

4/5/24, 10:17 AM

Response to Robodebt Scheme Royal Commission findings | ACCC intranet

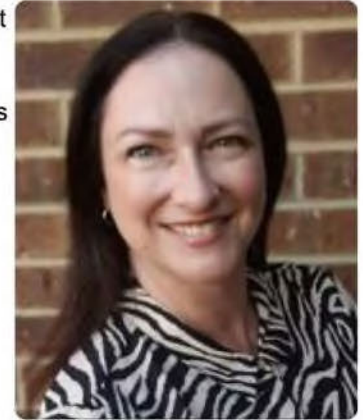
Response to Robodebt Scheme Royal Commission findings

21 Jul 2023 - 6:55 am

I want to share my reflections on the findings from the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme.

Like many of you I have spent the past week reading and considering the recommendations and findings of the Robodebt Royal Commission, and what lessons and actions we should take from it.

The Royal Commission's recommendations span a range of areas, including the budget process and funding proposals (NPPs), automation of government services, and the obligations of public servants.



What this means for the APS

Clearly, the implications for the Australian Public Service (APS) will be far-reaching and wide, as recognised this week by the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Glyn Davis, and the Australian Public Service Commissioner, Gordon de Brouwer, in their message to all public servants.

In case you missed it in your inbox, the full text is below.

I strongly agree with their statement that integrity and stewardship are integral to the work of the APS, our responsibilities serving the community, and the trust the community places in us.

Indeed, this report comes at a time of heightened awareness and scrutiny of security, integrity and probity issues in government entities, such as the:

- [whole-of-APS directive on TikTok](#)
- publicity surrounding allegations of PwC's misuse of confidential information
- [ANAO audit of the ACCC/AER probity arrangements and its recommendations](#), which we are still considering.

Next steps

We are considering how best to act on and communicate any implications for our agency arising from the Robodebt Royal Commission, and will share more information soon.

Scott Gregson has asked me to coordinate broader thinking on the report, and lessons or key issues for the agency and ways in which we will share and discuss this internally. I will:

- seek input from a number of key people, including Commissioners, members of the Executive Management Board and the broader leadership group
- work with our AER CEO Anthea Harris to ensure we effectively address any matters relevant to the AER
- schedule an all-employee forum to step through the implications for us in more detail.

I expect you will also have discussions with your teams as we share thinking with you.

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Message to all APS employees

The following is a message sent to all employees on Monday 10 July 2023 from Prime Minister & Cabinet Secretary Professor Glyn Davis AC and Australian Public Service Commissioner Dr Gordon de Brouwer.

Colleagues

We would like to talk with you about the release last Friday of the findings from the Royal Commission into the Robodebt Scheme.

We want you to know the Australian Public Service takes the Royal Commission's findings seriously.

We are committed to working through the findings in an open and constructive way with you – the APS – and with the Australian public.

We know the vast majority of public servants are committed to providing quality advice and dedicated service consistent with the APS values and code of conduct. Australians see the important and meaningful work that you and your agencies do every day, and the professional and diligent way you do it.

Following the release of the report on Friday, a taskforce led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Attorney-General's Department, and the Australian Public Service Commission will be established to support Ministers in preparing the Government's response.

Separate to this, the APSC will oversee an independent process to determine if public servants with adverse findings have breached the APS Code of Conduct. This process will be established under the APS Commissioner's powers in the Public Service Act 1999. It is designed to be fair, independent, and consistent.

The APSC has engaged Mr Stephen Sedgwick AO to exercise these powers as an Independent Reviewer. Mr Sedgwick will make inquiries and determinations about whether an individual referred for inquiry has breached the APS Code of Conduct.

We will continue to talk with you about the Government's response and what it means for you. Integrity and stewardship are integral to the work of the APS, our responsibilities serving the community, and the trust the community places in us.

We echo the Prime Minister's thanks for the many public servants who assisted the Commission. We reiterate the continuing importance of an effective working relationship between the APS and the Government.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to embodying the APS values in every aspect of your work.

Support services

We recognise this message and the Royal Commission's findings may have an impact. Support is available.

We encourage you to contact your agency's Employee Assistance Program.

