



# PUBLIC SECTOR ASSURANCE FORUM

HYATT HOTEL, CANBERRA  
30 JULY 2026 - CONFERENCE  
31 JULY 2026 - WORKSHOPS

# Program Overview

On behalf of the Institute of Internal Auditors-Australia, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 Public Sector Assurance Forum in Canberra.

This year's in-person forum brings together internal audit, risk, compliance, governance and assurance professionals from across the public sector to connect, collaborate and share insights on the key challenges shaping our environment. As expectations continue to evolve, the role of the assurance function in providing independent insight, challenge and confidence has never been more important.

The program has been designed to be practical and forward-looking, covering key areas such as AI and cyber, organisational resilience, integrity and culture, climate risk, alongside insights into leading internal audit practices.

Importantly, the forum provides a valuable opportunity to build meaningful professional connections. We encourage you to take full advantage of the in-person experience to exchange ideas, learn from your peers and strengthen your professional network.

We look forward to welcoming you to an insightful and engaging forum.



**Christopher Puschak PFIIA CIA CGAP CRMA**

Chair – Public Sector Internal Audit Forum

IIA-Australia



**Sue Ironside PMIIA**

President

IIA-Australia

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## Conference App



## Conference Program Day 1 – Thursday 30 July 2026

### 7.30am – 8.45am Chief Audit Executive Breakfast Forum

This is an exclusive invitation only event limited to CAEs which will focus on the emerging issues for the internal audit profession and the critical role of the CAE. This interactive forum will provide the opportunity for you to engage with, debate, question and discuss various issues at strategic level with your peers, as well as, provide insight into senior executives' and stakeholders' expectations of internal audit.

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### 8.30am – 9.00am Registration and arrival refreshments

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### 9.00am – 9.10am Welcome address and opening remarks

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### 9.10am – 9.55am Keynote 1

#### **Delivering what matters – Driving outcomes, value and transparency across government**

- Insights on how the Australian Public Service is shifting towards a more connected, enterprise-wide system to deliver better outcomes for citizens
- Addressing the need to respond to rising expectations from Parliament and the community, including JCPAA insights, by making performance and decision-making more visible
- Building a stronger focus on outcomes in determining whether government policies, programs and investments are delivering measurable value and impact
- How the internal audit and broader assurance functions can enable confidence by providing independent insight over performance, risk and delivery to support the work of the public sector

**Matt Yannopoulos, Secretary, Department of Finance**

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### 9.55am – 10.00am Session transition break

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### 10.00am – 10.45am Keynote 2

#### **AI Governance & Ethics in the public sector**

- Overview of how the Digital Transformation Agency's framework is shaping the safe, ethical and accountable use of AI across the Australian Public Sector
- Governance and accountability for AI – Establishing clear ownership, oversight and controls to manage risks relating to bias, transparency, privacy and decision-making
- Balancing innovation with safeguards to ensure AI-enabled services are reliable, explainable and aligned to public expectations
- Putting in place effective policies, controls and oversight mechanisms to manage AI risks and support responsible, consistent adoption across government

**Lucy Poole, Deputy CEO, Strategy, Planning and Performance, Digital Transformation Office**

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### 10.45am – 11.15am Morning networking break and exhibition viewing

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## Conference Program Day 1 – Thursday 30 July 2026

### 11.15am – 12.00pm Concurrent sessions 1

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#### 1A Auditing the control environment

- Simplifying the control environment – Reducing complexity and duplication to focus on key controls that genuinely mitigate risk
- Testing what really matters – Moving beyond design to assess whether controls are operating effectively in practice and delivering intended outcomes
- Challenging false assurance – Identifying gaps between perceived and actual control effectiveness and addressing over-reliance on paper-based compliance
- Driving stronger, more reliable control frameworks – Using audit insights to strengthen control design, improve accountability and embed a culture of continuous assurance

**Jade Woodhouse AMIIA, Chief Audit Executive, Australian Electoral Commission**

**Nalisha Ranchod PMIIA, Chief Audit Executive, Department for Education, Children and Young People**

#### 1B Third-Party risk and assurance in the public sector

- Scoping third-party risk audits effectively – Identifying critical vendors, mapping key risks and aligning audit focus to areas of highest exposure and reliance
- Auditing governance and control frameworks – Assessing due diligence, contract management, performance monitoring and accountability structures across the third-party lifecycle
- Methodologies to testing control effectiveness – Validating whether controls over third parties are operating as intended, including oversight, reporting and issue management
- Insights on preparing to apply the Third-Party Risk Topical Requirement to structure audits

