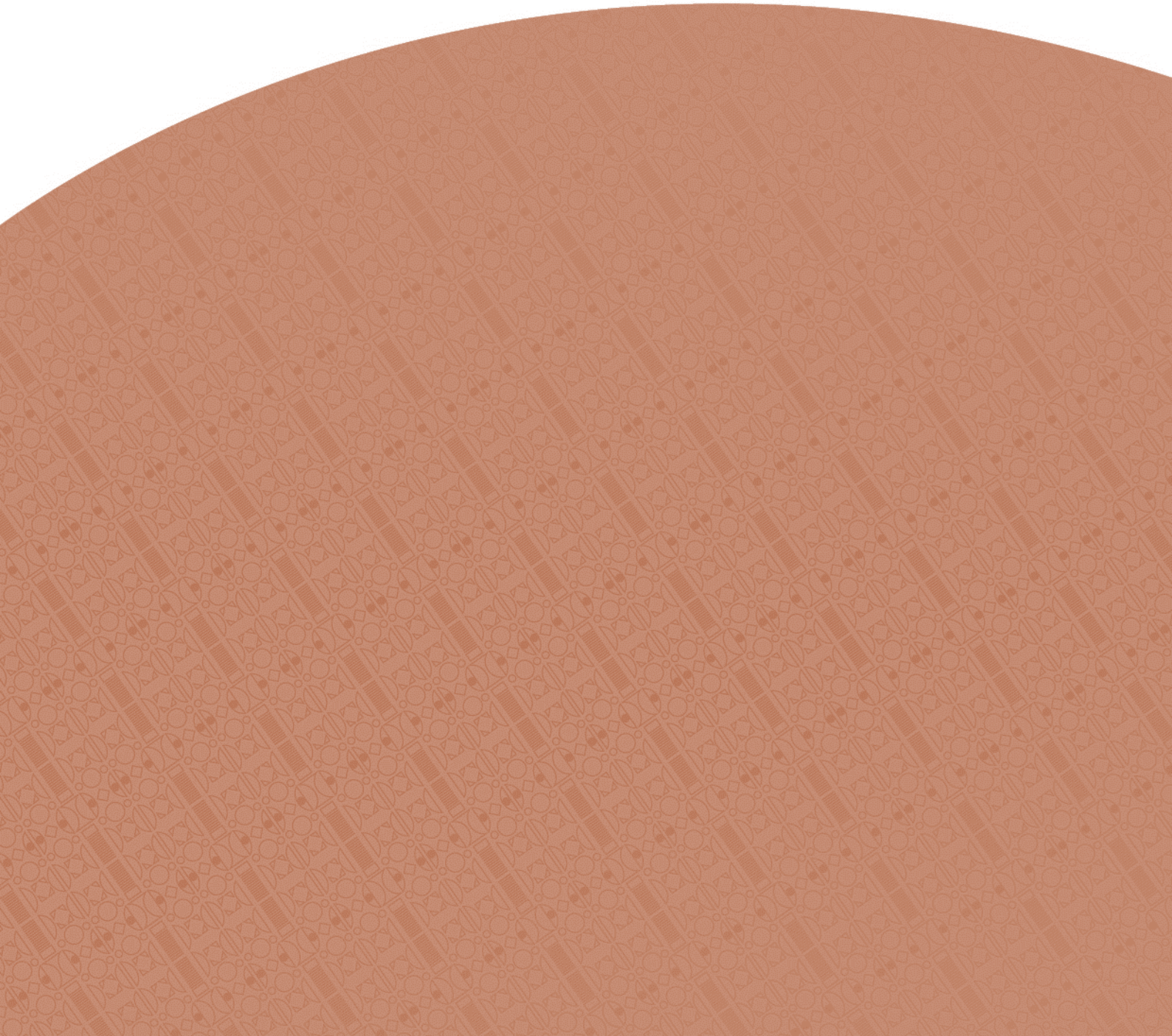




Parliamentary
Budget Office

Parliamentary Budget Office

CORPORATE PLAN 2024-25



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Feedback

If you found this report useful, or have suggestions for improvement, please provide feedback to feedback@pbo.gov.au.

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Forward



As the accountable authority of the PBO, I present the PBO Corporate plan 2024-25, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

This plan has been prepared in accordance with section 16E of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

This plan also serves as the PBO's work plan for 2024-25, as required by section 64Q of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*.

In 2024-25, we celebrate 12 years since our establishment, and we are anticipating our fifth general election. We also look forward to inducting a new Parliamentary Budget Officer in November 2024.

A key part of the PBO's role is to improve the transparency of election commitments with financial implications. We do this through supporting parliamentary parties to develop their election platforms with costed proposals, as well as producing a report analysing the budget impact of election commitments after the next general election.

The exact timing of the next general election is uncertain, so our focus is on planning to be ready at any time during the year and to proactively manage election related risks. Much of the PBO's work is shaped by the parliamentary cycle, and each election and new parliament present us with challenges and opportunities.

As the election approaches, we expect demand for our costing and budget analysis services to continue to increase. To prepare us for this surge in demand, we continue to look for opportunities to mature our business processes and leverage technology to streamline workflows and internal reporting to improve efficiency and manage risk.

We have completed an election preparedness and workforce plan. Our staffing levels will temporarily increase including through seconding staff from other agencies in the public and parliamentary services.

In an election year our self-initiated products will focus on those that add transparency and understanding of the budget baseline – helping parliamentarians to understand fiscal and budgetary issues. Our work program will adapt to enable us to prioritise delivering our Election commitments report.

Our election stakeholder communication strategy will be rolled out during the year, and we will continue to mature our external engagement activity as we prepare to welcome the 48th Parliament. We will do this by expanding our education programs and collaboration with parliamentarians, other parliamentary departments and agencies and leveraging feedback we received in the stakeholder survey completed in 2024.

Our 2024-25 Corporate plan underpins how we will deliver our vision of enriching Australia's democracy by providing the Parliament and the general public with independent information and tools for making sound policy choices and facilitating public policy debates. It is the primary document that outlines our work plan including our strategic priorities, key activities and measures of performance in 2024-25.

Stein Helgeby

Parliamentary Budget Office

29 August 2024

Purpose

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) was established in 2012 in response to a growing international trend to examine the adequacy of fiscal management, government forecasting, and transparency of public expenditure, and to provide for greater independence, transparency and accountability in the costing of election commitments.

Our purpose is to inform the Parliament by providing independent and non-partisan analysis of the budget cycle, fiscal policy, and the financial implications of proposals. Our vision of enriching Australia’s democracy through independent budget and fiscal analysis drives everything we do. It is facilitated through delivery of our strategic priorities of service excellence, operational effectiveness, provision of independent and informative analysis, and investment in our people.

PURPOSE		VISION	
Inform the Parliament by providing independent and non-partisan analysis of the budget cycle, fiscal policy, and the financial implications of proposals.		Enriching Australia’s democracy through independent budget and fiscal analysis.	
VALUES			
INDEPENDENT	TRUSTED	EXCELLENCE	
We support the Parliament by providing non-partisan analysis and information, that is factual, and evidence based.	We are a trusted partner that acts with integrity, transparency, discretion, and mutual respect.	We strive for excellence by continuously improving and innovating to provide high-quality, useful, and timely information, tailored to the needs of our parliamentary clients.	
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES			
SERVICE EXCELLENCE	OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	INDEPENDENT & INFORMATIVE ANALYSIS	GREAT PEOPLE
STRATEGIC OUTCOMES			
Provide high-quality customer service to support our core functions.	Ensure our internal operations are effective and efficient.	Produce high-value outputs to improve understanding of the budget and fiscal policy issues.	Attract and retain high performing employees who align with our vision and values.

We improve the quality of the public policy debate by providing all parliamentarians with access to confidential costing and budget analysis services. We also publish analysis and interactive tools to improve public understanding of fiscal policy and budget policy issues and enhance transparency around the financial implications of election commitments.

We are one of 4 parliamentary departments supporting the Australian Parliament.