The following services are also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- **Beyond Blue Support Service** – Provides immediate, short-term counselling, advice and referral services. Phone 1300 224 636, webchat, or search their forum for free
- **Lifeline Crisis Support** – This is a confidential service providing you with support for when you feel overwhelmed, for when you have difficulty coping, or are thinking about suicide. Phone 13 11 14 or chat to a crisis supporter online
- **13YARN** – Provides crisis support for First Nations peoples. Phone 13 92 76 or view their services online at www.13yarn.org.au.

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Contact

[Julia Peterburgsky, Chief Integrity Officer](#)

More information

[APS Code of Conduct](#)

[Robodebt Royal Commission](#)

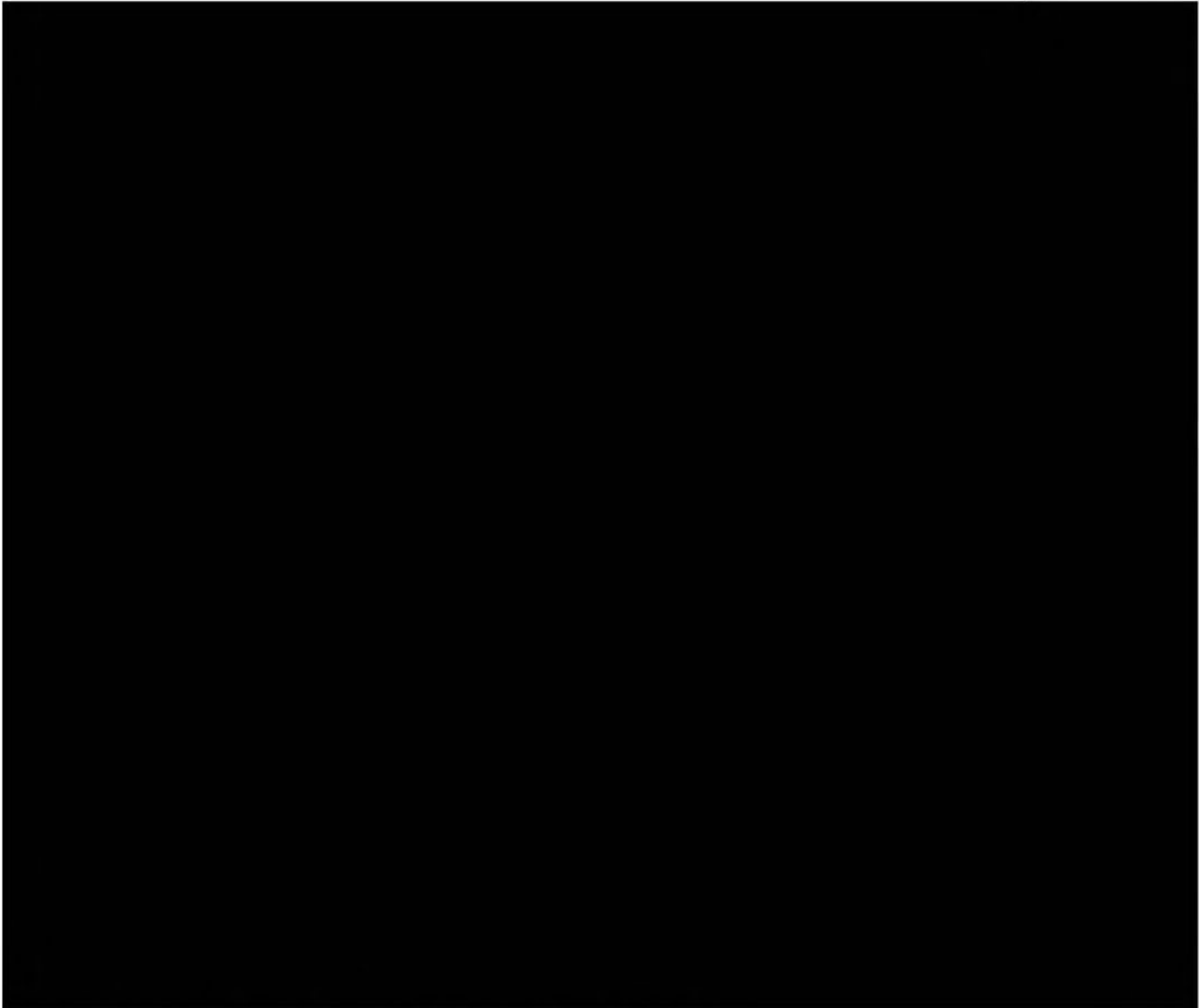
[Know your integrity obligations](#)

