

Audit report of the 2024–25  
annual performance statements

Department of Foreign Affairs and  
Trade



## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT on the 2024-25 Annual Performance Statements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

**To the Minister for Finance**

### ***Conclusion***

In my opinion the 2024-25 Annual Performance Statements of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT):

- present fairly DFAT's performance in achieving its purpose for the year ended 30 June 2025; and
- are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of Division 3 of Part 2-3 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the PGPA Act).

### ***Audit criteria***

To assess whether DFAT's annual performance statements complied with Division 3 of Part 2-3 of the PGPA Act, I applied the following criteria:

- whether the entity's key activities, performance measures and specified targets are appropriate to measure and assess the entity's performance in achieving its purposes.
- whether the performance statements are prepared based upon appropriate records that properly record and explain the entity's performance.
- whether the annual performance statements present fairly the entity's performance in achieving the entity's purposes in the reporting period.

### ***Accountable Authority's responsibilities***

As the Accountable Authority of DFAT, the Secretary is responsible under the PGPA Act for:

- the preparation of annual performance statements that accurately present DFAT's performance in the reporting period and comply with the requirements of the PGPA Act and any requirements prescribed by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (the Rule).
- keeping records about DFAT's performance as required by the PGPA Act, and
- establishing internal controls that the Accountable Authority determines are appropriate to enable the preparation of annual performance statements.

### ***Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statements***

My responsibility is to conduct a reasonable assurance engagement to express an independent opinion on DFAT's annual performance statements.

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which include the relevant Standard on Assurance Engagements (ASAE) 3000 *Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information* issued by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

Procedures were planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the annual performance statements present fairly the entity's performance in achieving its purposes and comply, in all material respects, with the PGPA Act and Rule.

The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures depend on my judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, in the annual performance statements. In making these risk assessments, I obtain an understanding of internal controls relevant to the preparation of the annual performance statements in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

### ***Independence and quality control***

I have complied with the independence and other relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements, and applied Auditing Standard ASQM 1 *Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements* in undertaking this assurance engagement.

### ***Inherent limitations***

Because of the inherent limitations of an assurance engagement, it is possible that fraud, error or non-compliance may occur and not be detected. An assurance engagement is not designed to detect all instances of non-compliance of the annual performance statements with the PGPA Act and the Rule as it is not performed continuously throughout the period and the assurance procedures performed are undertaken on a test basis. The reasonable assurance conclusion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Australian National Audit Office



Mark Vial  
Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

12 September 2025

# Annual performance statements

## Statement of preparation

As the accountable authority of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, I present the department's 2024–25 annual performance statements, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

In my opinion, these annual performance statements accurately present the department's performance and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

In accordance with section 16F of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, these statements report on our performance in the year ended 30 June 2025, assessed against the purpose, key activities and performance measures published in our Corporate Plan 2024–25 and the relevant part of the Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Adams', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jan Adams AO PSM  
Secretary  
11 September 2025

## Overview of results

DFAT’s annual performance statements report on performance against the performance measures and targets as set in the Corporate Plan 2024–25 and Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25. Overall, DFAT performed well, achieving 9 of 12 performance measures and substantially achieving 3 measures. Table 2.1 provides an overview of results against our 6 key activities, while Table 2.2 provides a summary across all outcomes, key activities and measures. A detailed analysis against each performance measure is on pages 30–87.

**Table 2.1: Overview of performance results across 6 key activities, 2024–25**

Result	Key activity 1	Key activity 2	Key activity 3	Key activity 4	Key activity 5	Key activity 6	Total
Achieved	2	1	1	1	2	2	9
Substantially achieved	2	–	1	–	–	–	3
Partially achieved	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Not achieved	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

### Key activities

Key activity 1: Negotiate and advocate internationally and provide international policy advice

Key activity 2: Deliver international development and humanitarian assistance

Key activity 3: Advocate within multilateral institutions

Key activity 4: Deliver consular services

Key activity 5: Deliver passport services

Key activity 6: Manage the Australian Government’s overseas network

## Performance ratings

In 2024–25, we assessed our performance using 4 ratings, outlined below. Each measure includes specific definitions, provided in the analysis on pages 30–87.

- Achieved
- Substantially achieved
- Partially achieved
- Not achieved

**Table 2.2: Performance results summary across 3 outcomes, 6 key activities and 12 measures, 2024–25**

<b>Outcome 1</b> The advancement of Australia’s international strategic, security and economic interests, including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign, trade and international development policy priorities	
<b>Key activity 1: Negotiate and advocate internationally and provide international policy advice</b>	
<b>Measure 1: DFAT’s diplomatic efforts support favourable foreign affairs and trade policy outcomes for Australia</b>	<b>Substantially achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> Six case studies demonstrate performance:*</li> </ul>	
- Upgraded relationship with Vietnam	Substantially achieved
- Upgraded relationship with the Philippines	Substantially achieved
- Resolution of the trade impediments with China on Australian live rock lobster exports and red meat	Achieved
- Deliver a New Roadmap for Economic Engagement with India	Substantially achieved
- Advocate for an enduring Australian banking presence in the Pacific, and support the World Bank to develop a regional banking solution	Substantially achieved
- Implement 2024–25 Australia–France Roadmap deliverables	Partially achieved
<b>Measure 2: Increased number and diversity of Australian university undergraduates with Indo-Pacific capability</b>	<b>Substantially achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> 8,000 Australian university undergraduates complete a New Colombo Plan program to the Indo-Pacific region in 2024–25</li> </ul>	
Substantially achieved	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> Diversity measures for First Nations, disability and regional/remote students are equal to or greater than the broader Australian university undergraduate cohort. First Nations: 2.2%, disability: 12.4%, and regional/remote: 17.9%*</li> </ul>	
Achieved	
<b>Measure 3: Australia’s standing in the region is enhanced through DFAT’s public diplomacy</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> Case study on implementation of planned first-year activities of the ASEAN–Australia Centre demonstrates performance*</li> </ul>	
Achieved	
<b>Measure 4: Australia’s treaty obligations are met under Australia’s Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol to the satisfaction of the International Atomic Energy Agency</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) grants a ‘broader conclusion’ for Australia confirming Australia’s compliance with its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol treaty obligations</li> </ul>	
Achieved	

*(continued)*

**Table 2.2 (continued): Performance results summary across 3 outcomes, 6 key activities and 12 measures, 2024–25**

<b>Key activity 2: Deliver international development and humanitarian assistance</b>	
<b>Measure 5: The development program is effective, efficient and responsive</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Target:</b> At least 85% of investments are assessed as satisfactory on both effectiveness and efficiency criteria in the investment monitoring reports process</li></ul>	Achieved
<b>Key activity 3: Advocate within multilateral institutions</b>	
<b>Measure 6: Australia’s payments to multilateral development organisations generate collective action on issues impacting Australia</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Target:</b> Mandatory payments to multilateral development institutions are paid on time</li></ul>	Achieved
<b>Measure 7: International organisations reflect Australian interests and values when addressing global challenges</b>	<b>Substantially achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Target:</b> Three focus areas demonstrate Australia’s influence and engagement in international institutions, including delivery of planned strategic objectives for the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week; election of Australian multilateral candidatures; and delivery of the UN Junior Professional Officer Program</li></ul>	Substantially achieved
<b>Outcome 2</b>	
The protection and welfare of Australians abroad and access to secure international travel documentation through timely and responsive travel advice and consular and passport services in Australia and overseas	
<b>Key activity 4: Deliver consular services</b>	
<b>Measure 8: Australians have access to consular information and services, including in times of crisis</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Target:</b> 100% of travel advisories reviewed biannually for posts in a volatile risk environment and where there are elevated Australian interests; 100% of travel advisories reviewed annually for all other posts</li></ul>	Achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Target:</b> A maximum of 2 unplanned Consular Emergency Centre telephony outages greater than 5 minutes per financial year</li></ul>	Achieved

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued): Performance results summary across 3 outcomes, 6 key activities and 12 measures, 2024–25

<b>Key activity 5: Deliver passport services</b>	
<b>Measure 9: Australian passports are processed efficiently</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> 95% of travel documents are available within 6 weeks of lodgement*</li> <li>• <b>Target:</b> 98% of priority passports are processed within 2 business days</li> <li>• <b>Target:</b> 98% of fast-track passports are processed within 5 business days*</li> <li>• <b>Target:</b> Travel document processing efficiency is greater than or equal to 90% of the agreed benchmark*</li> </ul>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
<b>Measure 10: Customers are satisfied with passport services</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> 85% satisfaction rate overall from customer surveys</li> </ul>	Achieved
<b>Outcome 3</b> A secure Australian Government presence overseas through the provision of security services and information and communications technology infrastructure, and the management of the Commonwealth's overseas property estate	
<b>Key activity 6: Manage the Australian Government's overseas network</b>	
<b>Measure 11: Australian Government staff, information and assets overseas are protected through appropriate risk-focused security measures</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> DFAT achieves the set security performance standards across a majority of its posts in the areas of compliance, culture and responsiveness to incidents*</li> </ul>	Achieved
<b>Measure 12: The overseas property estate is effectively maintained and fit for purpose</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Target:</b> At least 80% satisfaction rating with the performance of the outsourced property service provider and the Overseas Property Office</li> <li>• <b>Target:</b> Annual reinvestment in the DFAT portfolio of a minimum of 2% of the building asset value</li> <li>• <b>Target:</b> At least 90% of the owned property estate 'planned and preventative maintenance program' is completed as per the agreed schedule</li> </ul>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>

\* Targets were revised during the reporting period. See Table 2.3 (pages 28–29) for details.



## Revised performance measures

During 2024–25, we revised performance information published in the DFAT Corporate Plan 2024–25 for performance measures 1, 2, 3 and 9. Details of these revisions are provided in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Summary of revisions to DFAT’s performance measures during 2024–25**

<b>Measure 1: DFAT’s diplomatic efforts support favourable foreign affairs and trade policy outcomes for Australia</b>	
<b>Reason for change:</b> We refined the wording of case study titles to improve clarity of intent and split a case study into 2 parts, allowing for individual examination of the respective intended favourable outcomes. The case study on resolving trade impediments now excludes oaten hay, as only live rock lobster and red meat impediments remained at the start of the reporting period. The description of the methodology was amended for clarity (see page 30) and the measure type was updated to correct a typographical error.	
<b>Published target and measure type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Target: Five case studies demonstrate performance.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Upgraded relationships with Vietnam and the Philippines</li><li>- Resolution of the trade impediments with China on Australian live rock lobster exports, red meat and oaten hay</li><li>- Deliver a Comprehensive Roadmap for Economic Engagement with India</li><li>- Advocate for an enduring Australian banking presence in the Pacific, and support the World Bank to develop a regional banking solution</li><li>- Implement Year 1 of the France–Australia Roadmap deliverables</li></ul></li><li>• Measure type: Qualitative, outcome.</li></ul>
<b>Revised target and measure type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Target: Six case studies demonstrate performance.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Upgraded relationship with Vietnam</li><li>- Upgraded relationship with the Philippines</li><li>- Resolution of the trade impediments with China on Australian live rock lobster exports and red meat</li><li>- Deliver a New Roadmap for Economic Engagement with India</li><li>- Advocate for an enduring Australian banking presence in the Pacific, and support the World Bank to develop a regional banking solution</li><li>- Implement 2024–25 Australia–France Roadmap deliverables</li></ul></li><li>• Measure type: Qualitative; effectiveness.</li></ul>
<b>Measure 2: Increased number and diversity of Australian university undergraduates with Indo-Pacific capability</b>	
<b>Reason for change:</b> Results for 2023–24 were published in the DFAT Annual Report 2023–24, and diversity targets were aligned with the 2023 data published by the Department of Education in November 2024.	

(continued)

<b>Published targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target 1: 8,000 Australian university undergraduates complete a New Colombo Plan program to the Indo-Pacific region in 2023–24 and 2024–25.</li> <li>• Target 2: Diversity measures for First Nations, disability and regional/remote students are equal to or greater than the broader Australian university undergraduate cohort. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity measure targets: First Nations: 2.1%, disability: 11.4%, and regional/remote: 18.0%. This is the most recent comparable national data, dated 2022.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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<b>Revised targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target 1: 8,000 Australian university undergraduates complete a New Colombo Plan program to the Indo-Pacific region in 2024–25.</li> <li>• Target 2: Diversity measures for First Nations, disability and regional/remote students are equal to or greater than the broader Australian university undergraduate cohort. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity measure targets: First Nations: 2.2%, disability: 12.4% and regional/remote: 17.9%. This is the most recent comparable national data, dated 2023.*</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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### Measure 3: Australia's standing in the region is enhanced through DFAT's public diplomacy

**Reason for change:** We refined the target wording to improve clarity of intent. The description of the methodology was amended for clarity (see page 54) and the measure type was updated to correct a typographical error.

<b>Published target and measure type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target: Case study on implementation of planned first-year activities of the Australia–ASEAN Centre demonstrate performance.</li> <li>• Measure type: Qualitative, outcome.</li> </ul>
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<b>Revised target and measure type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target: Case study on implementation of planned first-year activities of the ASEAN–Australia Centre demonstrates performance.</li> <li>• Measure type: Qualitative; effectiveness.</li> </ul>
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### Measure 9: Australian passports are processed efficiently

**Reason for change:** DFAT undertook a review of this measure with the intent to provide more meaningful information reflective of user experience, as well as to capture the new fast-track (5-day processing) service.

