

# Alberta Public Service Engagement Survey

May 2016

## Executive Summary

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Following are the results, analysis, and key findings from the Alberta Public Service (APS) 2016 Engagement Survey, completed by 19,169 managers and employees between February 23<sup>rd</sup> and March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

In late 2015, the Government of Alberta contracted TalentMap to conduct the 2016 engagement survey in which the Alberta Public Service 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. It is important to note that the 2012 survey included only permanent employees; whereas, in 2013 both permanent and temporary employees were surveyed. In addition, the survey results were also compared to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial benchmark (2014-15 results).

The 2016 survey was deployed to 26,453 Alberta Public Service (APS) employees over the period of February 23<sup>rd</sup> through March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

### Response Rates

**The Alberta Public Service (APS) survey response rate was 72%**, which is significantly higher than the response rate of 62% (permanent staff) achieved in 2013. The high response rate has three very important implications for the interpretation of survey results:

- Firstly, there is minimal chance for significant non-response bias when looking at the entire group of employees who responded, which means that there will only be minimal chance of those who didn't respond having significantly different views than those who did. In other words, we can be very confident that the responses accurately represent the views of the entire APS;
- Secondly, a high response rate is an indicator that, notwithstanding the issues raised, members want to be a "part of the solution". This is further substantiated by the fact that virtually all employees provided detailed and thought-provoking verbatim comments; and
- Lastly, it also signals to the APS leadership how much the membership value the opportunity to provide input about their work environment and the organization's leadership.

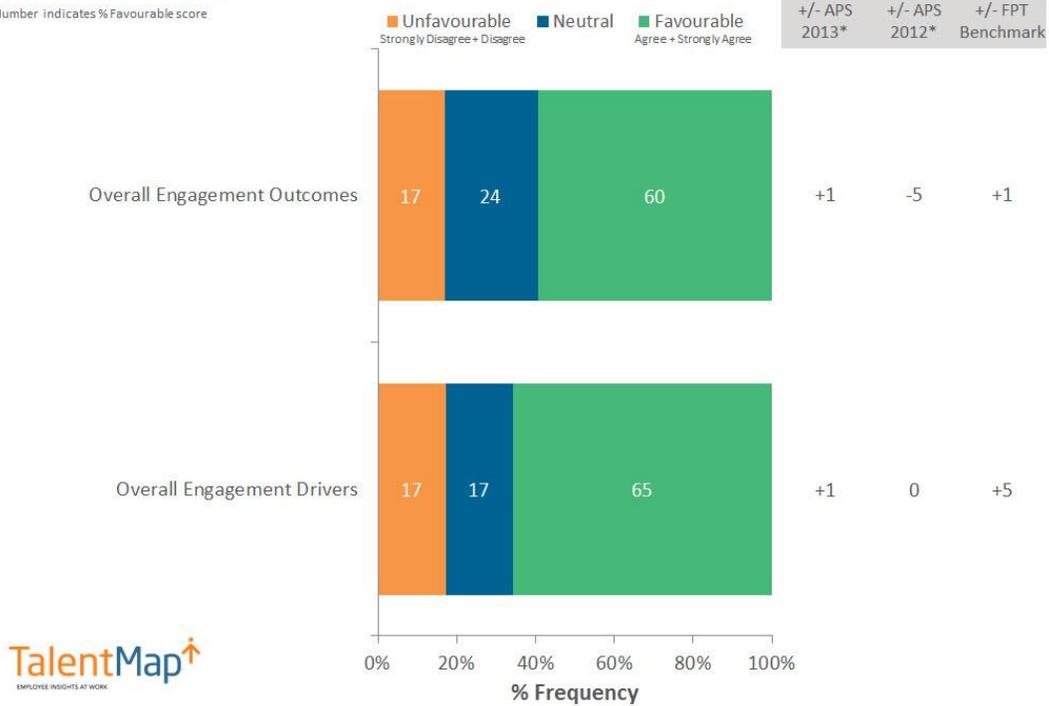
### Employee Engagement Outcomes and Drivers

**The overall APS Engagement Outcomes score in 2016 was 60%, essentially the same as the survey results in 2013 (1% above), but 5% lower than was achieved in the 2012 survey.** Almost one in four APS employees (24%) fall in the neutral category, meaning that there is substantial "upside potential", as this means that, on average, they neither agree nor disagree with the engagement outcome statements, meaning that they can be favourably influenced. Finally, seventeen percent (17%) can be considered "unfavourable", meaning that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the engagement outcome statements, on average. This group of employees can be considered "disengaged", and as such, it will prove challenging to change their attitudes.

**In terms of overall Engagement Drivers, favourability has also remained relatively constant since 2013, at 65% (1% higher than 2013, and the same as in 2012).** This score is 5% *above* the benchmark.

