Guidance Note Work-Function Field - VPS Data Specification

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Introduction

Work-function information is required to assist Government to better understand how its public service workforce is deployed to key activities and functions, focusing on Service Delivery, Public Administration and Accountability, and Corporate Support.

Service Delivery and Corporate Support Services functions are common to any organisation, whereas Public Administration and Accountability functions are requirements specific to government.

The work-function classification structure has been designed to:

- establish categories that can be consistently applied across all public service bodies;

- be capable of being assigned consistently within each public service body and maintained over time without loss of integrity;

- avoid any requirement to make fine distinctions about the classification of individuals and groups of staff, while providing credible and meaningful information on the deployment of staff in general terms;

- be reported in the VPSC's annual workforce data collection and used in combination with occupation data (reported using the Australia and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) structure) so that it can to deliver greater detail and understanding of work performed by individuals; and

- limit the additional reporting burden by incorporating the requested information into the existing data collection.

It will provide the Government with consistent information on the proportion and number of staff working in the broad activity areas across all public service agencies. The information will enable the Government to make informed decisions about the allocation of resources to functions in the public service.

At the agency level the implementation of the work-function classification structure is intended to provide a means for departments to improve their internal analysis on the deployment of their workforce.

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Classification Structure

The structure has five classifications (see table below) that are intended to be mutually exclusive.

Work-function classifications		Workforce code
Service delivery	Operational service delivery	OSD
	Service delivery management	SDM
Public administration and accountability	Public administration	PAD
	Public accountability	PAC
Corporate support services	Corporate support services	CSS

The categories are summarised as follows:

(1) *Service Delivery –* providing services, or oversight of provision of services, to the Victorian community under one of two functional sub-categories:

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(1.1)   *Operational service delivery* – Directly delivering services to the community and/or managing funding of, and relationships with, service providers (including administering grants, collating performance data and reports, the delivery of regulatory compliance functions, and significant service enabling capital infrastructure and equipment – for example buildings, pipelines, major capital equipment); or

(1.2)   *Service delivery management* – Designing, planning, co-ordinating, managing or evaluating programs delivering services to the public.

(2)   *Public Administration and Accountability* – governance functions that are required as a consequence of being part of government, portfolio wide strategic planning, providing Ministerial administrative support, and developing policy proposals, options, strategies and plans that inform decision making by government / ministers on programs to be implemented. This would include most functions of central agencies as well as policy development, strategic planning and Ministerial support services in line departments.

(2.1)   *Public Administration* – Government policy and support functions such as Cabinet and Parliamentary briefings and process support, Ministerial co-ordination, advice and support, portfolio strategic planning and development of policy proposals, options, strategies, and plans that inform Government decisions; or

(2.2)   *Public Accountability* – Public accountability and integrity functions such as reporting on delivery and performance to government oversight agencies (including reporting to the Commonwealth under service and funding agreements), government specific corporate reporting, managing procurement processes and systems, and Freedom of Information. This function will cover offices with public review responsibilities such as the Auditor General, Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability, and the Ombudsman.

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(3)   *Corporate Support Services* – providing services and support to both service delivery and public administration and accountability staff (such as document processing, records management, IT system provision, finance, human resources and corporate business management and administration).

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How to assign work-function

Each employee is to be assigned a **'work-function'** based on the nature of the work undertaken by the **'work unit'** in which they are placed (team, unit, branch, or office, as appropriate).

Allocation of work-function should be based on the functions of the unit in which employees work

While each employee is to be given a work-function, the classification should not be done on a person by person basis. Typically, individuals undertake tasks within a work unit to deliver the outputs required of that work unit. It is the primary nature of the work of the unit that is sought. Accordingly, all people working in a unit (including managers) are allocated the work-function classification appropriate for the unit.

The nature of the tasks performed by individuals is reported through the Australia and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) data field.

Work units should be determined in the context of identifying a discrete function

A **work unit** may be a Team, Unit, Branch, discrete Office – whatever makes sense in the context of identifying a discrete function for the purpose of reporting.