<b>Published targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target 1: 95% of passports processed within 10 business days.</li> <li>• Target 2: 98% of priority passports processed within 2 business days.</li> </ul>
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<b>Revised targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target 1: 95% of travel documents are available within 6 weeks of lodgement.</li> <li>• Target 2: 98% of priority passports are processed within 2 business days.</li> <li>• Target 3: 98% of fast-track passports are processed within 5 business days.</li> <li>• Target 4: Travel document processing efficiency is greater than or equal to 90% of the agreed benchmark.</li> </ul>
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\* Department of Education, 2023 *Section 11 – Equity groups*, Higher Education Statistics, Department of Education website, accessed 5 September 2025.

# Performance results for Outcome 1

**Outcome 1: The advancement of Australia’s international strategic, security and economic interests, including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign, trade and international development policy priorities**

**Key activity 1: Negotiate and advocate internationally and provide international policy advice**

Measure 1: DFAT’s diplomatic efforts support favourable foreign affairs and trade policy outcomes for Australia	
Overall performance	Substantially achieved
Targets and results	<p>Six case studies demonstrate performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upgraded relationship with Vietnam <b>Substantially achieved</b></li><li>Upgraded relationship with the Philippines <b>Substantially achieved</b></li><li>Resolution of the trade impediments with China on Australian live rock lobster exports and red meat <b>Achieved</b></li><li>Deliver a New Roadmap for Economic Engagement with India <b>Substantially achieved</b></li><li>Advocate for an enduring Australian banking presence in the Pacific, and support the World Bank to develop a regional banking solution <b>Substantially achieved</b></li><li>Implement 2024–25 Australia–France Roadmap deliverables <b>Partially achieved</b></li></ul>
Methodology	We used an evaluative approach to understand how effectively the department delivered on intended outcomes and responded to changes in the operating environment. We examined each case study to identify patterns and lessons across a range of activities as part of continuous improvement in our diplomatic efforts.
Data sources	A range of primary and secondary sources, including internal reporting cables, briefings and speeches.
PBS and corporate plan references	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 31 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 22
Measure type	Qualitative; effectiveness
Result explained	While case studies demonstrate that diplomatic efforts have supported favourable foreign affairs and trade policy outcomes, not all targets have been achieved. We therefore rate this measure as ‘substantially achieved’.

## Overall analysis

We rate our overall performance against this measure as **‘substantially achieved’**. We fully achieved the intended favourable outcomes in one of the 6 case studies. The remaining 5 case studies demonstrate meaningful progress and had either substantially or partially achieved the intended favourable outcomes. In 3 cases, outcomes were either delivered immediately after the reporting period or are expected to be delivered within the 2025–26 financial year.

Foreign policy and trade outcomes are inherently unpredictable, shaped by global economic shifts, geopolitical tensions, technological transformation, and the actions of other countries and international organisations. These factors can rapidly alter the strategic landscape in which we operate.

Despite uncertainty, the department must continue to advance Australia’s international interests and safeguard our national security and prosperity. Delivering favourable outcomes in foreign and trade policy requires the careful balancing of long-term strategy with short-term tactical delivery. It requires informed judgements about which entry points to pursue in a dynamic and often unpredictable context. Those opportunities must then be leveraged through influential and impactful work. This work is multifaceted, summarised under the term ‘diplomatic efforts’.

‘Diplomatic efforts’ are defined broadly and include:

- geopolitical and economic analysis
- relationship management and representation with foreign governments and stakeholders
- management of events, meetings and dignitary visits that enable representation of Australian interests
- whole-of-government coordination and domestic stakeholder engagement to ensure Australia’s interests are represented consistently and holistically across government
- engagement in international and multilateral forums such as the United Nations, the International Court of Justice and the World Trade Organization
- protocol services for foreign dignitaries
- reputational risk management
- soft power activities such as public diplomacy and media engagement
- financial management of programs and partnerships
- core business of the public service – such as ministerial briefing and ministerial correspondence.

In an increasingly uncertain geostrategic environment, our diplomatic efforts are critical in navigating emerging challenges and identifying new opportunities to shape a peaceful, stable and prosperous region.

A core part of the department’s work is responding to international crises that impact Australians or Australia’s interests. Staff from across the department are drawn from their day-to-day work to provide surge support on crisis response. During 2024–25, DFAT’s crisis centre was stood up 3 times for a total of 33 days. Over 800 staff were activated across the department to respond to crises. This includes the 2025 India–Pakistan conflict and the Myanmar earthquake, which involved the initiation of the Inter-Departmental Emergency Task Force and deployment of the Crisis Response Team. This work includes policy, logistical, coordination, humanitarian and consular work – requiring contributions in skills from across the department, including in policy specialist areas. The scale of consular and humanitarian responses is impossible to predict with certainty.

Consequently, resourcing across all areas of the department may be affected each year, including those responsible for delivering outcomes under the case studies for this performance measure. In some instances, foreign affairs and trade policy outcomes must be reoriented in response – whether by shifting priorities, reallocating resources, or adapting strategies to better align with evolving situations. All case studies should be read with this context in mind.

## Case studies

The following 6 case studies demonstrate our performance in supporting favourable foreign affairs and trade policy outcomes for Australia during 2024–25.

### Case study 1: Upgraded relationship with Vietnam

Vietnam is one of our most important partners in the Indo-Pacific and our relationship has never been stronger. We are working together to realise a region that is peaceful, stable and prosperous. Vietnam is important to Australia’s economic future, and there is great potential for trade and investment to grow further.

In March 2024, during the visit to Australia of Vietnam’s Prime Minister, H.E. Phạm Minh Chính, leaders announced the elevation of the bilateral relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP). The CSP reflects the depth of our ties and shared ambition for the future of the relationship. The CSP upgrades whole-of-government cooperation in established areas, and commits both sides to foster cooperation on new priorities, including climate change, energy and minerals, and digital transformation. This case study focuses on DFAT’s objectives in 2024–25 to advance our bilateral relationship through implementation of the shared priorities in the CSP.

### Intended favourable outcome

During 2024–25, DFAT aimed to achieve the favourable outcome of **delivering on shared priorities in the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with Vietnam** through finalising a plan of action for the CSP and commencing implementation, including through holding senior officials' talks and finalising an Australia–Vietnam Development Partnership Plan.

### Result

We consider the favourable outcome to be **substantially achieved**. On 18 October 2024, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, and Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bùi Thanh Sơn, signed the Plan of Action to Implement the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Government of Australia and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2024–2027.

On 9 December 2024, the Australia–Vietnam Development Partnership Plan (DPP) 2025–2030 was launched. The DPP translates into action the development priorities Australia shares with Vietnam. It builds on over 50 years of development cooperation between our 2 countries and delivers on the shared ambitions and commitments in our CSP. The DPP continues our focus on inclusive economic growth, skills and equality, and introduces a new focus on climate change and digital transformation. These areas align with Vietnam's priorities and its goal of becoming a high-income country by 2045.

Australia and Vietnam agreed to establish senior officials' talks between DFAT and Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These are held annually alongside the existing annual 2+2 Strategic Dialogue, which also includes senior officials from the Department of Defence and Vietnam's Ministry of Defence and was last held in August 2024. While not within the 2024–25 financial year, the inaugural Australia–Vietnam Senior Officials' Talks were held on 5 August 2025 in Canberra. The talks discussed developments in the bilateral relationship, progress on the plan of action, and strengthening cooperation on regional issues.



DFAT Deputy Secretary Michelle Chan and Vietnam Vice Foreign Minister Nguyễn Mạnh Cường at the inaugural Australia–Vietnam Senior Officials’ Talks, held together with the 10th Australia–Vietnam Strategic Dialogue at the RG Casey Building, Canberra, on 5 August 2025. Credit: Mel Adams/DFAT.

## Analysis

The finalisation of the plan of action, establishment of senior officials’ talks, and the launch of the Development Partnership Plan have collectively advanced our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with Vietnam – a key foreign policy initiative for Australia. DFAT undertook a range of tasks to achieve each of the objectives. This comprised engagement with Australian and Vietnamese stakeholders, collaboration with partner agencies, provision of briefing, drafting and coordination of the plan of action and DPP, and the delivery of ministerial visits.

DFAT coordinated across the Australian Government to compile inputs for the plan of action. DFAT also conducted several rounds of negotiations with the Government of Vietnam on the text for the plan of action. Throughout the process, DFAT utilised engagements of portfolio ministers and senior officials with their Vietnamese counterparts to advocate for Australia’s interests. In particular, DFAT staff delivered the annual Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Adelaide in October 2024, providing briefing to inform the successful finalisation of the plan of action and signature by ministers.

To prepare the DPP, DFAT held consultations with Australian Government partners, multilateral development partners, non-government organisations, and managing contractors. In Vietnam, consultations were held with Government of Vietnam agencies, the Communist Party of Vietnam and Vietnam's National Assembly. Using these inputs, DFAT managed drafting, editing and finalisation of the document and obtained ministerial approval for the DPP, which will shape our bilateral development priorities for the next 5 years.

The inaugural Australia–Vietnam Senior Officials' Talks were held on 5 August 2025 in Canberra. This was the earliest available time for both Australia and Vietnam's Foreign Affairs and Defence senior officials to hold the senior officials' talks and 2+2 Strategic Dialogue in 2025. Following signature of the plan of action in October 2024, DFAT engaged with Vietnamese officials to establish the senior officials' talks and agree on a meeting agenda. DFAT briefed Australia's senior officials and organised the meeting. The senior officials' talks will be held annually, providing an additional forum to discuss ways to further advance the bilateral relationship.

### **Case study 2: Upgraded relationship with the Philippines**

The upgrade to a Strategic Partnership in September 2023 reflects the strength and dynamism of Australia–Philippines ties and a shared interest in a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. The Philippines–Australia Plan of Action (2023–2026) is the roadmap to implement the Strategic Partnership – it consolidates pre-existing efforts and outlines new commitments to deepen political and strategic cooperation. Two separate memorandums of understanding on cyber and critical technology cooperation and enhanced maritime cooperation – both signed during President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr's historic visit to Australia in February 2024 – expand on relevant commitments in the plan of action, and underscore the centrality of deepened cyber and maritime cooperation to our joint prosperity and security.





Roundtable participants during the Philippines maritime study visit to Australia, at the RG Casey Building in Canberra on 29 April 2025. Credit: Addison Orme/DFAT.

### Intended favourable outcome

During 2024–25, DFAT aimed to achieve the intended favourable outcome of **deepened political and strategic cooperation with the Philippines**, pursuant to commitments in the plan of action to implement the Strategic Partnership and memorandums of understanding on enhanced maritime cooperation and cyber and critical technology cooperation.

Building on existing ministerial and senior officials dialogues, DFAT intended to hold additional thematic and expert-level dialogues and implement additional activities to strengthen the Philippines' cyber and maritime security. Specifically, DFAT intended to deliver:

- inaugural Senior Officials' Talks on Consular and Crisis Management and the inaugural High-Level Consultations on Development Cooperation
- senior officials engagements on cybersecurity and preliminary activities to establish the new Southeast Asia and Pacific Cyber Program (SEA-PAC Cyber)
- maritime institutional capacity building via new scholarships, study visits and equipment.

## Result

We consider the intended favourable outcome to be **substantially achieved**. DFAT delivered the inaugural Senior Officials' Talks on Consular and Crisis Management and High-Level Consultations on Development Cooperation, as per the plan of action. DFAT delivered 3 engagements of senior officials on cybersecurity and established SEA-PAC Cyber. DFAT also delivered a substantial maritime support package, including 2 new masters scholarships for Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) officers; 2 Australian study visits for Philippine maritime policy leaders, scientists and practitioners; and the gifting of drones, radios and training to support PCG operations. A procurement of supporting radio infrastructure was delayed, which meant the overall outcome was not fully achieved.

## Analysis

The inaugural Senior Officials' Talks on Consular and Crisis Management (July 2024, Manila) coincided with the arrival of Typhoon Gaemi. While many delegates were unable to reach the meeting venue due to flooding, the talks proceeded online with open and frank exchanges on our respective consular and crisis management experiences. Follow-up activities have included information exchanges and briefings, including on kidnap response protocols, e-apostille systems, e-visas, student visas, crisis management systems, and ISIS brides. The inaugural High-Level Consultations on Development Cooperation (February 2025, Manila) focused on implementation of the Australia–Philippines Development Partnership Plan 2024–2029 (launched in Manila in 2024). Senior officials also exchanged policy and program updates, and committed to annual consultations going forward.

For Australia, cyber and critical technology are foreign policy priorities. The first visit to the Philippines of Australia's Ambassador for Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology (August 2024) engaged a range of Philippine agencies on opportunities to progress the Memorandum of Understanding on Cyber and Critical Technology Cooperation (February 2024). This visit led to agreement to establish a bilateral cyber dialogue, and to conduct 2 additional cyber engagements in the Philippines in 2025, including the Southeast Asia Business Exchange Mission (February 2025). The mission, comprising 23 technology companies from Australia, highlighted our strengths in critical technologies (cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, fintech and blockchain). The second engagement (March 2025), led by DFAT, advanced planning for capacity-building activities with the Philippines under SEA-PAC Cyber. All preliminary activities to establish the program, including endorsement of the Philippines as a priority country, have been completed. DFAT has commenced program implementation by delivering 4 cyber incident preparedness and response exercises with the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Department of Energy, Philippine National Police and Department of Transportation, aimed at enhancing agencies' cyber preparedness and threat response.