<p>DEPARTMENT OF THE SENATE</p> <p>The Department of the Senate provides the Senate, its committees, the President of the Senate and Senators with a broad range of advisory and support services related to the exercise of the legislative power of the Commonwealth.</p>	<p>DEPARTMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES</p> <p>The Department of the House of Representatives provides services to support the efficient conduct of the House of Representatives, its committees, and certain joint committees, as well as a range of services and facilities for Members in Parliament House.</p>
<p>DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES</p> <p>The Department of Parliamentary Services provides a wide range of diverse services and facilities, such as the Parliamentary Library, to ensure the Parliament functions effectively.</p>	<p>PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE</p> <p>The Parliamentary Budget Office provides independent and non-partisan analysis of the budget cycle, fiscal policy, and the financial implications of proposals.</p>

Core functions

Our mandate is to support the Parliament by providing access to independent policy costings and additional support to scrutinise the Budget, and to help inform the public debate on budgetary and fiscal policy issues. In an election year, we also improve transparency and accountability of the financial implications of election commitments through producing the Election commitments report. We deliver our mandate through our core functions:



Parliamentarian requests – policy costings and budget analysis

We provide all parliamentarians with access to advice on the financial implications of their policy proposals, based on the specifications they provide. Outside of the caretaker period for a general election, parliamentarians may submit requests for policy costings on a confidential basis. This means we are required to keep both the request and our response in confidence.

During the caretaker period for a general election, there is a different process for costings. Parliamentary parties and independent parliamentarians can request costings of their publicly announced election policies. We publish these requests, complete the analysis, and publicly release the costing as soon as possible.

We also provide parliamentarians with access to information relating to the Budget. They can request this information on a confidential basis, regardless of when the request is made.

Our policy costing and budget analysis services are available to parliamentary committees on issues that fall within our mandate. Responses to committee requests are automatically published.

Self-initiated products

We publish self-initiated analysis, chart packs and interactive tools on the budget and fiscal policy settings. Through our publications and tools, we seek to improve budget transparency and promote better public understanding of fiscal and budget policy issues.

Election commitments report

After each general election, we publish a report that shows the budget impacts of the election commitments of each of the major parliamentary parties. This report presents the impacts on a policy-by-policy basis, as well as the aggregate impact of each party's policy platform. Minor parties and independents may choose to opt in to have their election commitments included in this report.

The purpose of this report is to provide transparency around the fiscal impact of election commitments. It serves an important role in encouraging parliamentary parties to announce fully costed election commitments and to publish their policy platforms prior to polling day.

People and systems

Our people and systems function develops and implements our organisational strategies and policies. This includes managing the delivery of a broad range of corporate services including human resources, financial management and reporting, governance and compliance, performance reporting, risk management, information management and communications.

We aspire to a strategic approach to managing our data and models that seeks to enhance corporate memory, mitigate key risks and facilitate our ambitions for performance and accuracy.

We strive to provide a working environment which recognises that people are key to our success and supports them to perform at their best, including by providing learning opportunities and career development.

External engagement

We support our vision of enriching Australia’s democracy through independent budget and fiscal analysis by proactively engaging with our stakeholders and seeking to continually improve our services and their accessibility. We are evolving how we can effectively support parliamentarians and their staff to understand the Budget and fiscal issues, trialling new methods and adapting our approaches in response to feedback.

The results from our major stakeholder survey, conducted once every parliamentary term, underpin continuous improvement in our engagement activity. Better understanding the needs of parliamentarians and working to make complex information easier to consume supports our role in improving public understanding of the budget and fiscal policy issues.

Key activities¹

Inform the Parliament by providing independent and non-partisan analysis of the budget cycle, fiscal policy, and the financial implications of proposals.				
POLICY COSTINGS & BUDGET ANALYSIS	SELF-INITIATED PRODUCTS	ELECTION COMMITMENTS REPORT	PEOPLE & SYSTEMS	EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT
<p>Prepare high quality policy costings and budget analysis at the request of parliamentarians in a timely manner.</p> <p>Maintain and enhance our analytical capabilities including models and databases.</p>	<p>Publish analysis and interactive tools that promote a better understanding of the budget and fiscal policy settings, with a focus on sustainability of the budget over the medium term.</p> <p>Develop and enhance analysis and tools to complement our publications.</p>	<p>Deliver our election related responsibilities including the completion of high-quality costings and the publication of a timely, informative and accessible Election commitments report.</p> <p>Execute our election preparedness and workforce plan.</p> <p>Work with parliamentary parties to effectively understand and manage election-related risks.</p>	<p>Implement our education strategy and induction program to build capable and confident teams.</p> <p>Invest in our critical tools, systems and processes to improve their efficiency and resilience.</p> <p>Enhance our user-focused digital services.</p> <p>Improve how we manage our data, information, knowledge, and records.</p>	<p>Expand the Budget Insights education program.</p> <p>Collaborate with parliamentary departments to successfully induct the next Parliament.</p> <p>Strengthen working relationships with parliamentarians and agencies.</p> <p>Mature our feedback mechanisms putting our stakeholders at the centre of our work.</p> <p>Support international capability building and partnerships.</p>

¹ Key activities serve as the priorities for the PBO’s work plan, as required by sub-section 64Q(3)(a) of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*.

Together, these activities support us to achieve our purpose to inform the Parliament by providing independent and non-partisan analysis of the budget cycle, fiscal policy, and the financial implications of proposals. Our aim is to provide analysis and insights that add value and are tailored to the needs of our clients. Refer to **Appendix A** for a one-page summary of our planned activities by function.

Parliamentarian requests – policy costings and budget analysis

In 2024-25, we will continue to support parliamentarians through the provision of policy costings and budget analysis. This will be achieved by:

- working closely with parliamentarians and parliamentary committees to provide high-quality and timely responses to policy costings and budget analysis requests
- providing greater transparency by regularly reporting on the demand for our services, and timeliness of our responses
- responding to any costing requests made during the caretaker period for a general election as set out in our legislation and contributing to the preparation of an Election commitments report
- continuing to mature our business processes to improve service efficiency and reporting
- investigating opportunities to streamline the information request process, including through proactively liaising with Commonwealth agencies to facilitate the timely provision of information that underpins our responses
- implementing our data and model strategy including enhancing our datasets and models in anticipation of future demands, including through model simplification and developing tools to automate manual processes
- maturing quality assurance processes to underpin consistent, coherent and accurate responses to parliamentarian requests to a level that can withstand external scrutiny
- proactively managing election related demand for policy costings and budget analysis, and effectively managing election related risks.

Self-initiated products

To enhance public understanding of the budget and fiscal policy issues, we will continue to deliver a suite of self-initiated products. As 2024-25 is an election year, we expect to adjust our self-initiated program and publish fewer self-initiated products. The expected schedule will depend on the timing of the general election and Government fiscal updates.

The aim of our self-initiated program is to support readers and users to understand key fiscal concepts and be empowered to engage with the policy conversation.

Our 2024-25 self-initiated work program falls broadly into 3 categories:

- Reports and analysis that are linked to the release of a fiscal update, such as the Budget, that assist readers to understand current issues, particularly related to fiscal sustainability. It includes our flagship publication, *Beyond the budget*.
- Data and interactive tools that help users perform their own analysis such as the *Build your own budget* fiscal analysis tool, which provides unique user-driven insights into how changes in key economic and policy assumptions flow through to the medium-term fiscal position.
- Other products that build the knowledge and understanding of budget and fiscal issues, released when capacity allows.

We retain flexibility within our self-initiated program to adjust our output over the course of the year, including in response to emerging issues or interests of parliamentary committees.

However, in the main our work considers issues related to:

- Fiscal sustainability
- Medium- and long-term fiscal risks
- Improving understanding of the budget
- Distributional analysis.

