

WATERMARK SEARCH INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATE BRIEF

**Assistant Secretary,
Financial Performance, Advice and Analytics**

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

December 2025



Australian Government

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Presented by Watermark Search International.
Trusted for over 40 years, focused on the future.



Australian Government

**Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing**

**SES BAND 1
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE, ADVICE AND
ANALYTICS
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing**



Applicant Kit

Job Reference Number: 25-FMDIV-30641

Job Reference Number	25-FMDIV-30641
Classification	SES Band 1
Job Title	Assistant Secretary
Location	Canberra, ACT
Status	Ongoing and non-ongoing
Employment type	Fulltime
Security Clearance	Negative Vetting 1, or eligible to obtain and maintain.
Contact Officer	Name: Bronwen Kerr
	Phone: 02 9233 1200
	Email: search@watermarksearch.com.au

About the Department

At the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the department) our vision is to deliver better health and wellbeing for all Australians, now and for future generations.

Our purpose is to support the government to lead and shape Australia's health, disability and aged care systems through evidence-based policy, well targeted programs, and best practice regulation. We work with a wide range of stakeholders to achieve this.

We're building an inclusive and accessible care economy, that empowers people with disability, supports people to age with dignity, and works towards all Australians having their health needs understood and met.

Further information about the Department can be found at: <https://www.health.gov.au/about-us>

Performance Leadership at Health

As an Assistant Secretary at the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing you will:

Deliver outcomes – You will need to establish and deliver against a business plan for your area that contributes to achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the Corporate Plan and the Portfolio Budget Statement. You will need strong project management, risk management and financial management skills and the ability to establish and nurture strong stakeholder relationships.

Provide strong leadership to your team - To be a strong contender, you will need to demonstrate the behaviours outlined in the Secretaries' Charter of Leadership **DRIVE** Behaviours. You will have an outstanding record of leading people effectively to accomplish

high quality results that make a difference to the nation while maintaining a culture that values collaboration, innovation, and diversity.

Contribute as part of the department's leadership team – For the department to thrive, our leaders must work as a team. You will be expected to make a significant contribution to the success of the organisation by engaging in departmental and APS priorities, contributing to the culture of the whole organisation, and helping shape the strategy and frameworks that guide our work.

Commitment to First Nations Leadership and Inclusion - The Department is committed to fostering a culturally safe and inclusive workplace that empowers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to lead and thrive. We recognise that the knowledge, perspectives and lived experiences of Australia's First Peoples offer invaluable insights that enrich our leadership and decision-making. These perspectives help shape more responsive policies and programs, ultimately strengthening our impact across communities. We actively encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for our senior leadership roles, as your voices are vital to building a stronger, more inclusive future for all Australians.

Division and Branch Overview

The **Financial Management Division** provides trusted financial leadership and stewardship across the Department. We design and implement the Department's financial management framework, ensure compliance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act (PGPA), and deliver key planning and reporting documents such as the Corporate Plan, Portfolio Budget Statements, and Annual Report.

Our vision is to **empower better health outcomes through trusted financial leadership, smart systems, and insightful advice**. We lead with integrity, insight, and innovation to enable disciplined financial stewardship of over \$400 billion in funding, ensuring value for money, compliance, and strategic alignment across all investments.

FMD operates across four strategic domains:

- Spend Management – Using funds wisely across sourcing and grants, focusing on cost savings without compromising quality.
- Compliance, Assurance, Reporting & Frameworks – Meeting all legal and governance obligations and building trust through strong controls and audits.
- Performance, Advice & Analytics – Turning data into actionable insights to support planning and decision-making.
- Operations & Systems – Running modern, efficient financial systems that ensure data integrity and scalability.

Through trusted partnerships, actionable analytics, and resilient systems, FMD empowers the Department to make informed decisions that drive impact.

The **Financial Performance, Advice and Analytics Branch** plays a critical role in delivering high-quality financial advice and advanced analytics to support strategic decision-making across the Department. Our focus is on strengthening financial governance,

improving forecasting and reporting capability, and embedding robust risk management frameworks.

The branch collaborates closely with policy divisions, the Department of Finance, and internal data and analytics teams to monitor, analyse, and explain financial performance and forward estimates for major programs. We lead initiatives to modernise financial systems, adopt AI and automation, and enhance business intelligence capabilities to improve operational effectiveness.

Our mission is to provide actionable insights and authoritative advice that enable the Department to allocate resources effectively, manage financial risk, and deliver sustainable outcomes for Australians.