Strengthening maritime cooperation is also a focus for Australia and the Philippines. Australia gifted over \$1 million in drones, operator training and radios (between October 2024 and April 2025) through Australia’s Southeast Asia Maritime Partnerships to enhance PCG maritime domain awareness capabilities, fulfilling a 2023 commitment by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. DFAT worked closely with the PCG to ensure the equipment met operational needs, and engaged like-minded donor missions to manage duplication risks. A planned procurement of supporting communications infrastructure (to extend the effective range of the radios) was temporarily paused while the PCG conducted an internal capability review. This pause ensured our support remained aligned with the PCG’s priorities and operational requirements. The procurement will be completed in 2025. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding on Enhanced Maritime Cooperation, DFAT has worked to enhance Philippine capacity through 2 new scholarships for PCG candidates studying the Master of Maritime Policy at the University of Wollongong. DFAT also delivered 2 Australian study visits (April and May 2025) for separate cohorts of 25 Philippine maritime policy leaders and 21 marine scientists and practitioners. Through implementing partners, DFAT has received high-level requests for additional visits in the future.

### Case study 3: Resolution of the trade impediments with China on Australian live rock lobster exports and red meat

China is Australia’s largest trading partner.<sup>1</sup> Total goods and services trade with China in 2024 was valued at \$312 billion, larger than our next 3 largest trading partners combined (United States, Japan and Republic of Korea).<sup>2</sup> A stable commercial relationship serves the interests of both Australia and China.

In 2020, China began imposing trade impediments targeting a wide range of Australian exports to China. This case study is a continuation of an earlier one from the DFAT Annual Report 2023–24, which described the department’s success in resolving some – but not all – of China’s trade impediments.

This case study focuses on the trade impediments that remained in place at the beginning of 2024–25: suspensions of 2 meat establishments for the alleged detection of the banned substance chloramphenicol (one in 2020 and one in 2021), and China not issuing import permits for Australian live rock lobster producers from late 2020 onwards.

### Intended favourable outcome

During 2024–25, DFAT aimed to **resolve the remaining trade impediments imposed by China on Australian exports from 2020.**

<sup>1</sup> DFAT, *Australia’s trade in goods and services 2024*, DFAT website, June 2025.

<sup>2</sup> DFAT, *Trade statistical pivot tables*, DFAT website, accessed 28 May 2025.

## Result

We consider the favourable outcome to be **achieved**. On 3 December 2024, China lifted the 2 remaining suspensions on Australian red meat establishments. On 20 December 2024, China notified Australia that live rock lobster trade could resume immediately and recommenced issuing import permits. This means all trade impediments affecting Australian exports to China imposed from 2020 to 2022 have been removed, without our compromising any of Australia's national interests or values.

Following the lifting of suspensions on the 2 remaining red meat establishments on 3 December 2024, Australia exported \$1.5 billion of red meat to China in the period December 2024 to May 2025. During the same period in the previous financial year, the value of Australia's exports of red meat to China was \$1.1 billion. Following the lifting of live rock lobster trade impediments on 20 December 2024, Australia exported \$343 million of live rock lobster to China in the period December 2024 to May 2025. During the same period in the previous financial year, Australia exported no live rock lobster to China.



China-based Australian chef Heidi Dugan gave a lobster and beef cooking demonstration during the China International Import Expo in Shanghai, China, in November 2024. Senator the Hon Don Farrell, Minister for Trade and Tourism, who led Australia's delegation to the expo, signed a memorandum of understanding on beef exports on 4 November 2024. Credit: Daniel Walding/DFAT.

Overall, in 2024 Australia exported \$19.5 billion of previously impeded products to China (barley, bottled wine, coal, copper ores and concentrates, cotton, live rock lobster, oaten hay, red meat, and timber logs). This was more than the \$14 billion exported in 2023 and more than the \$2.4 billion exported in 2022, when all impediments were in place.

## Analysis

The resolution of the remaining 2 impediments in 2024–25 was the result of a coordinated, multi-pronged strategy. This involved the deployment of senior Australian ministers and consistent and organised advocacy from Australian Government departments with key Chinese interlocutors. For all bilateral engagements, DFAT prepared briefing tailored to each engagement, providing the best messaging to prosecute our case.

DFAT worked closely with partner agencies, especially the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). DAFF managed technical aspects of the remaining sanitary and phytosanitary impediments, negotiating with Chinese counterpart agencies on removing technical impediments to trade, while DFAT played a significant role in coordinating across government to support coherent public messages and policy outcomes.

Throughout 2024–25, DFAT undertook regular assessments of bilateral diplomatic, trade and economic relations to inform actions consistent with the above approach. DFAT also provided ongoing monitoring of trade data to track the effect of the trade impediments. The resumption of exports of red meat and live rock lobster demonstrates DFAT's success in influencing the removal of the impediments.

### Case study 4: Deliver a New Roadmap for Economic Engagement with India

India is the world's most populous economy – and is central to Australia's diversification efforts. On track to become the world's third-largest economy by the end of the decade, India is the fastest-growing G20 country. Our strategic settings are strong for us to pursue the full potential of our economic relationship with India and seize new opportunities to benefit from India's economic rise. How we engage will shape our long-term prosperity for the benefit of Australian businesses and consumers.

In 2024, DFAT led a whole-of-government approach to develop *A New Roadmap for Australia's Economic Engagement with India* (the roadmap), building on the India Economic Strategy to 2035 and the 2022 update to that strategy. The roadmap highlights how Australia can focus and accelerate efforts to grow our economic ties, by identifying 4 sectors that show the most potential. The roadmap is also a signal to investors and businesses that the Australian Government is committed to maximising economic opportunities with India.



## Intended favourable outcome

During 2024–25, DFAT aimed to achieve the favourable outcome of demonstrating commitment to the Australia–India partnership through the **development and launch of the roadmap**.

## Result

We consider the favourable outcome to be **substantially achieved**. The department led a comprehensive consultation process to inform the development of the roadmap publication and delivered a successful launch event on 26 February 2025, attended by the Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, and the Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon Don Farrell. The launch event occurred later than initially scheduled owing to factors outside of DFAT's control.



*A New Roadmap for Australia's Economic Engagement with India*, launched by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at Deakin University's Burwood Corporate Centre, Melbourne, on 26 February 2025. Credit: DFAT.

Through the development of the roadmap, DFAT consulted extensively across all Australian states and territories and India. As a result, the roadmap taskforce identified 4 high-priority sectors that show the most potential for growth, with 7 other second-tier priority sectors. Consultations drew out numerous suggestions to take forward these opportunities. The roadmap document includes 47 clear action points to fill gaps in current efforts and enhance our efforts in areas of emerging opportunity.

The roadmap signals commitment to the economic relationship to key stakeholders in the business, government and community sectors. Over 100 people attended the launch event at Deakin University in Melbourne, including community and diaspora leaders and senior business representatives. At the launch, the Prime Minister announced a \$16 million Australia–India Trade and Investment Accelerator Fund and \$4 million extending the Centre for Australia–India Relations Maitri Grant Program to support roadmap implementation.

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## Analysis

In 2024–25, DFAT played a lead role in developing and launching the roadmap. DFAT’s assessment is that the development of the roadmap was valued by industry, state and territory governments and members of the Indian Australian diaspora. The consultation process was well received and signalled commitment to growing the economic relationship with India. The roadmap also drew the attention of state and territory governments, the Indian diaspora and the business community to the opportunities created by India’s growth and our natural economic complementarities.

The department established a small roadmap taskforce to coordinate and lead this work. The taskforce met over 400 businesses and stakeholders, and hosted more than 20 roundtable discussions and over 25 individual meetings. In addition, the department received and assessed 72 written public submissions. The Minister for Trade and Tourism and the then Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Tim Watts MP, each chaired roadmap-related roundtables on priority sectors, demonstrating a high level of government engagement. Key stakeholders such as the Australia India Institute and the Business Council of Australia also hosted consultation events. Anecdotal feedback indicated significant support for the roadmap.

In addition to public consultations, DFAT coordinated whole-of-government efforts to collect and collate policy input from across government to support development of the roadmap. This consisted of regular interdepartmental meetings, chaired by a DFAT senior executive officer.

The assessment indicates that the work delivered by the department – standing up a taskforce, leading a comprehensive consultation process, developing the roadmap publication, delivering a launch event and providing ministerial (including prime ministerial) briefing support – contributed to supporting favourable trade policy outcomes, including demonstrating commitment to the Australia–India relationship. Implementation of the roadmap will be reported in a separate case study for the 2025–26 annual report.

#### **Case study 5: Advocate for an enduring Australian banking presence in the Pacific, and support the World Bank to develop a regional banking solution**

The Pacific region continues to face significant challenges due to the withdrawal of banking services, particularly US dollar correspondent banking relationships. This withdrawal, which is part of a global trend of financial de-risking, threatens financial inclusion, economic development and regional stability. It also opens gaps for malign actors to fill. In response, DFAT pursued a multi-pronged strategy, in close concert with other Australian Government agencies, to maintain an enduring Australian banking presence in the Pacific and undertake regional banking reforms to strengthen the economic security and prosperity of our region.

#### **Intended favourable outcomes**

In 2024–25, DFAT aimed to achieve the favourable outcomes of an **enduring Australian banking presence in the Pacific and reducing the broader decline of banking services in the region** by:

- delivering the Pacific Banking Forum 2024 for endorsement of a regional banking solution
- securing an Australian bank for Nauru
- securing ANZ Bank’s long-term presence in the region.



## Result

We consider the favourable outcomes to be **substantially achieved**. The Pacific Banking Forum 2024 facilitated engagement on the World Bank’s Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships project – a regional banking solution to address Pacific banking challenges. The project was endorsed by the World Bank’s board. As announced in December 2024, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia will commence banking operations on Nauru in August 2025. In March 2025, ANZ announced its long-term commitment to the region by maintaining its existing service offering to Pacific island operations without reduced footprint or levels of service. However, this commitment was contingent on the passage of the Pacific Banking Guarantee Bill 2025, which passed both houses of parliament in September 2025.

## Analysis

It is in Australia’s national interest that Pacific island countries maintain strong connections to the global financial system. These connections have been deteriorating because of low profitability and high regulatory compliance complexity for banks. Together with the US and Australian treasuries, DFAT hosted the Pacific Banking Forum on 8–9 July 2024. The forum brought together US banks and regulators with Pacific counterparts for the first time. A forum outcomes statement was drafted to distil commitments from regulators, governments and the multilateral development banks. The forum provided a platform for the World Bank to present and consult on the concept for its new Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships project, which was subsequently endorsed by the World Bank’s board in August 2024.

Nauru, which was facing the loss of all banking services with the departure of Bendigo and Adelaide Bank, was the extreme case of de-risking. The economic, social and gender inclusion consequences of this could have been severe. Through the Asian Development Bank–delivered Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative, and subsequently in partnership with the Department of the Treasury, DFAT facilitated industry consultation and representation to find candidate banks to replace Bendigo and Adelaide Bank. Australia then committed, through Article 3 of the Nauru–Australia Treaty, to secure a banking solution for Nauru. Following the treaty announcement, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia announced that it would establish banking operations in the second half of 2025.



DFAT staff and other project team members at the Pacific Banking Forum, held on 8–9 July 2024 at the Brisbane Convention Centre. Credit: Richard O’Leary/Eventphotography.com.

Maintaining the presence of Australian banks is vital for maintaining the Pacific’s financial connection to the world and is a significant soft power asset for Australia. Australian banks in the Pacific are recognised for their high standards of anti–money laundering compliance, uplifting the reputation and capability of the wider financial sector. They also facilitate trade, investment and remittance flows between Australia and the region. DFAT worked closely with the Treasury-led whole-of-government negotiations with ANZ to secure the bank’s long-term presence in the region. We also coordinated consultation through our network of posts on ANZ’s Pacific commitments, and the department continues to engage on this through the whole-of-government Pacific Banking Steering Committee.

On 14 March 2025, ANZ announced its long-term commitment to banking services in the region. For the Pacific Commitments Deed to take effect, the Pacific Banking Guarantee Bill 2025 first needed to be passed by the Australian Parliament. Following both government (including by the Minister for International Development) and opposition speeches in support of the bill, it lapsed with the calling of the May 2025 federal election. The bill was reintroduced to the 48th Parliament, and with the parliament’s support through the passage of the bill in September 2025, ANZ’s long-term presence in the Pacific will be fully secured in the 2025–26 financial year.

## Case study 6: Implement 2024–25 Australia–France Roadmap deliverables

France is an influential global and regional partner for Australia. The partnership recognises the strategic challenges in the Indo-Pacific region, advances regional peace, stability and prosperity, and promotes international rules and norms. Prime Minister Albanese and French President Emmanuel Macron issued a joint statement in Paris on 1 July 2022 reaffirming their ‘commitment to building a closer and stronger bilateral relationship based on mutual trust and respect’.<sup>3</sup> The leaders agreed to ‘establish a new agenda for cooperation based on three pillars: defence and security; resilience and climate action; and education and culture’.

The Australia–France Roadmap was officially launched in Canberra by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, and France’s Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Catherine Colonna, on 4 December 2023 as a package of 21 initiatives structured around the 3 pillars, to be implemented by 9 Australian Government departments and agencies. Initiatives were identified based on their potential to deepen collaboration.

DFAT is responsible for delivering 9 roadmap initiatives – 7 with new funding of \$14.2 million over 4 years from 2023–24, and 2 initiatives that were already in train.