BUILD YOUR OWN BUDGET (BYOB)	An interactive tool to explore the impact of different economic assumptions and policy settings of your choice.
BEYOND THE BUDGET	A report on the medium-term (budget year plus 10 years) budget outlook, including projections of balance sheet, receipts and payments, and analysis of the major trends in, and risk to, the medium-term outlook and long-term fiscal sustainability.
HISTORICAL FISCAL DATA & FORECASTS	Historical fiscal data and forecasts published in the Government's latest Budget update. The data includes time-series and forecasts previously unavailable in a single location.
BUDGET SNAPSHOT & MYEFO SNAPSHOT	Succinct online graphical summaries of the Budget and MYEFO, published directly after each release. The snapshots provide a graphic summary and highlight the impacts of policy decisions and parameter changes.
BUDGET EXPLAINERS	Non-technical pieces focused on explaining a particular area of the budget.
BUDGET BITES	Short insights into fiscal policy issues and updates to previously published PBO analysis.
NATIONAL FISCAL OUTLOOK	A summary of the national fiscal outlook, published following the release of all the Commonwealth and state and territory budgets, providing a national perspective on fiscal outcomes across all levels of government.
UNLEGISLATED MEASURES TRACKER	A list of Commonwealth Government measures for which enabling legislation has not yet passed.

Election commitments report

After each general election, the PBO must publish a report on the budget impacts of the election commitments of each parliamentary party with 5 or more members in the Parliament immediately before the commencement of the caretaker period. Minor parties and independents may opt in to have their election commitments included in this report.

The exact date of the next general election is determined by the Prime Minister, with a potential timing window from August 2024 through to May 2025. The PBO is required to publish the election commitments report before the later of 30 days after the end of the caretaker period or 7 days before the first sitting day of Parliament.

The report is a flagship product for the PBO, and we are planning on the basis that we will need to deliver it this year. Given the timing uncertainty, our focus has been on ensuring that we are well prepared to deliver a minimum viable product at the start of the potential election timing window, with the opportunity to innovate and revise our approach as time allows.

Key activities in 2024-25 will include:

- executing our election planning, including the Election commitments report plan and broader plan for managing caretaker costing and budget analysis requests, proactively identifying and effectively managing risks
- publishing and socialising guidance materials for parliamentary parties on our approach to managing election related activity including the Election commitments report
- working with parliamentary parties to effectively understand and manage election-related risks
- preparing and publishing a timely, informative and accessible Election commitments report within the statutory deadlines.²

People and systems

Our people and the enabling systems that support them enable the PBO to deliver its mandate effectively and efficiently. We focus on ensuring our people have the capability, skills and technology to achieve our objectives, underpinned by responsible financial stewardship and fit for purpose governance frameworks.

In 2024-25, priority will be given to:

- ensuring the PBO retains high-quality people who are connected to our vision and purpose and feel recognised and rewarded for their contributions
- implementing our induction program and education framework with greater alignment to our performance management processes
- resourcing additional capacity to deliver our election capability, including effective on-boarding, induction and off-boarding for temporary staff (our election workforce plan)
- investing in our critical tools, systems and processes to improve their efficiency and resilience
- enhancing our user focused digital services, including developing a parliamentarian requests digital portal, refreshed information and knowledge management systems, and implementation of our data and model strategy
- successfully inducting a new Parliamentary Budget Officer

² Delivery of this activity will depend on the timing of the next general election

- successfully managing an accommodation move from Australian Parliament House to West Block, whilst maintaining service levels and staff wellbeing
- continuing to evolve our inclusive and diverse organisational culture.

External engagement

We will continue to mature our external engagement activity as we prepare to welcome the 48th Parliament at some point during this year. We will do this by expanding our relationships with parliamentarians, other parliamentary departments and agencies and leveraging feedback we received in the stakeholder survey completed in early 2024.

We will also continue to enhance our education programs. We are committed to continual improvement in our service delivery and to making our work accessible to our audiences.

Our 2024-25, external engagement priorities include:

- expanding the Budget Insights education program, including more drop-in sessions and webinars designed to build knowledge of the budget and fiscal issues
- collaborating with other parliamentary departments and agencies to prepare for, and induct, the next Parliament of Australia
- partnering with other parliamentary departments to deliver information products, maximise staff training opportunities and link in with staff networks
- continuing to strengthen relationships with our stakeholder agencies to ensure continued provision of high-quality information and models that underpin our work
- proactive engagement with parliamentarians and their staff to continually improve the requestor experience and ensure effective request management
- maturing our feedback mechanisms as we strive to put our stakeholders at the centre of our work.

Operating environment

We operate within the broad governance and accountability arrangements that apply across the parliamentary and public sectors. Our operating environment is affected by various factors over which we have varying levels of influence. Understanding our operating environment allows us to identify potential challenges and opportunities that may impact our ability to fulfil our purpose.

To inform our planning, we have identified 4 key areas that may present challenges and opportunities for us in 2024-25 and beyond:

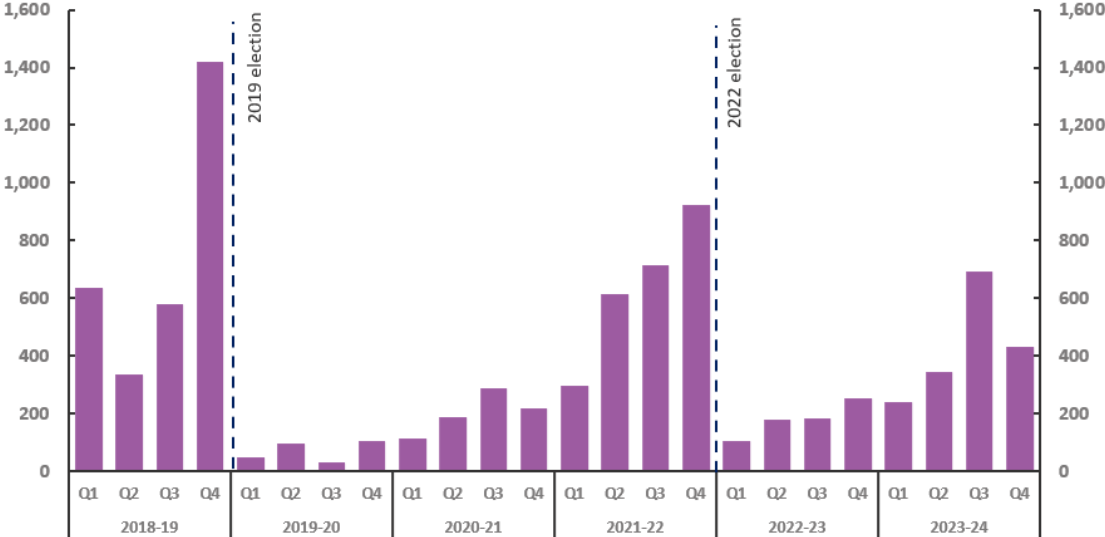
1. The next general election
2. Feedback from stakeholders
3. The commencement of the 48th Parliament
4. Preparing for the future.

The next general election

2024-25 is an election year, with a potential timing window from August 2024 through to May 2025. This creates an inherent uncertainty in planning for the year, in terms of the timing of the publication of the PBO’s Election commitments report, demand for costing and budget analysis services, and the available capacity for the self-initiated work program.

The PBO has a critical role in supporting parliamentarians to prepare for the general election. Our experience is that demand for costing and budget analysis services significantly increases as the general election approaches, as shown in Figure 1. This provides an opportunity to improve the efficiency of our internal systems and processes, and to build staff knowledge, experience and skills to respond in a timely way to requests. It also puts a premium on planning and prioritising our effort to smoothly adapt as the available election window narrows.

Figure 1: Number of completed request options from parliamentarians³



Feedback from stakeholders

During each parliamentary term we conduct a stakeholder survey to gather valuable feedback on our services. Feedback from the 2021 survey led us to:

- increase our management focus on improving the timeliness of our responses to parliamentarian requests
- enhance our induction of new parliamentarians and their staff
- develop the Budget Insights education program
- build a new, user-focused website with more interactive tools, such as *Build your own budget*, and shorter audience focused analysis
- progress a digital portal for the submission, receipt and management of requests from parliamentarians.

³ The data sources are from the PBO’s Parliamentarian Request app and SharePoint records.

The survey of the 47th Parliament conducted in early 2024 demonstrated that these changes have been well received, particularly the improvements made to the timeliness of our responses to parliamentary requests and the accessibility of information and resources. Recommendations from this survey focus on continuing to build on this work.

In the year ahead, we will expand our Budget Insights program to increase the frequency of interaction with parliamentarians and their new staff. We will also consider new digital engagement methods to keep parliamentarians and their staff up to date with products and services available from the PBO. We will continue to improve our website and digital tools to ensure they are fit for purpose and easy to use. We will also uplift our client relationship program to support requestors to prepare for the next general election.

