Discover.

**Thinking differently about
the workplace.**

summary.

What we heard

This report summarises baseline workplace intelligence for the Property and Construction Division within the Department of Finance.

Key insights:

- Staff indicated a moderately high level of satisfaction with the work environment. Yet, less than half feel the environment helps them be productive.

- People within the Division are seeking fewer distractions with quiet spaces in which to concentrate and an environment able to adapt more easily to changing business needs [agility].

- On average, staff estimated they lost half an hour per day to distractions at or near their work point. Currently, around one quarter of workpoints are placed within circulation paths.

- Most staff are dissatisfied with the technology available, with less than half of respondents considering themselves digitally confident.

- The Division has a variety of different workstyles, each style engaged in varying amounts of collaborative and focused work. Interestingly, the observed workstyles of the Division were twice as mobile and dynamic than they consider themselves.

Food for thought

Consider reshaping the environment to create a more agile work place with distinctly different mental environments [page 23].

Engage teams in their use of space to enable informed decisions around space as a high performance tool.

Engage the Division in a meaningful way to build a culture of positive behaviours and norms around being mindful of others and sharing space.

Help individuals and teams improve their confidence with the technology available.

Encourage greater movement. Consider a communication campaign related to the benefits of multiple postures and movement.

Next steps

Share and discuss results with staff. What makes sense and what was surprising?

Look for ways to re-shape the space.

Experiment with different ways of working flexibly in the new space.

Actively seek ongoing feedback from staff and compare with baseline data. Which changes have had the biggest positive impact on satisfaction and productivity.

Property and Construction Division, within the Department of Finance, have begun thinking differently about workplace.

Workplace as a Tool.

The Division understands that staff are seeking greater flexibility in how they do their jobs and where they work.

They would like greater trust in the work they do and more exposure to the work underway across the Division.

Staff are seeking stronger platforms for idea generation and facilitation. Along with greater integration of technology within processes.

Being Curious.

For this, the Property and Construction Division have begun to be curious about flexible, agile working.

The first stage, has seen some staff flexibly sharing spaces in specific locations across the neighbourhood.

The next step was to collect intelligence around the flexible potential of the Division and its environment.

How does the Division work, what do staff think and feel about the current work environment, and to what extent might the Division work more flexibly?

Property and Construction have established a robust evidence base within this report of what works well and what doesn't now.

Process of Discovery.

The Division engaged independent workplace specialists, Puzzle Partners, to develop a baseline of workplace intelligence, including:

1. Interviews with senior leaders across the Division.

2. A voluntary, anonymous workplace survey.

3. A two week period of workplace observations.

Flexible Potential.

Leaders across the Division have a strong understanding of flexible work environments and the factors that help them succeed.

Just under two thirds of the Division are satisfied with the current environment, yet less than half feel the environment support them to be productive. Staff are seeking a greater variety of spaces and mental environments, including quiet, private spaces in which to work.

When the Division observed how space is used, around half of its workpoints were actively used. There is significant potential to make better use of technology and space.

Increase the sense of privacy and reduce the sense of being surrounded by people talking.

Survey Respondent, 2018

Leader insights.

Senior Executive Service leaders were interviewed to gather strategic insights around opportunities and challenges in terms of flexible environments.

Strong understanding of ABW.

Each leader had a good understanding of the different types of flexible environments, and the elements required to make these high performance environments thrive.

Intended outcomes.

Leaders are seeking to build greater trust, proactive info sharing. Strategic cross team connectivity. Devolved decision making. Digital, agile and innovative work practices. Together, they would like to create a positive workplace culture.

Satisfaction and perceived productivity with the work place can have a big impact on performance.

63%

Of the Division are satisfied with the current work environment.

47%

Feel the environment helps them to be productive.

Figures used within the report represent the proportion of positive ratings provided.

The Division was asked to indicate what they think and feel about the current work environment via a workplace survey.

Responses were analysed using multivariate statistics to identify the strongest drivers of workplace satisfaction and perceived productivity. This approach identifies extremely strong relationships when all of the factors are considered.

What's driving satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

Leaving visitors with a positive impression [58%] and the variety of spaces available [58%].

The ability to adapt to changing business needs [35%] also plays a big part in how satisfied people are with the current environment.

Staff feel the quality of the environment and how pleasant it feels to work in is the strongest driver of a positive impression for visitors [74%]. This includes elements such as access to views and natural light, good indoor lighting, temperatures and air circulation.

Two thirds of staff feel they have good access to a variety of spaces to meet and collaborate [64%], though only half feel they have access to the variety of spaces they need [50%].

The extent to which the space can quickly adapt to changing needs is influenced by how well the environment supports collaboration [29%], access to leaders [54%], learning / innovation [36%] and decision making [28%].
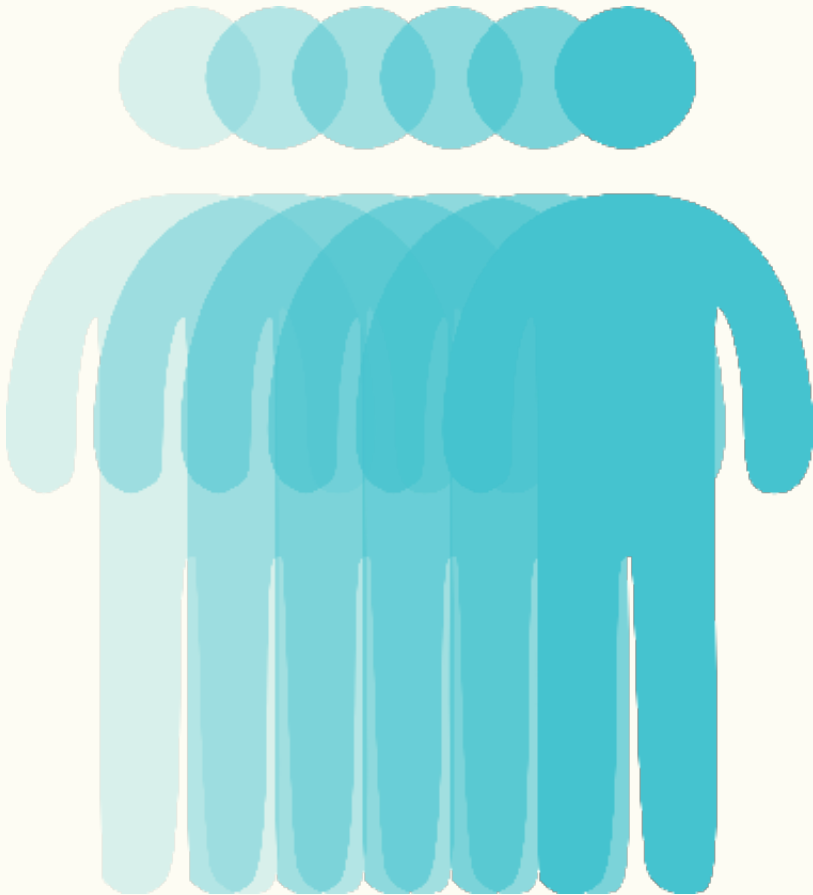
Workplace satisfaction has a positive relationship with productivity. More satisfied staff are also more productive.