This case study focuses on DFAT’s delivery of 8 roadmap initiatives in 2024–25, consisting of 15 planned activities (DFAT’s ninth initiative – sports diplomacy – commences in 2025–26). Many of these initiatives are foundational for building a closer and stronger bilateral relationship between Australia and France.

### Intended favourable outcome

During 2024–25, DFAT aimed to achieve the favourable outcome of demonstrating commitment to strengthening the bilateral relationship, through delivery of activities under 8 DFAT-led initiatives:

- the **Australia-France Indo-Pacific Studies Program** to strengthen institutional linkages and enable joint projects on priority strategic challenges
- the **Australia–France Energy Transition Program** to bring together leading Australian and French institutions, researchers and companies on energy transition
- the **Australia–France Pacific Shared Knowledge Initiative** to enhance Australian and French academic and research cooperation to promote understanding of Pacific issues and key regional challenges
- the **Initiative for Climate, Nature and Forests in Papua New Guinea (PNG)** to deepen Australia and France’s engagement with PNG’s forests sector and relevant climate and environmental agencies

<sup>3</sup> The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, *Joint Statement by France and Australia*, Prime Minister’s website, 1 July 2022.

- **development coordination in the Pacific** under a letter of intent between DFAT and the French Development Agency
- the **Food Security Program** to leverage Australian and French resources to promote healthy, climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems
- the **Australian Cultural Initiative** in France to strengthen two-way people-to-people links and enhance ties between arts and cultural institutions
- the **Collaboration for the Protection of the Antarctic Environment** to identify opportunities to work together on Antarctic matters.

## Result

We consider the favourable outcome to be **partially achieved**. DFAT has delivered all planned activities for 6 out of 8 roadmap initiatives and most activities under the remaining 2 initiatives – a total of 13 out of 15 planned activities. Under the Australia–France Indo-Pacific Studies Program, DFAT was unable to ensure delivery of a Track 2 Strategic Dialogue. Under the Collaboration for the Protection of the Antarctic Environment, DFAT was also unable to establish the Hawke–Rocard Medal.



Promotion of Australian Indigenous art *Badu Gili: Healing Spirit* at the Australian Embassy in Paris, France.  
Credit: Photo by Daniel Boud. Poster artwork by Esme Timberly, Marilyn Russell and Steven Russell.

## Analysis

DFAT demonstrated its commitment to strengthening the Australia–France bilateral relationship by delivering activities under the 8 initiatives. DFAT supported the government to progress a legislative amendment in 2023–24 to underpin the roadmap grant and fellowship programs in 2024–25 – an unforeseen challenge that delayed commencement of the activities.

DFAT entered into a grant arrangement with the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA) to deliver activities under the **Australia–France Indo-Pacific Studies Program**. Under the arrangement, a Track 1.5 Strategic Dialogue brought together experts from government (including from DFAT), academia and think tanks to share Indo-Pacific assessments, and 2 academic research grant programs were established.

DFAT used a grant arrangement with Swinburne University of Technology to harness Australian and French expertise through the **Australia–France Energy Transition Program**. The grant arrangement created the Franco-Australian Centre for Energy Transition (FACET), a partnership between Swinburne, the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission and the Université Grenoble Alpes. DFAT contributed to FACET’s mission by participating at a senior level in its annual conference (28–29 October 2024) and by supporting its program of scientific research grants as a member of the FACET Steering Committee.

Through the **Australia–France Pacific Shared Knowledge Initiative**, DFAT offered 10 Australia Awards scholarships (5 more than originally planned, due to no scholarships offered in 2023–24) to students from New Caledonia and French Polynesia as part of the 2025 cohort, with 7 currently studying in Australia. The awards were established to promote understanding of Pacific issues and key regional challenges.

To promote **development coordination in the Pacific**, DFAT held discussions under the letter of intent on development coordination in the Pacific, a Pacific Policy Dialogue and other official discussions with French counterparts on further collaboration in the Pacific, including potential infrastructure cooperation. Under the **Australian Cultural Initiative in France**, DFAT raised the profile of Australian cultural strengths in France by delivering art exhibitions, dance partnerships, networking events and the establishment of 2 awards programs (Young Journalist Prize and Eloquence Art Prize).

A new climate change–focused position at the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby – created under the roadmap in 2023–24 – helped DFAT drive policy discussions with PNG and France in 2024–25 under the **Initiative for Climate, Nature and Forests in PNG**. This included facilitating French participation in the Green Finance Summit and the

Green Climate Fund Board Meeting. The **Food Security Program** supported Australia and France’s work to ensure Pacific communities have access to diverse and nutritious domestic food and sustainable livelihoods, through DFAT’s provision of an additional \$2.6 million of official development assistance funding to the Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees – a body ensuring the long-term conservation of key crops and tree species of the Pacific region.



La Terre est bleue: the art of Dhambit Mununggurr exhibition at the Australian Embassy in Paris, held in conjunction with the National Gallery of Victoria. Credit: Andrew McLeish.

Under the **Collaboration for the Protection of the Antarctic Environment**, DFAT strengthened Australia and France’s cooperation on Antarctica across environmental, cultural and scientific domains. As part of this effort, DFAT organised an Australia–France Senior Officials’ Strategic Polar Dialogue, held on the margins of the 47th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Italy (23 June – 3 July 2025). Australia and France agreed to seek to establish a Hawke–Rocard Medal in early 2026. An Antarctic research grant has been established through collaboration between Monash University and the French Government.

In addition to leading the 8 initiatives, DFAT convened regular whole-of-government Australia–France Roadmap interdepartmental committee meetings and reported on implementation to the French Government. DFAT’s diplomatic efforts to strengthen the Australia–France relationship were also evidenced through high-level bilateral meetings, including meetings led by the Governor-General, the Prime Minister, DFAT portfolio ministers and a range of other ministers and senior officials.

**Measure 2: Increased number and diversity of Australian university undergraduates with Indo-Pacific capability**

<b>Overall performance</b>	<b>Substantially achieved</b>
<b>Targets and results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target 1: 8,000 Australian university undergraduates complete a New Colombo Plan (NCP) program to the Indo-Pacific region in 2024–25 <b>Substantially achieved (7,348 completions)</b></li> <li>Target 2: Diversity measures for First Nations, disability and regional/remote students are equal to or greater than the broader Australian university undergraduate cohort <b>Achieved</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Nations: 7.2% against a 2.2% target (achieved)</li> <li>Disability: 15.4% against a 12.4% target (achieved)</li> <li>Regional/remote: 38.0% against a 17.9% target (achieved)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Methodology</b>	Assessment of data submitted as part of the NCP application process and completion reports. For the diversity target, data was compared with source statistics published by the Department of Education. For the performance measure to be assessed as ‘achieved’, both targets need to be ‘achieved’. If one target is ‘achieved’ and one target is ‘substantially achieved’, the measure is assessed as ‘substantially achieved’. If one target is ‘not achieved’, the measure is assessed as ‘partially achieved’. If neither target is achieved, the measure is assessed as ‘not achieved’.
<b>Data sources</b>	Two IT platforms were used for the mobility and scholarship programs, respectively. The department works closely with a service provider on data extraction, processing, analysis and reporting. For completion data, the scholarship program collects data directly from students, while the mobility program relies on information reported by university officers. For diversity data, the scholarship program relies on students to self-report. The mobility program is excluded from the results due to limitations in data availability, as Australian universities are not required to supply this information and it occurs after project completion. Although there are known data gaps, this remains the only available source.
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	<p>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 35</p> <p>Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 23</p> <p>Note: The diversity targets were revised during the reporting period – see Table 2.3 on pages 28–29.</p>
<b>Measure type</b>	Quantitative; output

*(continued)*



## Measure 2: Increased number and diversity of Australian university undergraduates with Indo-Pacific capability

### Result explained

In 2024–25, the target of 8,000 Australian university undergraduates completing an NCP program was substantially achieved, with 7,348 undergraduates completing an NCP program, including 7,127 mobility project participants and 221 scholars.

In 2024–25, 16 of the 221 scholars (7.2%) were recorded as First Nations scholars, achieving the target of 2.2%; 84 scholars (38.0%) were recorded as coming from a regional/remote area, achieving the target of 17.9%; and 34 scholars (15.4%) were recorded as having disability, achieving the target of 12.4%. As all 3 diversity targets were achieved, the overall target was ‘achieved’.

The overall performance is ‘substantially achieved’, noting that one target was ‘substantially achieved’ and one was ‘achieved’.

## Analysis

We rate our performance against this measure as **‘substantially achieved’**.

The New Colombo Plan (NCP) is an initiative of the Australian Government that aims to increase Indo-Pacific knowledge, capability and connections in Australia. The NCP provides scholarships and flexible mobility grants to support Australian undergraduates to undertake study, language training and internships in the Indo-Pacific. In 2024–25, scholarships ranged from 3 to 19 months. Student mobility grants were from 2 weeks to 2 semesters, with an increase of the minimum duration from 2 to 4 weeks for the 2025 round as a result of program reforms.

The NCP aims to deepen Australia’s relationships in the region, at the individual level and through expanding university, business and institutional links. Student participation plays an important role in achieving an influential network of Australians with experience and strong networks across the Indo-Pacific region.

In 2024–25, the NCP supported 41 Australian universities and over 1,000 Indo-Pacific organisations to implement NCP scholarship and mobility programs across 34 host locations.

The department substantially achieved the target of 8,000 Australian university undergraduates completing an NCP program in the Indo-Pacific region (91% of the target was met, with 7,348 Australian university undergraduates, comprising 7,127 mobility project participants and 221 scholars).

The department also achieved all 3 diversity targets (First Nations: 7.2% against a 2.2% target, disability: 15.4% against a 12.4% target, and regional/remote: 38.0% against a 17.9% target) across the NCP scholarship program.





New Colombo Plan scholars attend a cocktail event during their pre-departure training, with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, and the then Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Tim Watts MP, in February 2025. Credit: Davey Barber/5 Foot Photography.

During 2024–25, the department continued to work closely with universities to encourage diversity in the nomination process for the NCP scholarship applications. The department delivered dedicated application and interview preparation workshops for First Nations nominees and lifted the visibility of disability support available throughout the program. Results for 2024–25 show an increase in diversity participation compared to 2023–24 (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4: New Colombo Plan scholar diversity results, 2023–24 and 2024–25

Diversity group	2023–24 result (%)	2024–25 result (%)
First Nations	2.7	7.2
Disability	8.9	15.4
Regional/remote	31.5	38.0

Diversity data for mobility students was excluded from the measure as students are not known at the project application stage. Providing this data is optional, and the program operates on a project-based model without direct engagement with students. Diversity information is submitted by university officers after project completion, often resulting in data gaps. To improve data collection, the department has completed the design phase of a new IT system, the ONE Education platform. Work is underway to support decision-making around the build and existing systems.

The department also works closely with universities to manage program implementation risks, such as travel restrictions, to support student participation. While the diversity target achieved greater results compared to 2023–24, the completion result was slightly lower than last year (7,348 compared to 7,904).

A number of factors continued to influence completion rates, such as:

- The 2023 round, with applications opening in late 2022, was impacted by post-COVID low rates of international travel and related COVID challenges. This resulted in fewer students participating in the mobility program for the 2023 round. Subsequently, fewer student completions were recorded in 2024–25, when the 2023 round of participants finalised their programs.
- In August 2024, the government announced reforms to the NCP program to ensure the program better supports Australia's interests, including creating deeper connections in the Indo-Pacific, with more immersive experiences for students, a focus on increasing language study, and ensuring deeper institutional links with the region and in Australian Government priority areas.
- As part of these reforms, the minimum duration for an NCP mobility program increased from 2 to 4 weeks for the 2025 round. While the increase led to fewer student completions, students will now undertake longer and more immersive experiences in the Indo-Pacific.

In 2025–26, DFAT will implement a new performance measure to capture the government's reforms, including the number of Australian university undergraduates awarded an NCP scholarship and the planned language learning component for the scholarship, semester (new in 2026 round) and mobility programs.

Measure 3: Australia’s standing in the region is enhanced through DFAT’s public diplomacy	
Overall performance	Achieved
Target and result	Case study on implementation of planned first-year activities of the ASEAN–Australia Centre demonstrates performance <b>Achieved</b>
Methodology	Similar to performance measure 1, DFAT used an evaluative approach to understand how effectively the department delivered on intended outcomes and responded to changes in the operating environment. We looked for patterns and lessons from the case study, with the aim of continuing to improve our performance and risk management across all diplomatic efforts during 2024–25.
Data sources	A range of primary and secondary sources, including internal reporting cables, briefings, and speeches.
PBS and corporate plan references	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 36 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 25
Measure type	Qualitative; effectiveness
Result explained	In 2024–25, DFAT successfully delivered planned activities for the ASEAN–Australia Centre’s first year of operation. We therefore rate this measure as ‘achieved’. Results are detailed in the case study below.

Overall analysis

DFAT’s public diplomacy – through arts, sport, education and other cultural initiatives – is a tool of influence that helps strengthen ties with other countries and raise Australia’s profile as an innovative, contemporary and creative nation. It builds people-to-people links and fosters mutual understanding, helping others understand more about Australia and our values. DFAT undertakes a range of activities intended to enhance Australia’s reputation to support the achievement of foreign, trade and development policy objectives. For the 2024–25 reporting period, we have assessed this performance measure through a case study on the ASEAN–Australia Centre. The centre delivers programs and initiatives that deepen Australia’s connections with Southeast Asia and ASEAN.

