

# Alberta Public Service Engagement Pulse Survey

July 2017

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT

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Following are the results, analysis, and key findings from the Alberta Public Service (APS) 2017 Pulse Engagement Survey, completed by 16,996 employees between June 14 and June 30, 2017. These survey insights are presented here to guide Executive decision-making, gauge progress on the APS People Strategy, and identify areas for continued focus and improvement.

### Summary of Key Insights: Results are Mixed

Favourable scores have increased for three of the six engagement drivers measured:

- I have confidence in the senior leadership of my department (+3%)
- Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff (+3%)
- I receive meaningful recognition for a job well done (+2%)

Scores have declined for three of the drivers measured as well:

- Innovation is valued in my work (-5%)
- I have opportunities for career growth within the APS (-4%)
- I have support at work to provide a high level of service (-2%)

## Background

In late 2015, the Government of Alberta contracted TalentMap to conduct the 2016 engagement survey in which the APS permanent and temporary employees expressed their views on their workplace, and the level of employee engagement was measured and compared to the previous surveys conducted in 2012 and 2013. Following that survey, 11 APS employee engagement strategy sessions were held across the province to hear from employees on their engagement needs. Based on the feedback from 5000 APS employees, *ENGAGE: Our Alberta Public Service People Strategy* was created and launched in January 2017.

The strategy includes the following three priority areas address the things APS employees said were important:

- **Connect:** Focuses on thoughtful and deliberate actions to ensure information flows throughout the organization. It responds to APS members' feedback that having their ideas heard and considered will help them do great work.
- **Lead:** Focuses on effective leadership – leaders that advocate for and encourage individual members of their teams to grow, recognize their strengths, and help them seek opportunities to learn and develop.
- **Learn:** Focuses on each APS employee's personal development, career growth, and chance to gain insights and skills to keep pace in a changing environment. Each of us is responsible for seeking opportunities to develop professionally and grow our careers, and the APS as an organization is committed to supporting ways for employees to learn and support each other as we go along.

The APS People Strategy includes a number of actions and tactics under each of the three above priority areas. Three Deputy Minister (DM) Committees were established – one for each priority area – to oversee the implementation of the actions and tactics. The Committees include staff from all levels throughout the public service.

## The 2017 Pulse Survey

The survey was designed to measure the progress of each priority area, and more specifically, the progress of the key engagement drivers which, if improved, should result in improvement in the APS workplace culture.

The 2017 Pulse Survey measured progress on *six engagement drivers*:

- *I have confidence in the senior leadership of my department*
- *Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff*
- *I have support at work to provide a high level of service*
- *Innovation is valued in my work*
- *I receive meaningful recognition for work well done*
- *I have opportunities for career growth within the APS (e.g. advancement, lateral movement, special projects, or different job opportunities)*

These drivers were previously identified to have the greatest opportunity for improvement and the biggest impact on employee engagement. They align to the priorities identified in the 2016 Employee Engagement Survey results and in the actions and tactics incorporated in *ENGAGE: Our APS People Strategy*.

