



Empowering Government through Evidence-Based Decision-Making

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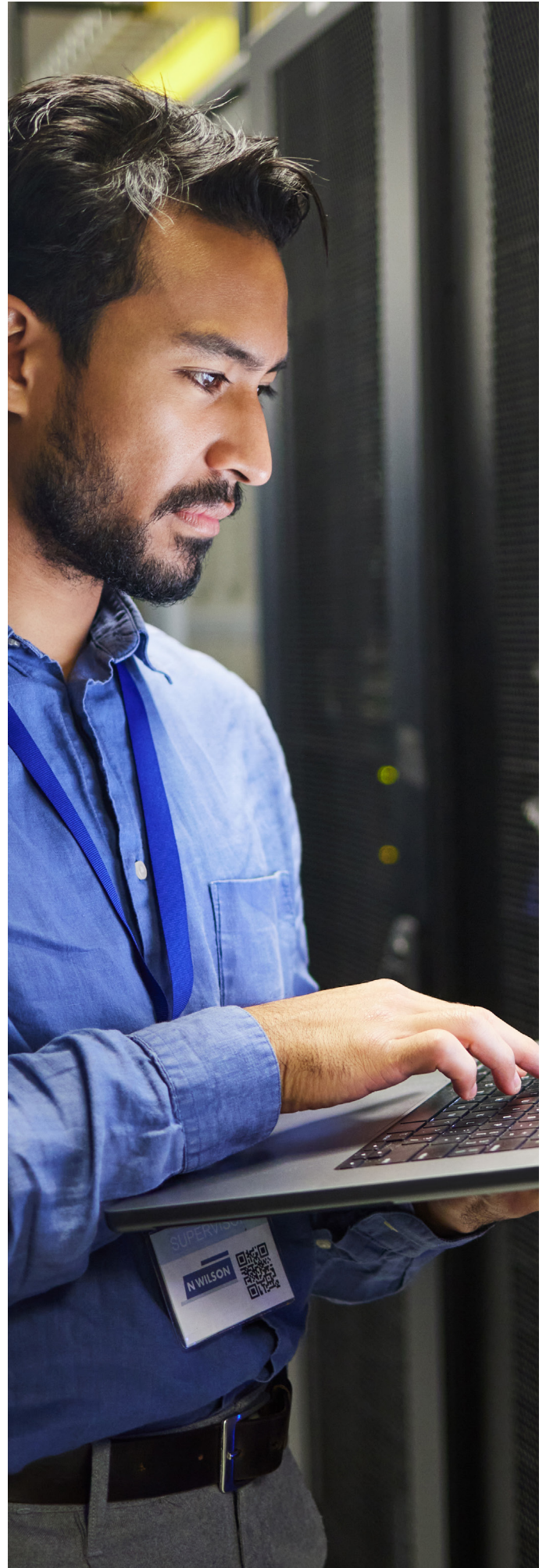
Executive Summary

The Data & Analytics Roadshow 2024 convened leaders and experts from various sectors to discuss the evolving landscape of data analytics. Keynote speakers and panelists explored the transformative potential of data in driving policy changes, improving decision-making, and enhancing service delivery. Central themes included the necessity of fostering curiosity in data analysis, the integration of AI and machine learning, and leveraging environmental, social, and governance (ESG) data for sustainable operations.

The event emphasised the importance of cultivating a culture of curiosity to derive meaningful insights from data and highlighted the critical role of data storytelling in making complex data accessible and actionable for decision-makers. Discussions focused on the integration of ESG data, stressing the need for accurate data collection to meet regulatory requirements and improve sustainability. Another key point was the importance of strategic communication in mobilising data-driven initiatives, alongside insights on the integration of AI and the necessity of robust data infrastructure.

Real-world case studies illustrated these concepts in action. For example, Venues New South Wales improved operations and customer satisfaction through real-time data analytics. Infrastructure Australia's Market Capacity Tool showcased the predictive power of data in planning and resource allocation. A government initiative on ESG data collection demonstrated how granular data could optimise waste management. An air quality monitoring program highlighted the impact of strategic communication in raising public awareness.