For example:

1. A large legal branch may include a team that undertakes prosecutions of members of the public for breaches of legislation, a team that provides legal policy advice, a team that manages Freedom of Information, and a team that managers internal governance. In this case the work unit should be at the team level – the prosecution team being *Operational service delivery*, the legal policy team being *Public administration*, and the FOI team being *Public accountability*, and the internal governance team being *Corporate support services*.

2. A smaller legal branch may not be structured into discrete teams, but have all members operating across the required functions, collectively providing advice on legal policy, legislation, FOI and internal governance. The primary purpose of the branch may be to provide legal policy advice to the Minister and the secretary. Reporting, accountability and internal governance work can be considered to be incidental. Accordingly in this case the whole legal branch would be the work unit an classified as *Public administration*.

3. The Auditor General's office has a division / branches that provide corporate functions

(finance, people management, IT support etc) and divisions that conduct audits. All people in the divisions conducting audits would be classified as *Public accountability*, while all people in the corporate division would be classified as *Corporate support services*.

Allocation of work-function should be on the basis of the principal activity of the work unit

Classification should be on the basis of the principal reason for the existence of the **work unit**, where principal reason is defined as the tasks or functions that if no longer required would result in the unit being wound up.

Allocation of 'work-function' should be on a broad or overall assessment

Making fine distinctions in the activity of small teams that comprise branches and teams is not expected. A small team would be allocated to a classification distinct from the broader branch only where the function is clearly separate and unambiguously belongs to a different classification e.g. an FOI unit working in a corporate services branch / division.

Distinctions over the nature of the work performed by people within functional areas will be achieved by combining work-function information with ANZSCO occupation information.

Allocation of 'work-function' should be based on the following hierarchy

- only *Operational service delivery* if clearly dealing with services for people / agencies external to the department at the operational level, including project management of capital projects and performance of regulatory functions;
- only *Service delivery management* if activity is concerned with determining how service programs are delivered, i.e. program design, planning, evaluation and or direction. This includes policy work associated with how to give effect or operationalise decisions of government;
- only *Public administration* if services provided to support Ministers in their role as a member of Cabinet, as a member of Parliament, or in exercising their Ministerial responsibilities (including supporting Ministerial committees):

  - policy advice is *Public administration* if advice is to inform government / ministerial decision making;
  - regulatory functions performed on behalf of the Minister are excluded (these are *Operational service delivery*),
  - provision of IT, accounts administration, facilities, payroll and similar functions to

Ministers' offices are excluded (these are *Corporate support functions*).

- only *public accountability* if work involves accountability or reporting requirements that are specific to government, either legislation or regulations require government agencies to report in a specified way, or reporting and accountability obligations are unique to government.

- if not clearly *Service delivery* or *Public administration and accountability* then *Corporate support services*.

How to code particular roles and units

Secretaries – fall in the *Public administration* classification, acknowledging their statutory responsibility to provide advice to Ministers and accountability for the functioning of their Department.

Office of the Secretary – typically will be *Public administration* reflecting functions that the are primarily focused on supporting the Secretary in managing the relationship between the Department, the Secretary and Ministers. However, it is possible that an office may include a unit where the primary focus is on co-ordination and management across the Department. Such units should be *Corporate support services*.

Communications Units – will be *Corporate services support*, unless the unit, or team within the unit, is primarily and substantially engaged in preparing publications / pamphlets / advice sheets / web pages to inform members of the public about services, regulatory obligations, or other general community interest advice. Such units will be *Operational service delivery*.

Shared Service providers – will be classified according to the nature of the service delivered. Shared services that are established to deliver corporate service functions (e.g. IT, HR, Finance, Libraries) will be classified as *Corporate support services*.

Performance reporting – will be classified according to the nature of the reporting being undertaken:

- Where the unit is primarily engaged in gathering data and information from service providers for collation into consolidated reports for monitoring and advice, the unit will be classified as *Operational service delivery.*

- Where the unit is primarily engaged in preparing reports that assess and / or evaluate the service delivery for quality or quantity, the unit will be *Service delivery management*.

- In a small number of cases there may be units that are primarily engaged in preparing reports to external agencies (e.g. Commonwealth government agencies funding programs to be delivered by the State, or a State government regulator / oversight body) to demonstrate delivery or performance of a service to a required standard. Such units will be *Public accountability*.

