



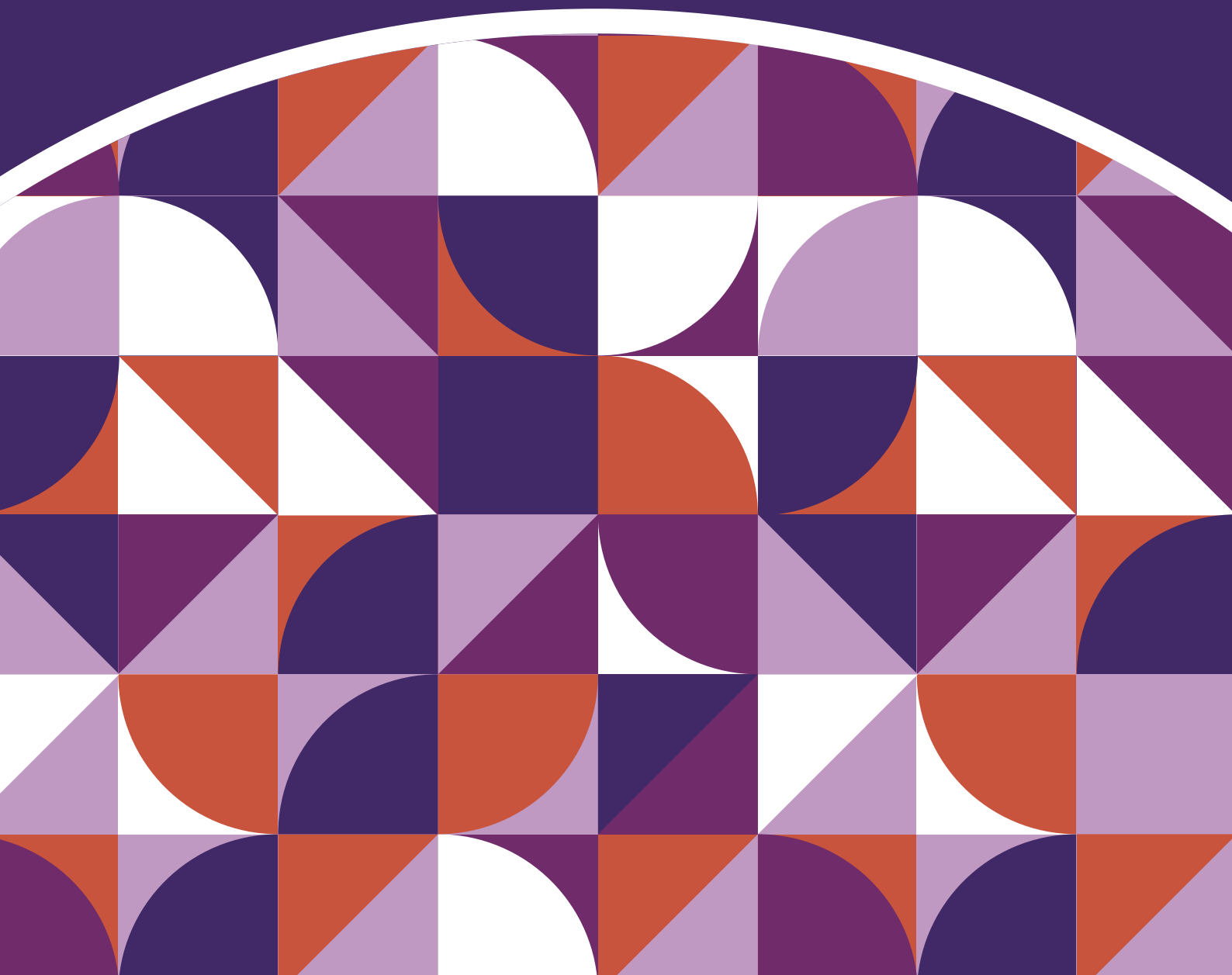
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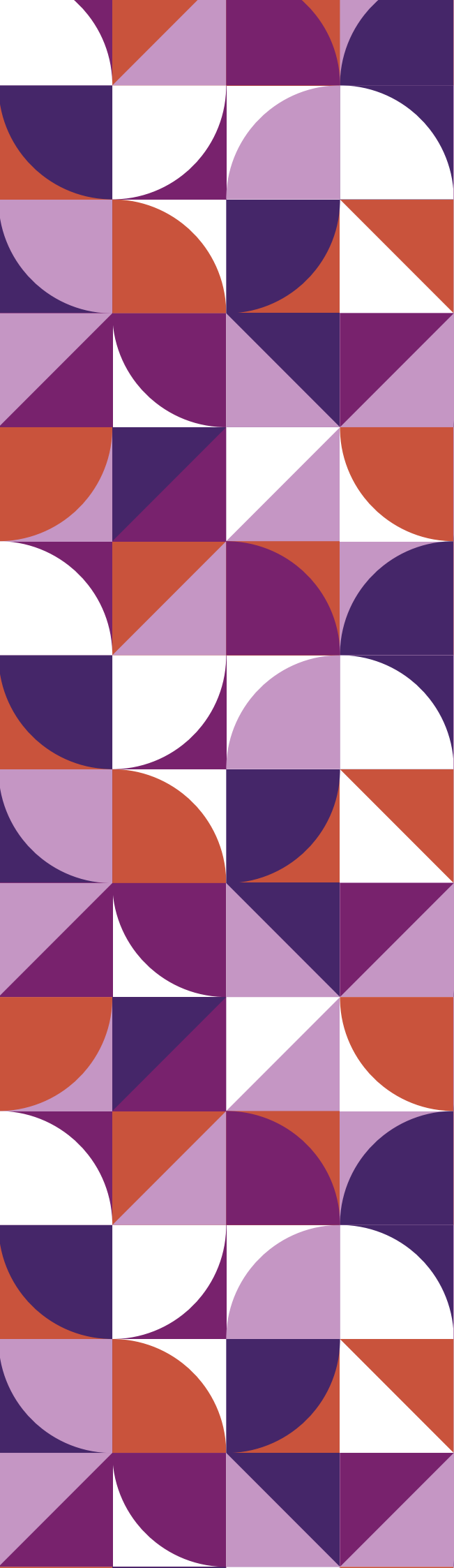


OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR-
GENERAL
OF AGED CARE

Corporate Plan

2024-25





Publication information

Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to elders both past and present.

Publication details

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Introduction

Acting Inspector-General's Foreword



As the Accountable Authority, I am pleased to present the Corporate Plan for the Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care, covering the period 2024–25, as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and in accordance with section 16E of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

On 16 October 2024 the Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care reaches its first anniversary as an independent statutory agency providing oversight of Australia's aged care system. Our Corporate Plan for 2024–25 sets out how we will build on the foundations established in our first 9 months of operation and outlines our strategic direction for the next four years from 2024–28.

We perform a unique role in overseeing the administration of Australia's aged care system, which is underpinned by the statutory functions and powers laid out in the *Inspector-General of Aged Care Act 2023* (IGAC Act). Our establishment has enabled me, as Acting Inspector-General, to implement these functions for the first time, a landmark achievement towards delivering greater transparency and accountability, and improved aged care services for older people and their families.

As an agency we continue to improve our understanding and establish our processes, develop our systems and capabilities, and ensure that our work meets the requirements of our legislation. This is particularly relevant in the context of our first in-depth review which commenced in March 2024.

As required under the IGAC Act we have also delivered our first statutory report on progress towards implementing the Aged Care Royal Commission's recommendations¹. The report was provided to the Minister on 30 May 2024 and tabled in Parliament and publicly released on 2 August 2024. We will commence a second progress report for completion by 1 June 2025.

¹ The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Final Report: Care, Dignity and Respect was tabled in Parliament on 1 March 2021 – <https://www.royalcommission.gov.au/aged-care/final-report>

Our annual work planning processes will look to further outline the issues that require dedicated investigation or oversight by the Inspector-General. This will be informed by views from a wide range of stakeholders and users of the aged care system and by the intelligence we collect about current and emerging issues.