Roles and Duties Overview

The Assistant Secretary, **Financial Performance, Advice and Analytics Branch** provide strategic leadership and authoritative advice on financial management across the Department. This role is pivotal in shaping financial strategy, ensuring robust governance, and delivering high-quality financial performance insights to support decision-making at the executive level. The position operates within the **Financial Management Division**, requiring strong expertise in monitoring budgets, managing financial risk, and implementing mitigation strategies aligned with legislative and policy frameworks.

As a senior leader, the Assistant Secretary sets the strategic direction for financial and business support services, drives innovation in financial processes, and fosters a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. The role demands collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, including senior executives and ministers, to ensure financial sustainability and compliance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (PGPA) Act.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the Finance Business Partners to collaborate with policy divisions and the Executive to monitor, analyse, and advise on financial performance and strategies for programs and organisational units.
- Develop and maintain financial models and analytical tools that support strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and risk mitigation across the organisation.
- Lead the branch's financial governance and performance agenda, ensuring compliance with the PGPA Act and implementing robust frameworks for financial risk management.
- Drive initiatives to enhance financial reporting and forecasting capability, delivering accurate, timely, and insightful advice to the Executive and Ministers.
- Work closely with internal data and analytics teams and external stakeholders to strengthen financial systems, improve data integrity, and support evidence-based policy development.

Key Capabilities

- Demonstrated ability to lead the development and monitoring of budgets, forecasts, and financial performance across a complex organisation. This includes managing financial risk, implementing strategies for cost efficiency and value for money, and overseeing procurement and contract management frameworks.
- Proven capability to translate strategic vision into action, unite teams behind priorities, and deliver high-quality results in a fast-paced, dynamic environment. This includes project and programme management, change leadership, and the ability to engage positively and creatively with risk while maintaining focus on organisational goals.
- A focus on nurturing people and relationships with an inclusive and collaborative approach, where individuals are challenged and supported to be creative, take risks, innovate, and contribute their best. Demonstrated ability to build capability, encourage innovation, and foster a high-performing culture that drives continuous improvement.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills to build relationships based on understanding, respect, and trust. Ability to provide authoritative advice to senior executives and ministers on financial strategy, resource allocation, and risk management, while influencing and negotiating effectively to achieve strategic outcomes.
- Well-developed technical and analytical skills, including scenario modelling and financial impact analysis, to anticipate emerging risks and opportunities. Ability to apply these insights in shaping financial policy, improving forecasting, and supporting evidence-based decision-making.
- The intelligence, persuasiveness, professionalism, authenticity, and credibility necessary to leverage both formal and informal authority. Excellent self-awareness and a proactive approach to personal and professional development, as well as building organisational capability and resilience.

Core Selection Criteria

The criteria outlined in the [Integrated Leadership System](#) and [Work Level Standards](#) are applied when selecting for Senior Executive Service (SES) positions within the Australian Public Service (APS). When considering applicants, Selection Advisory Panels will seek evidence of performance against each of the criteria. It is therefore in the interests of candidates to present their application in a way that demonstrates significant outcomes associated with each of the criteria, as well as the capabilities and behaviors that underpin them.

Additional Information

Employees perform their duties at one of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DoHAC) offices, in the locations specified in this advertisement. Remote working is possible and is negotiated with your manager on commencement. Flexibility can be negotiated with your manager to balance your personal and professional needs with the needs of your role and business area.

Application Response (one-page application)

Your application will be assessed on your ability to demonstrate that you possess, or have the real potential to develop, the required skills, knowledge, experience, and qualifications to perform the role. These requirements are based on the information provided to you as part of the job advertisement.

You will also need to upload a current CV and list the details of at least two referees. We strongly encourage all applicants to discuss their application with their referees to ensure they can support your claims.

Applicants are required to provide a statement of claims framed around the key duties and key capabilities.

Your statement of claims should be no more than one page in total with a font no smaller than size 10. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not be considered.

Location

Canberra ACT

Work Environment

The Department is committed to being inclusive, culturally aware, and responsive to the needs of individuals in our policies and practices. Program initiatives have been developed and continue to be implemented to broaden diversity and inclusion in our workplace, supporting a wide range of diversity dimensions including gender, age, disability, LGBTI+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, cultural diversity and neurodiversity. Your line manager will work with you to design flexible work arrangements that best meet your circumstances and support you to contribute most effectively in your role.

The Department has a modern, flexible and healthy work environment which empowers our people to deliver their best work. Our New Ways of Working (NWOW) program provides inclusive workspaces, with shared SES offices and workstations, and ample meeting spaces to promote collaboration across the Department.

Successful candidates will support the Department in adopting modern, digital and collaborative ways of working in hybrid environments, modelling the behaviours expected of all staff in an NWOW environment and encouraging flexible work practices.