% of positive ratings

WORKPLACE SATISFACTION [63%]	Workplace Outcomes
PERCEIVED PRODUCTIVITY [47%]	
AGILITY [35%]	Key factors affecting Workplace Outcomes
VISITOR IMPRESSION [58%]	
COLLABORATION [29%]	
COMMUNICATION [62%]	
COMMUNITY [44%]	
DECISION MAKING [28%]	
HEALTH & WELLBEING [64%]	
KNOWLEDGE SHARING [43%]	
LEARNING & INNOVATION [36%]	
PRIVACY [44%]	
QUIET WORKING [39%]	
SENSE OF TEAM [68%]	
VARIETY [58%]	
ATTRACT / RETAIN TALENT [11%]	Factors without a direct effect on Workplace Outcomes
VISIBILITY / LEADER ACCESS [54%]	
INTERNAL ENVIR QUALITY [74%]	
SUSTAINABILITY [38%]	

0%   100%

Figures used within the report represent the proportion of positive ratings provided.

The Division was asked to indicate what they think and feel about the current work environment.

Workplace satisfaction has the biggest impact on how well the environment supports productivity.

What's driving perceived productivity?

Many factors influence perceived productivity.

As with Workplace Satisfaction, perceived visitor impression, variety and agility have an impact on how productive people feel within the current environment.

The extent to which people feel the environment supports: communication [62%], health & wellbeing [64%], sense of team [68%] were satisfactory.

High performing environments demonstrate scores greater than 65%, explaining why lower scores for collaboration [29%], sense of community [44%], knowledge sharing [43%], privacy [44%], quiet working [39%] were also key influencers of perceived workplace productivity.

When we consider all of these elements together, the two most influential drivers of perceived productivity are:

1. workplace satisfaction [63%], and

2. the ability of the workplace to adapt to changing needs [agility - 35%].

Invisible Barriers to Movement and Productivity.

Technology affects the culture, efficiency and relationships across an organisation.

Less than half of the Division are satisfied with technology.

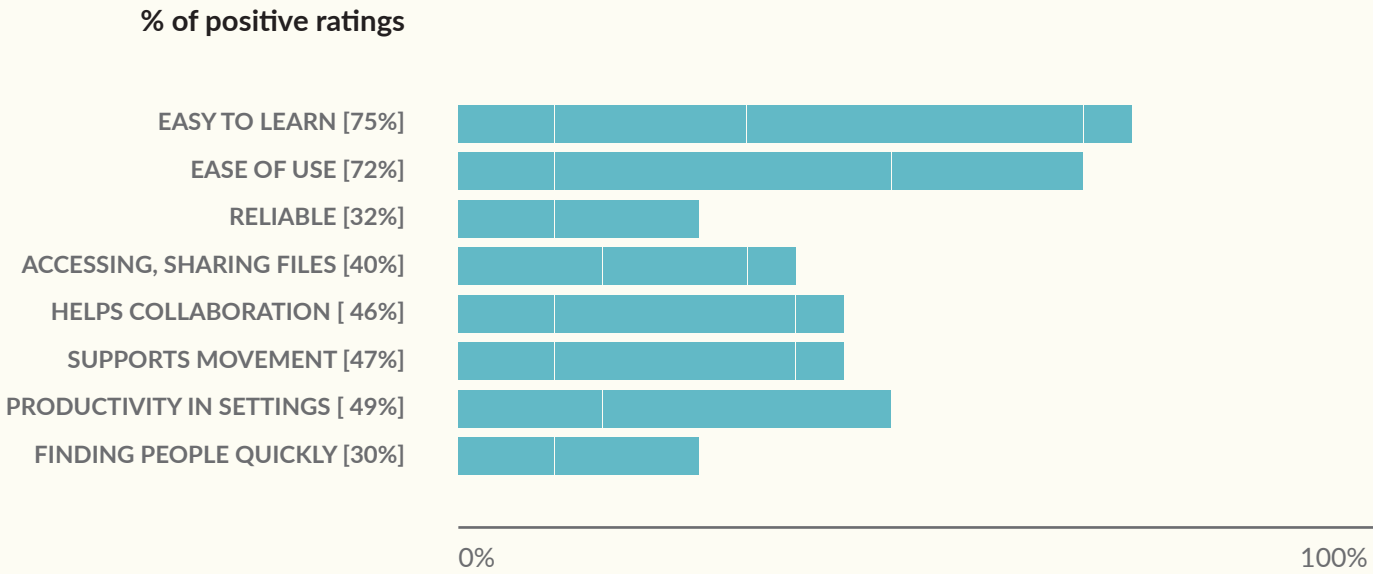People feel the technology is easy to use and learn.

Yet, two thirds feel connectivity is unreliable. Further, the majority of people think the current technology available does not support:

- accessing, storing and sharing files,
- collaboration,
- movement throughout the space,
- productivity in all of the settings, or
- finding people quickly.

Making the most of technology.

Less than half of respondents feel confident using and learning technology.

This suggests there is an opportunity to increase the digital confidence of people within the Division so they can make the most of the technology available.