Case study: Implementation of planned first-year activities of the ASEAN–Australia Centre

Australia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are deeply connected through our economies; our shared interest in a region that is peaceful, stable and prosperous; and our extensive ties. As a bloc, ASEAN is already Australia’s second-largest two-way trading partner. Australia is home to more than one million people who have an ancestral connection to Southeast Asia.

Establishing the ASEAN–Australia Centre in 2024 to mark 50 years since Australia became ASEAN’s first dialogue partner was an investment in Australia’s future. As a vehicle to deepen Australia’s engagement with Southeast Asia, the centre’s public diplomacy efforts and programs aim to increase Southeast Asia literacy among Australians, and strengthen economic linkages, education, and cultural connections with our region. The centre’s work demonstrates Australia’s commitment to the region and positions Australia as a trusted partner that Southeast Asia can rely on.

This case study focuses on the ASEAN–Australia Centre’s establishment and its first year of operations, including the implementation of corporate governance processes, strategic communication activities, and delivery of key programs that support Australian Government policies, including the ASEAN–Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and *Invested: Australia’s Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040*.

### Intended favourable outcome

In 2024–25, DFAT aimed to achieve the favourable outcome of establishing **the ASEAN–Australia Centre to enhance Australia’s standing in the Southeast Asia region**.

In its first year of operation, the ASEAN–Australia Centre has delivered key programs and initiatives that support Southeast Asia literacy in Australia, economic linkages, education, and cultural connections between Australia, Southeast Asia and Timor-Leste.

### Result

We consider the favourable outcome to be **‘achieved’**. Twelve eminent Australians, including 2 ex-officio members, were appointed to the ASEAN–Australia Centre Advisory Board, which met twice. The ASEAN–Australia Centre was officially launched and moved to standalone premises. The centre finalised its brand, implemented a strategic communication plan, and launched a website and social media presence. It implemented several programs and initiatives, including an annual grants program to fund projects across business, education and culture, a program supporting 120 young women entrepreneurs over 4 years, an emerging leaders program, a schools partnership program, and short courses targeting the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and resource sectors.

## Analysis

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, announced the appointment of the ASEAN–Australia Centre Advisory Board on 5 November 2024. The advisory board consists of 12 eminent Australians, including business, higher education, youth, creative industries and First Nations representatives, and 2 ex-officio members. The advisory board has met twice, in February and May 2025, and 6 members of the advisory board travelled to Jakarta, Indonesia, in April 2025 to engage with ASEAN stakeholders, including the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat. The advisory board plays an important role, providing direction to the centre and supporting its engagement with Southeast Asia and ASEAN.

The ASEAN–Australia Centre was officially launched by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on 27 November 2024 at Parliament House, Canberra, in the presence of the Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Dr Kao Kim Hourn. The event was attended by Southeast Asian heads of mission, members of parliament, senior university, cultural and First Nations representatives, the first cohort of the Emerging Leaders Program, and the boards of the ASEAN–Australia Centre and the National Museum of Australia. The importance of the centre’s establishment was recognised publicly by the Secretary-General of ASEAN, who said it ‘reflects Australia’s dedication to supporting ASEAN’s vision of a more integrated and resilient region’.<sup>4</sup> Centre staff moved to a standalone office space on 17 February 2025, providing the centre with public-facing premises to host public diplomacy events and stakeholder outreach.

To raise awareness of the ASEAN–Australia Centre’s mission, build a community of supporters and amplify the impact of its programs, the centre has implemented a strategic communication plan and established dedicated channels to increase reach and influence. The centre’s website, [aseanaustraliacentre.org.au](https://aseanaustraliacentre.org.au), went live in November 2024 with a landing page showcasing the centre’s brand, and a more detailed version of the website was published on 23 June 2025. The centre’s LinkedIn and Instagram accounts launched on 28 April 2025 and a channel strategy and content calendar have been developed to support regular and engaging updates. The centre’s brand identity has been developed, drawing on elements from Australia’s Nation Brand and the ASEAN logo, demonstrating our investment in a genuine partnership with ASEAN.

The ASEAN–Australia Centre has implemented programs that support its 4 pillars: to increase **Southeast Asia literacy** in Australia, and strengthen **economic linkages, education, and cultural connections** between Australia and Southeast Asia. Greater Southeast Asia literacy and awareness among Australians is a key enabler for Australia to

<sup>4</sup> H.E. Dr Kao Kim Hourn, *Remarks by H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN at the Launch of the ASEAN–Australia Centre*, ASEAN Secretariat, 27 November 2024, para 6.

make the most of the economic, educational and cultural opportunities Southeast Asia offers. The centre's programs build a stronger understanding of Southeast Asia and drive greater engagement in the region. Programs include:

- an **annual grants program** – the Minister for Foreign Affairs approved the grant guidelines on 24 October 2024 and the Minister for Finance approved their release on 29 October 2024. The grant round was launched on 22 November and closed on 10 January 2025, with 296 applications received. The Minister for Foreign Affairs announced grant recipients in a media release on 3 March 2025. The centre's grants program is an annual opportunity to fund programs and initiatives that directly strengthen business, education, cultural and community connections between Australia and Southeast Asia. Initiatives include visiting fellowships for business and community leaders, exchanges for music industry professionals, a football diplomacy program and a program enhancing the supply of premium Australian horticultural produce to Southeast Asia.
- a **young women entrepreneurs program** – the grant round for delivery of this program opened on 22 November 2024 and closed on 17 January 2025. On 25 February 2025, Hacker Exchange (HEX) was confirmed to deliver the 12-week program each year, over the next 4 years. The program will support 120 young women entrepreneurs who are ready to fuel their ambition, build cross-cultural connections and scale their business, social enterprise or startup on a global stage. It includes 11 weeks of online training, followed by a one-week trade mission exchange in Australia, each year. Participants for the 2025 program are confirmed and the program is underway, targeting businesses focused on climate tech, sustainability, the green economy and energy transition.
- the **ASEAN–Australia Emerging Leaders Program** – 3 cohorts of the Emerging Leaders Program were delivered in 2024–25, supporting 75 participants. The program supports young professionals from Australia and Southeast Asia to develop their leadership skills, expand their networks and engage in meaningful cross-cultural exchanges. Focus areas for the 3 cohorts were health (November 2024), digital economy (April 2025) and food and agriculture (May 2025).
- the **ASEAN–Australia BRIDGE School Partnerships Program** – the BRIDGE Program has been successfully expanded from Indonesia to other ASEAN member states and Timor-Leste. The program brings together teachers and students from across Australia and Southeast Asia to provide structured learning opportunities and build cultural understanding. On 3 March 2025, the Minister for Foreign Affairs announced that the expanded program had established 38 new school partnerships.

- **two-way tertiary scholarships** – 2 short courses were delivered during 2024–25, with a specific focus on the STEM and resource sectors, supporting 42 participants. The short courses support implementation of *Invested: Australia’s Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040* by offering two-way tertiary scholarships to address skills shortages and enhance Southeast Asia’s technical capacity. Focus areas included Resources in the Energy Transition (February 2025) and Women in STEM (April–May 2025). The centre is also supporting 12 New Colombo Plan ASEAN–Australia Centre scholars, who were announced in February 2025. The centre will support its scholars to undertake professional and educational experiences, such as internships, or to participate in seminars, conferences and events in the region to further enrich their study experience.



The 2025 ASEAN–Australia Women in STEM short course participants outside Australian Parliament House, Canberra, on 7 May 2025. Credit: Annabel Deibe/DFAT.



**Measure 4: Australia's treaty obligations are met under Australia's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol to the satisfaction of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

Overall performance	Achieved
<b>Target and result</b>	The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) grants a 'broader conclusion' for Australia confirming Australia's compliance with its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol treaty obligations. <b>Achieved (IAEA drew the 'broader conclusion' for Australia)</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	Compliance is independently verified by the IAEA. Complying with Australia's obligations on a routine and continuous basis is a prerequisite for achieving the 'broader conclusion' the following year.
<b>Data sources</b>	The IAEA Safeguards Statement and its conclusion. The Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO) annual report includes the Safeguards Statement and lists IAEA inspections that occurred during the reporting period. The IAEA typically issues its annual Safeguards Statement in June for the prior calendar year, so the IAEA Safeguards Statement for 2024 only accounts for the first 6 months of the 2024–25 reporting period.
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 38 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 26
<b>Measure type</b>	Qualitative; effectiveness
<b>Result explained</b>	In 2024–25, the IAEA continued to draw the 'broader conclusion' for Australia that 'all nuclear material remains in peaceful activities'. Therefore, the target and overall performance measure were 'achieved'.

## Analysis

We rate our performance against this measure as **'achieved'**.

In July 1974, Australia ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) – a multilateral treaty with commitments verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That month, the Safeguards Office, now the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO), was established. ASNO, located within DFAT, is led by a statutory position of Director General, appointed by Australia's Governor-General. The Director General tables a separate annual report in parliament, pursuant to the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation (Safeguards) Act 1987*.

As a non-nuclear-weapon state under the NPT, Australia made a commitment to not acquire nuclear weapons. Australia also committed to the IAEA to accept nuclear safeguards – a range of technical measures applied by the IAEA on nuclear facilities and materials – and to implement a national system of accounting for and controlling Australian nuclear material, associated items and facilities.



Each non-nuclear-weapon state under the NPT is required to conclude its own safeguards agreement with the IAEA – called a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA). Australia’s CSA details its responsibilities and the IAEA’s requirements to verify that Australia is meeting its NPT obligations. Most countries, including Australia, have signed an Additional Protocol. The Additional Protocol gives the IAEA greater access to locations and information to provide higher confidence to the international community that Australia is abiding by its non-proliferation commitments.

Once the IAEA is satisfied that a country has met its obligations under the CSA and Additional Protocol, the IAEA draws a ‘broader conclusion’ which states that ‘all nuclear materials remains in peaceful activities’.<sup>5</sup> Of the 190 states with safeguards agreements in force with the IAEA, the IAEA drew the broader conclusion for only 75 states.

For 2024, the IAEA drew a ‘broader conclusion’ for Australia, the IAEA’s strongest-level safeguards conclusion. The IAEA has drawn this conclusion for Australia every year since 2000, a measure of Australia’s high non-proliferation credentials. As a result, the performance measure was achieved.

In 2024–25, ASNO submitted all reports, declarations and notifications to the IAEA on nuclear materials, facilities and activities, ensuring that Australia met its obligations under the CSA and Additional Protocol.



ASNO officials, led by the Director General of ASNO, Dr Geoffrey Shaw (second from right), visited the Kartini Research Reactor managed by the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in February 2025. Credit: BRIN.

<sup>5</sup> IAEA, *The Safeguards Implementation Report for 2024*, IAEA, Section B, para 15.

During 2024–25, ASNO officers facilitated all requests for IAEA inspections. The IAEA inspectors conducted 20 different inspection activities in 5 states and territories. This continues the sustained increase in the number of IAEA inspections since the AUKUS announcement.<sup>6</sup>

Australia’s planned acquisition of conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines is the most significant change in Australia’s nuclear landscape since the creation of ASNO. This change is leading to a significant increase in ASNO’s regulatory activities.

In 2024–25, ASNO continued to work with the Australian Submarine Agency (ASA) to protect sensitive information on naval nuclear propulsion. ASNO also worked with ASA to satisfy Australia’s international treaty obligations and associated domestic regulatory requirements. ASNO is leading Australia’s efforts to develop safeguards arrangements for naval nuclear propulsion.

Even though acquiring naval nuclear propulsion represents a significant step up for Australia’s nuclear footprint and regulatory complexity, Australia met the highest non-proliferation standard and received the ‘broader conclusion’ in the reporting period.

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<sup>6</sup> The Hon Scott Morrison MP, the Hon Peter Dutton MP and Senator the Hon Marise Payne, *Australia to pursue nuclear-powered submarines through new trilateral enhanced security partnership* [joint media release], 16 September 2021.

Key activity 2: Deliver international development and humanitarian assistance

Measure 5: The development program is effective, efficient and responsive	
Overall performance	Achieved
Target and result	At least 85% of investments are assessed as satisfactory on both effectiveness and efficiency criteria in the investment monitoring reports process <b>Achieved (90%)</b>
Methodology	Internal analysis of annual ratings in investment monitoring reports (IMRs), which consist of 3 types: standard IMRs, humanitarian investment monitoring reports (HIMRs) and final investment monitoring reports (FIMRs). A standard IMR covers performance over a 12-month period and applies to ongoing investments that are not specific humanitarian responses. An HIMR covers the performance of humanitarian investments over a 12-month period. An FIMR is completed in the final year of implementation of an investment and covers performance over the life of the investment. Only one type of report is completed for each eligible investment in each annual process.
Data sources	IMRs, HIMRs and FIMRs
PBS and corporate plan references	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 32 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 27
Measure type	Quantitative; effectiveness
Result explained	In 2024–25, IMRs were completed for 381 investments, with 90% assessed as satisfactory against both effectiveness and efficiency criteria. As the department met the 85% target, the overall performance measure was ‘achieved’.

Analysis

We rate our performance against this measure as ‘**achieved**’.

The objective of Australia’s development program is to advance an Indo-Pacific region that is peaceful, stable and prosperous. The development program supports our national interests by working with our partners globally – and with a particular focus in the Indo-Pacific region – to address shared challenges. To be successful, the development program must be effective (delivering the outcomes intended), efficient (in the use of time and resources) and responsive to partners’ priorities and needs.