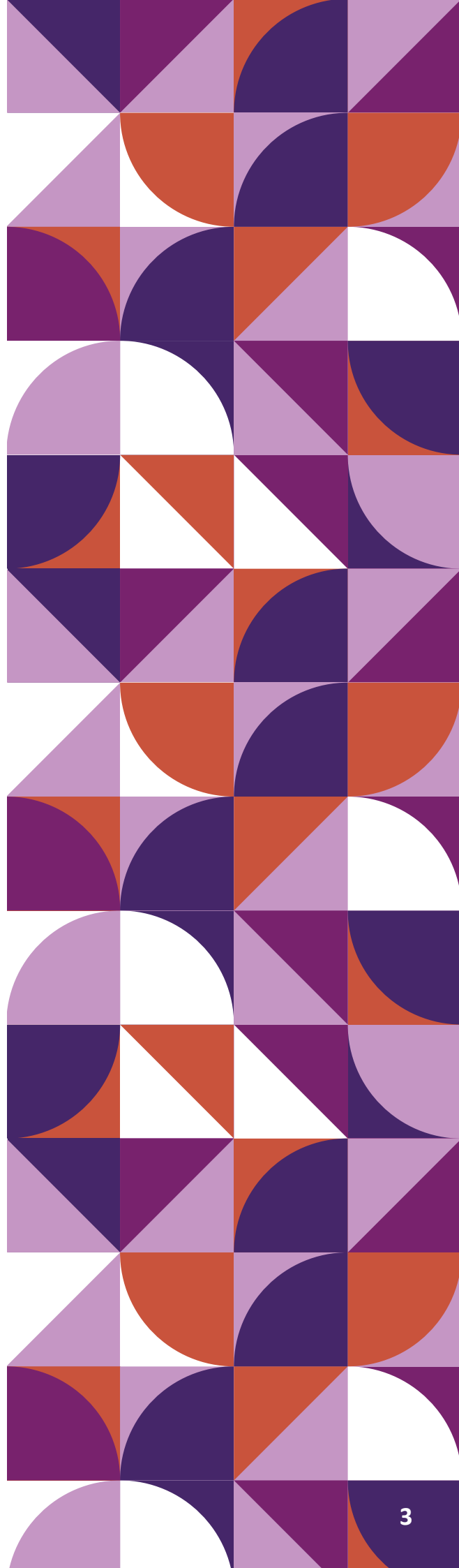
As our agency matures we continue to embed a strategic approach to our operations and the delivery of our functions. This includes further developing our corporate foundations, systems, technology and engagement activities. We are building our monitoring capabilities to ensure, as far as resources allow, that our oversight function operates with the agility needed to address matters impacting aged care. We will continue to invest in building our workforce capability to ensure we have the right expertise and put in place the frameworks and policies needed to support and enable a growing workforce.

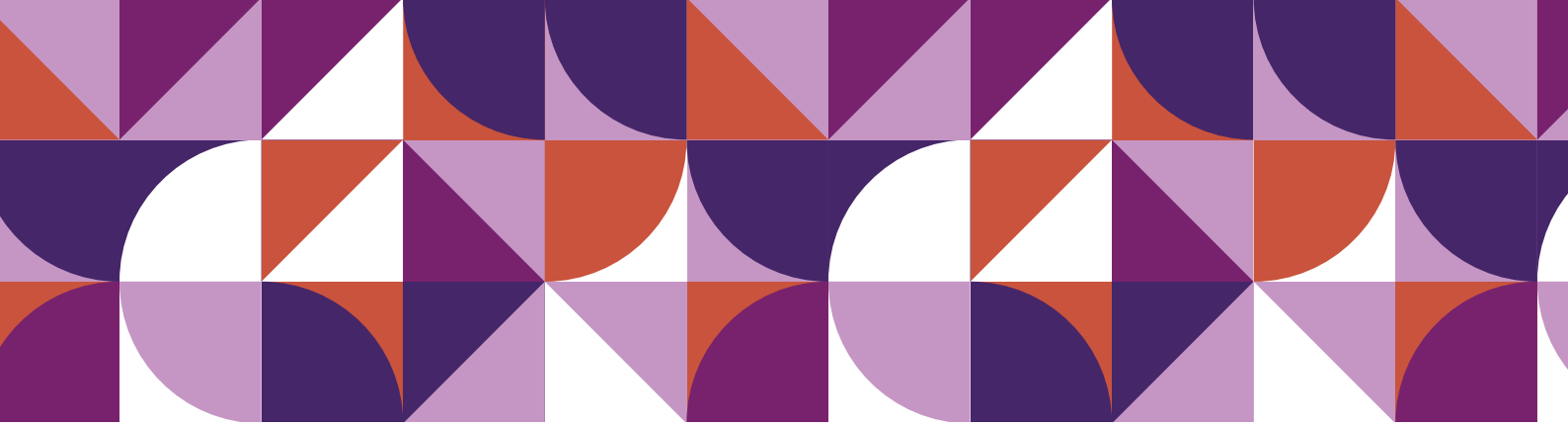
I would like to acknowledge my Office's profound level of determination and the quality of work the team has delivered since our establishment. I am confident that the strong foundational work we are putting in place will ensure we continue to improve the transparency and accountability of the system and the sector for years to come. This, in turn, will lead to improvements in the delivery of aged care in Australia and achieve better outcomes for older people in our community now and into the future.