% of positive ratings

EASY TO LEARN [75%]	
EASE OF USE [72%]	
RELIABLE [32%]	
ACCESSING, SHARING FILES [40%]	
HELPS COLLABORATION [46%]	
SUPPORTS MOVEMENT [47%]	
PRODUCTIVITY IN SETTINGS [49%]	
FINDING PEOPLE QUICKLY [30%]	

0%   100%

Figures used within the report represent the proportion of positive ratings provided.
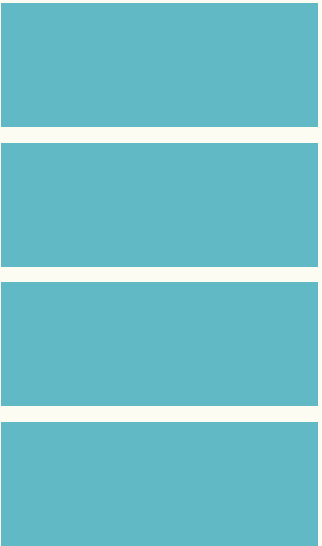
100%

0%
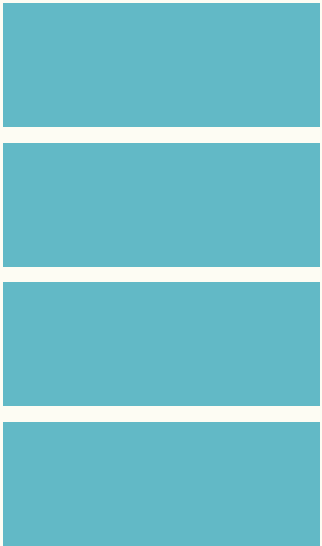
43%

Digital Confidence

42%

Satisfaction with Technology
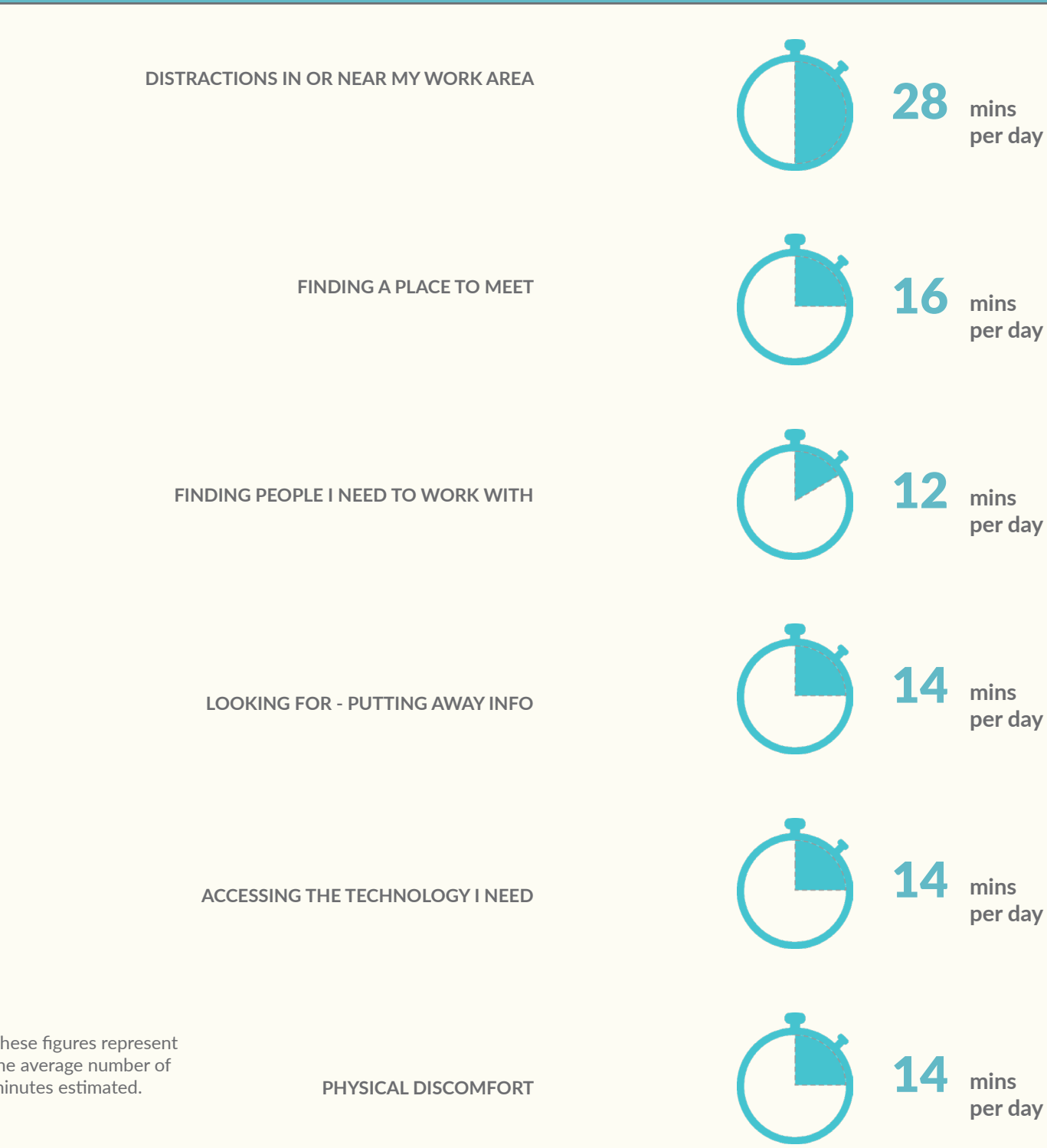
Distraction.

Knowledge workers can be interrupted as often as every three minutes by digital and human distractions.

Ripple effect.

Global research has shown it takes an average of 23 minutes for the mind to focus back on the task at hand after being distracted.

Individual control.

External distractions — things like sound or what we see—can be controlled in the environment. Yet, the way each person manages distractions is different.

DISTRACTIONS IN OR NEAR MY WORK AREA

28 mins per day

FINDING A PLACE TO MEET

16 mins per day

FINDING PEOPLE I NEED TO WORK WITH

12 mins per day

LOOKING FOR - PUTTING AWAY INFO

14 mins per day

ACCESSING THE TECHNOLOGY I NEED

14 mins per day

These figures represent the average number of minutes estimated.

PHYSICAL DISCOMFORT

14 mins per day

The Division was asked to estimate the number of minutes lost per day to the following types of distractions.