Implementation of Australia’s development program is guided by Australia’s International Development Policy and its associated Performance and Delivery Framework.

The framework establishes a 3-tier indicator framework to assess the performance of the development program, comprising the Indo-Pacific development context (Tier 1), Australia's contribution to development (Tier 2), and how we work (Tier 3). Performance measure 5 maps to the highest-level indicator in Tier 3 (see Table 2.5).

**Table 2.5: Indicator from Tier 3 of Australia's International Development Performance and Delivery Framework**

Indicator	Measure
Our development cooperation is effective	At least 85% of investments are assessed as satisfactory on both the effectiveness and efficiency criteria in the investment monitoring reporting (IMR) process

Source: DFAT, *Australia's International Development Performance and Delivery Framework*, DFAT, August 2023, p 18.

IMRs are structured self-assessments completed by DFAT staff annually for bilateral, regional, global and multilateral investments of \$3 million and above. A proportion (62% in 2024–25) of all IMRs are subject to either internal or external review to strengthen the robustness of assessments. This includes all final investment monitoring reports (FIMRs) being assessed by a team of external, independent monitoring and evaluation specialists to validate results.

In 2024–25, the department met the target of at least 85% of the overall number of investments assessed being rated as satisfactory (a score of at least 4 – 'adequate') on both effectiveness and efficiency criteria in annual IMRs. Reports were completed for 381 investments, and 90% were assessed as satisfactory for both effectiveness and efficiency criteria. This is an improvement in performance of 5 percentage points compared with 2023–24 and is primarily due to an increase in efficiency scores, which increased from 87% rated as satisfactory in 2023–24 to 92% in 2024–25. Effectiveness scores decreased by 1 percentage point from 94% in 2023–24 to 93% in 2024–25.

The increase in efficiency scores reflects a higher percentage of both new and ongoing investments being rated satisfactory for efficiency due to factors such as investment outcomes being more clearly defined, improvements in operating environments, and suitability of delivery mechanisms. The adequacy of these and other factors may vary year on year throughout the implementation of an investment, leading to fluctuations in annual aggregate efficiency outcomes.



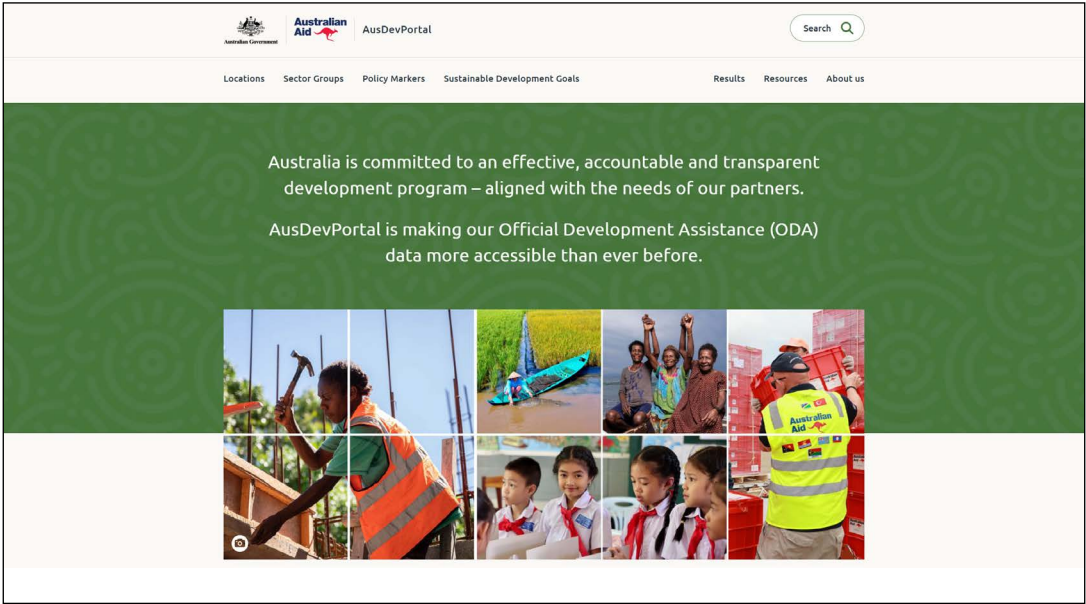
Members of the Australian Disaster Awork with local authorities to undertake search and rescue operations in Port Vila in support of the Government of Vanuatu's response to the earthquake in December 2024. Credit: Queensland Fire Department.

Of the 381 investments with IMRs, 17 were humanitarian responses and therefore a humanitarian investment monitoring report (HIMR) was completed. In 2024–25, all investments with HIMRs were assessed as satisfactory against both effectiveness and efficiency criteria, compared to 96% in 2023–24. Of the 381 investments with IMRs, 59 completed implementation during the reporting period and therefore final investment monitoring reports (FIMRs) were prepared. In 2024–25, 78% of investments with FIMRs were assessed as satisfactory against both effectiveness and efficiency criteria, a decrease of 2 percentage points compared with 2023–24. During 2024–25, 19 investments (5% of the 381 investments with IMRs) were identified as underperforming. Nine underperforming investments were completed or ending implementation during the reporting period (therefore, no remediation was undertaken in response to the IMR ratings), and remediation plans were developed for the 10 ongoing investments identified as underperforming.



Further analysis of progress against other development program measures and targets, including against specific policy priorities defined in Australia’s International Development Policy and the International Development Performance and Delivery Framework, is reported through the annual Performance of Australian Development Cooperation report.

In December 2024, DFAT launched a new online transparency portal, AusDevPortal (adp.dfat.gov.au), and recommenced reporting to the International Aid Transparency Initiative, delivering on 2 transparency commitments in the International Development Policy. IMR ratings for 2022–23 and 2023–24 for effectiveness, efficiency, gender equality and disability equity are published at the investment level on AusDevPortal. Ratings for 2024–25 will be uploaded to the portal in early 2026.



The homepage AusDevPortal, launched in December 2024. Credit: DFAT.

As Table 2.6 illustrates, investments over the past 4 years have shown high levels of effectiveness and efficiency – at an annual average of 87% being assessed as satisfactory for effectiveness and efficiency.

**Table 2.6: Proportion of development investments rated as satisfactory, 2021–22 to 2024–25**

Year	Investments rated satisfactory for effectiveness and efficiency (%)
2021–22	85
2022–23	86
2023–24	85
2024–25	90
<b>Four-year average</b>	<b>87</b>

Note: To be rated as satisfactory, an investment must achieve a score of at least 4 (‘adequate’) on both effectiveness and efficiency criteria in annual investment monitoring reports.

**Key activity 3: Advocate within multilateral institutions****Measure 6: Australia's payments to multilateral development organisations generate collective action on issues impacting Australia**

<b>Overall performance</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Target and result</b>	Mandatory payments to multilateral development institutions are paid on time <b>Achieved (9 out of 9 encashments)</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	An internal review of mandatory payments made to multilateral development institutions
<b>Data source</b>	Instruments of commitments
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 33 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 29
<b>Measure type</b>	Quantitative; output
<b>Result explained</b>	In 2024–25, 9 out of 9 encashments were made by the agreed encashment date, so the performance measure was 'achieved'.

**Analysis**

We rate our performance against this measure as '**achieved**'.

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) provide finance and technical assistance to support low-income countries to meet their development goals. Australia works closely with other donors and MDB managers to negotiate funding commitments in 3- or 4-year replenishment cycles, and through this process advocates for policy and resource settings that best respond to the priorities of countries in our region. Through our contributions, the department leverages the scale of MDB expertise and financial reach to support collective action, meet shared development goals and respond to crises. Providing a significant share of development support in the Indo-Pacific, the MDBs contribute to a stronger, prosperous and more resilient region.

Donors that make larger commitments during replenishment negotiations hold a larger burden share in mechanisms such as the World Bank's International Development Association and the Asian Development Bank's Asian Development Fund. While our membership of these institutions enables a seat at the table, our contributions give credibility to our policy and resourcing positions. Australia's financial contributions are complemented by productive relationships with other members that underpin the ability of donors to achieve collective agreement on the scale and strategic direction of these MDB mechanisms.



As an example, Australia’s priorities for the recent replenishment of the Asian Development Fund (known as ‘ADF 14’, spanning the calendar years 2025–2028) included robust, predictable funding allocations for vulnerable Pacific island countries to meet their development challenges; a greater focus on delivering high-quality infrastructure that is climate resilient and brings local economic benefits; and significant dedicated resourcing for action on gender equality and climate. Australia worked closely with other donors such as Japan, and Pacific island countries such as Cook Islands and Kiribati, to see these priorities agreed in the final ADF 14 replenishment framework in May 2024 as an expression of our intent for collective action.

Payments that donors agree to make (encashments) enable the MDBs to operationalise the intent for action agreed through replenishments. Donor contributions do not have to be paid up-front but are paid over the encashment cycle, which is negotiated as part of the replenishment process. The schedules are formalised through financially binding instruments of commitment (signed by Australia’s Minister for Foreign Affairs) and promissory notes (signed by Australia’s Treasurer). Ensuring payments are made on time, including during times of known domestic budgetary constraints, demonstrates Australia’s financial and political commitment to the multilateral bank system. It also provides the financial certainty that allows MDBs to finance the multi-year projects necessary to promote sustainable development in line with the expectations of Australia and other donors.

In 2024–25, DFAT was responsible for 9 encashments to MDBs totalling \$370,734,668. Four encashments were made to the Asian Development Bank’s Asian Development Fund; 4 to the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA); and one encashment to IDA’s Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative. Of the 9 encashments, all were made on or before the agreed due date.

This result is an improvement on the previous year’s result of 8 out of 9 payments being made on time, which resulted from the late payment of one encashment in 2023–24.

**Measure 7: International organisations reflect Australian interests and values when addressing global challenges**

<b>Overall performance</b>	<b>Substantially achieved</b>
<b>Target and result</b>	Three focus areas demonstrate Australia's influence and engagement in international institutions, including delivery of planned strategic objectives for the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week; election of Australian multilateral candidatures; and delivery of the UN Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Program. <b>Substantially achieved</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	The department identified 3 focus areas to assess our performance against the intended outcomes. The department then undertook a review of the 3 focus areas identified, ensuring coverage of all 3 focus areas, to assess our performance against the overall measure.
<b>Data sources</b>	The Foreign Minister's High-Level Week program as complete and internal records, including records of conversation; candidature outcomes and voting records; and results from JPO recruitment processes and surveys
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 34 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 30  Note: The target was revised following publication of the PBS 2024–25. The revised target was published in the Corporate Plan 2024–25.
<b>Measure type</b>	Quantitative; qualitative; effectiveness
<b>Result explained</b>	In 2024–25, the department reviewed 3 focus areas demonstrating Australia's influence and engagement in international institutions, including delivery of planned strategic objectives for High-Level Week; election of Australian multilateral candidatures; and delivery of the UN JPO Program. Of the 3 focus areas, one objective was achieved, one objective was substantially achieved, and one objective was partially achieved. The overall performance rating against this measure is 'substantially achieved'. An analysis of DFAT's performance against each of the focus areas is provided below.

**Analysis**

We rate our performance against this measure as '**substantially achieved**'.

**Overall performance**

This measure reflects the importance of active and creative multilateral engagement to protect and promote Australia's interests and values. It is in our national interest to engage with the multilateral system to enhance security, contribute to stability, and foster prosperity for Australia, the Indo-Pacific and the world.

As one focus area was ‘substantially achieved’, one focus area was ‘partially achieved’, and one focus area was ‘achieved’, the overall performance for 2024–25 is ‘substantially achieved’. This reflects the challenges and unpredictability of working in the multilateral system. With 193 member states participating in the UN General Assembly, consensus decision-making can be slow and cumbersome, and can make it difficult to show where Australia has influenced outcomes.

This was the first year that DFAT reviewed these 3 specific focus areas to demonstrate performance against this measure. Given external factors, including ongoing disruption to the multilateral system, DFAT will consider how methodologies are applied for future reporting periods.

Global security, stability and prosperity depend on an effective multilateral system, including international organisations. These organisations serve as platforms for dialogue, negotiation and cooperation between countries on global challenges that cannot be tackled by individual countries, or smaller groups of countries, alone.

Through Australia’s engagement with international organisations, we advocate for a world that is stable, peaceful and prosperous, and seek to ensure our national interests and our region’s priorities are reflected in the work of international institutions.

In 2024–25, the department assessed its performance by undertaking a review of 3 focus areas that illustrate the multifaceted approach to ensuring Australian interests and values are reflected in international institutions.

Focus area 1 – the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week – measures the effectiveness of our engagement with UN member states and international organisations, and of our strengthening partnerships with influential countries.

Both focus area 2 (multilateral candidatures) and focus area 3 (the UN Junior Professional Officer Program) measure the effectiveness of our whole-of-government coordination and domestic stakeholder engagement, to ensure Australia is in leadership positions that allow us opportunities to influence international organisations and represent our interests consistently and coherently.

### ***Delivery of strategic objectives for United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week***

We rate our performance against this focus area as ‘**substantially achieved**’.

The United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week is the largest annual gathering of world leaders, convened at the UN Headquarters in New York in September each year. At High-Level Week, Australia advocates for Australian multilateral interests and values at meetings and events of UN member states, international organisations and non-government actors, focused on addressing global challenges.