We continue to innovate how we seek feedback from those parliamentarians who use our services. In addition to the results of our once-per-parliament survey, we capture unsolicited feedback and periodically undertake more structured interviews with key clients.

The commencement of the 48th Parliament

The commencement of the 48th Parliament presents an opportunity to induct new members and senators to the PBO and the support we can offer, as well as re-engage returning parliamentarians.

We will prioritise activities that addresses the feedback we received during the 47th Parliament, while engaging with new parliamentarians to understand their requirements and manage expectations. We are committed to continual improvement in our service delivery and will recalibrate where needed to continue our high-quality service.

Preparing for the future

To achieve our vision of enriching Australia's democracy through independent budget and fiscal analysis, we need to innovate, evolve, and remain responsive to changes in our operating environment. This includes adapting our internal processes to respond to environmental changes, modern workforce expectations, and ensuring our costings and self-initiated products consider changes in fiscal risks.

To ensure we remain a trusted partner, we will continually review our processes to identify improvements, look for new ways to deliver our information and services, and leverage technology to enhance user experience. This includes proactive investment in our people to be an employer of choice and retain our corporate knowledge.

Capabilities

In 2024-25 and beyond, we will focus on maturing our business operations and building and mitigating strategic risks. Capability initiatives are split into 3 key areas – people and culture, data and models, and information systems and critical tools. These initiatives assume the continued implementation of OnePBO – our commitment to an agile culture, agency resilience and continual improvement.

	CURRENT STATE	TRANSITION STATE	FUTURE STATE
PEOPLE & CULTURE	Strong subject matter expertise	Cross-functional team collaboration, tailored individual and team development	
	Skilled workforce	Workforce retention/succession and learning and development plans in place	
	Values culture Diverse workforce	Values, diversity and inclusion embedded in corporate culture	
DATA & MODELS	Web-based interactive educational and analytical tools	Expansion of web-based interactive visualisation and analytical tools	
	Comprehensive datasets Legacy models Siloed models	Model review and evaluation Cross-skilling on various policy models	Automation and streamlining of complex modelling Integrated model/linking across models Improved quality and transparency of data modelling
INFORMATION SYSTEMS & CRITICAL TOOLS	Innovation and automation of existing processes Maintain critical election ICT capabilities	New parliamentarian portal	
	Siloed analytics tools and data modelling	Central secure cloud-based analytics capability to support collaboration, efficiencies and innovation	
	Adhoc digital records management system and procedures	Evolve digital record keeping business processes and procedures	Best practice digital records management

People and culture

We have a small, dedicated workforce of around 45 employees, which becomes temporarily larger in an election year. For 2024-25, this growth in our workforce will comprise additional ongoing employees and temporary secondees from other Commonwealth agencies, and graduates under the Parliament of Australia Graduate Program.

We will continue to refine our flexible operating model, called OnePBO, to maximise efficiency, and to enable us to meet the demand for our services whilst building breadth and depth in our team. Our analysts are allocated to the preparation of costings and budget analysis and to self-initiated longer-term projects and publications. A small team of employees is dedicated to managing our governance and corporate support functions, including oversight of our outsourced payroll, financial transactions, and ICT services. Our technical and corporate staff collaborate to deliver on our key priorities.

In 2024-25, we will continue to:

- invest in our workforce to attract and retain the right mix of expertise and capabilities to deliver on our strategic priorities (including cross-skilling initiatives, tailored development strategies and succession planning)
- engage with staff as we refine our operating model and effectively mitigate risks, including proactively managing wellbeing
- respond proactively to feedback from the 2024 APS Census and complete implementation of the 2023 APS Census Action Plan
- implement actions from our updated diversity and inclusion strategy to increase awareness of diversity and improve our policies and processes to support inclusion and equity, as well as implementing the Australian Parliamentary Service Access and Inclusion Plan
- support reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our work in implementing the Australian Parliamentary Service Reconciliation Action Plan
- contribute to international capability building and partnership initiatives in our region.

Data and models

We develop and maintain a wide range of datasets and over 70 different models to deliver high quality and trusted costings and budget analysis. To ensure these are properly maintained we invest PBO resources and rely on strong, productive relationships with other Commonwealth agencies for access to data and models. We have well-established arrangements in place to facilitate the provision of information. This includes standing information requests with several agencies to provide specified data and models after each economic and fiscal update.

To improve our responsiveness to parliamentary requests and reduce administrative burden for Commonwealth agencies, we are proactively engaging with agencies on requirements during the election period as well as capability building, automation and streamlining complex modelling.

Consistent with the [Data and Model Strategy 2023-2025](#), in 2024-25, we will look to further expand the amount of interactive dynamic visualisation and budget analysis available through the PBO website, such as an enhanced *Build your own budget* tool.

Information systems and critical tools

Effective and efficient ICT capability is critical to enable the PBO to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of PBO operations, and the timeliness and accessibility of our services.

Our secure ICT environment enables us to effectively collaborate with flexible and sustainable working practices, improve the efficiency of our internal workflows and data management, as well as allow for innovation. Our website enables us to further explore the use of interactive budget analysis and modelling tools.

Our focus on ICT modernisation will continue in 2024-25, leveraging the architecture and environment of our out-sourced ICT services provider, the Department of Parliamentary Services. A key priority is to ensure our election related critical tools, business workflows and business intelligence reporting are optimised to support operational efficiency and effective risk management. We will also continue to develop a new parliamentarian portal and improve our records and information management.

Cooperation and external engagement

We engage with a wide range of Commonwealth agencies, organisations, and individuals as part of our ongoing operations. These cooperative relationships are crucial to us achieving our purpose through enhanced capabilities, improvements to the quality of our products, and increasing the relevance of our self-initiated work program.



Oversight

We are accountable to the Parliament for our activities through the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA) and Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee. The JCPAA has an important oversight role for the PBO. We engage with them regularly throughout the year, including on our work plan, resourcing, and performance.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer reports to the Presiding Officers (the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate) in relation to the management of the PBO, our operations and work plan. The Parliamentary Budget Officer is not subject to direction in the performance of their functions.

Service providers and partners

Our ability to fulfil our purpose relies heavily on our relationships with a broad range of partners, including the Parliamentary Library, parliamentary departments, Commonwealth agencies, and independent research bodies.

Commonwealth agencies provide us with access to information and models that allow us to perform our core functions. We liaise regularly with Commonwealth agencies to maintain our strong relationships, and where appropriate, share our models and analysis to enhance capability across the public service.

Delivery of our corporate services is also supported by outsourced arrangements with the Department of Parliamentary Services for accommodation and ICT services, and the Department of the Senate for payroll and financial services.

Panel of expert advisers

Our panel of expert advisers was established in December 2017 to ensure our work is of the highest analytical quality. We meet and engage with the panel as required to provide advice on a broad range of matters related to policy costings and our self-initiated publication program. In 2024-25 we will undertake a review of the panel to ensure its continued value and that it is fit for purpose.

Risk oversight and management

Risk management is a fundamental responsibility of all our employees. Risk oversight and management is about understanding our key threats and opportunities, including factors both within and outside our control. This allows us to implement mitigation strategies to influence our operating environment to allow us to achieve our objectives.

Our risk management framework consists of a collection of policies, processes and plans that are embedded into our business practices at all levels. The framework meets our obligations as set out in the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy. The Parliamentary Budget Officer considers the advice of the Executive and the Audit and Risk Committee in setting the PBO's appetite and tolerance for risk.

Individual risk management plans are developed to operationalise our risk policy and strategy. This includes plans for strategic risks, operational risks, specialist risks (such as protective security and fraud and corruption), and project-specific risks.

Our key areas of risk and a summary of mitigation strategies are below.