Remuneration

This is a senior appointment, and the remuneration package will be structured to attract an outstanding appointee in line with the Public Service Act 1999.

Assistance with Relocation

Assistance with removal expenses and/or short-term accommodation assistance may be provided if interstate relocation is involved.

Other Conditions

This is a position of trust, and the successful candidate will be required to obtain a NV2 security clearance.



Eligibility

To be eligible for employment with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, applicants must be an Australian citizen at the time an offer of employment is made.

An applicant's suitability for employment with the Department will also be assessed through a variety of pre-employment check processes, such as:

- Satisfactory completion of a criminal history check, and where relevant a Working with Children and Vulnerable People Check.
- Completion of a medical declaration and pre-employment medical (where required).
- Providing evidence of qualifications (where required).
- Obtaining and maintaining a security clearance at the required level.
- At Health, we encourage First Nations and RecruitAbility candidates to apply.

RecruitAbility

RecruitAbility applies to this vacancy. You will be invited to participate in further assessment activity for the vacancy if you choose to apply under the RecruitAbility scheme, declare you have a disability, and meet the minimum requirements for the job. For more information, see: <https://www.apsc.gov.au/recruitability>.

How to Apply:

All applications must be submitted via our Health system, e-recruit. If you're having trouble submitting your application or have any questions about the role, please contact Watermark Search International at search@watermarksearch.com.au or call **02 9233 1200**.

Applications close on Monday 12 January 2026 at 11:30pm AEDT



How to Apply

An executive search is being undertaken by Watermark alongside the public advertisement.

Applications for the position will need to include the following:

Candidate Statement	Curriculum Vitae	Support for Your Application
Statement of claims framed around the key duties and key capabilities. Your statement of claims should be no more than two pages in total with a font no smaller than size 10.	Covering positions held, dates, key achievements and details of present position. Details of education, professional training and qualifications including dates of degree completion.	Any further support documents. Details of at least two referees.

For a confidential discussion please call Bronwen Kerr of Watermark Search International, who are leading the search on behalf of The Department.

Daniel Nicholls Partner, Executive Search 02 9233 1200	Claire Crawford Partner, Executive Search 02 9233 1200	Bronwen Kerr Head of Research 02 9233 1200	Georgina Southwell Project Administrator 02 9233 1200
---	---	---	--

Please send your application quoting **Ref No A006201** via the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's online portal, *e-recruit*. We will reply to the email address used for your application.

Closing date: Monday 12 January 2026 at 11.30pm AEDT

Candidate Care



At Watermark, we recognise we have a duty of care to both our clients and the candidates. As an ambassador for the Department, we recognise how important our role is in representing your brand, we take this responsibility seriously and treat successful and unsuccessful applicants with the same level of respect:

- All candidates filtered out before an initial interview are advised in writing.
- Candidates sourced by Watermark are called and given feedback on their performance throughout the selection process; this includes feedback about their experience, knowledge, capabilities and fit for the organisation as well as feedback about their interviewing and presentation techniques.
- Candidates who proceed to client interviews are debriefed and receive feedback either face-to-face or over the phone; this includes feedback as outlined above, plus specific feedback from any notes taken during the interview. We also provide feedback on areas for development such as interview skills, professional development and career guidance.

Candidate Charter



We respect our candidates as individuals and value them as an integral asset to our business. Our focus is on understanding their talents and aspirations and matching them to the right role and organisation. Whether we approach you about a specific role or you contact us to explore opportunities, we want you to experience our commitment to providing a seamlessly professional, constructive, integrity driven service where we care about our engagement with you.

[Association of Executive Search Consultants](#) (AESC) members and their people are guided by a Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Standards.

The AESC Code of Professional Conduct is summarised through these critical values:

- **Ethics & Integrity**
 - We put integrity above all else
- **Excellence**
 - Excellence guides the work we do
- **Objectivity**
 - We exercise independent, objective judgement
- **Diversity & Inclusion**
 - We know the power of diverse talent and inclusive cultures
- **Confidentiality**
 - We safeguard any confidential information entrusted to us

To read the full AESC Code of Professional Conduct, please [click here](#).

Copyright 2024 Association of Executive Search Consultants www.aesc.org

If ever you feel we have not lived up to this Code of Professional Conduct, please tell us. We want to know. Email our Managing Partner at David.Evans@watermarksearch.com.au

Contact Us

Sydney

Level 32, 200 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000
+61 2 9233 1200

Melbourne

Level 11, 385 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
+61 3 8629 1333

Brisbane

Level 38, 71 Eagle Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
+61 7 3020 0301

watermarksearch.com.au



Watermark
SEARCH INTERNATIONAL