Ian Yates AM

Acting Inspector-General of Aged Care

30 August 2024





Purpose

Our purpose is to provide independent oversight of the aged care system to instil greater accountability and transparency, and drive positive change for older people and their families and carers.

To do this we will monitor and investigate the Commonwealth's administration and regulation of the aged care system, call out significant and systemic issues, and make recommendations to Parliament.

Vision

Our vision is to be a trusted authority that ensures integrity and accountability in the aged care system. We will be a catalyst for change by calling out problems and identifying areas for improvement to help ensure that older people can access the care they need.





Who we are

The Australian Government established the Inspector-General of Aged Care (Inspector-General) and the supporting Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care on 16 October 2023 through the IGAC Act. The IGAC Act sets out the functions and powers of the Inspector-General and supporting Office.

Why we were established

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (Royal Commission) recommended that the Australian Government establish an independent Inspector-General and supporting Office to ensure that the aged care system is subject to ongoing scrutiny, and to hold government agencies accountable for their processes, decisions and performance.

We do this through our core functions of reviews, monitoring and reporting, including:

-  identifying and conducting in-depth investigations of systemic issues
-  reporting on the implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendations
-  making independent recommendations for improvement
-  publicly reporting to the Government and Parliament.



Our strategic objectives

Our five strategic objectives to deliver on our purpose are:

- 1 Provide independent and impartial oversight of the aged care system
- 2 Investigate and make recommendations to address systemic issues
- 3 Drive accountability and ongoing reform
- 4 Foster productive stakeholder relationships
- 5 Operate as a high-performing and trusted organisation.

Our values

The Office upholds the Australian Public Service (APS) Values and Code of Conduct, as outlined in the *Public Service Act 1999*.

We have been entrusted by the Government and community to provide independent oversight of the aged care system and with this comes a high level of responsibility. We are committed to embedding accountability and integrity into our own activities, ensuring our processes are transparent and free from bias, and always behaving ethically and professionally.

Key activities

What we do

We help to improve the aged care system through in-depth investigations and independent recommendations to the Government and Parliament. We do this through the key activities outlined below.

The Inspector-General's priorities and areas of focus for reviews and reports over the coming year are published in an Annual Work Plan on our website.

Monitor

Effective monitoring helps us understand how the aged care system is operating and decide where to focus our efforts.

We are building our monitoring function incrementally. As it matures we will use it to regularly gather information from other government bodies responsible for administering, funding, regulating and delivering aged care.

We collect intelligence from a range of sources to maintain a comprehensive understanding of the broader issues affecting aged care. Our analysis of the intelligence that we collect will help inform the activities in our Annual Work Plan, including our reviews, reports, complaints management oversight and our engagement.

Review

We help to improve the aged care system by doing in-depth investigations and providing independent advice to the Australian Government and Parliament through:



examining a systemic issue or topic within the remit of the Government's regulation, administration or funding of the aged care system



writing a review report making recommendations to the Government and Parliament



providing this report to the Minister for Aged Care to table in Parliament and



publishing the review report on our website.

Report

We produce a range of reports that fit broadly into three categories:

- progress reports that provide updates on the implementation of Royal Commission recommendations
- special reports on specific topics or matters relating to the aged care system – for example, issues-based reports, aged care data reports, review update reports and reports on performance of other government bodies.
- corporate reports including our Corporate Plan and Annual Report.

The Minister for Aged Care tables our reports in Parliament and we publish them on our website.

Oversight of complaints management

Our broader role includes oversight of the Commonwealth's administration of complaints processes in the aged care system and how they are managed. This includes considering whether complaints management processes in aged care are:

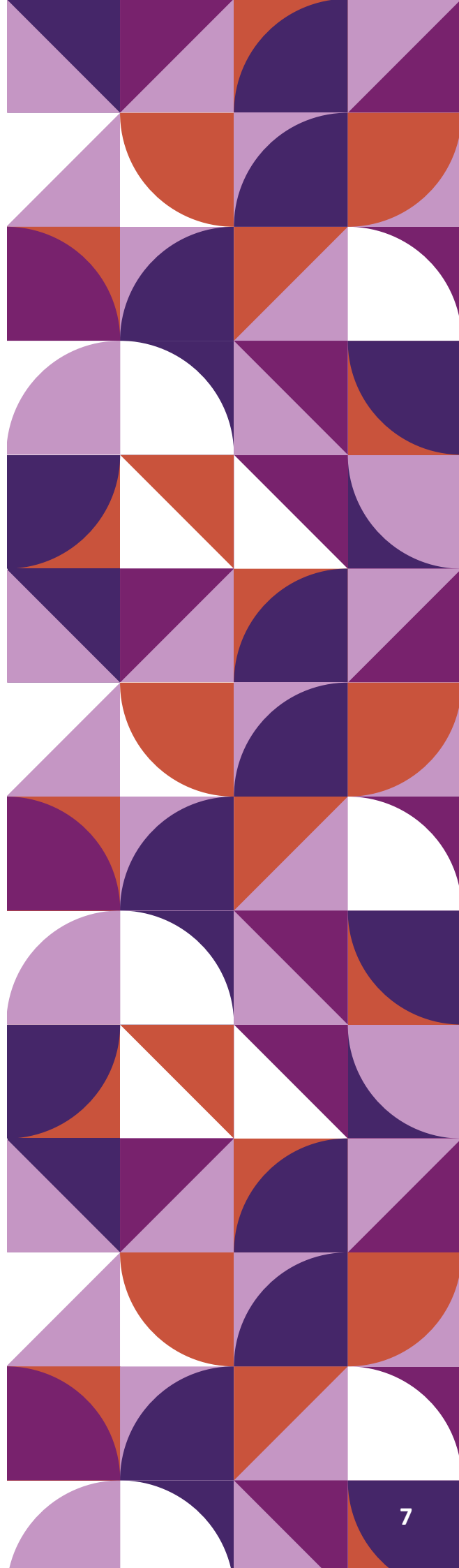
- fit-for-purpose, effective, efficient and accessible
- providing a fair and transparent means of resolving peoples' concerns.

The Inspector-General does not have the power to investigate individual complaints about aged care. This remains the responsibility of the agency or body that the complaint is about, or of the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission when complaints about providers are referred to it.

Engage

Engagement is an ongoing and integral part of our work. We are actively considering how we will expand our engagement mechanisms to ensure we can talk to and hear from older people, their families, carers, providers, clinicians, aged care workers, researchers, their representative peak bodies and others. We will continue to build our capability to engage effectively and openly with our target audiences and our stakeholders to inform our analyses, reviews and reports and to share the insights we obtain through our analyses.

We are fully committed to looking for new and innovative ways for people to connect with us, to ensure that we can hear from people with diverse backgrounds and needs.



Operating context

Environment

Australia's health and aged care landscape is transforming. People are living longer, rates of chronic conditions and neurodegenerative diseases are increasing, and many older people are wanting to remain in their own homes. Coupled with the affordability and availability of aged care, these factors will increasingly shape future models of aged care and the needs of older people.

The delivery of aged care in Australia is undergoing generational change as the Government continues to progress complex and ambitious reforms in response to the Royal Commission recommendations. These include the development of a new Aged Care Act prioritising older people and their wellbeing for the first time, the establishment of the new Support at Home Program and outcomes arising from the Aged Care Taskforce. As a result, we operate in a dynamic and constantly evolving environment.

This operating environment will shape how we exercise our independent oversight to deliver greater accountability and transparency in the aged care system. We have a clear remit, which is unique within the aged care system, of holding government bodies responsible for administering, regulating, funding and delivering aged care to account for their performance. Our unfettered independence, which is enshrined in our legislation, and our distinct legislative tools are critical to our success in carrying out this role. They allow us to deliver impartial, rigorous and credible reports to the Government and Parliament.

Capability

As a small agency with a broad mandate, we aim to use our available resources strategically to focus on key priorities that have maximum impact on our overarching objectives.

We will focus on building and enhancing our workforce capability and developing our technology to successfully deliver on our purpose and outcome. This includes supporting and developing the capabilities of our people to meet our objectives and their professional development goals and career aspirations.

We are committed to implementing and embedding the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework to strengthen in-house capability to deliver core work and to ensure core work is done by APS employees. Our future contracts will include arrangements for transfer of knowledge and skills to the APS. As a new agency we are incorporating related principles and requirements into our procurement, contract management and HR policies and processes.

Workforce

We are funded for 21 full-time equivalent positions in addition to the Inspector-General.

Our workforce is employed under and supported by a flexible legislative framework in the *Public Service Act 1999*, with terms and conditions set out in the Office of the Inspector-General of Aged Care (OIGAC) Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027.

We have a small and agile workforce that is capable and diverse.

