, live and invest.

Major operational activities

› Programs to promote Australia's cultural exports and creative exchange including: the International Cultural Visits program, the Focus Country Programs, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program, the Visual Arts Program, and the new Fashion and Design Program.

› The International Media Visits (IMV) program will provide participant journalists and their readers with an increased understanding of contemporary Australia.

› Promote the new sports diplomacy strategy to capitalise on Australia's sporting assets and expertise to promote Australia's diplomatic, development and economic interests.

› The development of a science diplomacy strategy in 2015 to promote Australia's science, research and innovation capabilities and assets.

› Promote the New Colombo Plan, which expands knowledge of the Indo-Pacific by supporting Australian undergraduates to study and undertake internships in the region.

› Build deeper and broader people to people and institutional links through the Foundations, Councils and Institutes, Australia Awards, Australian Volunteers for International Development and the Australian NGO Cooperation Program.

› The development of a whole-of-government international alumni engagement strategy in collaboration with government and tertiary institution partners.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › the extent to which public diplomacy initiatives achieve public diplomacy objectives	Annually
Review	The department will review: › the ability of programs to build links overseas and increase Australia's influence › qualitative and quantitative metrics for determining the success of public diplomacy activities	Annually

Leading the Government's response to international crises & humanitarian emergencies

Australia is committed to responding to international crises that affect our interests, whether consular, humanitarian or political in nature. The department will lead government's response to ensure a coordinated whole-of-government approach which helps affected Australians and supports countries, especially in the Indo-Pacific region, impacted by humanitarian emergencies. Our response will deliver comprehensive and clear advice to government, as well as immediate consular assistance to affected Australians and their families. Our humanitarian response will address the differentiated needs of affected people and build communities' resilience to recover from future disasters.

The department will ensure effective contingency planning is in place to prepare for, respond to, and recover from international crises and humanitarian emergencies. This will be done in close cooperation with our consular, bilateral and development partners.

Major operational activities

› We will provide whole-of-government leadership on international crises, including through coordination with partner agencies

› We will respond to crises by triggering the department's crisis response mechanisms through the activation of the Crisis Centre; deployment of government officials, experts and technical capabilities; funding through key Australian and international humanitarian partners; and providing emergency relief supplies and logistics support.

› We learn from each response and facilitate information sharing and innovation to improve our operational responses. We will provide coherent engagement on and support during crises through our diplomatic, consular and humanitarian efforts. We will work with trusted partners, including the UN, private sector, NGOs, other governments and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, who can assist the delivery of consular services for Australians, access affected communities and provide effective assistance.

› We will develop effective contingency plans to help Australian missions overseas respond to crises. With a focus on the Indo-Pacific region, we will build the capacity of national governments, regional organisations, and civil society to manage crises themselves.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › effective leadership and coordination of government's response to international crises › humanitarian leadership within the Indo Pacific region and international humanitarian system	Annually
Review	The department will review: › the effectiveness of our crisis management mechanisms in delivering a coordinated crises response › the provision of consular support to affected Australians › the provision of life-saving assistance to vulnerable women, girls, men, and boys in crisis situations › the level and scope of disaster risk-reduction and recovery programs	Annually or after each crisis

Strengthening international frameworks and norms

A key objective of the department's work is to strengthen international frameworks, norms and the rule of law in areas as diverse as human rights, peace and security, the environment, banking and criminal justice. Although the multilateral system has limitations, it serves our national interest in important ways, and we strive to ensure it works as effectively as possible. This objective is prosecuted in a variety of multilateral and regional forums, including through the United Nations (UN) and international financial and legal institutions. Our multilateral work also reinforces regional and bilateral relationships.

Major operational activities

› The department will work towards the negotiation and implementation of a global climate change agreement that creates a common playing field for all countries and contributes to the 2-degree goal. We will cooperate with international and regional partners to prevent maritime people smuggling and to support refugee resettlement. We are integrating gender equality across our work through a gender equality strategy, as well as taking gender equality forward through forums such as the High Level Review of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security.

› The department advances Australia's commitment to human rights through the Human Rights Council, the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly. Australia's Universal Periodic Review in late 2015 provides a further opportunity to demonstrate this commitment.

› The department will leverage our successful term on the Security Council to progress our interests in strengthening counter-terrorism, transnational crime, peacekeeping, non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. We will promote norms of responsible behaviour in space and cyberspace through international, regional and bilateral meetings and dialogues.

› We will continue to promote Australia's interests in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and to strengthen global development effectiveness norms. We will support the reduction of poverty through the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, and engage with key emerging institutions, including the Asian Infrastructure Development Bank and the Green Climate Fund.