**Representative from RSM**

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### 12.00pm – 12.05pm Session transition break

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### 12.05pm – 12.50pm Keynote 3

#### Integrity that performs – Turning frameworks into accountability

- Defining integrity performance in the public sector – What good looks like beyond compliance, including culture, behaviours and decision-making aligned to public expectations
- Oversight in practice – How key assurance players work together to strengthen integrity, change management and provide confidence
- From frameworks to reality – Assessing whether integrity controls, policies and reporting mechanisms are genuinely effective
- Strengthening integrity through coordinated assurance – Leveraging internal audit, external audit and the wider assurance function to improve transparency accountability and organisational trust

#### Panel members include:

**Jane Meade, Group Executive Director Professional Services, Australian National Audit Office**

**Darren Box, Independent Audit Committee Member**

**Nicholas Shizas, Deputy Commissioner, Integrity Assurance and Law, and Chief General Counsel, Australian Taxation Office**

**Viki Press PMIIA GradCertIA, Director Governance Assurance and Attorney Regulation, IP Australia**

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### 12.50pm – 1.50pm Lunch networking break and exhibition viewing

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## Conference Program Day 1 – Thursday 30 July 2026

### 1.50pm – 2.35pm Concurrent sessions 2

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#### 2A Addressing Counter Foreign Interference risk

- Understanding the foreign interference threat landscape – Evolving risks across data, supply chains and critical systems impacting government
- Navigating the key requirements and implications of Foreign Ownership, Control or Influence (FOCI) for governance and risk management
- Protecting data sovereignty – Ensuring sensitive government data is stored, accessed and managed in line with national interest expectations
- Strengthening controls and assurance – Embedding governance, due diligence and monitoring to identify and mitigate foreign interference risks

**Emily Dowling, Acting Assistant Secretary, Counter Foreign Interference Coordination Centre, Department of Home Affairs**

#### 2B Assuring Public Sector resilience - Lessons learned from CPS 230 resilience models

- Overview of the CPS 230 framework and how its focus on operational resilience can help shape operational resilience across the public sector
- Assuring resilience of critical business services – Understanding how organisations can maintain and recover essential services (including third parties) when under disruption
- Ensuring robust business continuity and disaster recovery – What effective testing looks like, how often it should occur and how to evidence preparedness and response capability
- Preparing for the Organisational Resilience Topical Requirement
- How internal audit can support Boards and Risk Committees by integrating resilience into audit plans and providing forward-looking assurance

**Kumar Srinivasan, Director, Risk & Insurance, University of Technology, Sydney**

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### 2.35pm – 2.40pm Session transition break

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### 2.40pm – 3.25pm Concurrent sessions 3

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#### 3A Auditing HSE and psychosocial risk

- Defining roles and accountability for HSE and psychosocial risk across leadership, management and assurance functions
- Identifying hazards and approaches to recognising workplace threats, including safety risks, fatigue and organisational culture factors
- Assessing and prioritising risk – Evaluating likelihood and impact to focus attention on the most critical HSE and psychosocial risks
- Methodologies in testing whether prevention strategies are effective and reviewing lessons learned to strengthen the control environment
- Ensuring effective reporting and the role of internal audit in providing insight to support informed decision-making and accountability

**Brigadier (Retired) Damien McLachlan CSC and Bar, formerly Department of Defence**

#### 3B Auditing cyber security and applying the Topical Requirements

- Overview of frameworks to audit cyber security
- Explore how the topical requirement supports stronger alignment with public sector governance frameworks and delivers more robust, risk-based assurance
- Understanding what to test, how to assess effectiveness, and how to evidence cyber security controls in complex government environments
- Connecting the topical requirements with recognised frameworks such as NIST, ISO 27001 to ensure consistency and maturity in cyber assurance

**Jade Koay, Principal – Cyber Assurance, William Buck**

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### 3.25pm – 3.55pm Afternoon networking break and exhibition viewing

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## Conference Program Day 1 – Thursday 30 July 2026

3.55pm – 4.40pm **Concurrent Session 4**

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### 4A Auditing grants

- Auditing governance, risk and control processes, including compliance with the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles
- Assessing how agencies monitor grant performance and whether funded activities are on track
- Moving beyond compliance to consider whether grant programs achieve their intended outcomes and deliver value
- Partnering evaluation and audit – From assurance to impact