Distractions at work.

Noise and movement in or near work areas within the building is having a significant impact on people's ability to concentrate.

Respondents estimated around half an hour per day is lost due to external distractions in or near the work area.

Other key areas of distraction include:

1. finding a place to meet [16 mins per day]

2. finding people I need to work with [12 mins per day]

3. looking for information [14 min per day]

4. accessing technology I need [14 mins per day]

5. physical discomfort, such as headaches, backache, air conditioning, lighting or other ergonomic issues [14 mins per day].

Diverse workstyles.

Diversity unlocks innovation and helps drive more effective performance.

Inherent and acquired diversity.

We commonly think of diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity and age [inherent]. Sometimes we also consider organisational attributes like function, rank or tenure [acquired].
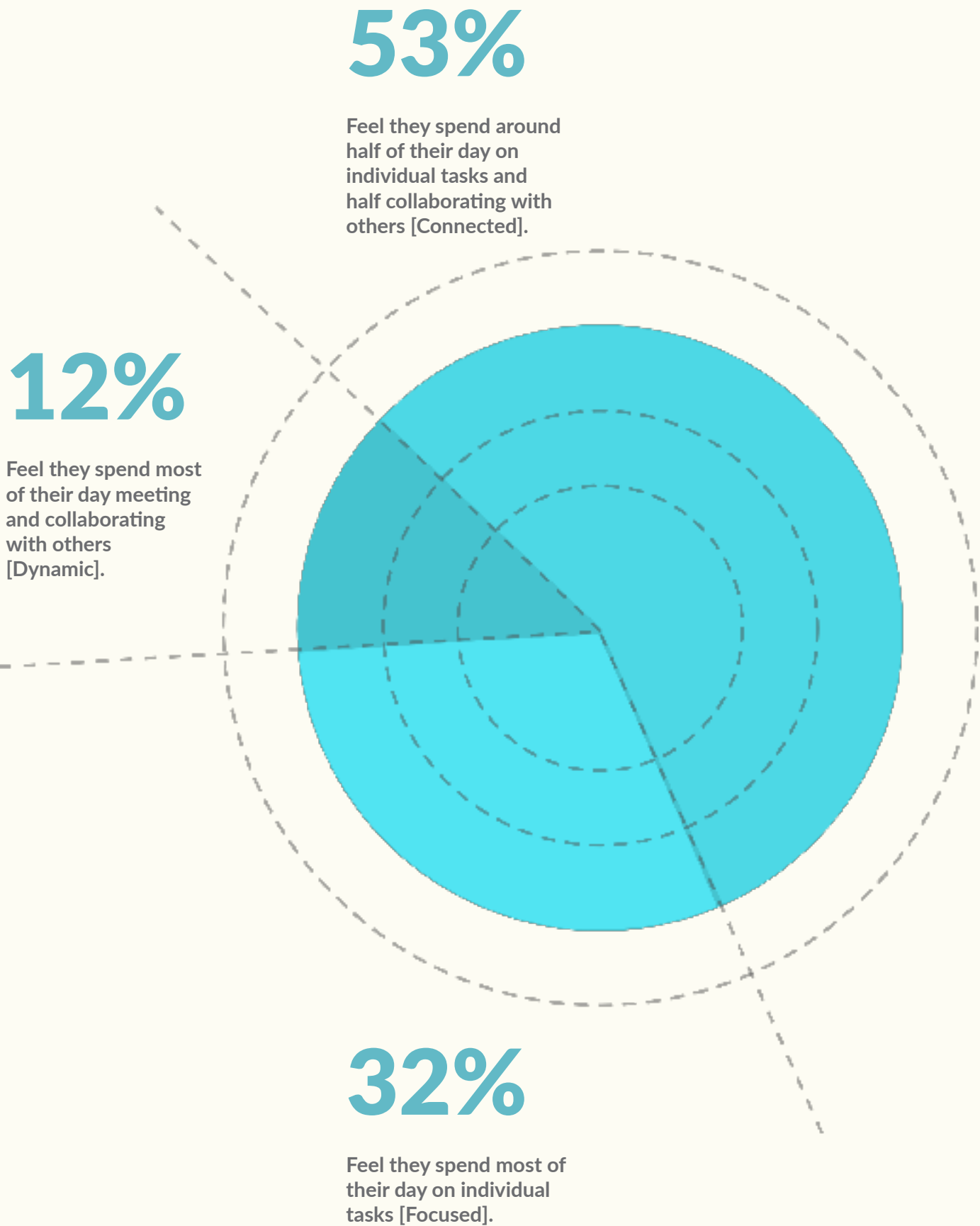
Different workstyles.

Another kind of diversity that provides a valuable lens when thinking about high performing work environments are the differences we have in work style — or the way in which we think about, organise, and complete tasks [with others and as individuals].

There is a difference in what people think they do and what they actually do in terms of work styles.

Typically, as seen below people mistakenly over represent the amount of time spent on individual focused activities compared to collaborative activities.

	Count	%Focused	%Connected	%Dynamic
SELF REPORTED WORKSTYLE	67	32%	53%	12%
OBSERVED WORKSTYLES	120	23%	47%	30%

53%

Feel they spend around half of their day on individual tasks and half collaborating with others [Connected].

12%

Feel they spend most of their day meeting and collaborating with others [Dynamic].

32%

Feel they spend most of their day on individual tasks [Focused].

The Division has demonstrated significant potential to make better use of space.

Free address work environments provide flexible physical infrastructure, reducing inherent challenges associated with necessary team movement and inefficient use of space.

Opportunity to make better use of space.

At any given time, around 53% of the work points available are actively used. This means that half of the individual work spaces remain unused for large proportions of time.

By reducing the number of individual work points to a level that more closely matches actual use, the Division would be able to provide more space for collaboration and meeting.

Greater variety of spaces and mental environments.

Staff are seeking a greater variety of places to work by themselves including spaces for private and focused work. Teams are also seeking a greater variety of places to collaborate with others.

Using space more efficiently than we do now, gives us an opportunity to provide greater choice of where and when we work at different times of the day.

53%

typically we use only half our workpoints.

Workplace Observations, 2018

Taking a good, hard look at our space.