The roadshow underscored the transformative potential of data analytics, offering strategies to overcome common challenges. By fostering curiosity, enhancing data storytelling, integrating ESG data, and leveraging AI, organisations can harness data to achieve sustainable and impactful transformations.



Harnessing Data for Impact

The Data & Analytics Roadshow 2024 served as a platform for professionals from government and industry to discuss the latest trends and innovations in data analytics. The event aimed to explore how data can drive policy changes, improve decision-making, and enhance service delivery. Through keynote speeches, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, attendees gained insights into the practical applications of data analytics and the integration of AI technologies.

In today's data-driven world, the role of data analytics is more crucial than ever.

Organisations across various sectors are leveraging data to enhance operational efficiency, make informed decisions, and drive policy changes. Technological advancements in AI and machine learning have revolutionised data analysis, enabling real-time insights from vast datasets. Furthermore, the integration of ESG data into business operations has gained prominence as organisations strive to meet regulatory requirements and achieve sustainability goals. The Data & Analytics Roadshow 2024 provided a comprehensive overview of these developments, offering strategies and solutions to leverage data effectively.



Hindrances to a Data-Driven Public Sector: Gaps in Knowledge, Management and Collaboration

Despite significant advancements in data analytics, many organisations struggle to harness their data's full potential. Common challenges include data silos, where data is isolated within departments, preventing holistic analysis. Additionally, there is often a lack of data literacy among employees, hindering their ability to derive actionable insights. The integration of AI and machine learning technologies, though promising, remains underutilised due to insufficient infrastructure and expertise.

A critical issue is the gap between data collection and the application of insights. Organisations often collect vast amounts of data without a clear strategy for analysis and utilisation. This leads to missed opportunities for improving operations, informing policy decisions, and enhancing service delivery. Furthermore, the integration of ESG data poses additional challenges. Accurate and granular data collection is essential for meeting regulatory requirements and driving sustainable practices, but many organisations lack the necessary tools and processes.

The Data & Analytics Roadshow 2024 addressed these challenges by providing insights into fostering a culture of curiosity, enhancing data storytelling, integrating ESG data, and leveraging AI technologies. The event highlighted the need for strategic communication and collaboration to ensure data-driven initiatives are effective and impactful. This report outlines the strategies discussed during the event, offering practical solutions to overcome these common challenges and harness the full potential of data analytics.



