Role Description
Director Artificial Intelligence

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Role Description Fields	Details
Department/Agency	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Division/Branch/Unit	Enabling Services
Classification/Grade/Band	PSSE Band 1
Senior executive work level standards	Work Contribution Stream: Service/Operational Delivery
OSCA Code	113231
PCAT Code	3226192
Date of Approval	01 October 2026
Agency Website	www.dpird.nsw.gov.au

Agency overview

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is the department dedicated to growing primary industries and supporting regional economic development to deliver long term benefits to the state. Our focus is to protect, support and develop our primary industries, mining sector, and regions.

DPIRD brings together Agriculture and Biosecurity; Fisheries and Forestry; Local Land Services; NSW Resources; Regional Development and Delivery; the Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation; NSW Public Works and Soil Conservation Service.

Primary purpose of the role

The Director, Artificial Intelligence leads the strategic, responsible and enterprise-wide adoption of artificial intelligence across the Department. The role provides authoritative advice to the Department's Leadership Team (DLT) on opportunities, risks and implications arising from AI and emerging technologies, and leads the development and implementation of the Department's AI strategy, governance arrangements, capability uplift and prioritised AI initiatives. The Director enables the delivery of AI solutions that improve productivity, service delivery and decision-making while ensuring AI is used safely, ethically, lawfully and transparently.

Key accountabilities

- Lead development and execution of an enterprise AI strategy and roadmap aligned with departmental and NSW Government priorities.
- Provide strategic advice to the Secretary, DLT and senior leaders on AI opportunities, risks, investment priorities and emerging developments.
- Establish and mature enterprise governance for the responsible adoption, development and use of AI, ensuring departmental AI initiatives appropriately address the NSW Government's applicable AI policy and assurance requirements.
- Establish an enterprise approach for identifying, assessing, prioritising and governing AI opportunities and use cases, partnering with business areas to translate operational challenges into practical AI opportunities that improve productivity, customer outcomes and public value.
- Drive responsible experimentation and provide pathways for successful initiatives to progress from pilots to sustainable enterprise adoption.

- Work collaboratively with digital, data, cyber, legal, privacy, procurement, records, risk and assurance functions to embed appropriate controls throughout the AI lifecycle.
- Lead organisational AI capability uplift, including executive awareness, workforce AI literacy and more specialised capability where required.
- Partner with People Division and business areas on the workforce implications of AI, including skills, role redesign, workforce transition and change.

Key challenges

- Moving from experimentation to enterprise value while maintaining appropriate governance and assurance, balancing innovation and risk, particularly privacy, security, ethics, transparency and public trust.
- Coordinating fragmented AI activity into coherent enterprise priorities and investment decisions, influencing across organisational boundaries where accountability for AI intersects technology, people, data, risk, legal and service delivery
- Building organisational capability to keep pace with rapid advances in AI, while managing workforce impacts and safeguarding human judgement, accountability and inclusion.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Secretary	• Provide independent, authoritative advice on strategic opportunities, risks and implications arising from artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. • Seek endorsement of the Department's AI strategy, governance arrangements and major enterprise priorities.
Department Leadership Team	• Provide strategic advice on AI investment priorities, enterprise risks, workforce implications and opportunities to improve productivity, service delivery and decision-making. • Build executive alignment on enterprise priorities, accountabilities and responsible AI adoption.
Chief Information/Digital Officer	• Align the AI strategy and roadmap with the Department's digital, technology and architecture strategies. • Collaborate on technology platforms, solution design, integration, delivery pathways and transition from pilots to sustainable enterprise services.
Chief Data Officer or equivalent	• Collaborate on data strategy, governance, quality, access and stewardship arrangements needed to support reliable and responsible AI solutions. • Ensure AI initiatives appropriately address data risks, dependencies and lifecycle requirements.
Chief People Officer	• Partner on workforce impacts, role redesign, capability development, workforce transition and organisational change arising from AI adoption. • Coordinate executive awareness, workforce AI literacy and specialist capability uplift.
Cyber security	• Identify and manage cyber security threats, vulnerabilities and controls across the AI lifecycle. • Ensure AI initiatives align with departmental security architecture, policies and assurance requirements.

Who	Why
Legal, Privacy, Risk and Audit	• Obtain specialist advice and assurance on legal, privacy, ethical, risk, records and accountability requirements. • Embed proportionate governance, assurance, monitoring and escalation arrangements throughout the AI lifecycle.
Procurement	• Develop fit-for-purpose sourcing and contracting approaches for AI products and professional services. • Address value for money, vendor risk, intellectual property, data use, transparency, performance and exit considerations.
Business and service delivery executives	• Identify and prioritise operational challenges and AI opportunities that support business outcomes and public value. • Co-design initiatives, clarify business ownership and benefits, and support responsible implementation and adoption.
Communications and change functions	• Develop clear, coordinated communication and engagement approaches for employees, stakeholders and customers. • Build understanding, trust and readiness for responsible AI-enabled change.