In 2024, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, was the head of Australia's delegation to High-Level Week. The UN General Assembly began with the Summit of the Future, where countries endorsed new commitments for a stronger United Nations and to enhance development, security and human rights. Australia used High-Level Week to press all countries to uphold international laws and norms, including the adherence to international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians and aid workers.

The department, in consultation with other Australian Government departments, develops strategic objectives for Australia's participation at High-Level Week each year to advance our priorities for multilateral engagement. In 2024, our strategic objectives related to building Australia's reputation and influence, and defending the UN system's foundational value.

Australia's engagement in High-Level Week can also be shaped by current global events and, given the presence of many world leaders in New York, meetings may also be used to prosecute Australia's broader foreign policy interests. In 2024, the Foreign Minister (as Australia's head of delegation) met with a range of partners on the priorities of Australia and our region, including on the conflict in the Middle East and Australia's initiative on the protection of aid workers.

To measure the department's performance, we analysed the outcomes of Australia's engagements at High-Level Week to determine alignment with the planned strategic objectives. The assessment aimed to determine the results of the department's actions – including in shaping and implementing the Foreign Minister's program and briefing – to achieve the intended outcomes.

Of the 46 events Australia's Foreign Minister attended at High-Level Week in 2024, 44 of these (96%) were assessed as aligning with at least one of Australia's 2 strategic objectives for High-Level Week. Against a target of 98%, this focus area is considered 'substantially achieved'. The remaining 2 events prosecuted Australia's broader foreign policy interests, beyond those specified for High-Level Week.

### ***Election of Australian multilateral candidatures***

We rate our performance against this focus area as '**partially achieved**'.

In 2024–25, DFAT, as the whole-of-government coordinator for multilateral candidacies, supported the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to campaign for election to the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) Executive Committee for the term 2024–2027. DFAT also supported the Department of Health and Aged Care to campaign for Australia's election to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) for the term 2026–2029. The support provided by the department included:

- advice on campaign planning and tactics, primarily with respect to crafting, targeting and delivering messages effectively, and promotional materials and events
- coordination of advocacy undertaken by Australia's overseas diplomatic posts, including formal written diplomatic communications and face-to-face meetings with representatives of other national governments

- negotiating reciprocal support arrangements – for example, agreeing to vote for a state’s candidacy in a multilateral election, in return for its agreement to vote for a specified Australian candidacy in the same or a different election
- provision of limited additional funding for campaign activities, such as event funding to support in-person advocacy with voting states. In 2024–25, the department only provided additional funding support to the CND campaign.

In 2024–25, Australia was successfully elected to the CND by a narrow margin, and was defeated in the INTERPOL Executive Committee election. The INTERPOL Executive Committee election saw 6 candidates in Australia’s regional group competing for only 2 seats – this increased the difficulty of attracting votes for Australia, as INTERPOL member states voting in the election were afforded a broad range of candidates from which to choose.

Factors outside of the department’s remit impacted on the candidacies. Australia’s INTERPOL candidacy benefited from the personal merit of the AFP’s nominated candidate, Assistant Commissioner David McLean. DFAT assesses that Assistant Commissioner McLean’s strong credentials in relevant professional capabilities assisted in attracting support from INTERPOL member states.

The department similarly assesses that Australia’s CND candidacy benefited from Australia’s reputation for constructive engagement as a member of the commission since 1973, including Australia’s consistent advocacy for evidence-based policy approaches.

The outcomes of both elections (in particular the narrow margin for the CND election) demonstrated that in the current multilateral environment, technical merit on its own is not enough to secure election – negotiating reciprocal support arrangements is an essential input. However, given the limited number of tradeable votes in multilateral elections, the majority of the support for a successful candidacy must be unconditional, relying on the effective delivery of compelling messages that promote Australia’s candidacies.

As Australia was successfully elected to the CND for the 2026–2029 term and not elected to INTERPOL’s Executive Committee for the 2024–2027 term, the target of both candidacies elected in 2024–25 was ‘partially achieved’.

### ***Delivery of the UN Junior Professional Officer Program***

We rate our performance against this focus area as **‘achieved’**.

The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Program is a UN initiative that allows early-career professionals from participating countries (including Australia) to gain practical experience working in international organisations. Australia participates in the JPO Program to strengthen its engagement and multilateral influence with the United Nations and support global efforts on issues important to Australia’s foreign policy interests, such as peace and security, disarmament, gender equality and climate change. DFAT leads Australia’s participation in the program, including the implementation and management of Australia’s participation, working with the United Nations to establish JPO positions, undertaking JPO recruitment processes and supporting Australian JPOs through their placements.



Participants in the annual climate security consultation with Norway, including Australian JPO Sally Swinnen (fifth from left), Program Analyst, at UNDP Nigeria, in October 2024 in Abuja, Nigeria. Credit: UNDP Nigeria.

In 2024–25, the department measured its performance against 3 quantitative targets. An analysis of results against the 3 targets is outlined below.

**Target 1:** 100% of JPO positions established for an Australian JPO are filled within the first recruitment process.

DFAT recruits and shortlists competitive Australian JPO candidates who meet the United Nations academic and professional experience requirements. Our objectives include:

- ensuring that our shortlisted applicants are agreed upon by the United Nations
- supporting the UN-led interview process that results in the selection of a candidate to fill each role
- achieving full placement of advertised positions each year.

In 2024–25, 100% (10 positions) available were filled within the first recruitment round. The result indicates that the department was able to identify qualified and competitive candidates.

**Target 2:** At least 80% of JPOs indicate that they are gaining knowledge of the multilateral system and structure of the United Nations.

The department conducts a placement experience survey at 10 to 12 months into a JPO's deployment. The objective is to gain an understanding of the JPO's perceptions and asks respondents to rate their experience with the program. The question related to this target asks JPOs to rate their agreement with the following statement: 'You are gaining knowledge of the structure of the UN/multilateral system and how to work effectively in the United Nations system.'

The department achieved the performance result for this target, with 85.7% of JPOs indicating that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that they are gaining knowledge of the multilateral system and structure of the United Nations. This is based on aggregate results from surveys conducted by DFAT and completed by 14 JPOs in 2024–25. This result exceeded the target of 80%, highlighting that the program is achieving its objective of creating pathways for future leadership in international organisations.

**Target 3:** At least 50% of Australian JPOs indicate that they are considering a long-term career with the United Nations.

The department conducts a second placement experience survey 20 to 22 months into a JPO's deployment. The survey seeks to understand if the JPOs are considering a longer-term UN career. The question related to this target is: 'Please rate your level of interest and intention to seek to forge a career in the UN and secure a UN role at the end of your placement.'

The department achieved the performance result for this target, with 62.5% of Australian JPOs indicating that they are 'more likely to seek to stay at the UN' or 'strongly intend to stay at the UN'. This is based on aggregate results from surveys conducted by the department and completed by 8 JPOs in 2024–25. This result exceeded the target of 50%, highlighting that the program is achieving its objective of building our multilateral expertise while fostering long-term international partnerships and developing networks and influence.

Australia's JPO program commenced in 2021, with the first cohort of JPOs deployed in 2022. This is the first year the department has undertaken a monitoring and evaluation process, which includes the survey component. Early data indicates that we are achieving the program objectives. However, the multilateral system has witnessed significant disruption and funding losses in 2025. Whether JPOs continue to perceive the option of an ongoing UN career as achievable in this unfamiliar environment remains to be seen.



## Performance results for Outcome 2

**Outcome 2: The protection and welfare of Australians abroad and access to secure international travel documentation through timely and responsive travel advice and consular and passport services in Australia and overseas**

**Key activity 4: Deliver consular services**

Measure 8: Australians have access to consular information and services, including in times of crisis	
Overall performance	Achieved
<b>Targets and results</b>	<p>Target 1: 100% of travel advisories reviewed biannually for posts in a volatile risk environment and where there are elevated Australian interests. 100% of travel advisories reviewed annually for all other posts.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p> <p>Target 2: A maximum of 2 occurrences of unplanned Consular Emergency Centre (CEC) telephony outages greater than 5 minutes per financial year.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b></p>
<b>Methodology</b>	The department undertakes a count of travel advisory reviews and CEC telephony outages. For the performance measure to be assessed as ‘achieved’, both targets need to be ‘achieved’.
<b>Data sources</b>	Travel advisory reviews and records of CEC telephony outages
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 42 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 31
<b>Measure type</b>	Quantitative; output
<b>Results explained</b>	<p>The department achieved the target of 100% of travel advisories reviewed biannually for posts in a volatile risk environment and where there are elevated Australian interests, and 100% of travel advisories reviewed annually for all other posts.</p> <p>No unplanned outages to the CEC telephone line were recorded during 2024–25, so the target of a maximum of 2 unplanned CEC telephony outages greater than 5 minutes per financial year was achieved.</p> <p>As both targets were achieved, we rate the overall performance measure as ‘achieved’.</p>

## Analysis

We rate our performance against this measure as **‘achieved’**.

The department delivers consular services globally through its network of embassies, high commissions and consulates. Australians in need can access emergency assistance 24 hours a day via the Consular Emergency Centre (CEC). Australians can also obtain up-to-date travel advice through the department’s Smartraveller website. This performance measure reflects our commitment to providing accurate, timely travel advice and ensuring Australians can access consular support at any time, including during crises.

### ***Reviews of travel advisories***

The department’s travel advisories, published on the Smartraveller website, are a primary resource Australians use to obtain information for safe overseas travel. In 2024–25, 100% of travel advisories were reviewed biannually for posts in a volatile risk environment and/or where there are high Australian interests. For all other posts, 100% of travel advisories were reviewed annually.

In 2024–25, some 1,148 travel advice updates were published on Smartraveller. For our performance measure outcome, this includes the required 205 scheduled reviews and 312 ad hoc updates. The Smartraveller website was visited over 30 million times. Travel advice for Indonesia attracted the most views among travel advice pages, followed by the United States, Thailand, Vietnam and the United Kingdom. ‘Visa and entry requirements in Europe’ remains the most visited thematic page, followed by ‘Travel advice explained’, ‘Notarial services in Australia’, ‘CHOICE travel insurance buying guide’ and ‘Travelling with medication and medical devices’.

DFAT’s consular services are delivered in an increasingly complex global environment, with rising traveller volumes and evolving risks. Smartraveller’s responsiveness remains critical – recent updates include new thematic content on issues such as ‘Water safety while travelling overseas’, and new advisory categories, such as methanol poisoning, updated across more than 170 country advisories. During crises, Smartraveller has issued up-to-the-minute tailored updates, including for civil unrest in Bangladesh, the Vanuatu earthquake in December 2024, and instability in the Middle East. These timely updates reflect DFAT’s commitment to keeping Australians informed and safe.

### ***Unplanned Consular Emergency Centre telephony outages***

The department provides emergency consular assistance 24 hours a day through the CEC, located in Canberra. After hours, Australians overseas can call the Australian embassy, high commission or consulate in the country they are visiting and follow the phone prompts for connection to the CEC. An unplanned telephony outage means that all phone systems and call diversion systems are not operational at any point in time, regardless of whether a call to the CEC is attempted during this period. In 2024–25, there were no unplanned outages to the CEC telephone line.

## Key activity 5: Deliver passport services

Measure 9: Australian passports are processed efficiently	
Overall performance	Achieved
<b>Targets and results</b>	<p>Target 1: 95% of travel documents* are available within 6 weeks from lodgement <b>(Achieved – 99.3%)</b></p> <p>Target 2: 98% of priority passports are processed within 2 business days <b>(Achieved – 99.8%)</b></p> <p>Target 3: 98% of fast-track passports are processed within 5 business days <b>(Achieved – 99.9%)</b></p> <p>Target 4: Travel document processing efficiency is greater than or equal to 90% of the agreed benchmark <b>(Achieved – 115.8%)</b></p>
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>The results for target 1 are calculated by determining the number of travel documents produced and available within the 6-week timeframe and dividing that by the total number of travel documents produced. The resulting percentage represents the proportion that were available within the 6-week timeframe.</p> <p>The results for targets 2 and 3 focus on passports processed under accelerated services – priority (2 days) and fast-track (5 days). For each target, the number of passports processed within the respective timeframe is divided by the total number of passports for which the corresponding expedited fee was paid. The results are a percentage of passports processed within the stipulated timeframes (2 days or 5 days).</p> <p>The results for target 4 are calculated by determining the number of travel documents produced and dividing that by the number of full-time equivalent days. The result is divided by the agreed benchmark (9.65). The resulting percentage represents how efficiently the passport office is processing passports against the agreed benchmark.</p>
<b>Data sources</b>	Passport lodgement and processing data, Australia Post delivery data and human resources system data
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	<p>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 43</p> <p>Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 32</p> <p>Note: The targets were revised following publication of the PBS 2024–25. The revised targets were published in the PBS 2025–26 (p 51) and the Corporate Plan 2025–26 (pp 25–26).</p>
<b>Measure type</b>	Quantitative; efficiency

(continued)

**Measure 9 (continued): Australian passports are processed efficiently**

<b>Results explained</b>	<p>In 2024–25, 99.3% of travel documents were available within 6 weeks of lodgement. Therefore, the target was ‘achieved’.</p> <p>For target 2, 99.8% of priority passports were processed within 2 business days. Therefore, the target was ‘achieved’.</p> <p>For target 3, 99.9% of fast-track passports were processed within 5 business days. Therefore, the target was ‘achieved’.</p> <p>For target 4, travel document processing efficiency achieved 115.8% of the agreed benchmark, exceeding the target. Therefore, the target was ‘achieved’.</p> <p>As all 4 targets were achieved, the overall performance measure is ‘achieved’.</p>
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\* ‘Travel documents’ refers to official documents that allow a person to travel internationally, including passports, certificates of identity, convention travel documents and documents of identity.

