



Australian Government
Australian Public Service
Commission

Indigenous Secondment Pilot Guidelines



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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

These guidelines provide an overview of the Indigenous Secondment Pilot (the Pilot) and key information and requirements for participating agencies and Indigenous Secondees.

PILOT OVERVIEW

The Pilot provides an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in participating Australian Government agencies to undertake a secondment to another agency. The Pilot involves two industry streams: law enforcement/regulation; and science. It seeks to give Indigenous employees an opportunity to further develop their capabilities, and experience working in other agencies within their industry stream.

The Pilot is administered by the APSC's Indigenous Capability Team, in collaboration with the following Australian Government agencies:

LAW ENFORCEMENT/REGULATION

- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC)
- Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA)
- Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC)
- Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC)
- Commonwealth Ombudsman
- Department of Defence.

SCIENCE

- Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA)
- Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)
- Department of Defence
- The Department of Environment and Energy
- Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS).

The Pilot is open to ongoing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees from participating agencies at the APS5 to EL2 (or equivalent) classifications.

PILOT OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the Pilot are to:

- a. assess the effectiveness of secondments as a strategy to retain and develop Indigenous employees
- b. assess the effectiveness of secondments as a strategy to build cultural awareness and capability of workplaces
- c. determine if there are any Indigenous-specific factors or considerations that would support the effectiveness of secondment programs.

SECONDMENT OBJECTIVES

The strategic objective of the secondments is to retain and develop the skills and capabilities of Indigenous employees to support the delivery of Commonwealth agency outcomes. Specifically, to:

- a. provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees with exposure to the work and culture of other agencies
- b. enhance the skills and capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS
- c. contribute to the retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees within the APS
- d. contribute to the advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS.

PILOT DETAILS

SECONDMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Secondments under the Pilot are distinct from other resourcing arrangements, and can be identified by the following characteristics:

- a. there is a focus on the development of the Secondee
- b. the Secondee remains an employee of the Home agency
- c. the secondment will be located at the Host agency
- d. the Secondee will perform their duties under the supervision of the Host agency.

ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for placement under the Pilot an employee must:

- a. identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- b. be an ongoing APS employee of a participating agency
- c. be substantively at the APS5 to EL2 classification
- d. not be subject to a current investigation or sanction in relation to the APS Code of Conduct
- e. not currently being managed for underperformance.

DURATION

Secondments will be for four to six months duration, dependent on the development needs of the Secondee and the availability of a suitable placement within a Host agency.

LOCATION

Secondments will ordinarily be in the same city as the Secondee's current work location. If a Home agency supports placement into a Host agency at another location, the Home agency will be responsible for any travel or relocation entitlements, consistent with the Enterprise Agreement of the Home agency.

SELECTION AND MATCHING

Home agencies will undertake internal processes to identify suitable candidates to be considered for secondment. This may include seeking expressions of interest or a direct approach to employees. An information flyer has been prepared that Agencies may tailor to their individual needs (Attachment A).

In nominating an employee for the Pilot, the Home agency must be satisfied that the employee:

- a. meets the eligibility requirements for the Pilot
- b. has clear development objectives that could be met through participation in a secondment
- c. has the capacity to succeed in a secondment to another agency
- d. is willing to participate in a secondment to another agency.

The Home agency will submit the details of nominated employees to the APSC using the Secondment Nomination Form at Attachment B.

The APSC will provide nominations to all participating agencies.

Participating agencies will identify potential placement opportunities within their agency that may be suitable for nominated employees.

The APSC will convene a meeting to facilitate matching of employees to potential suitable placements. It is expected that no more than ten placements will be available under the Pilot.

Agency Coordinators will liaise within their agency to determine final placements. This may include facilitating face-to-face meetings between candidates and work areas. Once placements have been identified, the Home agency, Host agency and Secondee will negotiate a suitable commencement date.

The APSC will facilitate implementation of Secondment Agreements between the Home and Host Agency for each Secondee consistent with Attachment C.