A Comparative Survey of Data Transformation in Australian Public Sector

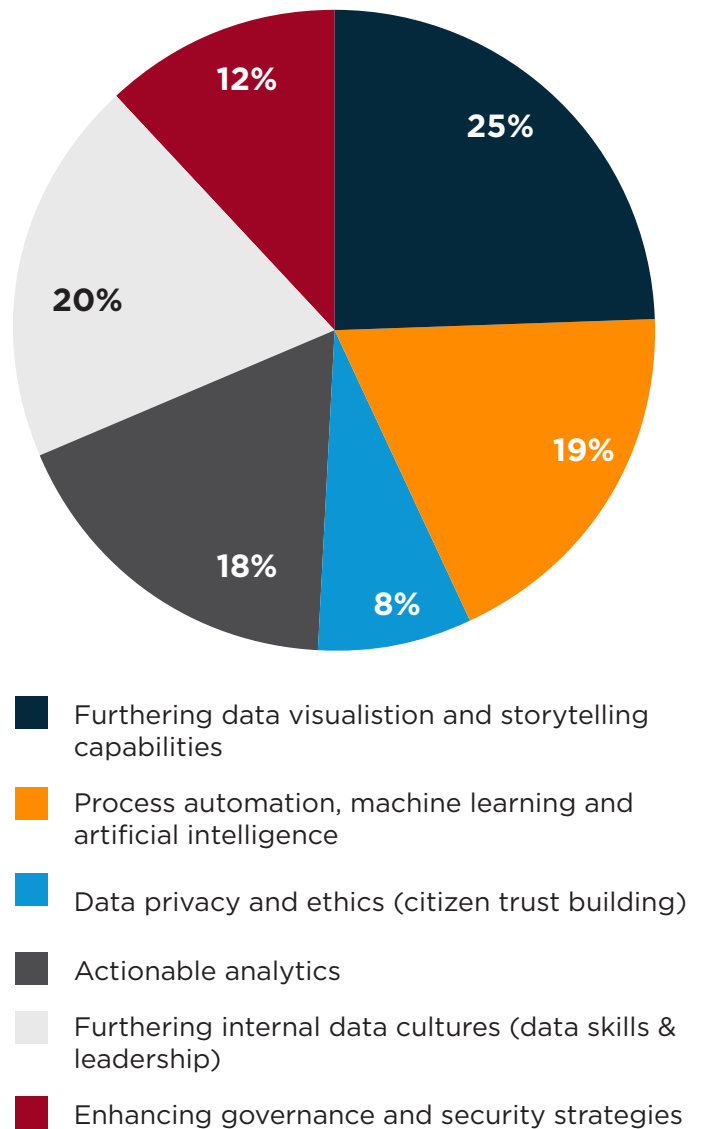
Data Priorities in 2024 and Beyond

The diverse data priorities for 2024 and beyond illustrate a multifaceted approach to harnessing data in the public sector. A notable trend is the simultaneous focus on both advanced technologies, such as machine learning and AI, and foundational elements like data governance and security. This dual focus indicates an understanding that while cutting-edge technologies are essential for innovation, they must be built on a solid foundation of secure and well-governed data practices.

Interestingly, the priority given to furthering data visualisation and storytelling capabilities reflects a recognition of the importance of making data insights accessible and compelling to a broad audience. This aligns with the challenge of communicating change effectively within organisations and with citizens, suggesting that better data visualisation could directly support more effective communication strategies.

The emphasis on actionable analytics and internal data culture points to an organisational need to not only generate insights but also to ensure these insights are actionable and that the workforce is equipped to leverage them. This connects to the recurring challenge of transforming culture, indicating that building a data-centric culture is not just about training but also about embedding analytics into everyday decision-making processes.

What are your organisation's data priorities in 2024 and beyond?



Source: PSN OPEX Survey 2024. Sample Size: 204 Australian Gov Executives.



Common/Recurring Challenges in the Current Data Journey

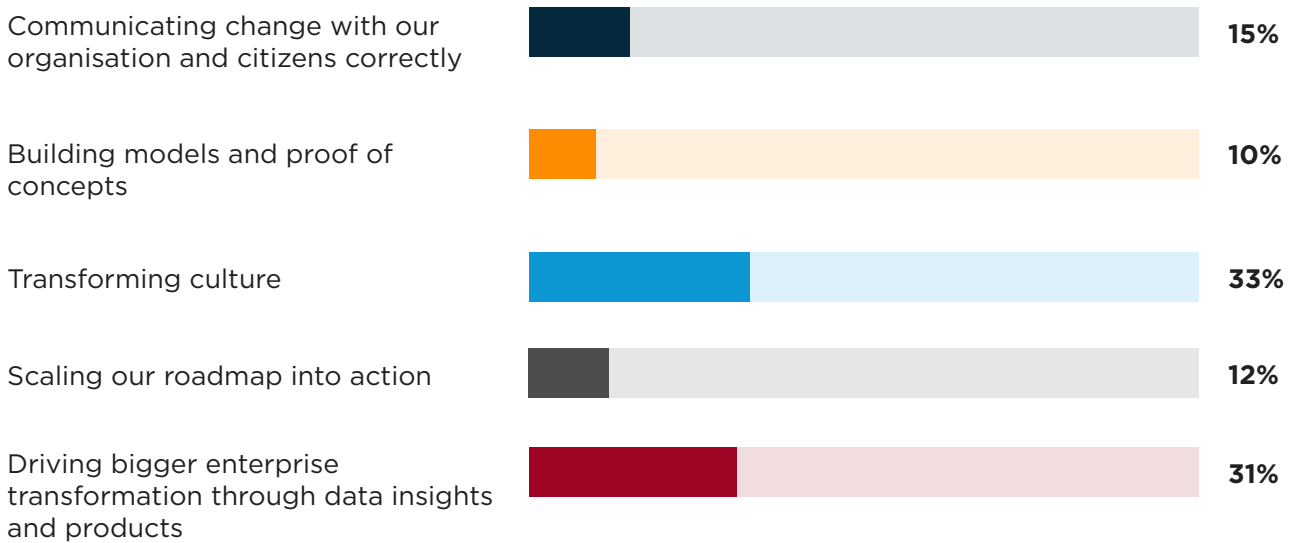
The recurring challenges faced by public sector organisations highlight a complex landscape where cultural and technical issues intertwine. The struggle with transforming organisational culture is a recurring theme that links to multiple data priorities, such as the need for actionable analytics and the development of internal data skills. This suggests that technical advancements in data capabilities must be accompanied by a concerted effort to shift cultural attitudes towards data.