KEY AREAS OF RISK	SUMMARY OF MITIGATING STRATEGIES
<p>IMPARTIALITY & INDEPENDENCE</p> <p>We are seen to be an instrument of a particular political party or are not perceived to be an independent, credible organisation.</p>	<p>Our outputs contain factual reporting and objective analysis, that is evidence based with documented assumptions and methodology.</p> <p>We are transparent in our workflow management and prioritisation processes.</p> <p>We strive to build a values-driven culture of openness, honesty and integrity and actively embed and reinforce core values into our corporate culture at all levels.</p>
<p>RELEVANCE & INFLUENCE</p> <p>We are not seen to be relevant or influential.</p>	<p>We undertake regular consultation with external stakeholders, including the JCPAA, our expert panel, parliamentary committees, and external peers.</p> <p>We actively seek and respond to feedback.</p>
<p>RELATIONSHIPS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS</p> <p>We fail to maintain productive and collaborative relationships with agencies which provide services, information, data, and models to us.</p>	<p>Our liaison, data provision and service arrangements are tailored with Commonwealth agencies and are underpinned by active and regular engagement.</p> <p>We set and enforce service level agreements to manage third-party risk and ensure service providers understand the risk mitigation strategies and procedures expected of them.</p> <p>We meet regularly with our outsourced ICT service provider to raise issues, provide feedback and discuss future opportunities.</p>
<p>CONFIDENCE IN DELIVERABLES</p> <p>Our deliverables are convincingly and publicly challenged.</p>	<p>We regularly monitor media and public references to the PBO and our work to ensure accurate reporting.</p> <p>Our self-initiated products are externally reviewed prior to release.</p> <p>Assessments of costing methodology are undertaken in consultation with external parties, agencies and the expert panel while confidentiality is maintained.</p>
<p>SENSITIVE INFORMATION</p> <p>Sensitive information held by or provided to us is inadvertently released because of accidental or intentional disclosure, or cyber-attack.</p>	<p>We annually assess our maturity against the Protective Security Policy Framework.</p> <p>We provide training to our employees on data handling, access controls, authentication processes, and authorisation procedures that is refreshed annually.</p> <p>We are undertaking a project to refresh our records management tools and enhance records management compliance.</p>
<p>PBO WORKFORCE</p> <p>We have difficulty attracting or retaining employees or are perceived to not provide a safe working environment.</p>	<p>We provide development and training opportunities, engaging work, and safe and flexible working arrangements to attract and retain employees.</p> <p>We regularly monitor relevant workforce data to identify emerging workforce issues.</p> <p>We integrate succession planning with leadership development to ensure the continuity of critical roles.</p>

Performance

We have one purpose: to inform the Parliament by providing independent and non-partisan analysis of the budget cycle, fiscal policy, and the financial implications of policy proposals.

Our performance framework is based on measuring:

- the relevance, quality, and timeliness of our outputs
- the independence, transparency, and integrity of our processes
- our operational effectiveness
- stakeholder satisfaction with our outputs and service experience.

To assess achievements against our purpose and to keep us accountable against our strategic priorities and outcomes, we use a mix of output, efficiency and effectiveness measures, and qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This ensures an appropriate balance in our reporting information and provides an unbiased assessment of our performance results.

Our performance targets, particularly those in relation to the level of demand for costing services, are linked to the election cycle. The measures of effectiveness seek to provide information on how our outputs contribute to improving public understanding of budget and fiscal policy issues.

We continue to refine our performance measures and targets to ensure that they reflect the changing nature of our work, including our focus on delivering value-add analysis more regularly and frequently through our self-initiated work program.

2024-25 is an election year, with a potential timing window from August 2024 through to May 2025. This creates an inherent uncertainty in planning for the year.

Reflecting this, we have updated the performance target for the number of self-initiated products, to acknowledge that our capacity to produce self-initiated work will be influenced by the election timing and the number and timing of fiscal updates during the year. We have also clarified the measure to distinguish between analytical reports and updates to our data and tools.

For 2024-25, we have also updated some performance measures to reflect the impact of uncertainty of the timing of the election, updated methodology and the framing language to improve clarity. We have revised the targets of some measures to better reflect what we expect to be able to achieve. We have also introduced new performance targets using website metrics for the measure related to demand for our self-initiated products, leveraging the reporting functionality from our new website.

Performance measures and targets should be read alongside the financial and performance information published in our Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS). Achievement against the performance measures in this corporate plan and the PBS is monitored by the PBO Executive and will be reported in the PBO's annual performance statements at the end of the reporting period.

Summary of 2024-25 Performance Measures and Targets

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	2024-25 TARGET
1. Output measures	
1.1 Number of policy costing and budget analysis requests completed	Equal to or greater than historical levels in the election cycle
1.2 Number of PBO self-initiated products	Publish between 9 and 12 self-initiated products
1.3 Publication of the election commitments report within the legislated timeframe	Less than 30 days after the end of the caretaker period or 7 days before the first sitting day of parliament
2. Efficiency measures	
2.1 Median time to complete policy costing and budget analysis requests	15 business days or fewer (non-caretaker) 5 business days or fewer (caretaker)
2.2 Percentage of fiscal update related products published at the time specified by our schedule	100%
3. Effectiveness measures	
3.1 Percentage of PBO publicly released parliamentary requests referenced in the public debate	80% of publicly released parliamentary requests referenced by media sources
3.2 Demand for PBO self-initiated products	50% of relevant products are reported on by a major news outlet
	25,000 web page views
	85% of relevant products receive at least 100 web page views
3.3 Demand for the election commitments report	90% of mentions are positive or neutral
3.4 Proportion of pre-election PBO responses to parliamentary requests that have informed election commitments (election commitments report-specific)	60%
3.5 Proportion of feedback from stakeholders that indicates a high-level of satisfaction regarding the quality of the service and outputs provided by the PBO	85% of feedback is positive or neutral
3.6 Proportion of media mentions that indicate our outputs are of high-quality and that we are perceived as independent, robust, and/or non-partisan	90% of mentions are positive or neutral

Alignment of 2024-25 Key Activities with Performance Measures and Targets

Key Activity	Performance Measure
Policy costings and budget analysis	1.1 Number of policy costing and budget analysis requests completed
	2.1 Median time to complete policy costing and budget analysis requests
	3.1 Percentage of PBO publicly released parliamentary requests referenced in the public debate
	3.6 Proportion of media mentions that indicate our outputs are of high-quality and that we are perceived as independent, robust, and/or non-partisan
Self-initiated products	1.2 Number of PBO self-initiated products
	2.2 Percentage of fiscal update related products published at the time specified by our schedule
	3.2 Demand for PBO self-initiated products
Election commitments report	1.3 Publication of the election commitments report within the legislated timeframe
	3.3 Demand for the election commitments report
	3.4 Proportion of pre-election PBO responses to parliamentary requests that have informed election commitments (election commitments report-specific)
External engagement	3.5 Proportion of feedback from stakeholders that indicates a high-level of satisfaction regarding the quality of the service and outputs provided by the PBO

1. Output measures

1.1 Performance measure	Number of policy costing and budget analysis requests completed			
Outcome	Independent and informative analysis: Stable or increasing demand for and timely provision of costing services, particularly from repeat clients, suggests that the PBO’s outputs are relevant, of high quality and timely.			
Methodology	<p>Calculations are undertaken on raw data to verify the summary data. The calculations include adjustment for public holidays/non business days and hold time (periods when specifications are being clarified or where the requestor has directed the PBO to place a request on-hold). Manual adjustments may need to be made to completion dates for reissues of responses to requests.</p> <p>Requests are defined as the number of options or components (request options) provided to the parliamentarian in response to their request.</p> <p>Completion rates are influenced by factors including the timing of the election cycle, the volume of requests on hand and the need to seek additional data from agencies.</p>			
Data sources	The data sources used to assess performance against the target for this measure include the Parliamentarian Request App and SharePoint records. This includes the number of requests/options, date received, date completed and/or date withdrawn.			
Targets				
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	
Equal to or greater than historical levels in the election cycle	Equal to or greater than historical levels in the election cycle	Equal to or greater than historical levels in the election cycle	Equal to or greater than historical levels in the election cycle	
Target rationale	The demand for policy costing and budget analysis services is directly affected by the general election cycle. The target is based on an assessment of historical trends in the election cycle.			
Changes from previous year	No changes. The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan.			