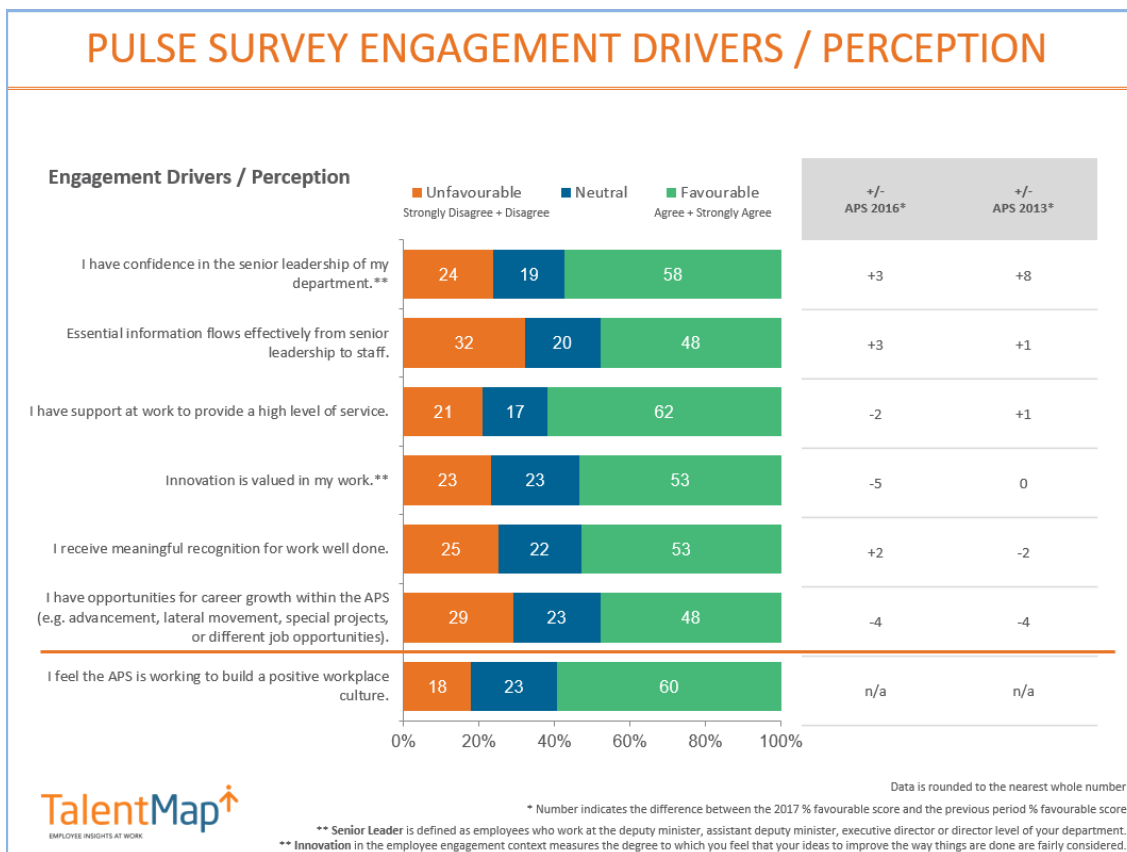
An additional statement was also added to the Pulse Survey to gauge the extent to which APS employees feel that the APS is working to build a positive workplace culture. The 2017 Pulse Survey was deployed to 27,302 APS employees over the period of June 14 to June 30, 2017.

**Response Rate**

**The APS Pulse Survey response rate was 62% (16,996 APS employees).** While lower than the 72% participation achieved in the 2016 Engagement Survey, it must be borne in mind that the survey was open for only 13 business days, compared to 19 business days for the 2016 survey. Notwithstanding the somewhat lower response rate, the results can still be confidently viewed as representative of the APS.

**Perception of Progress**

**Sixty percent (60%) of the APS agree or strongly agree that the APS is working to build a positive workplace culture.** Twenty-three percent (23%) neither agree or disagree, and eighteen percent (18%) disagree or strongly disagree. Those answering neutral represent continued opportunity to react well to the People Strategy, as they tend to have more flexible attitudes and can be positively influenced if their sources of inner conflict or uncertainty are addressed.



**Progress when Measured Next to the APS People Strategy**

Each of the three priority areas (Connect, Lead, Learn) identified attitudes to be measured which will gauge the progress achieved on each area. The six engagement drivers which were measured are presented in the table below according to each of the priority areas:

Engagement Driver	2017 % Favourable	Change since Engagement Survey 2016
<b>Connect</b>		
<b>I have confidence in the senior leadership of my department</b>	58%	+3%
<b>Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff</b>	48%	+3%
<b>Innovation is valued in my work</b>	53%	-5%
<b>Lead</b>		
<b>I have confidence in the senior leadership of my department</b>	58%	+3%
<b>I have opportunities for career growth within the APS</b>	48%	-4%
<b>I receive meaningful recognition for work well done</b>	53%	+2%
<b>Learn</b>		
<b>I have confidence in the senior leadership of my department</b>	58%	+3%
<b>I have support at work to provide a high level of service</b>	62%	-2%
<b>I have opportunities for career growth within the APS</b>	48%	-4%

#### Areas for Continued Focus and Improvement

The APS has had success in improving employee perceptions on three of the six drivers measured, while the three others have decreased. In terms of areas of continued focus and improvement, the **APS should continue with the implementation of the APS People Strategy and all three priorities (Connect, Lead, Learn)**. Even though there has been progress on engagement drivers such as essential information flowing from senior leadership, the absolute level of favourability is still below 50%, so continued focus and improvement is recommended.

The pulse survey results will be shared with the DM Committees. Since the APS People Strategy is in its early days, committees will have the opportunity to highlight early progress and review actions and priorities.

Departments are encouraged to continue to focus their actions and tactics both on the APS priorities, and on priorities aligned to their department engagement plan and survey results.

With the commitment of our leadership and our employees throughout the public service, we are putting ideas into action and monitoring our progress. More information about the Committees under the banners of Connect, Lead and Learn and the work underway is available [here](#).