› We will promote adherence to international law and the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes. Together with the Department of Environment, we will co-lead the development of the Government's 20 Year Plan for Antarctica. We will continue to support the Timor Sea treaty framework and defend the arbitration brought by Timor-Leste regarding the Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › the views of other departments on the coordination and promotion of Australia's interests in multilateral fora › the department's ability to shape multilateral outcomes which reflect Australian interests › the department's leadership of whole of government strategies on multilateral issues	Annually

Broadening knowledge of the Government's international policies

Active engagement with media, domestically and overseas, contributes to informed coverage of Australia's policies and programs as well as effective crisis management during humanitarian and consular crises. The department's strategic communications effort supports key foreign, trade and aid policy initiatives, with our use of social media continuing to expand through more accounts, in more countries on more platforms in order to engage directly with stakeholders. We are enhancing our online and multimedia presence to deliver high quality information to the public through our Australian and overseas mission websites.

Major operational activities

The department will assist the Government to meet its foreign, trade and investment, development and international security policy priorities over 2015-16 and forward years by developing and implementing programs and projects to enhance international awareness and understanding of Australia and Australian policies to advance our national interests. Major activities include:

› managing queries from domestic and international media organisations in addition to foreign media queries responded to by Australian missions overseas;

› providing on-the-ground assistance to Australian media covering the Government's response to disasters overseas;

› managing media arrangements for ministerial visits overseas, and preparing media releases and public statements for the department, portfolio ministers and parliamentary secretaries;

› deepening the department's digital presence by launching revamped websites for overseas missions and continuing to increase our social media presence to reach and engage with different audiences; and

› developing a digital media strategy to support the department's expanding social media presence and building our digital capabilities.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Case studies	The department will use case studies to highlight and assess: › the department's ability to engage media in communicating key messages › the department's ability to inform and influence media reporting on Australia › the timeliness, quality and professionalism of media enquiries management from domestic and international media	Annually
Review	The department will review: › the quantity and quality of responses to media enquiries handled by the department › the quantity of visits to the departmental website and embassy websites, and of departmental social media accounts and 'followers'	Annually

Securing communications and global property assets

Underpinning our work is a commitment to keep government communications secure, Australia's global property assets in good order, and ensuring the security and health of our staff.

This commitment involves up-to-date threat, risk management capability and mitigation measures that are commensurate with the fluid domestic and international security environments.

Major operational activities

› maintaining and strengthening physical security for chanceries, residences and other premises in accordance with the department's physical and infrastructure security standards and guidelines;

› implementing an International Communications Network (ICN) program to better protect information;

› applying robust day-to-day operational security measures and procedures, together with technical countermeasures;

› managing personnel security, including through rigorous security clearance vetting;

› delivering targeted security training; and

› engendering a strong culture of security awareness and vigilance.

Key performance measures and assessment

Measurement	Assessment	Period
Review	The department will review: › the quantity of security breaches and other evidence of a strong security awareness culture › the quantity of requests for internal departmental advice on security threats and risks, travel approvals, clearances and security practices › the accessibility and reliability of the secure cable network › the construction and refurbishment of departmental overseas property, completed within agreed timeframes and budgets › the annual assessment of asset management plans › the satisfaction of the department's tenants	Annually

Capability

The department has developed a capability improvement program for the next four years, which aims to make the department a more resilient, flexible, innovative and efficient organisation, responsive to new challenges and to the requirements of the Government and the community.

The program aligns with the objectives of the Strategic Framework 2015-19, notably "enhancing our organisational capability to improve how we work and contribute to government policy-making and the delivery of whole-of-government outcomes". The program also supports the department's Values Statement. The program covers seven work streams:

› organisational strategy, planning and performance

› leadership and organisational culture

› risk and innovation

› workforce development

› collaboration and engagement

› knowledge and information management

› communications (internal and external).

Workforce Planning[1]

The department is a large and geographically dispersed organisation. With around 6,200 staff working in over 100 locations, our workforce is diverse and delivers across a broad and highly-integrated foreign affairs, trade, and aid agenda.

Workforce Snapshot[2]
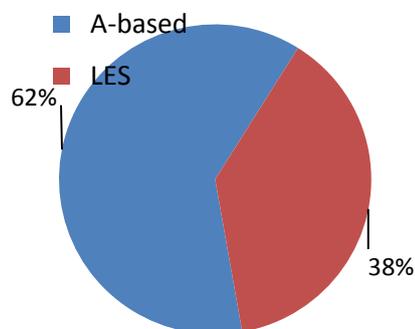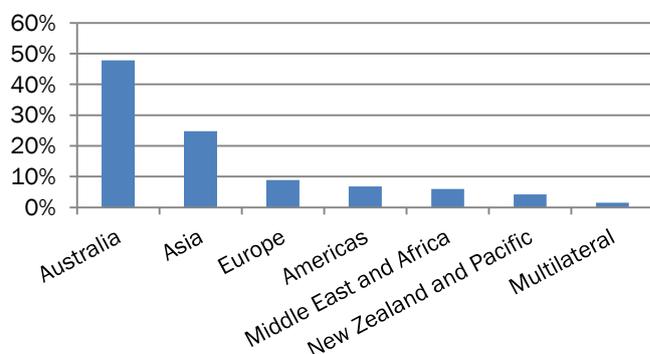
Over the next two years, the department's workforce size will stabilise and the department will continue to focus on building expertise. Key areas of activity include:

› deepening the department's expertise in key areas of policy development, program delivery and enabling services;

› promoting female representation, particularly at the SES level, through a Women in Leadership project; and

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[1] Locally engaged staff (LES) are locally engaged staff directly employed by overseas missions and are not considered members of the Australian Public Service. Australia-based (A based) staff are directly employed by the department, and are considered members of the Australian Public Service.

[2] Headcount data as at 30 June 2015.

> broadening exchange arrangements with other APS agencies, industry, and international organisations.

Improved workforce planning is a key pillar in the department's strategy to modernise its human resources enabling services. We will work to ensure challenges to future workforce capacity or capability can be identified, assessed, and addressed by the department's leadership.

Capital Investment Strategy

The department has a significant capital budget of $535 million, which reflects its diverse functions. In 2015/16, the department will develop a five-year Capital Strategic Plan to identify what current investment (worth $2.6 billion in 2013-2014) will need to be replaced, when, as well as the enhancements required to meet evolving strategic priorities.

The department's regular monitoring of capital expenditure will enhance oversight, manage risks and help maintain momentum of investment in three primary areas of ICT equipment, physical security and property. Significant areas of investment over the period include:

> the International Communications Network

> Jakarta Embassy

> Washington Embassy

> establishing new posts in Phuket, Ulaanbaatar, Doha, Houston, Makassar and Buka

> the Passport Redevelopment Project

> protective security.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The department will implement a new ICT Strategy in 2015 - 2016 to support current and future business requirements. Aligned with the department's Strategic Framework, the ICT Strategy is comprised of six key themes:

> Innovation – explore and deliver technology solutions that support and encourage the department's commitment to innovation;

> Information Security – ensure the security and protection of information and ICT services;

> Business Continuity – ensure the continuation of the department's global ICT systems and services, and prevent disruption to normal operational capability;

> Service Quality – deliver quality systems and services that contribute to the department and its partner agencies;

> ICT Investment – ensure the return on investment in ICT enhances strategic planning and capability that will meet agency objectives and whole-of-government strategies; and

> ICT Workforce Capability – build a sustainable and capable workforce to enable successful delivery of government services.

The department supplies essential ICT services to 49 partner agencies. It will look to improve and expand the services it offers, as well as increase the number of agencies that receive the service.

With a focus on building more responsive, agile and flexible ICT solutions, the department will work collaboratively with industry and our whole-of-government partners to ensure the delivery of high quality ICT and information services domestically and overseas.

Risk Oversight and Management

The department attaches a high priority to promoting a culture of positively engaging with risk within its work and functions. Operating in a complex and dynamic international environment, the department's ability to actively manage and engage with risk largely determines the extent to which it can achieve its objectives.

The department's *Guide to Better Risk Management* draws on a range of legislation, policies and international guidance on risk management, including the *Public Governance Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy, International Risk Management Standard ISO1000:2009 "Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines", and the department's Audit and Risk Committee. The *Guide to Better Risk Management* will act as a guide to the department's risk oversight and management over the next four years.

Risk management

The department operates in high risk environments, particularly overseas, where security may be an issue, governance is often poor, health and staff safety issues are of constant concern and there may be a strong risk of local corruption. Risk management at the department is about being open to an appropriate level of risk through balancing the level of risk against potential benefits and opportunities.

Divisions, posts and State and Territory Offices (STOs) all maintain and update a risk register. Risk registers assist the work unit in managing risks and are reviewed periodically by the Departmental Executive, as part of the Division/Post/STO Business Planning Review.

Divisions, posts and STOs record their decisions on risk in business plans and risk registers. These risk registers and business plans are reviewed every six months in which a Critical Risk List is generated identifying the higher risks for consideration by the Audit and Risk Committee and the Departmental Executive. An Enterprise Risk Group also convenes every six months to prepare a report on enterprise risks for consideration by both bodies.

The department's Senior Executive reviews business plans and risk registers for divisions, posts and STOs as part of business planning reviews.

The department's broader governance structure, including its Ethics Committee and Workplace Relations Committee, also plays an important role in the governance of the organisation.