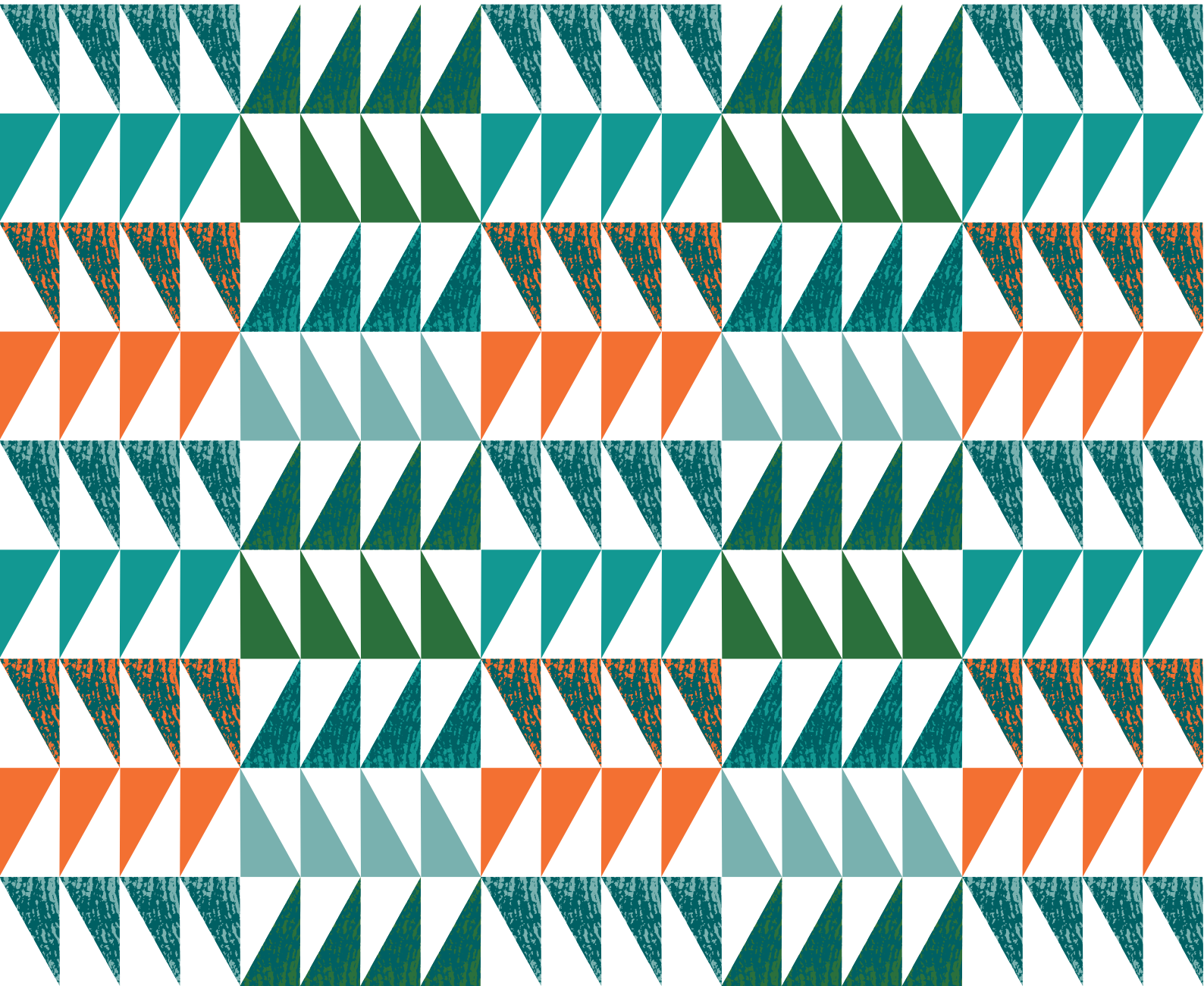




Australian Government

Australian Institute of Criminology

Corporate Plan / 2026–27



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Director's foreword

As the accountable authority of the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), I am pleased to present the 2026–27 corporate plan, as required under 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The plan is prepared in accordance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014.