**Analysis**

We rate our performance against this measure as ‘**achieved**’.

During the reporting period, the department introduced 2 new targets and replaced one target. This followed recommendations made in the Australian National Audit Office’s report on the efficiency of the Australian Passport Office, the introduction of the fast-track service on 1 July 2024, and consistent application of the definition of a business day to processing timeframes. In 2024–25, all 4 targets were achieved, so the overall performance measure is achieved. An analysis of the results against each target is provided below.

**Target 1:** 95% of travel documents are available within 6 weeks from lodgement

**Result:** Achieved with a result of **99.3%**

This replaces the target of 95% of passports processed within 10 business days. The revised target measures customer experience and published advice to ‘allow a minimum of 6 weeks to receive a passport’.

There is no mandatory timeframe for processing routine passport applications; however, customers expect a timely service. The target calculates the time from application lodgement to the delivery or customer notification that the document is available for collection. The threshold accepts that a small number of travel documents processed may exceed stated timeframes due to case complexity, seeking additional information from customers, or periods of high demand.

In 2024–25, the department recorded a result of 99.3%, exceeding the threshold of 95%. Therefore, the target was achieved.

**Target 2:** 98% of priority passports are processed within 2 business days

**Result:** Achieved with a result of **99.8%**

In 2024–25, the department recorded a result of 99.8%, exceeding the threshold of 98%. Of 65,126 priority passport applications received in 2024–25, 131 were processed outside the 2-business-day timeframe. Therefore, the target was ‘achieved’. This result is consistent with the 2023–24 result (99.9%).

**Target 3:** 98% of fast-track passports are processed within 5 business days

**Result:** Achieved with a result of **99.9%**

A new target was introduced to capture performance against a fast-track passport processing service that was introduced on 1 July 2024. The 98% threshold accepts a small number of applications may exceed stated timeframes for reasons that may include case complexity, system outages or periods of high demand. In 2024–25, the department recorded a result of 99.9%, exceeding the threshold. Of the 261,944 fast-track applications received in 2024–25, 195 were processed outside the 5-business-day timeframe. Therefore, the target was ‘achieved’.

**Target 4:** Travel document processing efficiency is greater than or equal to 90% of the agreed benchmark

**Result:** Achieved with a result of **115.8%**

This new target captures how many travel documents staff process each business day. The department uses demand modelling to forecast how many passport applications will be lodged. This helps with operational planning. As a predicted estimate, we allow for a 10% margin of error in our forecasts.

Passport demand changes across the year. Demand also depends on when people renew their passports. During the pandemic, many Australians delayed renewing their passports. As an ordinary child passport is valid for 5 years and an ordinary adult passport is valid for 10 years, this has created big increases and decreases in demand every 5 and 10 years.

The department is resourced to manage these fluctuations, but scale is important, and when fewer people apply, processing may run less efficiently than during busy times.

In 2024–25, we performed above our threshold. In 2025–26, we expect fewer people to apply for a travel document and anticipate performing closer to the 90% threshold.

**Measure 10: Customers are satisfied with passport services**

<b>Overall performance</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Target and result</b>	85% satisfaction rate overall from customer surveys <b>Achieved (91%)</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	A customer satisfaction survey is conducted monthly by a service provider with expertise in designing and conducting customer surveys. The Australian Passport Office works closely with the independent provider on survey design, reporting and secure data management. Customers are surveyed monthly and are selected in accordance with a proportionate sampling approach.
<b>Data sources</b>	Survey data held by the service provider
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 43 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 34
<b>Measure type</b>	Quantitative; effectiveness
<b>Result explained</b>	In 2024–25, the department achieved a 91% overall satisfaction rate in the passport customer surveys, exceeding the 85% target. Therefore, the overall performance measure was ‘achieved’.

**Analysis**

We rate our performance against this measure as **‘achieved’**.

The department places a high value on customer feedback, including the level of satisfaction with its passport services. The satisfaction survey is managed by a survey provider on behalf of the department. The survey design aligns with market survey methodology better practice.

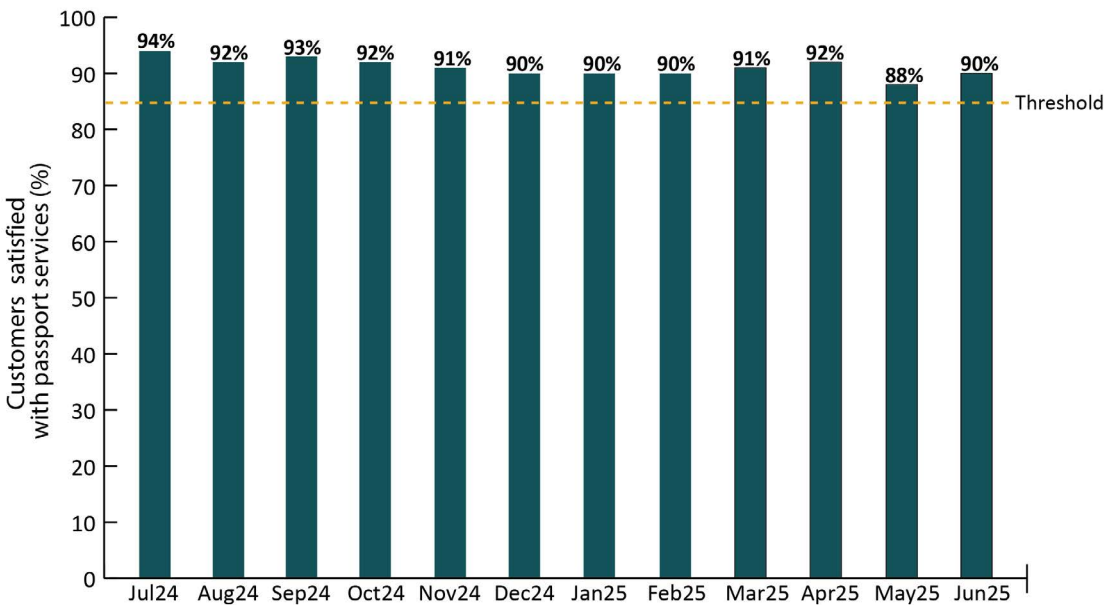
Customers are surveyed monthly and are selected in accordance with a proportionate sampling approach. The survey asks customers a range of questions to rate their overall satisfaction with their recent experience of applying for and receiving a passport. The question that is specifically relevant to this measure is, ‘Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your recent experience of applying for and receiving a passport?’.

The department achieved the performance result for this measure, with 91% of survey responses rating the department’s passport services as satisfactory or very satisfactory, based on aggregate results from surveys conducted over the reporting period. Responses of 7 and above on a scale of 1 to 10 are considered ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’.

This result compares to 94% recorded in the 2023–24 reporting period. Dissatisfaction with the cost of a passport was a frequent comment provided among those who rated their experience as ‘dissatisfied’ (scores of 1 to 4), noting that fee increases were implemented in July 2024 and January 2025.

Figure 2.2 shows the monthly satisfaction results achieved across 2024–25. The survey is conducted monthly based on when passports are finalised.

Figure 2.2: Customer satisfaction with passport services, by month, 2024–25



## Performance results for Outcome 3

**Outcome 3: A secure Australian Government presence overseas through the provision of security services and information and communications technology infrastructure, and the management of the Commonwealth's overseas property estate**

**Key activity 6: Manage the Australian Government's overseas network**

**Measure 11: Australian Government staff, information and assets overseas are protected through appropriate risk-focused security measures**

<b>Overall performance</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Target and result</b>	<p>DFAT achieves the set security performance standards across a majority of its posts in the areas of compliance, culture and responsiveness to incidents</p> <p><b>Achieved (the department achieved the set security performance standards across a majority of its posts in all areas of compliance, culture and responsiveness to incidents)</b></p>
<b>Methodology</b>	Ongoing assessments of compliance, culture and responsiveness to incidents for each of DFAT's overseas posts
<b>Data sources</b>	Data collected for each post on compliance with security, culture and responsiveness to incidents
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	<p>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 45</p> <p>Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 35</p>
<b>Measure type</b>	Qualitative; effectiveness
<b>Result explained</b>	In 2024–25, DFAT achieved the set security performance standards across a majority of its posts in the areas of compliance, culture and responsiveness to incidents. Therefore, both the target and the overall performance measure were 'achieved'.



## Analysis

We rate our performance against this measure as **‘achieved’**.

In 2024–25, a majority of posts achieved the standard of security performance in the areas of compliance, culture and responsiveness to incidents.

DFAT monitors security performance at overseas posts through an ongoing assessment of data used to calculate an aggregate score from 3 component areas – compliance, culture and responsiveness to incidents.

In 2024–25, we achieved increased scores across all 3 component areas. The largest increase in performance across all posts was in the area of compliance. Compared to 2023–24, the results suggest that, with increased performance being needed to meet the security standard, posts placed higher scrutiny on the measure’s most heavily weighted component – compliance. Additionally, the consistent upward trend likely reflects posts’ increased familiarity with and understanding of the scorecard in its second year of implementation.

**Measure 12: The overseas property estate is effectively maintained and fit for purpose**

<b>Overall performance</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Targets and results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 80% satisfaction rating with the performance of the outsourced property service provider and the Overseas Property Office <b>Achieved (95%)</b></li> <li>Annual reinvestment in the DFAT portfolio of a minimum of 2% of the building asset value <b>Achieved (2.5%)</b></li> <li>At least 90% of the owned property estate 'planned and preventative maintenance program' is completed as per the agreed schedule <b>Achieved (99%)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Methodology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An annual client satisfaction survey of 111 overseas posts conducted by a service provider with expertise in designing and conducting customer surveys</li> <li>An annual independent valuation program of real owned property assets and the investment in maintenance and upgrade of these assets</li> <li>An annual completion rate of the planned and preventative maintenance program</li> </ul>
<b>Data sources</b>	Responses to the annual client satisfaction survey, independent property valuation reports, expenditure data, and records of maintenance work orders from a property services provider
<b>PBS and corporate plan references</b>	Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25, p 46 Corporate Plan 2024–25, p 36
<b>Measure type</b>	Quantitative; output
<b>Results explained</b>	<p>In 2024–25, the client satisfaction survey had a 99% response rate and resulted in an overall satisfaction rating of 95%, exceeding the 80% target, so the target was 'achieved'.</p> <p>The department achieved a 2.5% annual reinvestment in the owned property portfolio, exceeding the annual property reinvestment target of 2%, so the target was 'achieved'.</p> <p>The department completed 99% of the planned and preventative maintenance activities scheduled for 2024–25, exceeding the target of 90%, so the target was 'achieved'.</p> <p>Noting that all 3 targets were achieved, the overall performance measure is 'achieved'.</p>

## Analysis

We rate our performance against this measure as **‘achieved’**.

The department manages the Commonwealth’s overseas property portfolio for over 2,000 properties. To effectively maintain the overseas owned property estate and for leased chanceries and head-of-mission residences, the department contracts a property services provider. The provider’s services include planned and preventative maintenance, lease administration, property upgrades and construction works.

### ***Performance of the property services provider and the Overseas Property Office***

In April 2025, a service provider conducted an annual satisfaction survey of all overseas posts on their satisfaction with the property services provided by the department and the outsourced property services provider. The survey measured how well the department’s Overseas Property Office (OPO) and the property services provider delivered property services for the overseas owned property portfolio and for leased chanceries and head-of-mission residences.

In 2024–25, OPO and its property services provider achieved a combined client satisfaction rating of 95% for owned properties and leased chanceries and head-of-mission residences, up from 85.5% in 2023–24 and surpassing the 80% target. This improvement resulted from increased engagement with posts, clearer communication about services, and a targeted action plan addressing issues found in the previous year’s survey.

OPO and the property service provider achieved improved satisfaction ratings against the 2023–24 survey results for competency and skills to meet the property needs of posts (+8.5 percentage points), reliability of property management services (+9.5 percentage points), resourcing capacity to meet posts’ property services requests (+8 percentage points), and clients’ satisfaction with the speed of how quickly their urgent repairs or maintenance issues are dealt with (+15 percentage points).

The survey also identified some areas for improvement where posts were not satisfied with the property services provided, such as the resourcing capacity to meet all the clients’ needs (20% not satisfied) and completeness of briefings following annual property inspections (20% not satisfied). OPO will work to address these areas for improvement.

### ***Annual reinvestment in the DFAT property portfolio***

The department achieved a 2.5% (2.5% in 2023–24) annual reinvestment in the owned property portfolio, exceeding the 2024–25 annual property reinvestment target of 2.0%. The department prioritises budget allocation at the start of each financial year to targeted works to ensure that the overseas property estate is effectively maintained and fit for purpose.

***Planned and preventative maintenance program***

During 2024–25, the property services provider delivered 12,177 (11,941 in 2023–24) planned and preventative works across the portfolio to improve the functionality, efficiency and lifespan of owned properties.

Overall, 99% (99% in 2023–24) of the planned and preventative maintenance activities were delivered, exceeding the target of 90%. The preventative maintenance program covers essential services, such as fire safety, electrical, plumbing, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.

***Overall performance***

Achieving all 3 planned performance results demonstrates the department's commitment to ensuring the overseas property estate is effectively maintained and fit for purpose.