External

Who	Why
Digital NSW / NSW GovAI	• Align departmental AI strategy, governance and assurance with NSW Government policy, guidance and whole-of-government priorities. • Participate in cross-government forums and share emerging practice, risks and lessons.
Premier's Department	• Engage on whole-of-government priorities, policy settings and strategic issues relevant to AI and emerging technology. • Provide departmental input and advice where enterprise AI matters require central coordination.
Other NSW Government agencies	• Build networks, share lessons and explore opportunities for common approaches, reusable solutions and cross-agency collaboration. • Maintain awareness of emerging public sector practice and coordinated responses to shared risks.
Technology and professional services providers	• Engage on market capability, emerging technology and delivery options. • Negotiate and oversee outcomes, assurance expectations and performance requirements for externally provided AI products and services.
Research and academic institutions	• Access independent expertise, research and evidence on emerging AI developments, risks and responsible practice. • Explore appropriate research, evaluation and capability-building partnerships.
Relevant Commonwealth and interjurisdiction	• Maintain awareness of national and interjurisdictional policy, regulatory and assurance developments. • Contribute to information sharing and collaboration on issues of common interest.

Role dimensions

Decision making

The Director, Artificial Intelligence operates with considerable autonomy in leading the Department's enterprise AI strategy, governance, capability uplift and portfolio of prioritised initiatives. The role is accountable for the quality, integrity and practicality of advice provided to the Secretary, Department Leadership Team and senior executives, and for ensuring that AI initiatives are assessed and governed in a manner proportionate to their benefits and risks. The role sets priorities and recommends investment and delivery pathways within approved strategies, policies, delegations and budget parameters. Matters with significant enterprise, policy, financial, workforce, legal, privacy, security, ethical or reputational implications are referred to the appropriate executive or governance body for decision.

Reporting line

This role reports to the Chief Operating Officer.

Direct reports

Direct reporting arrangements will be determined in accordance with the approved organisational structure and the delivery model established for the enterprise AI function.

Budget/Expenditure

The role manages approved AI program, project and operational expenditure in accordance with departmental delegations, procurement requirements and agreed investment priorities.

Key knowledge and experience

- Demonstrated senior leadership experience delivering enterprise digital, data, AI, technology or transformation strategies in a large and complex organisation.
- Demonstrated ability to provide authoritative strategic advice to senior executives on complex and rapidly evolving issues.
- Deep understanding of artificial intelligence, emerging technology and their organisational, workforce, risk and service-delivery implications.
- Demonstrated experience establishing governance and assurance arrangements while enabling innovation and organisational change.
- Strong record of influencing across organisational boundaries and leading multidisciplinary initiatives.
- Knowledge of public sector governance, accountability and policy requirements.

Essential requirements

- Demonstrated senior leadership experience in a complex organisation, with responsibility for enterprise technology.