This corporate plan reflects the functions of the AIC, as set out in the *Criminology Research Act 1971*, and the AIC's objectives and performance measurement framework. The plan has been prepared for the 2026–27 reporting year and covers the four-year period from 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2030.

The plan sets out how the AIC will continue to conduct criminological research and communicate the results of that research with the aim of promoting evidence-informed crime and justice policy and practice in Australia. Recognising that crime is constantly evolving, the plan includes updated research priorities that now also address hate crime and radicalisation with the intention of producing actionable evidence on these issues to support our Commonwealth partners.

While continuing to produce world-leading, impartial research on a range of contemporary crime and justice issues for use by policymakers, I also recognise the importance of communicating evidence to the criminal justice sector and the wider community. This plan also sets out how it will disseminate research findings through its publications, conferences and seminars, and through its information services. Through these approaches, the AIC will continue to fulfil its role as Australia's national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice.



Heather Cook

Director
Australian Institute of Criminology

Mission statement

To promote evidence-informed crime and justice policy and practice in Australia.

Purpose

The purpose of the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) is to inform crime and justice policy and practice in Australia by undertaking, funding and disseminating policy-relevant research of national significance.

/ Role

The AIC is Australia's national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice. We undertake and disseminate crime and justice research and provide policy advice.

/ Outcome

The AIC's outcome for 2026–27 to 2029–30, as stated in the Portfolio Budget Statement, is informed crime and justice policy and practice in Australia. This is achieved by:

- undertaking impartial, policy-relevant research to inform policy and practice in the crime and criminal justice sectors;
- working cooperatively with the Department of Home Affairs, portfolio and other federal agencies, and state and territory government agencies, as the Australian Government's national research centre on crime and justice;
- administering an effective and efficient annual Criminology Research Fund program that results in policy-relevant research of value to the nation; and
- actively disseminating research findings to policymakers, practitioners and the general public, across Australia and internationally, in a timely manner.

/ Functions

To perform its role and achieve its objectives, the AIC undertakes the functions set out in section 6 of the *Criminology Research Act 1971*:

- (a) to promote justice and reduce crime by:
 - (i) conducting criminological research; and
 - (ii) communicating the results of that research to the Commonwealth, the States, the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and the community;
- (b) to assist the Director in performing the Director's functions;
- (c) to administer programs for awarding grants, and engaging specialists, for:
 - (i) criminological research that is relevant to the public policy of the States, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory; and
 - (ii) activities related to that research (including the publication of that research, for example).

The functions of the Director include:

- conducting criminological research, including the collection of information and statistics on crime and justice matters;
- communicating the results of that research, including through the publication of research material and seminars and courses of training or instruction;
- providing information and advice on the administration of criminal justice to the Commonwealth Government and state and territory governments; and
- collaborating both within and outside Australia with governments, institutions and authorities, and with bodies and persons, on research and training in connection with the administration of criminal justice.

Operating context

/ Supporting the Commonwealth

The work of the AIC is designed primarily to support the requirements of the Commonwealth government and its statutory agencies in addressing crime and justice issues of national concern. The research priorities reflect this by focusing on Commonwealth offences and significant crime issues that are of concern to the Australian Government.

/ Crime and justice environment

The AIC conducts and disseminates crime and justice research characterised by:

- **evolving crime problems**—some traditional forms of volume crime have declined significantly over time, while new and emerging crime problems become issues for the future. The AIC continues to shape its research program to address these emerging problems;
- **multiple criminal justice systems**—while many crime and justice issues are important from a national perspective, the information available on such issues is often collected by state and territory agencies operating within their own criminal justice systems and subject to their own legal systems. The AIC therefore addresses research questions by negotiating access to relevant information from each criminal justice system. This creates opportunities for innovation at the state/territory level that can be examined through AIC research;
- **access to data**—access to crime and justice data is often restricted and these data are only released on limited terms. As an independent Australian Government research agency, the AIC has negotiated access to data not otherwise available to researchers; and
- **an expanding academic criminology sector**—criminology as an academic discipline has experienced long-term growth, offering opportunities for the AIC to identify, fund and disseminate high-quality applied criminological research through its Criminology Research Fund program and publication series.