**Chris Zhang PMIIA CIA GradCertIA, Assistant Manager, Internal Audit, Department of Industry, Science and Resources**

**Tina Tjia, Manager Evaluation Unit, Department of Industry, Science and Resources**

### 4B Culture and integrity audits

- Assurance with a human lens – How and why behavioural insights go beyond hard data to uncover underlying drivers of conduct, integrity and performance
- Preparing to apply the Organisational Behaviour Topical Requirement to structure culture audits and assessing behaviours
- Auditing culture in practice – Techniques and approaches to gather evidence on culture, from interviews and observations to data signals and triangulation
- Insights from real-world examples, common challenges and how internal audit can embed culture audits in both large and small organisations

**Stephen Calder PMIIA GradCertIA, Director Risk and Assurance, Centium & ACT Chapter Council Member, IIA-Australia**

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4.40pm – 4.45pm **Session transition break**

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4.45pm – 5.30pm **Keynote 4**

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### **Conversations - Internal audit in action**

See internal audit in action in this conversation / show and tell session where audit teams share practical tips, tools and clever approaches on the big issues of:

#### ***Making Outsourcing Work***

- Selecting the right partner – Defining scope, capability requirements and delivery expectations to align outsourced support with your audit strategy and risk profile.
- Maintaining effective oversight – Establishing governance, quality assurance, reporting and performance management to retain control and accountability
- Maximising value from the relationship – Building collaborative working models, knowledge transfer and continuous improvement to deliver stronger audit outcomes

**Brandon Brown PMIIA CIA, Partner, BellchambersBarrett**

**Amy Tepes AMIIA, Assistant Director, Internal Audit Team, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**

#### ***Using AI for Internal Audit***

- Enhancing risk-based planning with AI – Leveraging internal and external data to identify emerging risks, prioritise audit areas, and dynamically inform the audit plan
- Governance, data and model risk considerations – Managing data quality, privacy, bias and explainability, aligned to organisational AI policy, approvals and controls
- From pilot to practice – Testing AI-driven planning outputs, validating risk insights and embedding AI into the audit planning process with appropriate oversight and assurance

**Hui Zhang, Director, Internal Audit, Australian Taxation Office**

**Damien Browne AMIIA, Chief Internal Auditor, Australian Taxation Office**

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5:30 PM – 5:35 PM **Closing Comments**

## Workshop Program Day 2 – Friday 31 July 2026

**8.15am – 8.30am Registration and arrival refreshments**

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**8.30am – 12.30pm Workshop 1 - Embedding Data Analytics into internal audit**

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Data analytics is no longer optional for internal audit, as per the new Global Internal Audit Standards it is now essential for delivering deeper insight, broader coverage and more efficient assurance. This highly practical, hands-on workshop is designed for internal auditors looking to get started or accelerate their use of data analytics using tools such as Power BI. Bring your laptop and work through a procurement internal audit case study where the techniques you will learn can be immediately applied to audits in your annual plan. Participants will leave with practical resources, techniques and approaches to source the right data, analyse it and identify exceptions to enhance internal audit effectiveness.

### Key areas to be covered:

- Getting started with data analytics in internal audit – Practical steps to build capability, identify use cases and embed analytics into audit planning and delivery
- Tools, techniques and real-world applications – Overview and hands-on use of tools such as Power BI on a procurement case study to illustrate techniques to analyse data, identify anomalies and generate insights
- Understanding data quality and structure – How to assess data integrity and work with different data sets to ensure outputs are reliable and meaningful
- Applying analytics across the audit lifecycle – Using data analytics in planning, fieldwork and reporting to enhance coverage, efficiency and impact while using AI to brainstorm analytics scope and data requests
- Building an integrated approach to audit, risk and data – Connecting analytics with risk management and assurance to create a more data-driven audit function
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### Key learning outcomes:

- Understand how data analytics can be applied across internal audit and risk management activities
- Develop a practical action plan to embed analytics into your audit function
- Apply key data analytics techniques and concepts to analyse data, identify exceptions and highlight risks
- Select appropriate analytics approaches based on different audit scenarios
- Validate and document analytics outputs

### **Tariq Islam PMIIA, Managing Director, Rapidlynx Consulting & Member, AI Working Group, IIA-Australia**

Tariq is the Managing Director and Founder of RapidLynx Consulting, which has a mission to “empower organisations to unlock the power of data, analytics and AI through customised, collaborative and cost-effective services”. Prior to starting RapidLynx, Tariq held Executive Manager Analytics roles in the internal audit functions at CBA and Westpac. He has 20 years’ experience across roles in professional services, financial services and defence and has delivered data analytics work on over 150 internal audits.



Tariq is a Professional Member of IIA Australia, where he works closely with IIA-Australia through authoring white papers on data analytics, data visualisation and AI, presenting at conferences across Australia including SOPAC and delivering training on data analytics tools such as Power BI and SQL.