Regulatory compliance functions – involving the promotion and enforcement of standards for the protection of the community or compliance with obligations are a component of government service delivery and will be classified as *Operational service delivery.*

Major Capital acquisition functions – may include construction, purchase or lease of capital assets such as land, buildings or equipment (e.g. major medical diagnostic equipment), or it may involve sourcing capital through establishing public private partnership contracts or similar capital raising vehicles.

- Where major capital acquisition involves the construction, purchase or lease of assets, the function is *Operational service delivery*

- Where major capital acquisition involves capital raising and the establishment contract arrangements, the function is involved in program design and is classified as *Service delivery management*

Capital planning – involves the development of a plan for the future prioritising and scheduling expenditure of capital funds for decision be the Minister or Cabinet. Accordingly this function will be *Public administration*.

Special interest group support and advocacy – will be *Operational service delivery* where activities involve support where the client is a section of the community but where there may not be individual clients, or where a service is directed to general community benefit, e.g. Aboriginal Affairs, Multi-cultural Affairs.

Research Institutions / functions – are direct service delivery, engaged in activity that deliver benefit to the community generally, if not to specific clients. Research units undertaking work that informs the preparation of advice or policy for Ministers are *Public administration*.

Procurement– will be classified as *Public accountability* given that procurement is conducted in accordance with regulations and guidelines issued by the Government Purchasing Board.

Financial reporting – will be *Corporate support services* since the reporting function is an integral component of the broader internal financial and accounts management function. Similarly financial audit functions should be *Corporate support services* given they are also an integral part of are part of internal financial and accounts management.

Internal Audit – will be *Corporate support services* given that this is an internal management function which is not subject to specific Auditor-General requirements.

Occupational health and safety – will be *Corporate support services* given that the reporting required of public service agencies is no different to any other employer.

Legislation support for Ministers in drafting, review and preparation of documentation is

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classified as *Public administration*. Advice on interpretation of legislation internal to an agency is *Corporate support services.*

Ministerial Drivers – will be *Public administration* given their role is to support the Minister in undertaking their official duties.

Work Function in Detail

Work-function	Classification	Description	Examples

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SERVICE DELIVERY
Sub category 1:
OPERATIONAL SERVICE
DELIVERY
STAFF ENGAGED IN:
• DIRECTLY DELIVERING
SERVICES TO THE
COMMUNITY; OR
• SERVICE AGENCY
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Staff who engage with family units or individual members of the public to deliver care, or provide a service

Staff who provide or process information to the public, respond to enquiries, receive and process applications and appeals, through face to face contact, telephone contact, electronic channels, or hard copy documentation.

Staff undertaking functions that deliver a benefit to the community generally. Included are:
• Enforcing laws and regulations
• Protection and security of the community and public assets
• Protecting public safety
• Provision of general information and advice to the community
• Community and industry support and development services

Staff engaged in agency relationship management are those in direct contact with agencies who provide services to the community on behalf of State Government. Typically these staff will manage the relationship with providers. Providers include:
• Statutory authorities, other public entities, Universities
• Other government agencies (Local and Commonwealth Government)
• Community based agencies (Funded sector agencies e.g. Yooralla, Community Health Centres, CFA, volunteer organisations, and etc.)
• For profit contracted service providers (public transport providers, private prisons, public private partnerships, private VET providers, contractors undertaking public infrastructure capital works)

Internal support for direct service staff are those staff who undertake tasks and functions that are critical to allowing direct service staff to undertake their work.