/ Cooperation

Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission

The AIC works closely with the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC). The Chief Executive Officer of the ACIC is also the Director of the AIC. Although the AIC remains an independent entity, AIC staff are employed by the ACIC and seconded to the AIC.

Stakeholders

The AIC works with stakeholders both nationally and internationally to produce a research knowledge base that is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The AIC relies on data provided by the Australian Government and state and territory governments in order to undertake much of its research. Stakeholders include:

- **the Australian Government**—national law enforcement agencies, regulatory agencies, and justice agencies;
- **states and territories**—state and territory law enforcement agencies, regulatory agencies, and justice and corrections agencies;
- **international agencies**—the AIC is a member of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network of Institutes; and
- **the private sector**—academia, non-government organisations, and the general public.

/ Governance

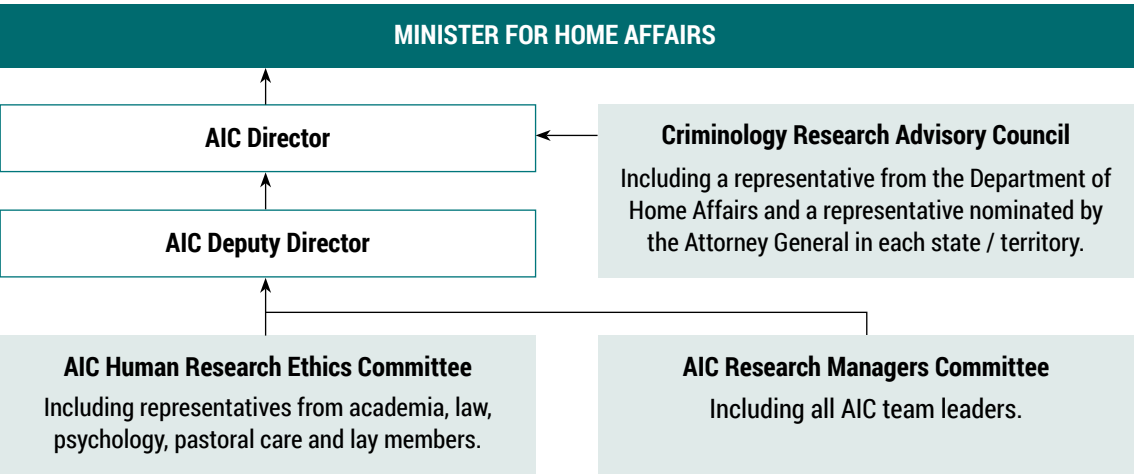
The AIC is accountable to the Minister for Home Affairs as part of the Home Affairs portfolio.

The Criminology Research Advisory Council, representing Commonwealth and state and territory justice agencies, is responsible for providing advice to the Director of the AIC on strategic priorities for research and priorities for communicating research results.

AIC research is also subject to ethical standards and overseen by an ethics committee, in accordance with National Health and Medical Research Council requirements.

The AIC’s governance structure is outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: AIC governance structure



Activities, capability and performance

The AIC is Australia's national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice, compiling trend data and disseminating research and policy advice. Our activities are grouped as follows:

- research services;
- funded research and awards; and
- communications and information services.

The contribution of these activities to achieving our purpose, the investments we are making in maintaining our capability and the means by which we will measure our performance are outlined below.

/ Research services

Undertaking research is the core function of the AIC. The AIC conducts timely and policy-relevant research on crime and justice issues for the Australian Government and other key stakeholders. The work involves a mix of statistical monitoring of crime and justice trends, research on the priority themes and consultancy research for stakeholders.

The AIC's research priorities are set by the Director in consultation with the Criminology Research Advisory Council.

