

## OPEN LETTER TO THE APS

Monday 22 March 2021

Dear colleagues

*'I still remember when we turned the Childcare Subsidy IT system off overnight. My heart skipped a beat. It really brought home to me what we do each day impacts millions of lives. It focusses the mind – getting it right for individuals, families – that's the core of our job'.*

That was Secretary Bruniges' reflection at our APS200 event last week, highlighting one of the swift decisions made to allow quick and targeted support for the child care industry in the early days of COVID-19, and the pride she felt in her staff for their professionalism and resilience in responding so effectively to the changing environment.

As public servants, we must remain focussed on meeting the needs of the Australian people. Our work in 2020 made clear that what we do makes an enormous difference to the lives of many Australians.

In 2021, some of you are working to deliver the rollout of vaccines – the single greatest logistical challenge the APS has faced in living memory. Some of you are helping cement Australia's economic recovery through policies and programs to support job creation. Many of you are providing essential services to Australians, and helping build their trust and satisfaction with the services we provide. Others are protecting and securing Australians interests in a challenging global environment or continuing to protect the health of our soil, water and landscapes.

These are the priorities outlined by the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, at his address to the National Press Club last month. While we all have different roles to play, our message to you is simple: no individual or team, no agency or portfolio can deliver any of these priorities alone. We need to work together – across the APS, with business and community sectors, and with other Governments – to meet the needs of Australians. We need to operate as '1 APS'.

Last year, we saw the greatest movement of staff across the APS that we have ever seen to deliver services. Record numbers of staff stepped up to meet the needs of Australians in incredibly challenging circumstances. Thank you again for what you did in 2020 and for what you are doing this year.

Our public service is made up of passionate and committed professionals, motivated by getting it right for the people we serve. The Australian public has high expectations of the APS, and we know that you can deliver.



Philip Gaetjens  
Secretary  
Department of the  
Prime Minister and Cabinet



Peter Woolcott AO  
Australian Public  
Service Commissioner