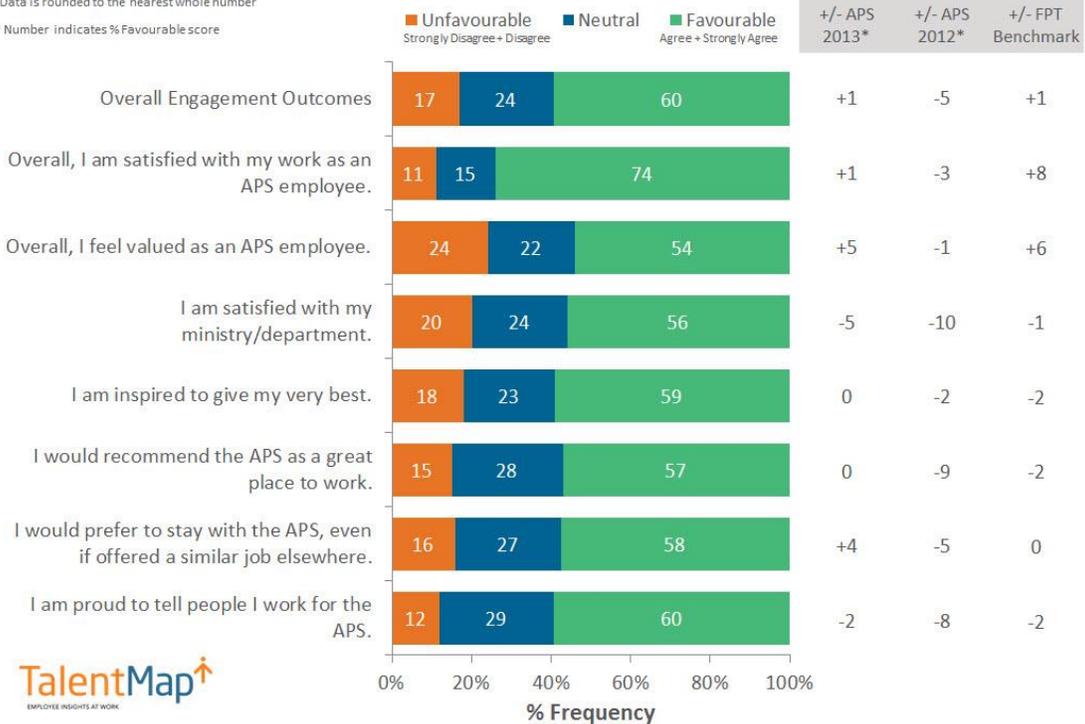
## ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES AND DRIVERS – OVERALL APS

Data is rounded to the nearest whole number  
\* Number indicates % Favourable score



## ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

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\* Number indicates % Favourable score



When looking at Engagement Outcomes for the overall APS, we can see that **satisfaction, at 74%**, represents **the highest scoring outcome**. Interesting is the fact that all of the other outcomes have very consistent results, and that there is little difference between the level of pride in working for the APS (60% favourable, i.e. they agree or strongly agree), and feeling valued as an APS employee at 54%. We also note that there is substantial percentage of APS employees who are neutral, i.e. they neither agree nor disagree with the outcome statement. These percentages range between 15% and are as high as 29% (almost three in ten). We interpret this as a signal that there is substantial positive upside potential, as these individuals aren't ready to agree with the assertions, but nor are they negative.

Also noteworthy is the fact that there has not been much change since the 2013 survey, with a couple of notable exceptions:

- 5% more employees feel they are valued than in 2013; yet,
- 5% fewer employees are satisfied with their department than 2013, and 10% lower when compared to 2012; and,
- 4% more would prefer to stay with APS, even if offered a job elsewhere.