Building models and proof of concepts emerges as a notable challenge, which ties back to the priority of process automation and AI. This indicates a gap between the aspiration

to leverage advanced technologies and the practical ability to develop and implement these solutions effectively. Overcoming this challenge likely requires not only technical expertise but also robust frameworks for innovation and experimentation.

Communicating change correctly with both the organisation and citizens is another significant challenge that resonates with the prioritisation of data visualisation and storytelling. Effective communication is critical for gaining buy-in and support for data initiatives, and improved visualisation capabilities can play a crucial role in making complex data insights more understandable and persuasive.

What are the most common/recurring challenges your organisation faces on your current data journey?



Source: PSN OPEX Survey 2024. Sample Size: 204 Australian Gov Executives.



Primary Challenge in Maximising Data Utilisation for Decision-Making

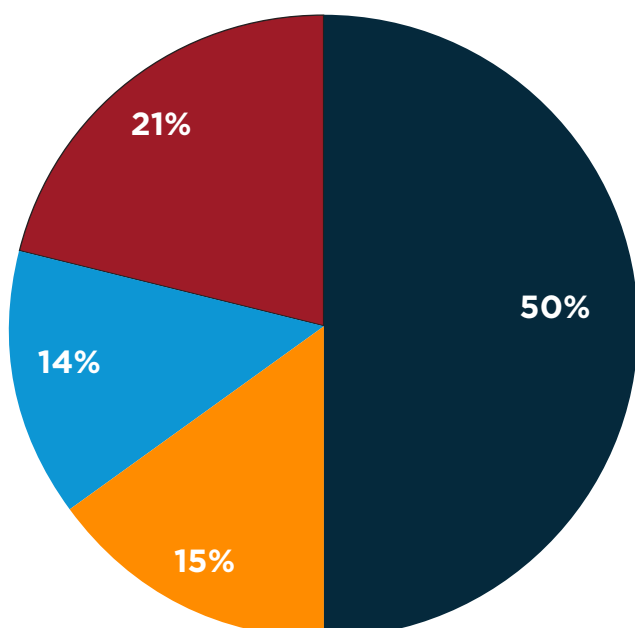
Data quality and consistency issues dominate as the primary challenge in maximising data utilisation, highlighting a fundamental barrier that affects all other aspects of data strategy. Without reliable and consistent data, efforts to build models, automate processes, or derive actionable insights are severely hampered. This pervasive issue also affects the ability to communicate data-driven changes effectively, as stakeholders may distrust insights derived from poor-quality data.

Limited access to relevant data sources and the lack of skilled personnel further complicate the data landscape. These challenges suggest that while there may be a desire to leverage data more effectively, practical limitations in data availability and expertise constrain progress. This ties back to the need for robust data governance and the development of internal data cultures, which are essential for ensuring that data is both accessible and usable.

Resistance to change and traditional decision-making processes also pose significant barriers. This resistance can undermine efforts to transform organisational culture and adopt advanced technologies. Addressing this resistance likely requires targeted change management strategies that align with the broader priorities of enhancing data skills and promoting a data-driven mindset.

“The convergence of data governance and ethical AI is crucial in today’s rapidly evolving digital landscape. Our responsibility is to ensure that as we innovate, we do so with integrity, maintaining the highest standards of privacy and security.”

Matthew Cunneen, Partner, Data Analytics, RSM Australia



What is the primary challenge you face in maximising the utilisation of data for decision-making in the public sector?