The AIC's research priorities for 2026–27 are:

- transnational serious and organised crime;
- cybercrime;
- radicalisation, extremism and hate crime;
- domestic, family and sexual violence;
- online sexual exploitation of children;
- human trafficking and modern slavery; and
- Indigenous justice.

Statistical monitoring

In addition to undertaking projects on each of the research priorities, the AIC also administers seven statistical collections on crime and justice—the Fraud Against the Commonwealth census, the Australian Cybercrime Survey, the National Homicide Monitoring Program, the National Deaths in Custody Program, the Australian Sexual Offence Statistical collection, the Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery National Minimum Dataset, and the National Hate Crimes Database.

/ Funded research and awards

The Criminology Research Fund program provides funding for criminological research relevant to crime and justice policy at both the national and state or territory level. The program also promotes funded research by publishing and disseminating the findings.

The priority themes for the Criminology Research Fund in 2026–27 are:

- Identifying culturally safe and effective approaches to reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system;
- Understanding and addressing victimisation of vulnerable cohorts (e.g. older people) and in specific contexts (e.g. online);
- Understanding and addressing offenders living with disability or mental health conditions in the criminal justice system; and
- Innovative responses to address children at risk of entering the criminal justice system (including young people with harmful sexual behaviours).

The AIC also administers the Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards. These awards recognise good practice in delivering local crime prevention projects. Awards are available for both local community projects and police projects. They provide another means of promoting approaches that reduce crime.

/ Communications and information services

Communications

The AIC produces high-quality publications, including the peer-reviewed Research Reports and *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice* papers, as well as Statistical Bulletins and Statistical Reports based on the Institute's data holdings. The AIC's work is disseminated in a range of ways, including via the website, email subscriber lists, social media, targeted media releases, conferences and occasional seminars.

Information services

The AIC hosts a substantial collection of criminal justice and related materials. The collection is housed in the AIC's JV Barry Library and is made available online, through the AIC website and via the CINCH database, to inform and assist in the development of evidence-based policy and programs.

Seminars and conferences

The AIC hosts a series of seminars, roundtables, workshops and other forums to promote and disseminate crime and justice research of national importance. Many of these events are recorded and made available on the AIC's YouTube channel, CriminologyTV.

/ Capability management

To deliver these activities, the AIC seeks to manage its workforce, infrastructure and information and communication technology capabilities in an efficient and effective way. The AIC continues to work closely with the ACIC, which provides the corporate services that allow for the AIC's requirements to be met.

Workforce requirements

The AIC employs specialists in research, library services and contract management to ensure its core activities are delivered. Researchers are typically recruited into early career positions and are then given in-house training and development to build their capabilities.

Retention rates are relatively high in the AIC, supported by flexible work conditions and ongoing staff development. Corporate services provided by the ACIC include a range of support services aimed at ensuring employee welfare.

The AIC is committed to developing a highly capable workforce, based on the principles articulated in the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework, including:

- Rigorous planning;
- Treating APS employment as the default;
- Using APS networks first;
- Using external support in limited circumstances;
- Maximising the benefits and minimising the risk of any external arrangements;
- Applying merit when converting roles; and
- Ensuring monitoring and accountability.

In 2026–27, the AIC will:

- Employ APS staff to undertake its core functions associated with delivering research services, grants and awards, and communications and information services;
- Continue to outsource its corporate services to another APS agency – the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC);
- Fund external researchers in universities, under section 6(c)(i) of the *Criminology Research Act 1971*; and
- Use external consultants in exceptional circumstances where the work is time sensitive and the requisite skills and capabilities are not available in-house. In 2026–27 this will include engaging:
 - A media company to create videos for the Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards and to film presentations at our conferences.

All staff of the AIC are employees of the ACIC. Targets established as a response to the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework are included under the auspices of the ACIC.

Infrastructure requirements

The AIC provides a positive working environment through its office space in Barton, Canberra, which also houses the AIC's JV Barry Library collection. The ACIC provides the AIC with its office space through a shared services arrangement.