1.2 Performance measure		Number of PBO self-initiated products	
Outcome	Independent and informative analysis: Demand for our products suggests that our self-initiated work is relevant, of high quality and timely.		
Methodology	<p>The PBO has a mandate to undertake independent analysis of budget and fiscal issues. Our self-initiated work program seeks to improve budget transparency through the provision of interactive tools and analysis that promotes public understanding of these issues. Self-initiated products fall into 3 broad categories (also relevant for performance measures 2.2 and 3.2):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reports and analysis that are linked to the release of a government fiscal update, such as the Budget, with the aim of assisting readers to understand the current issues, particularly related to fiscal sustainability. 2. Data and tools that help users perform their own analysis, updated at least once each year. These are counted only once, even if they are updated multiple times. 3. Other products that build the knowledge and understanding of budget and fiscal issues, released when capacity allows. <p>Self-initiated products do not include those associated with corporate governance, or process and guidance material for parliamentarians.</p> <p>Assessment of the number of products publicly disclosed on the PBO website.</p>		
Data sources	The PBO website.		
Targets			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Publish between 9 and 12 self-initiated products. ⁴	Publish between 14 and 18 self-initiated products. ⁵	Publish between 14 and 18 self-initiated products. ⁵	Publish between 9 and 12 self-initiated products. ⁵

⁴ The 2024-25 measure on the number of self-initiated products is dependent on the timing of the next general election.

⁵ For the purposes of this document, the PBO is assuming there will be a general election in 2024-25 and 2027-28.

Target rationale

The target for the total number of self-initiated products considers the expected timing of an election and fiscal updates, as well as expected available capacity given other workload pressures. The total number will vary depending on the number of government fiscal updates in a given year and staff capacity.

Fiscal update related releases cover those products that are triggered by the release of a Budget or Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO). In a non-election year, they include:

1. *Beyond the budget* medium-term projections & fiscal sustainability
2. Budget interactive snapshot
3. MYEFO interactive snapshot
4. *National fiscal outlook* whole-of-government fiscal analysis
5. Guide to the budget.

The data and tools we intend to update at least once a year following a fiscal update are as follows:

1. *Build your own budget* fiscal analysis tool (a major update following the Budget and minor updates at other times)
2. Historical fiscal data and historical budget forecasts
3. Unlegislated measures
4. Small Model of Australian Representative Taxpayers (SMART)
5. Public debt interest calculator.

With 2024-25 being an election year, we expect to adjust our self-initiated program and publish fewer self-initiated products. The expected schedule will depend on the timing of the election and fiscal updates. For an election in the first half of 2024-25, it is likely that major budget-related products, such as *Beyond the budget* and *Build your own budget*, could be published at the usual time in June. If the election is in the second half of 2024-25, these products would likely be published in the early part of 2025-26.

Other products, not listed above, are likely to be short ‘budget bites’ or explainers, produced as resources allow.

The number of publications for 2024-25 is therefore highly uncertain, reflected in a large range for the target.

The number of products we publish in 2025-26 will also depend on the timing of the next general election. The PBO must publish an election commitments report after the election, and this will take priority. Should the election be towards the end of 2024-25, the next publications would likely be some way into 2025-26. This would be consistent with the timing of our publications following the 2022 election. Our target of 14 to 18 publications in 2025-26 reflects this uncertainty.

Changes from previous year

The measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan. The outcome, methodology, target rationale and target has been updated to reflect the evolution of the self-initiated program, including changing the reference from publication to product.

The methodology has been refined to better categorise the self-initiated products into those that provide fiscal update related analysis and insights, those that are in nature data and tools, and other products. Previously we had 2 categories: publications related to fiscal updates and other publications.

The change to 3 categories reflects the increase in the number of releases of data and tools, such as *Build your own budget* and SMART, which are often updated multiple times throughout the year. Not all of these are linked to fiscal updates.

The target for 2024-25 has been clarified compared to the PBO's 2023-24 Corporate Plan and 2024-25 Portfolio Budget Statements, which stated that in an election year we would 'publish half of the total number of self-initiated products'. We have specified the expected number to be delivered, with the scope of the range reflecting the uncertainty around the timing of the next general election and the number and timing of fiscal updates during the year.

The target for 2025-26, has been amended to include an expected publication schedule for a non-election year. The new target of 14-18 identifies what we expect to achieve consistent with the previous wording for this year of 'maintain the total number of self-initiated products' (for a non-election year). This target compares to the 19 products published in 2022-23 and 16 in 2023-24.

1.3 Performance measure	Publication of the election commitments report within the legislated timeframe			
Outcome	Independent and informative analysis: The PBO measures the timeliness of the preparation of the election commitments report to provide evidence of compliance with its legislative obligations.			
Methodology	<p>Assessment against the timeframe for the preparation of the election commitments report as set out in subsection 64MA (1A) of the <i>Parliamentary Service Act 1999</i>.</p> <p>If an election was to occur late in the financial year, the PBO may publish the election commitments report early in the next financial year.</p>			
Data sources	Data sources include the formal approval to publish by the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the publication date of the election commitments report on the PBO website.			
Targets				
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	
Less than 30 days after the end of the caretaker period or 7 days before the first sitting day of parliament.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Less than 30 days after the end of the caretaker period or 7 days before the first sitting day of parliament. ⁶	
Target rationale	This is an output measure in relation to compliance.			
Changes from previous year	No changes. The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan.			

⁶For the purposes of this document the PBO is assuming that following the next general election there will be a general election in 2027-28.

2. Efficiency measures

2.1 Performance measure	Median time to complete policy costing and budget analysis requests			
Outcome	Operational effectiveness and efficiency: Results are interpreted to provide evidence of the PBO’s performance in terms of efficiency of outputs as assessed by time to completion against our targets.			
Methodology	<p>Analysis of the number of requests/options, date received, date completed and/or date withdrawn.</p> <p>Timeliness is influenced by factors, including the number of requests on hand, their complexity and whether we have to request information from other agencies to complete the request. The use of the number of request options seeks to be a proxy for complexity.</p> <p>We track metrics that influence time to completion, such as the number of information requests from Commonwealth agencies to better understand their impact on delivery timeframes.</p> <p>The target timeframe for caretaker election costings is informed by the Charter of Budget Honesty Policy Costing Guidelines, as updated periodically.</p>			
Data sources	The data sources used to assess performance against the target include the Parliamentarian Request App and SharePoint records.			
Targets				
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28⁶	
15 business days or fewer (non-caretaker)	15 business days or fewer (non-caretaker)	15 business days or fewer (non-caretaker)	15 business days or fewer (non-caretaker)	
5 business days or fewer (caretaker)				5 business days or fewer (caretaker)
Target rationale	Timeliness in relation to the completion of costing and budget analysis requests is the way in which the PBO is best able to measure efficiency.			
Changes from previous year	<p>The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan. The wording of the target has been changed from ‘fewer than 15 days’ to be clear that the target is 15 days, and less if we can.</p> <p>The methodology has been updated to explain the timeframes for costings submitted in the caretaker period, and to remove the reference to work to understand the drivers of time to delivery of parliamentarian responses, as this has been completed. Information requests are the most the significant driver of time to completion, other than volume of work on hand.</p>			

2.2 Performance measure	Percentage of fiscal update related products published at the time specified by our schedule
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Outcome **Operational effectiveness and efficiency:** Products are delivered in accordance with our schedule and published while the triggering event remains relevant.

Methodology Fiscal update related releases are triggered by the Government publishing new economic and fiscal estimates. These products fall into 2 categories:

- 1 Fiscal snapshots, historical data and the budget guide, which are to be released within 3 days of the trigger event.
- 2 Deeper analysis and model updates, which are to be released within 2 months of the triggering event (*Build your own budget, Beyond the budget, historical fiscal data and forecasts and National fiscal outlook*).

Assessment of the publication dates on our website for products specified in category 1 and 2 above. The differentiated timing between category 1 and 2, reflects the extra information and analysis that needs to be incorporated in *Build your own budget, Beyond the budget* and the *National fiscal outlook*.

Data sources The PBO website

Targets			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
100%	100%	100%	100%

Target rationale We have delivered consistent with the timeframes specified in our schedule over the previous reporting period. The 100% target indicates the importance of publishing while the trigger event remains relevant. The indicative schedule for 2024-25 is below, noting this may change depending on election timing and the release of fiscal updates.