- Data quality and consistency issues
- Limited access to relevant data sources
- Lack of skilled personnel for data analysis
- Resistance to change and traditional decision-making processes

Source: PSN OPEX Survey 2024. Sample Size: 204 Australian Gov Executives.

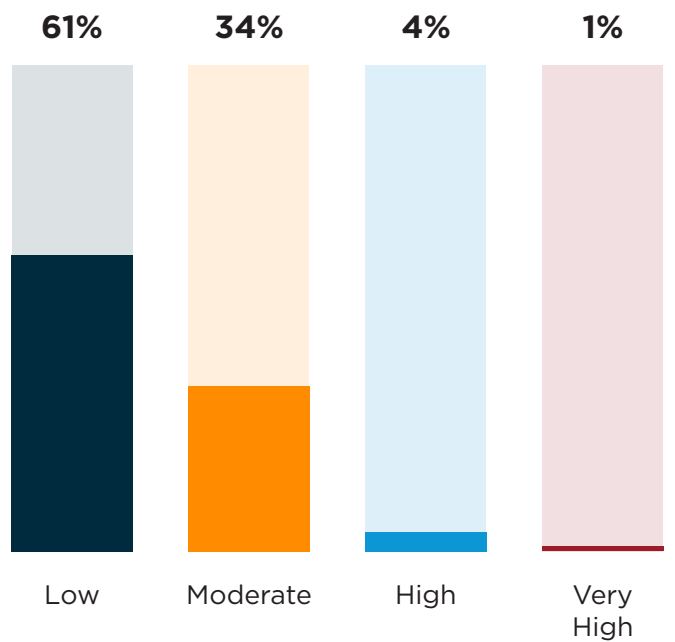
Current Level of AI Adoption and Maturity

The current state of AI adoption and maturity in the public sector is predominantly low, with most organisations either in the early stages of exploration or not yet adopting AI. This situation underscores a significant opportunity for growth but also highlights the challenges associated with scaling AI initiatives. The moderate level of adoption, where some AI applications are being tested, indicates a cautious approach to AI implementation, reflecting both excitement and uncertainty about its potential.

The few organisations that report high levels of AI adoption are likely leading the way in demonstrating AI’s tangible benefits. These examples could serve as valuable case studies for other organisations looking to navigate the complexities of AI adoption. The gap between early adopters and those yet to embrace AI suggests a need for knowledge sharing and best practices to accelerate AI maturity across the sector.

The focus on AI, despite its current low maturity, connects with the broader challenges of data quality, skills shortages, and cultural resistance. Successful AI adoption will depend on overcoming these foundational issues, ensuring that AI initiatives are built on high-quality data, supported by skilled personnel, and embraced by a culture that values innovation.

How would you rate the current level of AI adoption and maturity within your organisation?



Source: PSN OPEX Survey 2024. Sample Size: 204 Australian Gov Executives.



A man with glasses is shown in profile, looking at a laptop screen. He is in a dimly lit room with blue and red ambient lighting. In the background, there are blurred screens displaying data and charts. The overall atmosphere is that of a modern data center or office.

Sentiment Implications for Data and Analytics in Australia's Public Sector

The interconnected nature of these results paints a comprehensive picture of the data and analytics landscape in Australia's public sector. The sector faces a delicate balancing act between advancing technological capabilities and addressing foundational issues such as data quality, skills, and cultural transformation.

Investment in data visualisation and storytelling capabilities can enhance communication and foster a more data-driven culture, addressing both a key priority and a recurring challenge. Similarly, the focus on process automation and AI must be matched with efforts to build robust models and proof of concepts, highlighting the need for practical innovation frameworks.

Addressing data quality and consistency issues is foundational to all other efforts, ensuring that insights are reliable and actionable. Meanwhile, overcoming resistance to change and building a skilled workforce are critical for sustaining any advancements in data capabilities.

Overall, these findings suggest that Australia's public sector must take a holistic approach to data strategy, integrating technological advancements with strong governance, skill development, and cultural change initiatives. By addressing these interconnected challenges and priorities, the sector can unlock the full potential of data and analytics to drive innovation, improve public services, and enhance decision-making.