Information and communication technology requirements

Technological requirements are continually monitored and systems are updated on an ongoing basis. AIC's ICT requirements will continue to be delivered through a shared services arrangement with ACIC. In 2026–27, we will complete the move of the AIC's IT infrastructure to a cloud environment to allow for greater flexibility in future.

All staff in the AIC use laptops that allow for flexible working arrangements.

The website was refreshed in 2022–23 and is subject to continuing improvement to make the AIC's research and statistical collections available in a user-friendly manner. Hosting services are provided by GovCMS.

/ Performance management

The AIC's achievement against its purpose will be measured against the performance criteria presented below. It is anticipated these will apply for the duration of this plan. Performance against these criteria will be reported in the Annual Performance Statement contained in the AIC's annual report.

There is one change from last year's plan. A performance measure associated with *Evidence that AIC research has contributed to Australian Government policymaking*, which was measured via qualitative case-studies, has been removed, although case-studies will continue to be used in future annual reports to reflect activities.

Performance measures 2026–27 to 2029–30

Performance criteria	Target
<i>Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice</i> papers, Research Reports and Criminology Research Fund papers are peer reviewed to ensure the quality of the AIC's research outputs	100%
Reports produced for each of the monitoring programs are issued according to schedule, annually	On schedule
Research and statistical publications released on AIC website	At least 35
Roundtables, workshops, seminars and other forums to be held annually	At least 10
Satisfaction with events attended by more than 100 people	At least 90%

Performance measurement methodology

The following section describes the methodology, data sources and monitoring arrangements used to assess performance against the five performance measures.

- / **Performance measure 1:** *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice* papers, Research Reports and Criminology Research Fund papers are peer reviewed to ensure the quality of the AIC's research outputs

The peer review process is managed by the AIC Editor, who coordinates double-blind peer reviews for all eligible publications. Reports are initially provided to two independent peer reviewers. Where one negative review is received, the report is referred to a third reviewer. Where two negative reviews are received, the Deputy Director determines that the report will not proceed to publication as an AIC publication.

A dedicated folder for each report is maintained within AIC's content management system and includes peer review assessments and the author responses to reviewers' comments. The Deputy Director reviews the author responses to ensure the peer review feedback has been appropriately addressed prior to publication.

Progress in obtaining and finalising peer reviews is tracked through a work-in-progress (WIP) register. The register is reviewed weekly by the Deputy Director and provided to the ACIC Office of the CEO as part of regular reporting arrangements.

- / **Performance measure 2:** Reports produced for each of the monitoring programs are issued according to schedule, annually

The annual publication schedule is published on the AIC website at the commencement of each calendar year www.aic.gov.au/research. Achievement of this performance measure is assessed through verification of report publications against the approved schedule on the AIC website. Delivery progress is monitored throughout the reporting period through regular engagement with Research Managers and weekly WIP meetings.

- / **Performance measure 3:** Research and statistical publications released on AIC website

Achievement of this measure is assessed through verification of publications released on the AIC website. Reports published within the AIC series are available at www.aic.gov.au/publications, and publications within the Criminology Research Fund series are available at www.aic.gov.au/crg. Publication progress and delivery timeframes are monitored throughout the year through meetings with Research Managers and weekly WIP meeting to support oversight and timely publication outcomes.

/ **Performance measure 4:** Roundtables, workshops, seminars and other forums to be held annually

Achievement of this performance measure is assessed through records maintained within the AIC content management system which documents events conducted throughout the year. Information on most events is also publicly available on the AIC website www.aic.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases-and-statements, with recordings of relevant events published via YouTube channel www.youtube.com/user/CriminologyTV. Monitoring and oversight of event delivery is undertaken through regular internal reporting and event management processes.

/ **Performance measure 5:** Satisfaction with events attended by more than 100 people

Participant satisfaction is assessed through post-event surveys administered via the AIC Survey Manager platform for events with attendance exceeding 100 participants. Performance is measured against responses to the question: *“Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the event?”* Response options include: Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied and Very dissatisfied. Satisfaction results are calculated as the proportion of respondents who select either Satisfied or Very satisfied. Survey results are monitored and analysed to support continuous improvement in event delivery and stakeholder engagement.