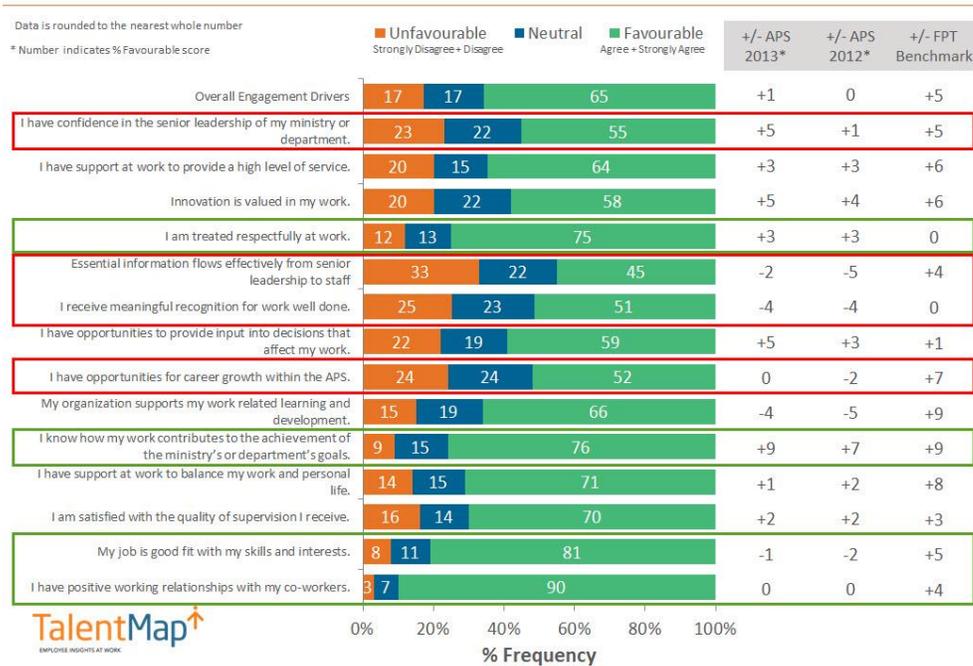
Satisfaction and feeling valued are also significantly above the benchmark.

### Engagement Drivers

As for the drivers of engagement, we see there is considerably more disparity between some drivers that are relatively well perceived, and others which are less well perceived. The top four engagement drivers, in terms of favourability (boxed in green), are:

- I have positive relationships with my co-workers. (90%)
- My job is a good fit with my skills and interests. (81%)
- I know how my work contributes to the achievement of the department's goals. (76% - a notable increase of 9% over 2013, 7% since 2012, and 9% above benchmark)
- I am treated respectfully at work. (75%)

## ENGAGEMENT DRIVERS



The bottom four engagement drivers in terms of favourability (boxed in red) are:

- Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff. (45%)
- I have opportunities for career growth within the APS. (52%)
- I have confidence in the senior leadership of my ministry or department. (55% - an increase of 5% since 2013, and 5% above benchmark).
- I receive meaningful recognition for work well done. (51%)

### Relative Importance of Engagement Drivers

Using statistical analysis, we are able to identify which of the engagement drivers have the greatest impact on influencing engagement outcomes. It follows, then, that actioning these drivers will have a disproportionate impact on improving engagement. The chart below shows the result of a “relative weight analysis”. The percentages on the right-hand side can be interpreted in terms of how much of the overall engagement outcome score is “explained” by each engagement driver. For example, the first statement, having confidence in the senior leadership of my department, accounts for 12.8% of the engagement outcome score. The higher employees score this particular driver, the more likely they are to be engaged, as measured by their engagement outcome score. Having support at work to provide a high level of service, and having opportunities for career growth are the second and third most important drivers in determining engagement outcomes. **Improvements in these areas will have the greatest impact on engagement.**

## DRIVERS OF ENGAGEMENT

Questionnaire Items	Relative Weights (Impact on Engagement)
<b>I have confidence in the senior leadership of my ministry or department.</b>	<b>12.8%</b>
<b>I have support at work to provide a high level of service.</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
<b>I have opportunities for career growth within the APS.</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
Innovation is valued in my work.	8.0%
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff.	8.0%
I receive meaningful recognition for work well done.	7.6%
I know how my work contributes to the achievement of the ministry's or department's goals.	7.1%
My job is a good fit with my skills and interests.	6.7%
I have opportunities to provide input into decisions that affect my work.	6.3%
I am treated respectfully at work.	6.2%
I have support at work to balance my work and personal life.	6.1%
My organization supports my work related learning and development.	5.8%
I am satisfied with the quality of supervision I receive.	5.1%
I have positive working relationships with my co-workers.	2.9%

- ❖ An index is created for each of the 14 questions.
- ❖ RWA (Relative Weight Analysis) is an approach used to evaluate the relative importance of predictor variables when dealing with correlated predictors. This technique accounts for potential multi-collinearity between predictors.
- ❖ Relative weights for each of the predictors represent the percentage of variance in the dependent variable explained by each predictor considering both its direct effect on the dependent variable and its joint effect with the other predictors.
- ❖ Relative weights are reported as percentages ranging from 0 to 100%. We call those survey dimensions with the largest relative weights "drivers" of engagement.



### Determining APS-wide priorities to improve overall employee engagement

The following chart (on the following page) plots the perception of each driver (vertical axis) as well as how strong or weak it is as an engagement driver (horizontal axis).

Drivers are shown from top to bottom based on how they are perceived relative to the FPT benchmark (represented by the horizontal line). As the reader can see, all of the drivers are perceived to be at or above benchmark.

The further a driver is positioned to the right-hand side of the chart, the more influence it has in terms of driving engagement.