How the space is used now provides useful insights into how well the Division's needs are being met.

Spaces used most often.

None of the spaces available are used intensively. The kitchen break out area is used regularly by a small number of people. Specific work points are also used regularly for longer periods of time.

Spaces used least often.

The open collaborative workpoints and open collaborative meeting areas are used infrequently.

Offices are only in use 26% of the time.

Library Area

Frequency of Use: 24% of time
Average Occupancy: 12% full
Most Common Activity: Solo activity
Most Common Tech: Mobile Phone

Kitchen Breakout

Frequency of Use: 75% of time
Average Occupancy: 20% full
Most Common Activity: Eating
Most Common Tech: Mobile Phone

Small Meeting Rooms

Frequency of Use: 31% of time
Average Occupancy: 10% full
Most Common Activity: Collaboration
Most Common Tech: Mobile Phone

Medium Meeting Rooms

Frequency of Use: 35% of time
Average Occupancy: 11% full
Most Common Activity: Collaboration
Most Common Tech: Laptop

Offices

Frequency of Use: 26% of time
Average Occupancy: 8% full
Most Common Activity: Solo on screen
Most Common Tech: Laptop

Large Meeting Rooms

Frequency of Use: 35% of time
Average Occupancy: 11% full
Most Common Activity: Digital collaboration
Most Common Tech: Laptop

Collaborative Work points

Frequency of Use: 7% of time
Average Occupancy: 10% full
Most Common Activity: Solo on screen
Most Common Tech: Laptop

Assigned Work points

Average Utilisation: 62%
Most Common Activity: Solo on screen
Most Common Tech: Laptop / Desktop
Collaboration at Desk: 11%

Shared Work points

Average Utilisation: 45% full
Most Common Activity: Solo on screen
Most Common Tech: Laptop
Collaboration at Desk: 15%

Open Collaborative Areas

Frequency of Use: 7% of time
Average Occupancy: 2% full
Most Common Activity: Solo activity
Most Common Tech: Mobile phone

0 - 20%   20 - 40%   40 - 60%   60 - 80%   80 - 90%   90 - 100%
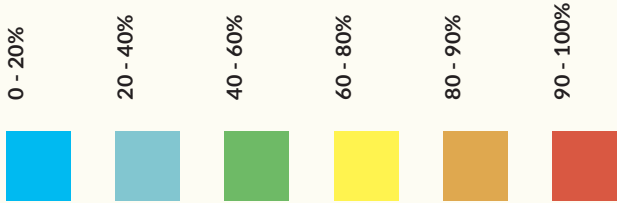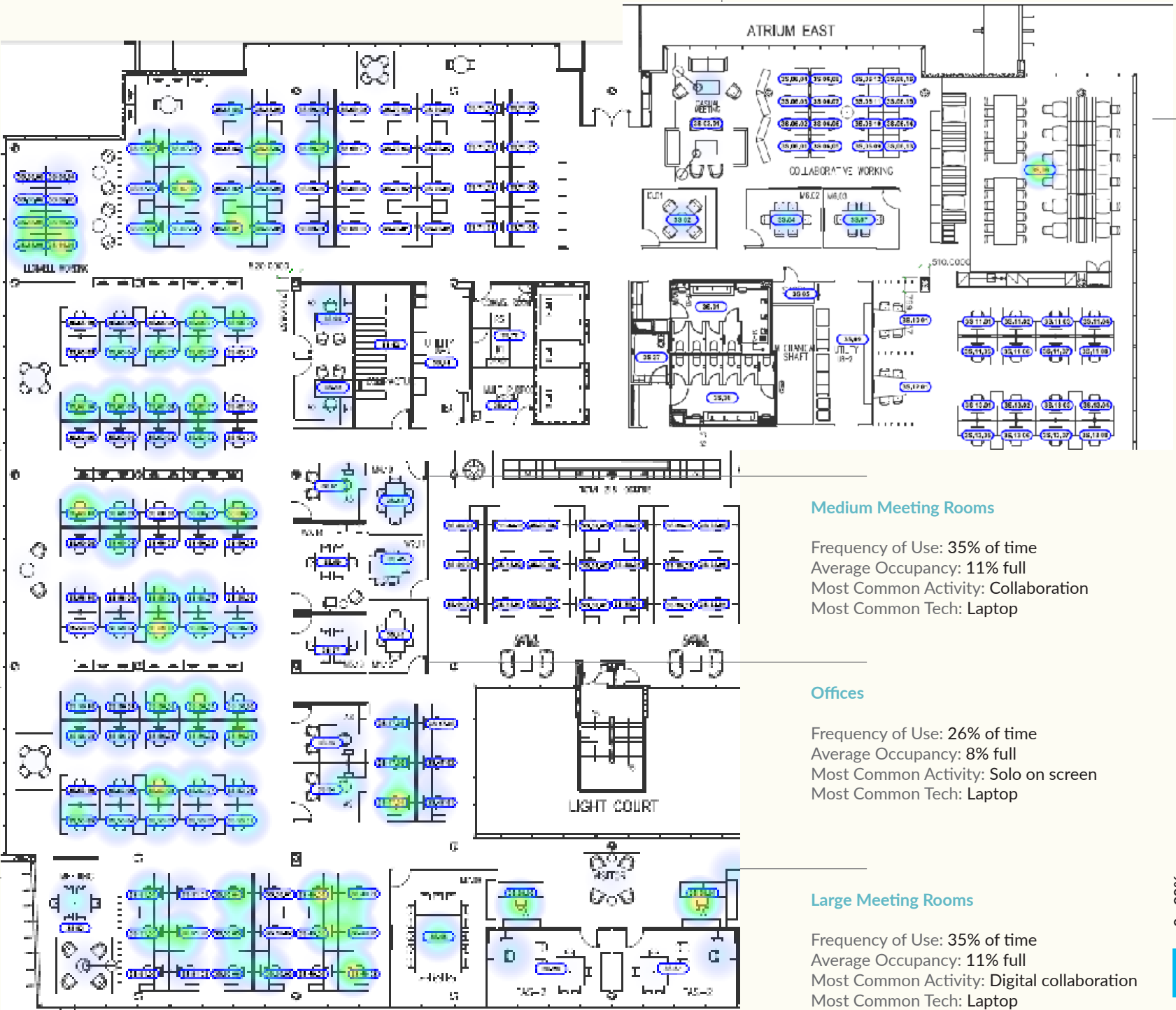
Tension points.