Risk

The Institute is vigilant in identifying and treating risks — the AIC has sound processes that protect staff, and its work is monitored by committees (see below) as well as through peer review. The Institute's activities are subject to internal audits. As the ACIC provides the AIC's corporate functions, AIC risk and audit issues are managed by ACIC functional managers in consultation with the AIC executive and the ACIC-AIC Audit and Risk Committee. The AIC also complies with the AIC Risk Management Framework, which is based on adherence to the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy of January 2023.

Overall, the AIC has a low-risk appetite, given the complex ethical and legal environment the Institute operates in and the potential for reputational damage which could lead to the Institute suffering loss of confidence by the government and public. Enterprise risks (listed below) have each been assigned a low-risk tolerance and are managed accordingly.

Enterprise risks and tolerances		
Risk category	Enterprise risk description	Tolerances
Legal	Failure to adequately consider and treat legal risk and/or failure to comply with policy and statutory requirements.	Tolerance for legal and ethical risk is low.
Health and safety	Failure to support the safety and wellbeing of all workers and manage health and safety hazards presented by our varied operating environments.	Tolerance for health and safety risk is low.
Ethics	Failure to produce ethical and unbiased criminological research to stakeholders and/or manage AIC staff integrity.	Tolerance for security and integrity risk is low.
Stakeholder	Failure to effectively manage stakeholder relations and produce high quality research in line with expectations	Tolerance for stakeholder risk is low.
Data	Failure to adequately manage storage and destruction of physical and digital data including cyber security.	Tolerance for data risk is low.
Finance and resources	Failure to adequately manage financial requirements, contracts, procurement and prevent and detect financial fraud.	Tolerance for finance and resources risk is low.

The AIC Director has overall responsibility for risk management in the AIC and is supported in her oversight and management role by the Deputy Director.

- The AIC executive considers strategic advice on research directions from the Criminology Research Advisory Council and oversees the management of the agency's budget and risk management activities. The Director also receives reports from other subordinate management committees. The AIC Human Research Ethics Committee has been operating since 1992. Its nine members have backgrounds in law, pastoral care, psychology and research, as stipulated by the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines for ethics committees. The ethics committee's role is to advise the Director whether approval to proceed should be granted for proposed research involving human subjects. It regularly reviews proposed projects to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure the research is consistent with ethical standards.
- The AIC's Research Managers Committee considers both strategic and operational aspects of the AIC research program and provides advice to the Director on research priorities and risks.
- The ACIC-AIC Audit and Risk Committee is established in accordance with section 45 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The committee's objective is to provide independent advice to the Director on the Institute's financial and performance reporting, risk management and internal controls.

Appendix: Compliance Index

PGPA Rule			
Reference	Description	Requirement	References
16E(2)	Introduction States that the plan has been prepared for paragraph 35(1)(b) of the PGPA Act. The statement may also refer to any other legislation applicable to the preparation of the plan; Specifies the reporting period for which the plan is prepared (this would usually be the first reporting period of the minimum 4 year period covered by the plan); and, Specifies the reporting periods covered by the plan (this would usually be the minimum 4 year period covered by the plan; for example, 2026–27 to 2029–30).	Mandatory	Page 3
16E(2)	Purposes Including objectives, functions or role.	Mandatory	Page 4
16E(2)	Activities Must set out how the activities of the entity contribute to achieving the priorities and objectives.	Mandatory	Page 9
16E(2)	Operating Context	Mandatory	Page 6
	Environment in which the entity will operate.	Mandatory	Page 6
	The capability required by the entity to undertake its key activities and to achieve its purpose.	Mandatory	Page 10
	The risk oversight and management systems, the key risks the entity will manage and how those risks will be managed.	Mandatory	Page 13
	How an entity works with others to achieve its purposes.	Mandatory	Page 6
	How any subsidiaries will contribute to achieving the entity's purpose.	Mandatory	N/A
16E(2)	Performance Including performance measures and targets for each reporting period covered by the plan.	Mandatory	Page 12

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