TYPE

General news

OFFICE

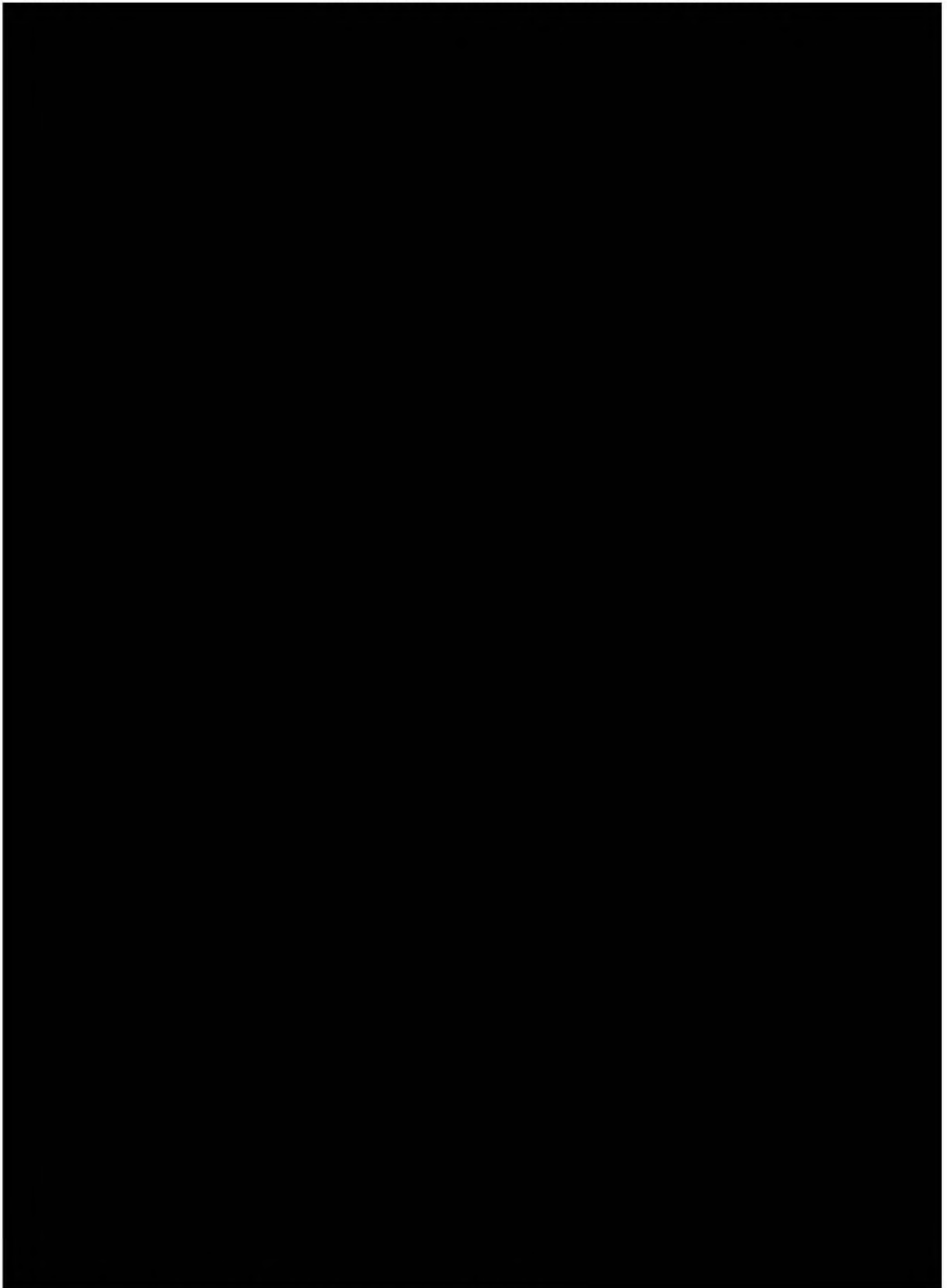
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