Using a human centred lens we are able to anticipate tension points within the workplace design based on underlying pychological needs.

Distraction.

Thirty-three of the 122 standard workpoints within the western neighbourhood of Level 3 are directly impacted by the circulation path [27%]. This means one quarter of the individual spaces to work will be negatively impacted by visual and acoustic distraction.

Psychological distance.

Good collabrative spaces provide a sense of place and a sense of privacy. Collaborative settings placed right next to work points tend to be used rarely and are therefore not an efficient use of space.
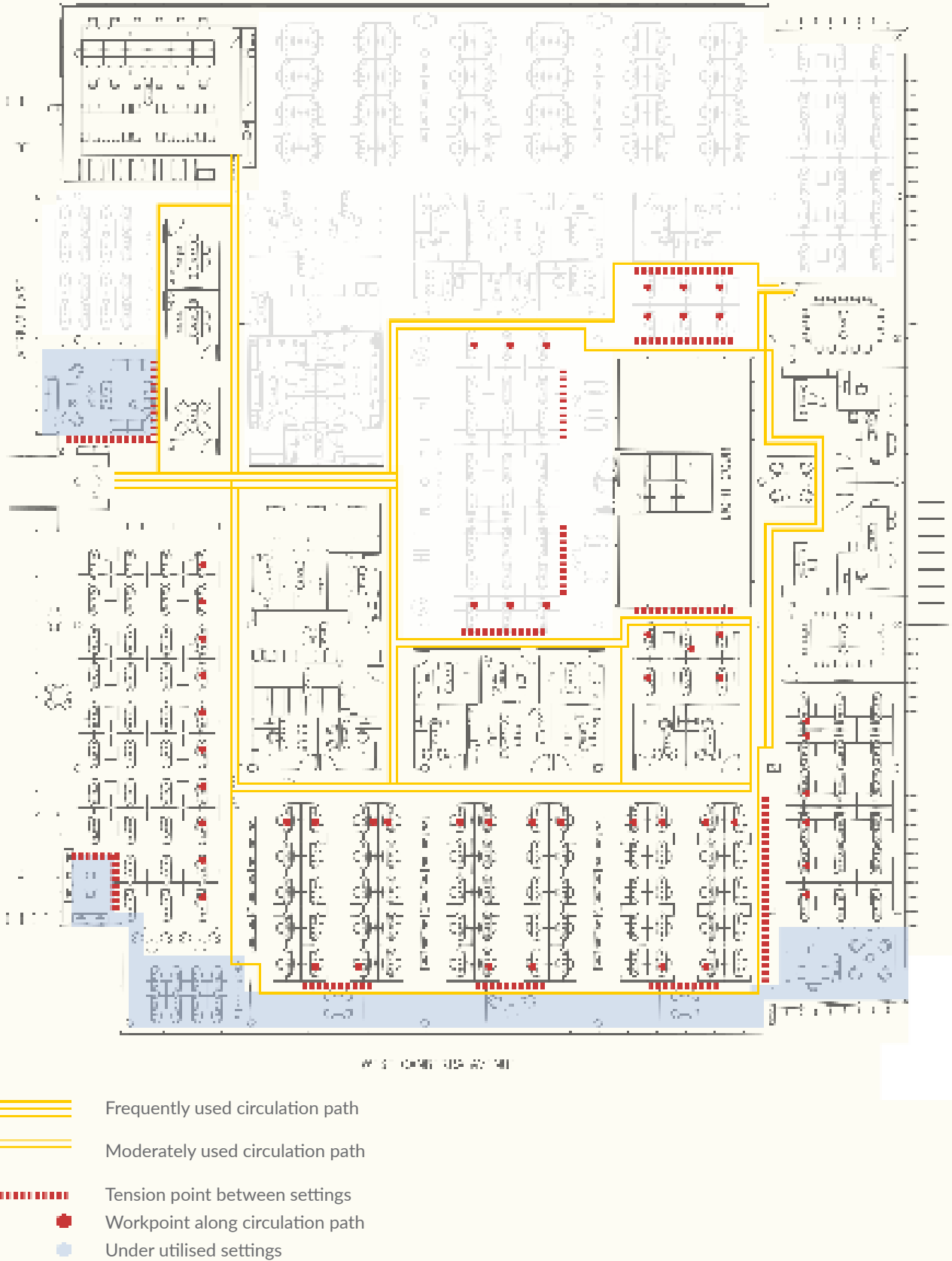
Library -like area

Intent. Quiet space for indivdiual and small group retreat.
Actual Use. Infrequent phone calls.
Design tension. Too close to major circulation path. Not situated in a quiet area of neighbourhood.

High Distraction Work points

Intent. Individual space to work.
Experience. Users are frustrated with feelings of being distracted at or near their workpoints.
Design tension. Workpoint alongside main circulation path. Allocation reduces sense of personal control over distraction.

Open Collaborative Areas

Intent. Informal, unplanned interactions.
Actual Use. Never.
Design tension. Situated too close to workpoints. Creates psychological tension about distracting others and privacy of conversations / work.

Frequently used circulation path

Moderately used circulation path

Tension point between settings

Workpoint along circulation path

Under utilised settings

Food for thought.

How the space is used and identified tension points for staff reveal opportunities to adjust the space to better meet the needs of the Division.

These tactics are designed for a free address environment based on a flexibility ratio of 1:1.2 [Eight desks for every 10 people].

Reduce sense of distraction.

- Reduce the number of workpoints impacted by circulation paths.

- Create distinct mental environments - an energetic end and a quiet, reflective end of the neighbourhood.

Re-purpose spaces to create greater variety and choice regarding mental environments and activities.

- Repurpose some offices. Use remaining offices as shared, non bookable retreat spaces for all staff.

- Create more creative - collaborative spaces.

- Shift open collaborative areas to the energetic end of the neighboruhood.

Collaborative - creative meeting spaces
Consider converting workpoints into two collaboration booths. Consider converting one FAS office intto bookable project lab and reception workpoint into open collaborative space.