Title of publication	Trigger event	Planned publication date
<i>Beyond the budget 2025-26</i>	Budget	Within 2 months
<i>Build your own budget: Budget update</i>	Budget	Within 2 months
<i>Guide to the Budget</i>	Budget	Within 3 days
<i>2025-26 Budget snapshot</i>	Budget	Within 3 days
<i>Historical Fiscal data – Budget update</i>	Budget	Within 3 days
<i>Build your own budget: MYEFO update</i>	MYEFO	Within 2 months
<i>Historical fiscal data –MYEFO update</i>	MYEFO	Within 3 days
<i>2024-25 MYEFO snapshot</i>	MYEFO	Within 3 days
<i>National Fiscal Outlook 2024-25</i>	Last State Budget	Within 2 months

Changes from previous year	<p>The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan.</p> <p>The wording of the measure has been changed to reference products rather than publications. The target rationale has been amended to include reference to the next general election and include a draft schedule of publications.</p>
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3. Effectiveness

3.1 Performance measure	Percentage of PBO publicly released parliamentary requests referenced in the public debate			
Outcome	Independent and informative analysis: The reference to PBO outputs in public debate suggests that PBO’s outputs are relevant. The independence, transparency, and integrity of the PBO’s processes may be inferred from the nature of the mentions.			
Methodology	<p>For the purposes of this measure, the term ‘PBO publicly released parliamentary requests’ refers to responses posted to the PBO website and includes requests for costings and analyses of the budget.</p> <p>Assessment of the number of references to PBO publicly released parliamentary requests sourced from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • daily media monitoring • speeches/media releases/interviews • other sources, as appropriate. 			
Targets	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	80% of publicly released parliamentary requests referenced by media sources	80% of publicly released parliamentary requests referenced by media sources	80% of publicly released parliamentary requests referenced by media sources	80% of publicly released parliamentary requests referenced by media sources
Target rationale	<p>The choice of the 80% target reflects the fact that not all publicly released costings are picked up by the media. For instance, some costing requests that are legislatively required to be publicly released (such as those completed on behalf of a Parliamentary Committee) may not be topical for the media cycle.</p> <p>Additionally, costing requests are automatically publicly released following completion where a request is submitted on a ‘non-confidential’ basis by a parliamentarian.</p>			
Changes from previous year	No changes. The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan.			

Outcome

Independent and informative analysis: The number of self-initiated products reported on by the media and viewed on our website indicates demand for our products and their relevance over time.

The media has discretion over whether or not they report on our products, including the quality of reporting they produce. Results are interpreted as evidence of the PBO's contribution to the public debate and may demonstrate the level and extent of our influence.

Traffic to the PBO website is also indicative of demand for our self-initiated products, especially those that are published to support users to better understand the budget (explainers, the glossary and data) and fiscal issues (budget bites).

Methodology

We use media reporting and website engagement to measure demand for and relevance of PBO self-initiated products.

Media reporting is measured through an assessment of the percentage of all relevant products reported on by a major news outlet. A 'major news outlet' is defined as a national news source with a substantial readership size.

Website engagement is measured via a collection of website analytics for website page views, adjusted for the 'bounce rate' (views of less than 10 seconds and no page interactions).

We measure the website page views in aggregate, to acknowledge that the stock of self-initiated products grows over time, and that many of them have a long shelf life and continue to be relevant after they have been released. Relevant products include fiscal updates, explainers, data and tools.

We also measure website page views of those products delivered within the reporting period, to ascertain the demand and relevance of new products.

Data sources

Daily media monitoring (Hansard, print and online media, television, radio transcripts and media releases).

Website analytics data and reports.

Targets				
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
1	50% of relevant products are reported on by a major news outlet	Maintain the percentage of relevant products reported on by a major news outlet	Maintain the percentage of relevant products reported on by a major news outlet	Maintain the percentage of relevant products reported on by a major news outlet
2	25,000 website page views	30,000 website page views	Maintain or increase	Maintain or increase
3	85% of relevant products receive at least 100 website page views	Maintain the percentage of relevant products that receive at least 100 website page views	Maintain the percentage of relevant products that receive at least 100 website page views	Maintain the percentage of relevant products that receive at least 100 website page views

Target rationale

The media target of 50% reflects that not all of our self-initiated products will receive media attention. Some of them, particularly those related to recent fiscal updates, such as the Budget, are more likely to gain media attention. Conversely, publications which explain a budget concept are unlikely to gain immediate media attention. Our program has a mix of these products being released in any given year.

The website page view target for all self-initiated products takes account of the stock of PBO self-initiated products (that increases each year), and that some have a long ‘shelf life’, resulting in website page views over a long period. Website page views, adjusted for bounce rate, are considered the best metric to take account of the different ways the PBO publishes its work, including through HTML, interactive interfaces, and downloadable documents and spreadsheets.

During 2023-24, we explored tracking metrics via Google analytics to better measure demand for our publications. We found that approximately a third of our website page views (around 10,000) were for self-initiated products released during 2023-24 with the rest (around 20,000) being for those released in prior years. The large demand for prior year publications reflects our growing stock of on-line resources, such as the online budget glossary, online tools and various budget explainers.

Our target for 2024-25 is for 25,000 website page views, to take account of 2024-25 being an election year, and that we have scaled down our self-initiated program to reflect the uncertainty in timing of the election and regular fiscal updates. The target reflects a continuation of around 20,000 website page views of products from prior years, plus 5,000 website page views from products to be published during 2024-25. The decrease in expected website page views for new releases reflects fewer planned products during the election year. This target is highly dependent on the

timing of the next general election (see discussion for performance measure 1.2 above).

For 2025-26 and beyond, our target is to return to at least the number of website page views in 2023-24.

The 85% target for newly released products reflects an assessment of our performance over 2023-24, where nearly all products received at least 100 page views. It acknowledges that some of our products have a niche audience, or niche purpose fulfilling an important transparency or accountability objective but may not achieve a lot of views when released.

Changes from previous year

The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan with the following changes.

References changed from publications to products, to reflect the change in how we refer to the outputs from our self-initiated work.

The wording of the outcome has been changed to add that it is both media and website page views that indicate demand and relevance of our products.

The methodology for media mentions has been refined from 'all publications' to 'relevant products' to exclude regular updates to data and tools, which have become a larger share of our publications, and are not expected to be referenced in the media.

The target for media references has been reduced from 65% to 50% to be more realistic about what we can achieve, and to acknowledge that some of our work has an education focus and is not expected to be picked up by the media. For example, an update to our Guide to the Budget is targeted at parliamentarians and their staff, and we would not expect the media to report it.

We had previously indicated we would develop a website related target to assess demand for our products. To ensure that we address both the stock and new products, we have developed 2 targets using website page views, adjusted for bounce rate.

The target for website page views has been developed over 2023-24. We consider page views to be the best measure of demand. Other metrics considered were number of downloads, number of interaction events and time spent on the page. These are limited by our wide range of publication formats, including HTML, interactive online charts and downloadable documents and spreadsheets.

The new aggregate target for number of page views reflects the experience over 2023-24. The difference between 2024-25 and 2025-26 for the target reflects an expectation of fewer publications during an election year. In 2026-27 and beyond, the target is to 'maintain or increase' page views.

The new target for new published products to have at least 100 web page views takes account of the 2023-24 experience.

3.3 Performance measure		Demand for the election commitments report		
Outcome	Independent and informative analysis: The number and nature of media mentions indicate demand for our election commitments report over time. Results are interpreted as evidence of the PBO’s contribution to the public debate.			
Methodology	Assessment of the number and nature (positive/negative or neutral) of media mentions related to the election commitments report. When assessing the nature of media references, PBO analysts are making their own judgment against a set of descriptors. For example, references are considered ‘neutral’ if they relate to the PBO’s function or outputs without accompanying descriptive language.			
Data sources	Daily media monitoring (Hansard, print and online media, television, radio transcripts and media releases).			
Targets				
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	
90% of mentions are positive or neutral	Not applicable	Not applicable	90% of mentions are positive or neutral ⁷	
Target rationale	Depending on the timing of the election, the PBO may publish the election commitments report early in the next financial year. Media mentions may also be assessed in the year following the election.			
Changes from previous year	No changes. The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan.			