The drivers circled in green represent those drivers that are relatively well perceived compared to the benchmark *and* have a strong influence on engagement. These are:

- I have confidence in my senior leadership of my ministry or department.
- I have support at work to provide a high level of service.
- I have opportunities for growth within the APS.
- Innovation is valued in my work

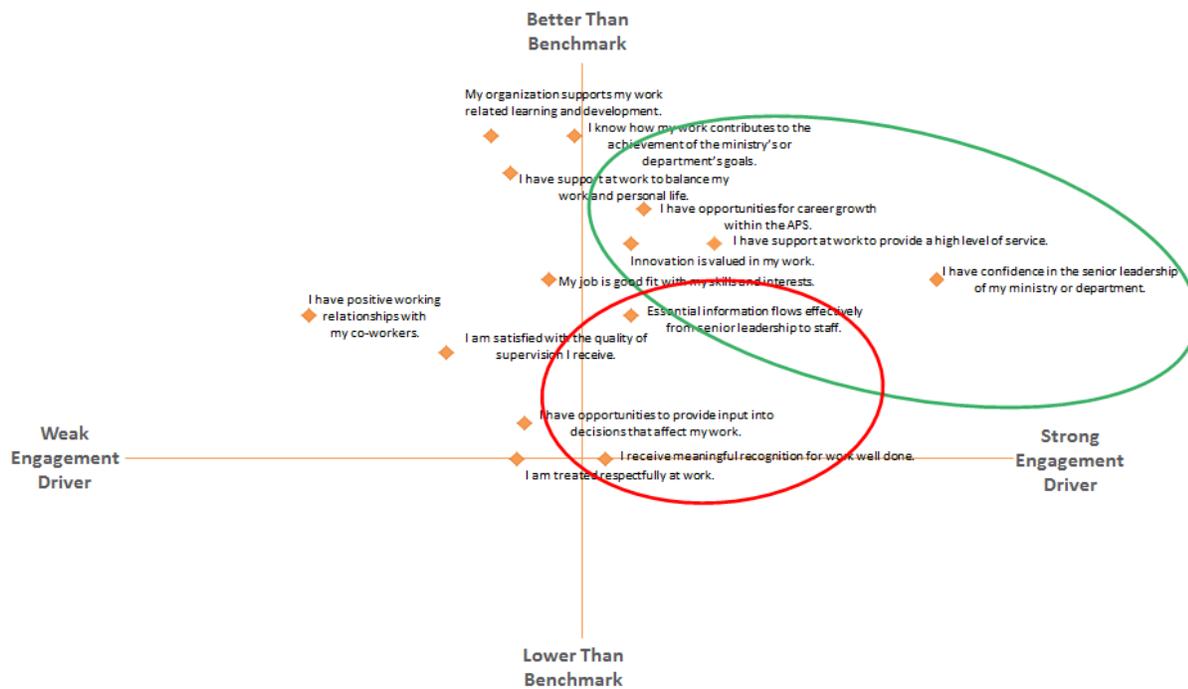
Maintaining, or even improving, perceptions on these drivers will have the biggest impact on engagement.

Normally, we would look to the bottom right-hand quadrant to identify those drivers which represent key opportunities for improvement; however, since all of the drivers are scoring above the benchmark, we must identify those drivers that are the strongest drivers of engagement *and* where perceptions of those drivers are relatively lower compared to others at APS. These drivers are circled in red and are as follows:

- I receive meaningful recognition for work well done.
- Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff.

These two drivers represent the greatest opportunity for improvement, and will also have a meaningful impact on engagement.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



## Summary of Key Insights

Overall, the 2016 employee engagement survey of the Alberta Public Service reveals the following key insights:

- Overall engagement and perception of engagement drivers has remained **virtually unchanged since the 2013 survey, and above the FPT benchmark (2014-15)**.
- **Job satisfaction is relatively high**, and the highest among engagement outcomes measured. The level of **pride** in working for the APS is also relatively high, at 60%, although this has dropped 2% since 2013, and 8% since 2012.
- The percentage of APS employees who **feel valued** has risen 5% since 2013, and is now 54%.
- Those engagement drivers which have the greatest overall impact on engagement outcomes are:
  - I have confidence in my senior leadership of my ministry or department.
  - I have support at work to provide a high level of service.
  - I have opportunities for growth within the APS.
  - Innovation is valued in my work.
- Those engagement drivers which represent the greatest opportunities for improvement for the overall Alberta Public Service *and* have an important impact on engagement, are:
  - I receive meaningful recognition for work well done.
  - Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff.
- Together, these six drivers should form the basis of six key priorities which will provide the greatest potential for improvement, and which will have the greatest impact on employee engagement.