The Regulator Leadership Cohort held an AI focused workshop on 22 May 2025.

Cohort Chair and co-facilitator, Clare Savage, opened the workshop by welcoming new member Hamish Hansford, Deputy Secretary of the Cyber and Infrastructure Security Group in the Department of Home Affairs, and by broadly thanking attendees for taking the time to meet and discuss Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Finance Secretary, Jenny Wilkinson, provided opening remarks to the cohort, which were followed by sessions where the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA), Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC), Intellectual Property (IP) Australia and Australian Taxation Office (ATO) shared insights and learnings on the use of AI within their own organisations.

The co-head of AI CoLab, Finance's Dr. Paul Hubbard, co-facilitated the workshop, and stressed the importance of hands-on experience with AI for all staff members, including senior leaders. By using AI tools for high-value tasks and building AI proficiency, staff can manage risks more effectively, he said.

Bruce Young, Executive Director, Technology & Data Division at APRA, shared the potential efficiencies and opportunities to be gained by using AI to generate insights from data sets and discussed the importance of senior management oversight, active governance, strong risk management practices and changing ways of working by encouraging safe testing and experimentation.

ASIC's Senior Executive Leader Graham Jefferson stressed the need for curiosity among directors to understand AI's complexities, while overseeing AI usage, ensuring governance practices to manage risks effectively.

Michael Schwager, Director General of IP Australia, discussed the organisation's adoption of automated decision-making and AI tools, emphasising the need for a cultural change, co-design to ensure staff engagement and the continuous investment in technology.

The ATO's Commissioner of Taxation, Rob Heferen, and Deputy Commissioner, Andrew Watson, shared insights on AI's applications by understanding different types of AI and discussed the ATO's use of AI in tax administration, the benefits and challenges in creating vision statements and assisting with tax audits.

Cohort members collectively recognised the transformative potential of using AI in their regulatory environments and in broader government operations. They noted the important role for senior leaders to play in embracing AI responsibly and fostering a culture of curiosity, innovation and continuous learning, while ensuring robust risk management and governance.

The Regulator Leadership Cohort will next meet in July.

Secretariat support is provided by the Risk, Claims and Regulatory Reform Division of the Department of Finance. If you would like further information APSRegulatoryReform@finance.gov.au.