⁷ For the purposes of this document the PBO is assuming that following the next general election there will be a general election in 2027-28.

3.4 Performance measure	Proportion of pre-election PBO responses to parliamentary requests that have informed election commitments (election commitments report-specific)		
Outcome	Independent and informative analysis: The usefulness of our costings and budget analysis and the trust placed in the agency in informing the election platforms of non-government parties and individuals, as measured by the proportion of commitments included in the election commitments report that are informed by work done by the PBO.		
Methodology	Performance results are calculated as commitments determined by the Parliamentary Budget Officer as meeting the criteria for inclusion in the election commitments report that were informed by PBO work, divided by, all commitments included in the election commitments report.		
Data sources	This measure draws on real-time, quality assured data already captured as part of the preparation of the election commitments report.		
Targets			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
60%	Not applicable	Not applicable	60% ⁸
Target rationale	The target is informed by historical levels (2016: 51%, 2019: 50%, 2022: 60%). Note, should an election occur late in 2024-25, reporting on results against this performance measure will be reflected in the following financial year's Annual Performance Statement (consistent with our approach to reporting on election commitments report-related performance measures).		
Changes from previous year	No changes. The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan.		

⁸For the purposes of this document the PBO is assuming that following the next general election there will be a general election in 2027-28.

3.5 Performance measure	Proportion of feedback from stakeholders that indicates a high-level of satisfaction regarding the quality of the service and outputs provided by the PBO		
Outcome	<p>Service excellence: Feedback from our stakeholders (including parliamentarians) indicates they are satisfied with the customer service quality (support, engagement, and timeliness of this service) and the website and digital tools, (accessibility, functionality, and usability) provided by the PBO.</p> <p>Independent and informative analysis: Feedback indicates our outputs (self-initiated products, policy costings and budget analysis and election commitments report) are relevant, high quality and timely, and/or our work is undertaken with independence, transparency, and integrity.</p>		
Methodology	<p>The PBO’s stakeholders include parliamentarians and their advisers and staff, parliamentary committees, the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit, Presiding Officers, Commonwealth agencies, the media, and the general public.</p> <p>The nature of feedback received from the following sources is assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBO stakeholder survey (undertaken every 3 years). • Ad hoc and unsolicited feedback provided by stakeholders. • Informal feedback via email/private briefings/meetings. • Other sources, as appropriate. 		
Data sources	As above.		
Targets			
2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
85% of feedback is positive or neutral	85% of feedback is positive or neutral	85% of feedback is positive or neutral	85% of feedback is positive or neutral
Target rationale	A target of 85% recognises that at times, we will receive feedback that indicates the need to vary or improve our services. Constructive feedback from our stakeholders which identifies opportunities for improvement is welcomed.		
Changes from previous year	The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan. The methodology has been revised to reflect that we have adjusted the methodology for the measure to remove reference to ‘semi-structured interviews’, as this has been superseded by our 2024 Triennial stakeholder survey and the enhanced client relationship process in place.		

3.6 Performance measure	Proportion of media mentions that indicate our outputs are of high-quality and that we are perceived as independent, robust, and/or non-partisan		
Outcome	Media mentions demonstrate how we are perceived as an agency by our external stakeholders.		
Methodology	<p>Assessment of the number and nature (positive/negative or neutral) of media mentions across costings, reports and function.</p> <p>When assessing the nature of media references, PBO analysts are making their own judgment against a set of descriptors. For example, references are considered 'neutral' if they relate to the PBO's function or outputs without accompanying descriptive language.</p>		
Data sources	Daily media monitoring (Hansard, print and online media, television, radio transcripts and media releases).		
Targets	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	90% of mentions are positive or neutral	90% of mentions are positive or neutral	90% of mentions are positive or neutral
Target rationale	The target is informed by historical levels.		
Changes from previous year	No changes. The performance measure is retained from the 2023-24 Corporate Plan.		

APPENDIX A - PLANNED ACTIVITIES BY FUNCTION

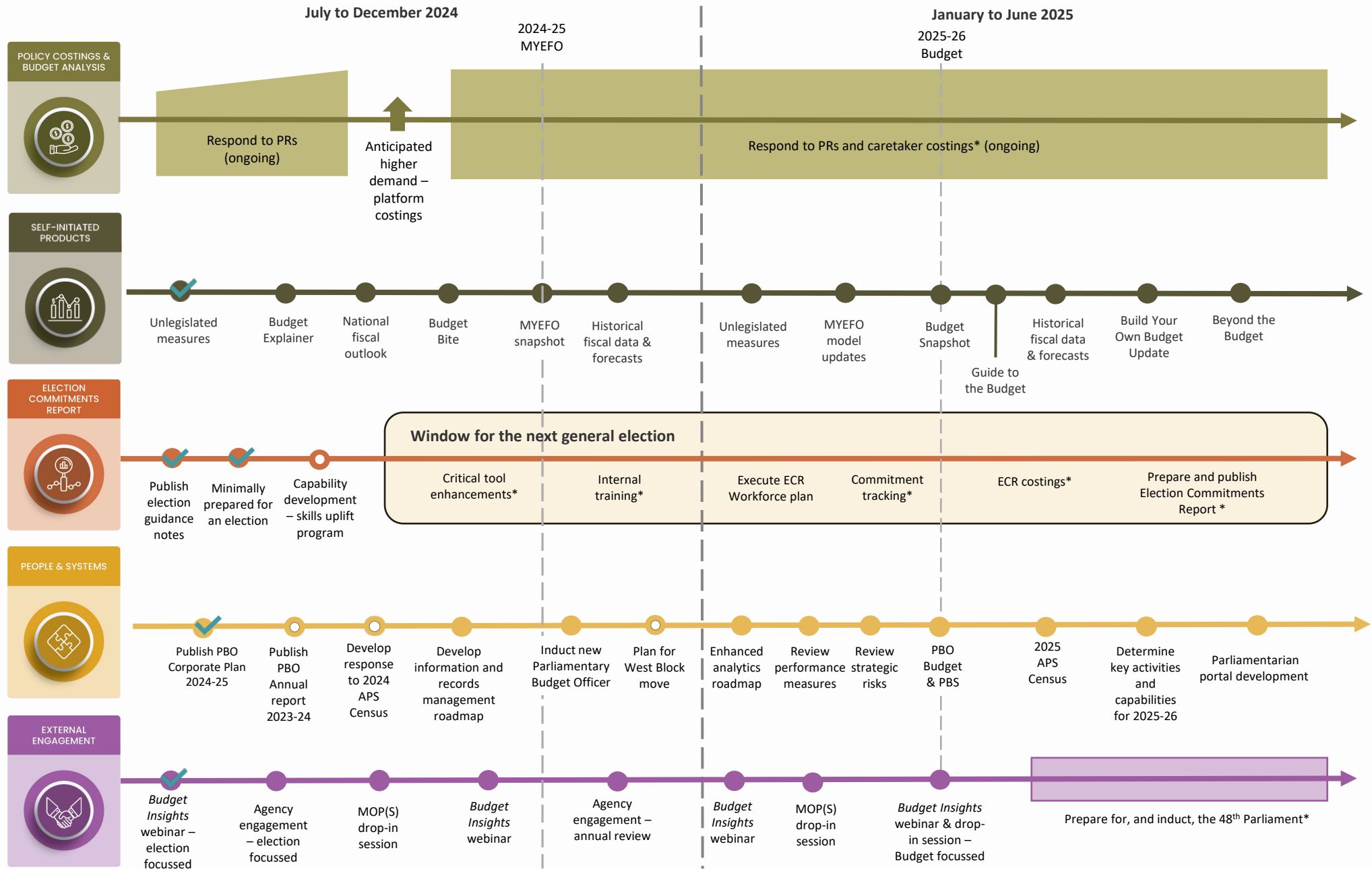
JULY 2024 TO JUNE 2025*



Parliamentary
Budget Office

LEGEND

- ✓ Activity complete
- Activity commenced



* This plan recognises that the PBO will need to prepare for an election but makes no assumption about when the election will be. The timing and delivery of some activities will be affected by the election.