Open Collaborative Area

Convert from library area to stand up collaborative space with stand up meeting table, stools. Mobile triangle wihteboards, alongside some arm chairs for phone nook.

Collaborative Workpoints

Create an energetic, collaborative end of the floor. Raise sit to stand into raised position for top two banks of workpoints. Add drafting task chairs. Remove collaborative tables. Shift banks of workpoints closer to window. Add arm chairs to act as phione nook.

Informal, reflective team space

Re-use lounges and lamp to create a non bookable, reflective team collaboration space.

Semi-focused Workpoints

Reduce number of workpoints. Shift away from major circuation path. Use storage cabinets as end of workpoint bank screening. Move collabrative tables up near collaborative area. Include two pairs of arm chairs to act as phone nook - quiet reading.

Library - like end
Create a library touchdown area, using relocated collaborative workpoints. Use signage & decals as visual cues for quiet. Add mobile acoutsic panels as screen at end of workpoint banks
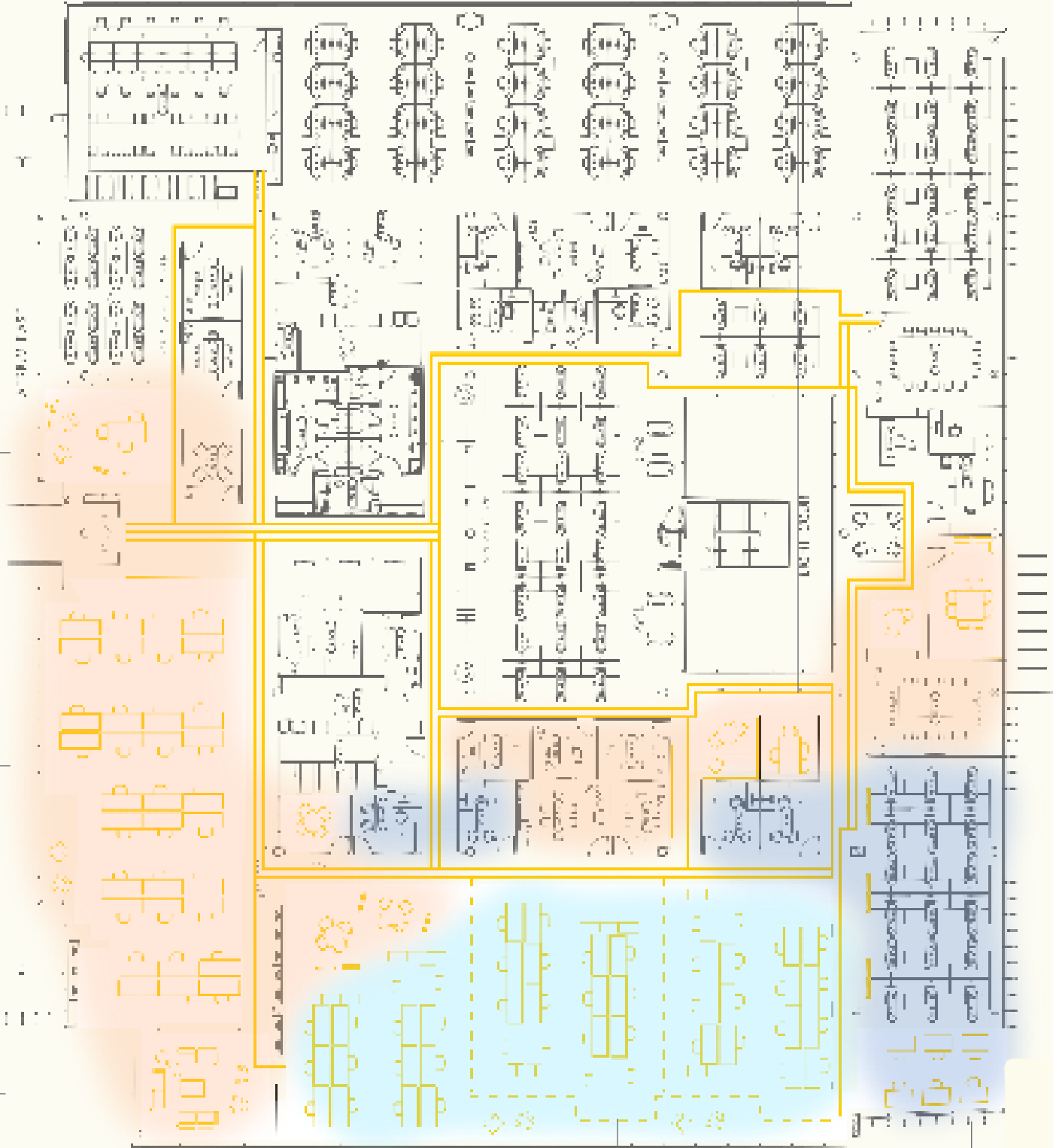
Variety of postures.

Movement by design.

Global research has shown that standing or moving around during the day, reduces the risk of early death, diabetes, heart disease, depression and anxiety compared to long periods of sitting at a desk [being sedentary].

Sit to stand.

The current environment provides staff with the opportunity to use sit to stand work points. On average, staff were observed using their workpoints in the raised position around 3% of the time.

When asked to estimate how many hours per day people sat and worked, the Division estimated an average of 6.7 hours per day.

When asked to estimate how many hours per day people stood and worked, the Division estimated an average of 1.4 hours per day.

3%

Portion of time staff were observed using their desk in a raised position.

Workplace Observations, 2018

Appendix 01.

Balanced view.

The best way to understand what people think and feel about the current environment is to ask them.

More than 79 survey responses were provided by staff. Responses were received from a good balance of gender, age, APS level and group, providing a representative view of staff experience.

GENDER	Count	% of Respondents
MALE	29	43%
FEMALE	30	45%
PREFER NOT TO SAY	8	12%

AGE		
<25 YRS	9	14%
25-35 YRS	14	22%
36-45 YRS	16	25%
>45 YRS	15	23%
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER	11	17%

GROUP		
COMMONWEALTH PROPERTY EFFICIENCY	15	24%
PORTFOLIO CAPITAL WORKS & ASSET MANAGEMENT	18	29%
CLIENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	15	24%
DIVESTMENT SERVICES	7	11%
PROPERTY LEGISLATION & ADVICE	0	0%
OTHER	8	13%

APS LEVEL		
APS	24	38%
EL1 OR EQUIVALENT	22	35%
EL2 OR EQUIVALENT	7	11%
SES	4	6%
OTHER	6	10%

There are already some positives in being able to move around. I think the challenge is shifting the mindset of staff to acknowledge that they don't own a seat .