Our staffing profile comprises a mix of ongoing and non-ongoing APS employees. We do not outsource any of our core work. Resources are deployed flexibly to be able to respond quickly to business needs and priorities, and we continue to direct efforts toward attracting and retaining capable and high-calibre staff.

Despite this flexibility, and with a commitment to maintaining an independent capacity to deliver our functions in-house, it is anticipated that an increased workforce will be needed to fully deliver on the Royal Commission’s vision for an independent Inspector-General of Aged Care going forward. To ensure we are well positioned to meet the Royal Commission’s intent, we will continue to evaluate our capacity to deliver against our core functions, build on

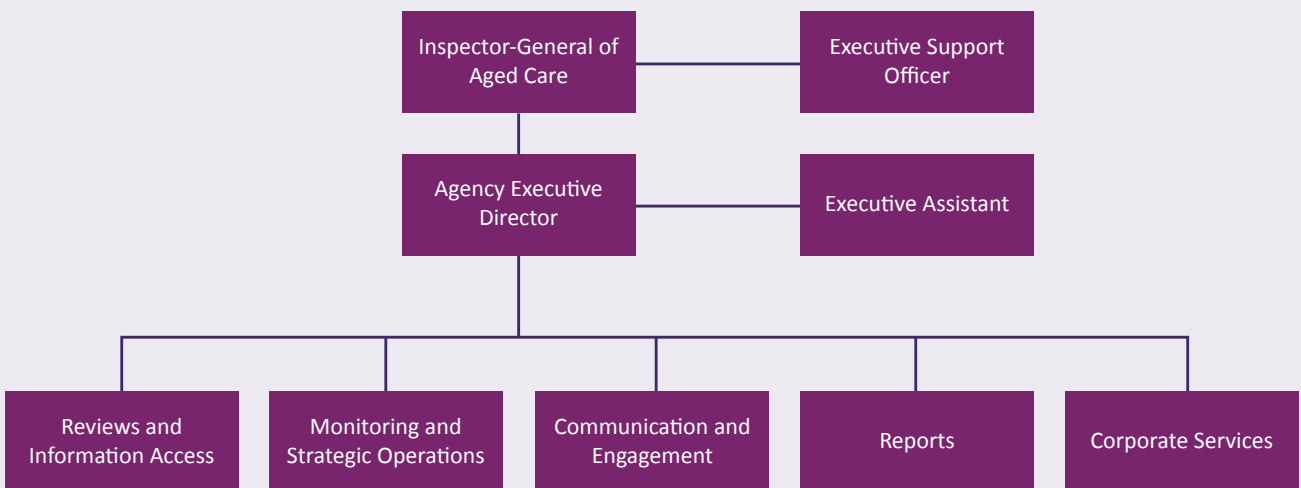
our understanding of our business needs and plan for future workforce requirements. We will seek to strengthen our workforce capacity and capability. As part of this uplift we will look to bring on additional staff with critical skills to fill any gaps.

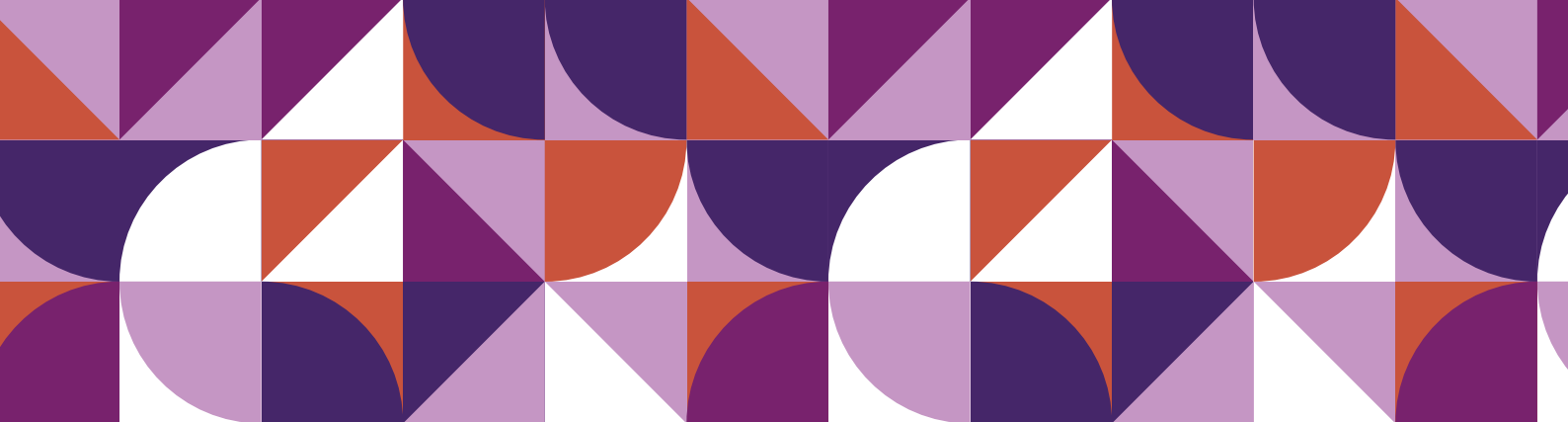
We strive to create a diverse and inclusive workplace. We are committed to demonstrating the APS Values and Code of Conduct, fostering strong leadership, building a positive workplace culture and supporting staff to do their best work.

