



Caseload Priority Framework 2025–26

Purpose

The *Caseload Priority Framework 2025–26* provides transparency on the overarching direction provided to our Jurisdictional Areas in relation to caseload management. The Framework reflects the Tribunal's commitment to the achievement of our statutory objective as we endeavour to best meet the needs of our users and the community at large through a user-centred approach to caseload management. The principles contained in this document will be used as the basis for decisions regarding the allocation of Tribunal resources.

Resourcing

Under a demand-driven funding arrangement, the Tribunal is funded, to an upper cap, to finalise a certain number of applications in each financial year. We may also receive funding for specific measures, such as additional members appointed for specified terms to address the on-hand caseload. It is ultimately for the Tribunal to determine what volume and types of matters will be finalised each financial year.

In 2025-26, the Tribunal is funded to finalise 59,045 applications. Due to the large number of applications received in recent years, and an increased on-hand caseload (over 100,000 matters), we are not resourced to finalise the existing caseload and new lodgements in a timely fashion, usually taken to mean within 12 months of lodgement. Consequently, there is a heightened need to clearly identify our caseload priorities so that we can focus our efforts and resources towards meeting achievable caseload objectives, where possible, and equitable outcomes for our users.

Caseload priority framework

The Framework sets out how we will address our caseload at two levels. Firstly, Tribunal Principles, which establish whole of Tribunal principles for determining caseload priorities. Secondly, Jurisdictional Area Principles, which capture the general categories of caseloads that have been assigned priority in 2025-26. The Tribunal Principles and the Jurisdictional Area Principles are set out below.

Tribunal Principles

In determining whole-of-Tribunal caseload priorities, the Tribunal has adopted the guiding principles set out in the table below. The needs of our users and our goal of providing an accessible review mechanism are core tenets underpinning the principles.

We will assign higher priority to case types or caseloads based on the following features or criteria



1. **Caseloads with higher proportions of vulnerable applicants or where delay has consistent, adverse impacts on the interests of applicants or other parties.**



2. **Caseloads with significant volumes of older cases.**



3. **Caseloads or case types where the impact on the community is significant or wide reaching.**



4. **Caseloads where efficiencies can be realised in the timely resolution of matters due to their significant impact on Tribunal resourcing.**

Jurisdictional Area Principles

The Jurisdictional Area Principles have informed the assignment of higher priority in 2025-26 to the case types and caseloads described in the table below. These principles will apply across the Tribunal’s existing caseload lists:

- General
 - Intelligence and Security
 - Migration
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
 - Protection
- Social Security
 - Taxation and Business
 - Veterans’ and Workers’ Compensation.

This Framework does not replace the Tribunal’s established processes for requesting a review to be expedited as set out in the [Administrative Review Tribunal \(Common Procedures\) Practice Direction 2024](#).

Priority case types and caseloads	Description
Vulnerable applicants	<div>Including but not limited to case types involving:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• elderly applicants – example case type: Veterans’ reviews• minors, particularly younger children – example case type: early childhood reviews undertaken within the NDIS Jurisdictional Area, and child support matters• a heightened risk of harm to the applicant.</div>
Aged cohorts	<div>Aged cases are defined as active cases that are three years or older from lodgement. They include but are not limited to reviews undertaken within the Protection Jurisdictional Area.</div>
Significant adverse impacts arising from delay	<div>Including but not limited to the following caseloads:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Migration Jurisdictional Area:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– reviews involving detainees– character-related reviews– partner visa reviews– reviews where a right is extinguished due to delay, for example, certain student or business visa reviews• Protection Jurisdictional Area – reviews involving detainees• Social Security Jurisdictional Area – first tier reviews pertaining to subsistence payments• General Jurisdictional Area – first tier Child Support reviews.</div>
Impact on the community	<div>Including but not limited to regulatory reviews undertaken within the Taxation and Business Jurisdictional Area.</div>

To ensure this Framework reflects and responds to our ongoing operating environment, our performance will be monitored throughout 2025-26, with formal reviews taking place at the end of each quarter.