Survey Respondent, 2018

Appendix 02.

Subjective measures of experience.

The Division was given the opportunity to complete a voluntary, anonymous online survey as a baseline assessment of what people think and feel about the current environment.

The survey assessed 37 different constructs. The following tables summarise the key results for each construct.

	Count	%Negative	%Neutral	%Positive
OUTCOMES				
WORKPLACE SATISFACTION	72	22%	15%	63%
PERCEIVED PRODUCTIVITY	72	25%	28%	47%
POTENTIAL BENEFITS				
PERCEIVED AGILITY	72	43%	22%	35%
ATTRACT / RETAIN TALENT	72	36%	53%	11%
VISITOR REPUTATION	69	19%	23%	58%
COLLABORATION	72	50%	21%	29%
COMMUNICATION	69	22%	16%	62%
COMMUNITY	72	22%	33%	44%
DECISION MAKING	72	31%	42%	28%
HEALTH & WELLBEING	69	10%	26%	64%
KNOWLEDGE SHARING	69	32%	25%	43%
LEARNING & INNOVATION	72	36%	28%	36%
SENSE OF TEAM	72	14%	18%	68%
VISIBILITY / ACCESSIBILITY OF LEADERS	72	26%	19%	54%
TECHNOLOGY DRIVERS				
SATISFACTION WITH TECHNOLOGY	72	35%	13%	53%
DIGITAL CONFIDENCE	67	24%	33%	43%
TECH1 [easy to learn]	68	12%	13%	75%
TECH2 [ease of use]	67	18%	10%	72%
TECH3 [reliable]	68	53%	15%	32%
TECH4 [accessing, storing, sharing files]	68	46%	15%	40%
TECH5 [supports collaboration]	68	32%	22%	46%
TECH6 [supports movement]	68	35%	18%	47%
TECH7 [supports productivity in settings]	68	34%	18%	49%
TECH8 [finding people quickly]	66	47%	23%	30%
ENVIRONMENTAL DRIVERS				
INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	69	12%	14%	74%
PRIVACY	72	26%	29%	44%
QUIET WORKING	72	39%	22%	39%
SUSTAINABILITY	69	35%	28%	38%
VARIETY	72	21%	21%	58%

	Count	%Low	%Medium	%High
INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS				
GENERAL HEALTH	67	21%	43%	36%
INTROVERSION	67	31%	37%	31%
ROUTINE SEEKING	66	32%	41%	27%

	Count	%Focused	%Connected	%Dynamic
SELF REPORTED WORKSTYLE	67	33%	54%	12%

Appendix 03.

In their own words.

Staff were given the opportunity to provide additional comments and suggestions. Forty of the 79 respondents provided additional comments [50%].

Key themes.

Challenges with places to work quietly without distraction; technology; working near each other as a team; and finding the spaces to meet and collaborate.

Theme	Count	%	Summary Description.
Mental Environments	18	23%	Staff indicated that the layout of desks over expose people to circulation areas, increasing disruption and distraction. Difficult to work quietly due to people talking near desks, without quiet, private spaces in which to go to concentrate [eg. library too near thoroughfare].
Technology	17	21%	Staff feel they do not have the technology to support their work. Technology is limiting agility and flexibility. Support, reliability and connectivity across the three devices [surface pro, laptop, desktop] is poor. Having to reset screen resolution prevents people form moving around. Unable to find people quickly. Not everyone has a mobile device. Systems freeze constantly.
Sense of Team	9	11%	Some staff indicated a desire for teams to sit together and be located within branches.
Collaboration	9	11%	Some staff felt the number and variety of spaces in which to meet and collaborate was limited.
No Challenges	8	10%	Some staff explicitly stated that there was no challenges in the workplace.
Behaviours and Norms	6	8%	Some staff felt that people should be encouraged and supported to connect more in break out collaboration spaces and eat hot food away from desks. Some staff also feel the environment is nice and the focus should be on culture, leadership and agreed principles of sharing space.
Furniture	5	6%	A small number of staff enjoy the ability to sit and stand at their desks, a few felt the standard task chairs are uncomfortable, others dislike the rows and layout of desks.
Storage, Amenities and Utilities	4	5%	A small number of staff agreed that people need storage space for personal references and books, and ready access to working printers. They would like more caches of staplers and stationery, and one staff member would like to be able to access a parent / carers space.
Internal Environmental Quality [EIQ]	4	5%	A small number of staff would like greater access to natural light. One staff member would like to have better air circulation.

We just don't have the technology to support our work.

Survey Respondent, 2018

Observed Use of Space.

Workplace observation audits involve hourly observation of work spaces to record how spaces and technology are used over a representative two week period.

More than 7,600 data points were collected over the two weeks. Providing a robust view of how people work within the current environment.

Group	Dynamic	Connected	Focused	Physically Present	Signs of Life	Utilisation	Max Utilisation	Collaboration at Workpoint
Client Relationship Management Branch	21%	57%	21%	37%	26%	63%	72%	15%
Commonwealth Property Efficiency Branch	7%	79%	14%	40%	26%	66%	75%	14%
Divestment Services Branch	22%	67%	11%	38%	23%	61%	75%	8%
Portfolio Capital Works and Asset Management Branch	30%	37%	33%	40%	24%	64%	63%	13%
Executive Team	31%	31%	38%	39%	18%	57%	71%	6%
Shared Desk [ABW desks]	43%	38%	19%	26%	19%	45%	54%	15%
Unassigned [Desks with technology, yet not assigned to Group]	43%	43%	14%	31%	13%	44%	61%	49%
Vacant [Desks without technology]	100%	0%	0%	2%	3%	5%	16%	11%
Total Average	**30%**	**47%**	**23%**	**33%**	**20%**	**53%**	**75%**	**18%**

Environment is great. Being located near teams we interact with would be more beneficial

Survey Respondent, 2018