In line with the broader government approach towards Reconciliation the Office is developing its first *Reflect* Reconciliation Action Plan 2025–26. The plan will form part of our overarching Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which is also under development.

Organisational structure

Organisational structure on 1 August 2024





Technology

We are assessing and continuing to develop our technological, data and analytical requirements and tools. These need to support and enable the delivery of our role and function and must be robust, reliable, secure and fit-for-purpose.

Our principles

Our **6 guiding principles** underpin our work. They influence how we conduct ourselves, how we operate and how we achieve results.

People-centred

We put the interests of older people in Australia first.



Inclusive

We support equal access for all older people in Australia.



Accountable

We hold government and regulatory bodies to account.



Evidence-based

We use robust data and evidence to oversee the system and call out areas where data is inadequate.



Objective

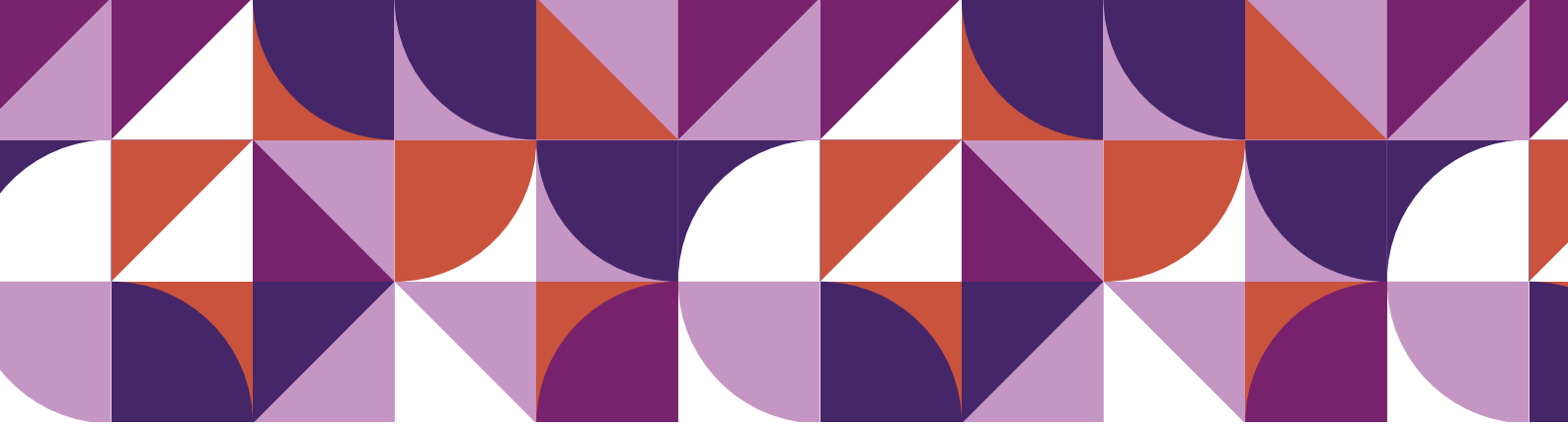
Our findings and recommendations are fair and impartial.



Excellence

We aim to build public confidence in Australia's aged care system.





Risk oversight

Oversight and assurance

Our corporate governance framework is critical to managing our strategic and operational activities to ensure we achieve our purpose and deliver on our objectives.

Our independent Audit and Risk Committee is established and will meet 4 times during 2024–25. The Committee is an integral component of our corporate governance through its review and monitoring of systems of risk management and oversight, financial management and reporting, and performance reporting.

Risk management and key risks

Risk management plays a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction of the Office. We have established a risk management framework, which encompasses our risk management policies, and a risk register to help us to identify, respond to and actively manage our key risks.