Tariq specialises in uplifting the data analytics capabilities of internal audit functions across various industry sectors, including financial services, government (federal, state and local), education and the Not-for-Profit sector through the customised development of data analytics strategies and methodologies, data analytics training and co-sourced data analytics delivery.

## Workshop Program Day 2 – Friday 31 July 2026

**12.30pm – 1.00pm Lunch for those attending both workshops**

**1.00pm – 5.00pm Workshop 2 - Meeting climate reporting requirements in the public sector – From implementation to assurance**

As the Australian Public Service progresses toward the Net Zero 2030 Target, climate reporting is becoming a core component of accountability, performance and stewardship. This workshop will explore how climate reporting expectations are evolving, how agencies can effectively collect and report climate data and how assurance functions can build confidence in disclosures. The workshop will equip participants with practical approaches to strengthen governance, data integrity and assurance over climate reporting.

### Key areas to be covered:

- Climate reporting landscape and obligations – Understanding current and emerging requirements, including whole-of-government direction and what this means for agencies
- Aligning with the climate commitments and expectations – Assessing climate-related risks and opportunities, developing transition plans, implementing and engaging your value chain
- Reporting climate information with confidence – Translating data from complex agency environments into meaningful disclosures, aligned to public sector expectations and stakeholder needs
- Governance, controls and data integrity – Establishing robust frameworks, roles and controls to ensure climate data is accurate, consistent and auditable
- Providing assurance over climate reporting – The role of internal audit and external assurance functions in testing data, validating methodologies and supporting credible, transparent reporting

### Key learning outcomes:

- Understand the public sector specific climate reporting expectations and how they are evolving
- Identify practical approaches to implement, collect, manage and report climate commitments and actions across your agency
- Recognise key risks, controls and governance requirements to support reliable reporting
- Apply internal audit and assurance techniques to build confidence in climate disclosures

### Isil Uysun PMIIA CRMA CIA, Partner, ERM CVS

Isil Uysun, PMIIA CRMA CIA, is a Partner at ERM CVS with over 20 years' experience across Turkey and Australia, specialising in internal audit, risk assurance, controls and compliance. She focuses on integrating sustainability considerations into governance, risk and assurance frameworks.



Isil leads sustainability assurance engagements across APAC, including third-party verification of disclosures and certification against internationally recognised standards such as IRMA, ASI, Copper Mark and ISO. She is recognised for delivering practical, high-quality assurance outcomes that support transparency, accountability and strong governance.

Previously a Partner at PwC, she led Internal Audit Services in Turkey and established certification, compliance and training services in Australia.

### James Fryer, Managing Consultant, ERM

James Fryer is a Managing Consultant in ERM's Corporate Sustainability and Climate Change team, with over 10 years' experience supporting public sector organisations in navigating evolving sustainability, climate and reporting expectations. He specialises in materiality assessments, sustainability strategy, climate-related financial disclosures and assurance.



James is known for translating complex requirements into practical, decision-ready outcomes that strengthen transparency, governance and accountability. He has recently supported NSW public sector agencies in preparing climate disclosures, including gap analysis and integration with risk and performance frameworks.

He is experienced in frameworks such as ASAE 3000, GRI and SASB, and holds professional accreditations from the PRI Academy and Climate Disclosure Standards Board.

# How to register

## Online Registration

Register online at [www.iaa.org.au](http://www.iaa.org.au) and follow the prompts. Each delegate must complete a separate online registration form. Please note this is a secure website.

## Registration forms

If you require an invoice, registration forms can be scanned and emailed to [conferences@iaa.org.au](mailto:conferences@iaa.org.au). Each delegate must complete a separate registration form.

## Venue details

Hyatt Hotel, Canberra  
120 Commonwealth Ave, Yarralumla ACT 2600

## Conference fees

All fees are quoted in Australian Dollars and are inclusive of the 10% compulsory goods and services tax (GST).

## CPE

Attendance will provide 8 CPE hours.

### Public Sector Assurance Forum 2026 – Registration Fees

Early Bird	Register before 17 July 2026
Member	\$1045
Non-member	\$1245
Standard	Register after 17 July 2026
Member	\$1230
Non-member	\$1430
Workshops (In-person only)	Register anytime
Attend One Workshop - Member	\$450
Attend One Workshop - Non-Member	\$550
Attend Both Workshops - Member	\$800
Attend Both Workshops - Non-Member	\$1000

Group discount – A group discount of 10% applies to in-person registrations only, when three or more people from the same organisation book at the same time. The relevant member or non-member rate will apply.