• Child protection officers
• Prison Officers, Community Corrections
• Disability Development Service officers Juvenile Justice
• Housing Service Officers
• Nurses, Psychologists, Speech therapists and etc in schools
• Prisons welfare officers
• Agricultural Extension Officers
• Counsellors, and social workers (Prisons, Family welfare, dispute resolution services)
• Equal Opportunity complaints and conciliation and hearings
• Enquiries officers, Complaints officers, Call Centre operators
• Information centre staff (business and public – bookshops (InfoVic & etc)
• Information providers (Web sites, information lines, help desk etc)
• Delivery of community education services
• Grants program publicity, receipt, processing and determination
• Government approvals (planning, heritage environment)
• Appeals receipt, processing and investigation
• Public prosecutions solicitors
• Forensic Officers (VicPol and VIFM)
• Court Registrars, Clerks of Courts Sheriffs, and other court officers
• Public Registries (Land Titles, Births Deaths and Marriages)
• State Revenue Office
• Industry support and liaison, (DIIRD)
• Community engagement support and liaison (DPCD)
• Foresters and Forestry Field staff Fisheries and Wildlife Officers, Land and Fire management (DSE)
• Public Health Division (DHS)
• Licensing functions, Inspectors and Investigators (Consumer Affairs, EPA, DPI, transport safety, Taxi Directorate, Marine Safety, product safety (consumer, industry, agriculture, biosecurity)
• Research Scientists

Agency relationship functions include:
• managing contractual arrangements and service level agreements including changes to service requirements
• allocating funding, processing payments adjusting for variations etc
• monitoring and evaluating performance and service delivery against government requirements
• co-ordinating between providers and between providers and the department
• Line mangers to whom the direct service staff report
• Receptionists in public contact offices
• Staff co-located with direct service staff who provide clerical, administrative and other ancillary support to those direct service staff.

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SERVICE DELIVERY **Sub category 2** **SERVICE DELIVERY** **MANAGEMENT** **STAFF ENGAGED IN PROGRAM** **DESIGN, PLANNING,** **EVALUATION, AND** **MANAGEMENT**	Staff engaged in overseeing the implementation of service delivery programs. They are engaged in: • Designing and advising on how Government program initiatives are to be implemented • Planning and determining how implementation is to be delivered, setting targets and performance standards, developing service level agreement parameters • Setting action and funding priorities, policy and guidelines • Allocation of funding to programs and sub-programs • Monitoring funding allocations, delivery against targets and performance standards • Liaison with community representative bodies and provider peak bodies on relevant program issues (e.g. Unions, employer bodies, Business groups, ACOSS, Public Transport Users Association, RACV, Australian Conservation Foundation)	• Managers who are responsible for leading delivery of programs, determining program planning, design and funding allocations, e.g. Regional, function, or sub-division/division managers • Program areas within Hospital and Health Service Performance Division of DH • Local Government Victoria (DPCD) • Head Office Facilities Branch of DEECD • Education and training curriculum development
PUBLIC ADMINISTATION AND **ACCOUNTABILITY** **Sub category 1** **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**	Staff working in units with responsibility for supporting Ministers in their roles as members of the Executive Government.	Tasks would include, but are not limited to: • Cabinet co-ordination • Ministerial advice, and briefing including strategic policy and program development • Policy development and strategic planning, evaluation, and co-ordination • Communications • Secretariats for Ministerial advisory bodies, committees and statutory boards • Ministerial correspondence • Ministerial drivers • Ministerial Office liaison • Parliamentary liaison Would include all staff at: • Office of Chief Parliamentary Counsel
PUBLIC ADMINISTATION AND **ACCOUNTABILITY** **Sub category 2** **PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY**	Staff responsible for meeting public reporting and accountability requirements, monitoring and reporting on organisations' compliance with financial, operational, performance, policy and ethical standards.	Tasks would typically include, but are not limited to: • Corporate Governance and Reporting • Freedom of Information • Management of public records • Procurement Would include operational staff at agencies established to monitor or report to the public on e.g. • Auditor General • Ombudsman • Law Enforcement Data Security • Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate • Vic Govt Purchasing Board

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| **CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES** **STAFF ENGAGED IN HEAD OR BACK OFFICE FUNCTIONS** | Staff working in work units with responsibility for management and administration of the department. | Tasks would typically include, but are not limited to:
• Financial management
• Human Resource Management
• Information and Communication Technology systems management and support
• Legal services
• Mail, documents and file management
• Organisation Development, Planning and Performance Review
• Property and Facilities
Includes corporate management units located in regional offices or in operational divisions undertaking roles such as:
• Business manager
• Local HR, accounts, finance, facilities, and other administrative services |

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