“Data-driven decision-making empowers organisations to unlock new efficiencies, optimise service delivery, and ultimately enhance citizen experiences. It’s about harnessing the power of data to drive tangible outcomes.”

Matthew Cunneen, *Partner, Data Analytics*, RSM Australia

The Innovation of Data Culture

Fostering Curiosity and Engagement

The importance of fostering a culture of curiosity within organisations cannot be overstated. Encouraging employees to ask questions and explore data can lead to valuable insights. By engaging stakeholders in the data analysis process, organisations ensure that the data collected is relevant and actionable.

Data Storytelling

Effective data storytelling is crucial for making complex data more accessible and actionable for decision-makers. Creating compelling narratives bridges the gap between data insights and practical actions, facilitating informed decision-making.

ESG Data Integration

The integration of ESG data into business operations is essential for meeting regulatory requirements and improving sustainability. Accurate and granular data collection is crucial for enhancing ESG reporting and optimising resource use.

Strategic Communication

Strategic communication plays a vital role in mobilising data for impact. Effective communication campaigns increase awareness and engagement with data-driven initiatives, ensuring that insights derived from data are utilised in policy-making and program implementation.

AI and Data Infrastructure

The integration of AI and machine learning technologies requires a robust data infrastructure. Organisations should focus on building scalable and adaptable data systems to support AI initiatives, enabling more effective data analysis and decision-making.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Collaborating with academic institutions, industry partners, and other stakeholders can enhance data projects and lead to more impactful outcomes. Partnerships provide additional expertise and resources to support data initiatives and drive innovation.



The Future of Data & Analytics in Australia

The Data & Analytics Roadshow 2024 underscored the transformative potential of data analytics in driving policy changes, improving decision-making, and enhancing service delivery. Key takeaways from the event included the importance of fostering curiosity, effective data storytelling, integrating ESG data, strategic communication, and leveraging AI technologies. By addressing common challenges and implementing the strategies discussed, organisations can harness the power of data to achieve meaningful and sustainable transformations.

Fostering a culture of curiosity encourages employees to explore data and ask insightful questions, leading to valuable insights. Effective data storytelling bridges the gap between complex data and practical actions, facilitating informed decision-making. Integrating ESG data into business operations ensures compliance with regulatory requirements and promotes sustainability. Strategic communication increases awareness and engagement with data-driven initiatives, ensuring that insights are utilised in policy-making and program implementation. Leveraging AI technologies requires a robust data infrastructure, enabling organisations to build scalable and adaptable data systems. Finally, partnerships and collaboration enhance data projects, providing additional expertise and resources to drive innovation.

The insights and strategies discussed during the Data & Analytics Roadshow 2024 provide a roadmap for organisations to overcome challenges and harness the full potential of data analytics. By implementing these solutions, organisations can drive policy changes, improve decision-making, and enhance service delivery, ultimately achieving meaningful and sustainable transformations.





About RSM Australia

For over a century, RSM Australia has supported clients with their assurance, tax and consulting needs. With over 1800 staff and 32 offices nationwide, our presence can be felt across Australia. At RSM, we understand the unique challenges government departments and public sector organisations face. We are proud to have been voted the Best Accounting & Consulting Services Firm (>\$200m) for six years in a row, as well as receiving the 'Best provider to Government & Community' award in the 2023 Client Choice Awards. There is a reason RSM is the Client's Choice. We offer targeted solutions to help

you take charge of change and achieve outcomes that matter.

RSM Australia's Data Analytics services empower organisations to make informed decisions and drive impactful changes. Our data analysts can help you align analytics with decision-making, drive action and quantify results. This approach will continuously add value to your department. We deliver comprehensive data analytics services, encompassing business process enhancement, customer expansion strategies, data management services and more.



About Public Sector Network

Public Sector Network (PSN) is a research company and insights exchange platform for government professionals. PSN connects public sector leaders to share knowledge, collaborate on solutions, and drive innovation in government services. Through events, workshops, and online communities, PSN fosters a culture of continuous learning and improvement in the public sector. PSN's mission is to support government organisations in achieving their goals through knowledge sharing and collaboration.

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