When a suitable placement is not identified, Home agencies will inform candidates, ensuring they are provided with constructive feedback, and where possible, alternative development opportunities are recommended.

SUPERVISOR BRIEFING

Prior to the commencement of placements, the APSC will coordinate a briefing session for Host agency supervisors to ensure their understanding of the Pilot, and the responsibilities of all parties.

MENTORS

Each employee will be allocated a mentor within their Home agency. The mentor is intended to:

- support the Secondee's connection with the Home agency during the secondment
- provide guidance in adapting to a new work environment
- support the Secondee's transition back to the Home agency.

Mentors should engage with Secondees on a monthly basis throughout the duration of the Secondment.

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

As part of the nomination process, employees are required to identify specific development objectives that they hope to meet through the secondment. Examples of these may include, but are not limited to:

- demonstrating capability to operate in different work environments
- enhancing self-confidence
- enhancing particular technical capabilities
- supervision of staff.

On commencement of the secondment, the Host Agency Supervisor and Secondee are required to review these objectives, and to produce a development plan with agreed objectives and specific activities or experiences that the Secondee will undertake during the secondment in order to meet these objectives. This plan will be made available to the Home Agency Supervisor to support the ongoing development of the Secondee, and to the Agency Coordinator and the APSC to support evaluation of the Pilot.

The Secondee and Host Agency Supervisor are required to undertake performance conversations on a regular basis. The frequency and approach should be determined by the two parties to suit the circumstance, however, a minimum of three should occur during the secondment period (on commencement, mid-placement, and on completion).

On completion the Secondee and Host Agency Supervisor are required to discuss and document how well they believe the development objectives have been met, and any factors that may have enhanced or inhibited the achievement of these objectives. This report will be made available to the Home Agency Supervisor to support the ongoing development of the Secondee, and to the Agency Coordinator and the APSC to support evaluation of the Pilot.

Prior to completion, Home agencies should ensure they have considered the transition of the Secondee back to the Home agency. This includes giving consideration to how the agency can best harness the enhanced capability of the Secondee, as well as how the Secondee's continued professional development can be supported.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The Secondee remains an employee of the Home agency for the duration of the secondment. As such, they are subject to the employment conditions of their Home agency, including accrual of leave entitlements.

Although Home agencies should consider the availability of nominated employees to complete a Pilot placement, the Secondee is eligible to utilise any accrued leave entitlements from the Home agency subject to the operational requirements and approval of their Host Agency Supervisor. The Secondee is required to provide their Home agency with details of any leave approved by their Host agency to facilitate processing.

The Secondee will remain eligible for performance-based salary advancement in accordance with their Home agency employment conditions. In determining eligibility, the Home agency may consider the achievement of the development objectives, and/or seek comment from the Host Agency Supervisor in relation to the Secondee's performance during the secondment.

CONFLICT, GRIEVANCES OR DISPUTES

The APSC should be kept informed of any conflicts or disputes that arise. In the event of a conflict or dispute, the directly relevant parties should attempt to resolve it at the local workplace level. If this is not successful, the Agency Coordinator and/or the APSC may provide assistance to support resolution. If further escalation is required, the Secondee may pursue formal dispute resolution in accordance with their Home agency Enterprise Agreement.

RESPONSIBILITIES

APSC RESPONSIBILITIES

The **APSC** (as represented by the Indigenous Capability Team) is responsible for overarching administration of the Pilot. This specifically includes:

- a. coordinating and distributing nominations from Home agencies to Agency Coordinators
- b. coordinating meetings of Agency Coordinators to match Secondees to suitable placements
- c. coordinating a briefing for Host agency supervisors prior to commencement of placements
- d. providing advice to Host agencies on resources to support development of cultural capability and culturally safe work environments
- e. supporting resolution of disputes that may arise between the Secondee, Home and/or Host agencies that are unable to be resolved at the local level
- f. coordinating review and evaluation of the Pilot.

SECONDEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Secondee** is required to:

- a. undergo Host agency pre-employment processes (where required)
- b. undertake Host agency induction/orientation processes, including any mandatory training (where required)
- c. negotiate mutually suitable working arrangements with their Host Agency Supervisor
- d. actively participate for the duration of the secondment
- e. demonstrate and uphold the APS Values, Employment Principles and the Code of Conduct
- f. abide by the policies and procedures, including any specified values and behaviours, of the Host agency
- g. maintain contact with their Home agency
- h. engage with their mentor on a regular basis
- i. provide the Home agency with details of leave approval by their Host agency to facilitate processing
- j. participate in Pilot evaluation activities as required.

AGENCY COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Agency Coordinator** is required to:

- a. be the first point of contact for the APSC, Host agency and the Secondee in relation to the secondment
- b. coordinate the nominations and the potential placements from the Home agency
- c. ensure nominees who are not successfully placed are advised
- d. ensure the Secondee keeps in contact with Home agency line manager and team
- e. ensure the mentor and Secondee are engaging on a monthly basis
- f. keep the APSC informed of any issues raised by the Secondee or other parties within their agency
- g. participate in regular meetings to review and evaluate the Pilot.

HOME AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Home agency** is responsible for:

- a. nominating eligible employees from their agency who would be suitable for the Pilot
- b. determining, in consultation with their Secondees, key development outcomes to be supported through participation in the Pilot
- c. nominating a coordinator from the Home agency who will perform the role of Agency Coordinator; and
- d. allocating suitable mentors for their employees participating in the Pilot
- e. administering leave taken by the Secondee during the secondment.

The **Home agency** is responsible for funding:

- a. pre-secondment – any medical tests and examinations, WHS costs, security and vetting costs, and any related FBT expenses for the Secondee required/requested by the Host agency
- b. Secondee relocation (if required) in accordance with their Home agency Enterprise Agreement/relocation policies
- c. Secondee salary, superannuation, agreed allowances and workers compensation insurance while on secondment
- d. other employee expenses associated with their ongoing employment (eg. pre-approved study assistance)
- e. Secondee travel associated with their ongoing employment.

HOST AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Host agency** is required to:

- a. offer a safe work environment (including cultural safety)
- b. ensure that all line managers and team members have access to cultural competency resources (eg. cultural awareness training, CORE)
- c. offer work placements that align to the identified development requirements of the Secondee
- d. support the Secondee to maintain contact with their Home agency and mentor
- e. facilitate the induction/onboarding for the Secondee.

The **Host agency** is responsible for funding:

- a. Seconded travel related to the work/duties required by the Host agency
- b. learning and development activities required by the Host agency, including any associated costs.

The **Host Agency Supervisor** is required to:

- a. attend the APSC's agency briefing prior to the commencement of the secondment
- b. demonstrate due diligence
- c. contact the Seconded prior to their commencement
- d. effectively induct/on-board the Seconded in accordance with Host agency policies and procedures
- e. negotiate mutually suitable working arrangements with their Seconded
- f. work with the Seconded to confirm development objectives
- g. supervise the day-to-day activities of the Seconded
- h. ensure the work of the Seconded aligns to their identified development requirements
- i. undertake regular performance conversations with the Seconded
- j. approve Seconded leave subject to operational requirements
- k. advise the Agency Coordinator of any issues with the Seconded or the secondment
- l. participate in Pilot evaluation activities as required.

EVALUATION

The APSC will evaluate whether the Pilot has met the specified objectives. Lessons learned on the administration and coordination of the Pilot will also be determined.

Objective
Effectiveness in retaining and developing Indigenous employees
Effectiveness in building cultural capability in workplaces
Specific Indigenous factors to enhance secondments

Pre-commencement data will be collected through:

- Secondee Survey
- Development Objectives (Nomination forms)
- Development Objectives (Plans)
- Host Agency Supervisor Survey.

Post-Return data will be collected through:

- Participant Survey
- Development Objectives (Report)
- Home Agency Supervisor Survey
- Host Agency Supervisor Survey
- Agency Coordinator Feedback.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For any further information in relation to the Indigenous Secondment Pilot please contact:

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