Capabilities for the role

The NSW public sector capability framework describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	**Display Resilience and Courage** Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	• Respond constructively when in high pressure and unpredictable situations • Give frank, honest advice in response to contrary views • Be open to criticism of your ideas and respond in a thoughtful and considered way • Welcome new challenges and persist in raising and working through novel and difficult issues • Develop effective strategies and be decisive when dealing with emotionally charged situations and difficult issues • Support and lead change and overcome discomfort when things are complicated, uncertain or unclear	Advanced
 Personal Attributes	**Act with Integrity** Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	• Model the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour and encourage others to do the same • Set an example for others to follow by representing your organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way • Promote a culture of integrity and professionalism within your organisation and when dealing with external organisations • Reinforce and monitor the use of ethical practices, standards and systems • Promote practices and systems that create a workplace culture that values high ethical standards and behaviour	Advanced
 Relationships	**Communicate Effectively** Communicate clearly, pay attention to others and respond with understanding and respect	• Present with credibility, engage diverse audiences and test whether they understand you • Translate technical and complex information clearly and concisely for different audiences • Create opportunities for others to contribute to discussion and debate • Set an example by promoting information sharing across your organisation • Manage complex communications that involve understanding and responding to multiple and divergent viewpoints	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
		• Explore creative ways to share information and communicate with diverse audiences • Leverage insights from people with lived experience to shape communication and engagement strategies • Write clearly, concisely and persuasively in a range of styles and formats	
 Relationships	**Influence and Negotiate** Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	• Influence others with a fair and thoughtful approach and present persuasive counter arguments • Work towards mutually beneficial, win-win outcomes • Show sensitivity and understanding when resolving serious and complex conflicts and differences • Identify key stakeholders and gain their support in advance • Negotiate from a clear position, based on research, a firm grasp of key issues, likely arguments, points of difference and areas for compromise • Anticipate and minimise conflict within your organisation and with external stakeholders • Use evidence, including data insights, to create persuasive stories	Advanced
 Results	**Deliver Results** Achieve results by using resources efficiently and committing to quality outcomes	• Seek and apply the expertise of key individuals to achieve business outcomes • Lead a culture of achievement and acknowledge others' input • Determine how outcomes will be measured and guide others on evaluation methods • Investigate and create opportunities to enhance the achievement of business objectives • Make sure others understand the need for on-time and on-budget results and how success is defined • Control business unit output to ensure government outcomes are achieved within budget and on time • Progress organisational priorities and ensure resources are acquired and used effectively	Advanced
 Results	**Think and Solve Problems** Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	• Undertake objective, critical analysis to reach accurate conclusions that recognise and manage contextual issues • Work through issues, weigh up alternatives and identify the most effective solutions in collaboration with others • Consider the wider business context when thinking about options to resolve issues	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
		• Explore a range of possibilities and creative alternatives to improve systems, processes and business practices • Put systems and processes in place that are supported by high-quality research and analysis • Look for opportunities to design innovative solutions to meet customers' needs and service demands • Evaluate the performance and effectiveness of services, policies and programs against clear criteria	
 Business Enablers	**Technology** Understand and use available technology to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	• Maintain current knowledge of the application of emerging and accessible technology and best practices, providing advice and seeking expert advice • Put governance frameworks in place to ensure technology delivers value, and initiatives that pose unacceptable risks or misalignment are adjusted or stopped • Establish effective governance to ensure organisational compliance with cyber security and acceptable use of technology policies, including record keeping, cybersecurity, privacy, responsible artificial intelligence use, and single points of failure • Critically assess business cases that support introducing technology to ensure clear business needs, public value and full assessment of total cost • Lead system strategies that have clear business cases, make user needs central to design, and ensure strategies are efficient and future-proofed to maximise long-term public value	Highly Advanced
 Business Enablers	**Project Management** Understand and use effective ways to plan, coordinate and control projects	• Prepare and review project scope and business cases for projects with multiple interdependencies • Use key subject matter experts' knowledge to inform project plans and directions • Design and implement effective stakeholder communication strategies for all project stages • Monitor project completion and implement effective and rigorous project evaluation methodologies to inform future planning • Develop strategies to correct projects if they vary from their plans • Manage transitions between project stages and ensure any changes to projects are consistent with organisational goals	Advanced

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
		• Participate in governance processes, such as project steering groups	
 People Management	**Inspire Direction and Purpose** Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements	• Help others to understand the links between government policy, organisational goals and public value • Present information in an engaging way to build a shared sense of direction, clarify priorities and goals, and inspire and prepare others to achieve them • Work with others to translate strategic direction into operational goals and build a shared understanding of the link between your organisation's goals and core business outcomes • Create opportunities for recognising and celebrating high performance at the individual and team level • Inspire confidence and cultivate an attitude of openness and curiosity when tackling future challenges	Advanced
 People Management	**Manage Reform and Change** Support and champion change, and help others to engage with change	• Promote a sense of purpose and enable others to understand the links between government policy, organisational goals and public value • Actively promote change processes and communicate change initiatives across the organisation • Provide guidance, coaching and direction to others managing uncertainty and change • Engage employees in change processes and provide clear guidance, coaching and support • Identify cultural barriers to change and implement strategies to address these • Recognise and acknowledge employees' contributions to the change process	Advanced

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identify performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes, however, may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	**Manage Self**	Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	Adept
 Personal Attributes	**Value Diversity and Inclusion**	Be inclusive and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Adept
 Relationships	**Commit to Customer Service**	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Adept
 Relationships	**Work Collaboratively**	Collaborate with others and value their contribution	Adept
 Results	**Plan and Prioritise**	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Adept
 Results	**Demonstrate Accountability**	Be proactive and responsible for your actions, and follow legislation, policy and guidelines	Adept
 Business Enablers	**Finance**	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Business Enablers	**Procurement and Contract Management**	Understand and use procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Adept
 People Management	**Manage and Develop People**	Engage with and motivate staff, and develop their capability and potential	Adept
 People Management	**Optimise Business Outcomes**	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Advanced