Risk management is everybody's responsibility and we will continue to encourage early engagement and open conversations about risk. We see this as an essential factor in identifying and assessing emerging or new risks that may impact our business and deciding how we mitigate and manage them.

Cooperation

We operate with independence and impartiality, and will continue to build cooperative and respectful working relationships with the agencies over which we have oversight, particularly:

- Department of Health and Aged Care
- Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
- Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority

While the Inspector-General has strong compulsory information-gathering powers under legislation, we are also working to establish proactive and robust information-sharing agreements to facilitate the voluntary sharing of relevant information in a timely manner. This will help us to provide ongoing monitoring and analysis of the performance of the aged care system. We signed the first such agreement with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission in April 2024 and we are establishing further agreements with other agencies and entities.

Performance

Our outcome objective

The outcome objective that our overall performance will be assessed against is:

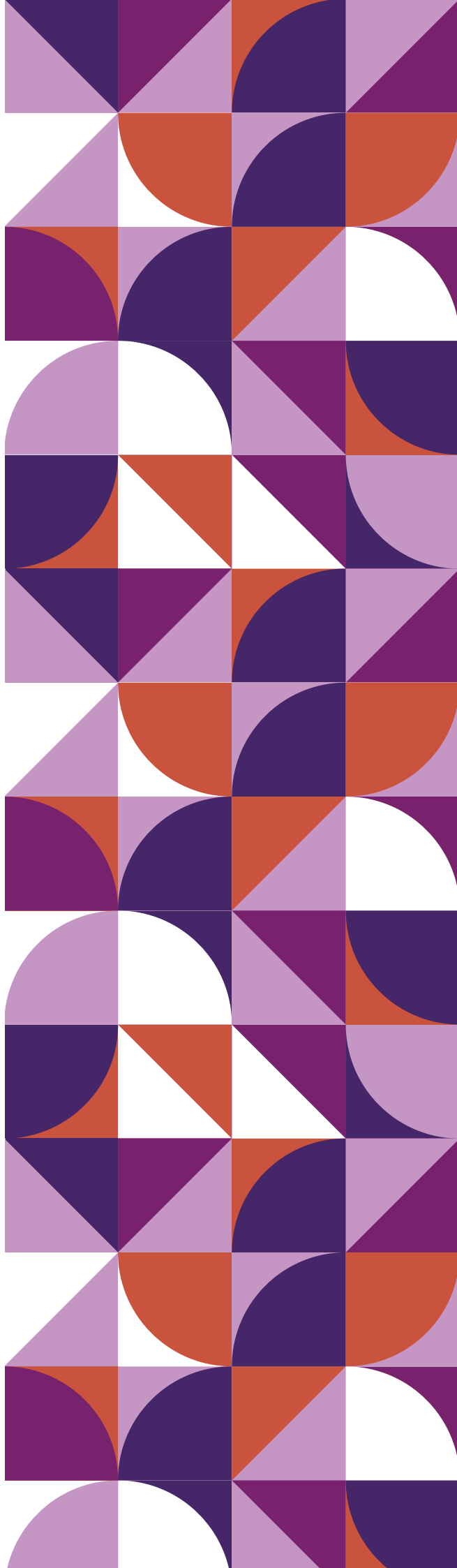
Provide independent oversight of the aged care system to drive accountability and positive change through reviews, recommendations and reporting to Parliament.

How we will measure our performance

The table below outlines how the Office will measure performance of its key activities.

Table 1. Performance measures for 2024–25 to 2027–28

	Key performance measure	Target 2024–25	Target 2025–28
1	Annual Work Plan (AWP) published	Publish the AWP annually by 31 July	As per 2024–25
2	Effective stakeholder engagement through meetings with consultative committee, other advisory bodies, agencies, organisations and the public	Positive response from annual review of stakeholder engagement	As per 2024–25
3	Reports and reviews are delivered and published within agreed timeframes	Publish 1 review report	Review reports published each year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 in 2025–26 • 2 in 2026–27 • 2 in 2027–28
4	Percentage of report recommendations accepted by the agency or organisation or government	70% of recommendations accepted	Recommendations accepted each year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% in 2025–26 • 80% in 2026–27 • 80% in 2027–28
5	Report on the implementation of Royal Commission recommendations delivered within statutory timeframes	Present 1 report to the Minister by 1 June 2025	
	Review the implementation by the Commonwealth of the recommendations of the Aged Care Royal Commission		Present 1 review to the Minister by 1 March 2026



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