OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

National Environment Service Employee Engagement Survey Report

Overall Agency Results — 2026

Agency: National Environment Service

Survey period: 30 March – 20 April 2026

Response rate: 38 of 38 staff — 100%

Report date: July 2026

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OVERVIEW

Executive Summary

National Environment Service achieved a 100% response rate in the 2026 Employee Engagement Survey — every one of its 38 staff took part. Results are strong across the board: 8 of 9 domains sit above the Public Service average, and the 9th, Work-Life Balance, is on par. No domain falls into the Priority band. This is one of the strongest overall profiles of any agency in the 2026 survey.

Even against this strong backdrop, there's a consistent, addressable pattern at the item level — the same one seen across the Public Service — around specific manager behaviours. Regular one-on-one check-ins and fresh approaches to planning both scored lower than the Manager Leadership domain overall (4.06, itself well above the Public Service average of 3.81). Staff comments were similarly positive overall, with communication and staffing/workload the most-raised (modest) themes for improvement.

4.10	100%	8 / 9	0
Overall Employee Experience score	Response rate (38 of 38 staff)	Domains above the Public Service average	Domains flagged as a Priority

SECTION 01

1. About This Report

This report presents 2026 Employee Engagement Survey (EES) results for National Environment Service, prepared by the Office of the Public Service Commissioner (OPSC).

Purpose

To give the Service's leadership team an evidence-based picture of employee engagement, wellbeing, and leadership, to inform its own workplace improvement planning.

Methodology

Employees rated a series of statements on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Related questions were grouped into domains such as Employee Engagement, Leadership, and Wellbeing. Domain scores represent the average rating across those questions.

A note on comparisons

2026 is the first year the former Leadership & Management Survey and Health & Wellbeing Survey were combined into a single Employee Engagement Survey. Because of that change in methodology, this report doesn't include a year-on-year comparison to the Service's 2025 results. This report instead establishes the Service's baseline under the new combined survey. As OPSC moves to a bi-annual survey cycle, future rounds will be able to track change against these 2026 results directly.

Confidentiality

Individual agency reports are only produced where an agency has a response rate of 50% or higher and at least 10 respondents — National Environment Service's 100% response rate comfortably clears this. Where a survey question (such as disputes and grievances) involves very few respondents, this report describes the result in general terms rather than an exact count, to avoid the risk of identifying an individual.

How to read the scores

- Domain: a group of related survey questions combined into one score (e.g. Employee Engagement, Leadership).
- Score (out of 5): the average rating across all questions in that domain — higher is more positive.
- Favourability (%): the percentage of employees who agreed or strongly agreed.
- Public Service average: the average score across the wider Public Service.
- Status: Strength = above average, On par = about the same as average, or Priority = below average.

SECTION 02

2. Workforce Profile

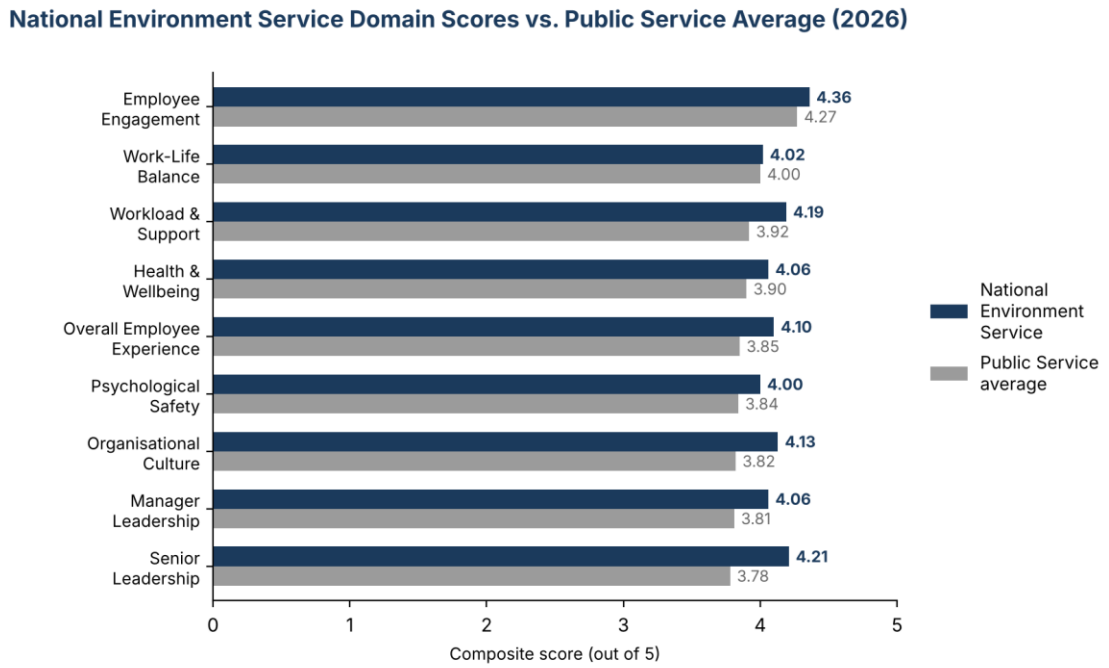
Total staff	38
Survey respondents	38
Response rate	100%

A 100% response rate gives the highest possible confidence that these results reflect the whole of the Service.

SECTION 03

3. Results by Theme

The chart and table below compare the Service's 2026 composite domain scores against the Public Service average. Status compares the Service's score to the Public Service average for that domain: Strength is at least 0.05 above, On par is within 0.05 either way, and Priority is at least 0.05 below.



■ Strength ■ On par ■ Priority

Domain	Agency score	Public Service avg	Status
Employee Engagement	**4.36**	4.27	Strength
Work-Life Balance	**4.02**	4.00	On par
Workload & Support	**4.19**	3.92	Strength
Health & Wellbeing	**4.06**	3.90	Strength
Overall Employee Experience	**4.10**	3.85	Strength
Psychological Safety	**4.00**	3.84	Strength
Organisational Culture	**4.13**	3.82	Strength
Manager Leadership	**4.06**	3.81	Strength
Senior Leadership	**4.21**	3.78	Strength

Top strengths (highest-scoring items)

- "I take initiative to improve my work" — 100% favourable
- "I genuinely care about the success of this Agency" — 97.6% favourable
- "I try to find solutions rather than just identifying problems" — 97.6% favourable

Areas with the most room to grow

- "Does your Manager hold regular one-on-one and/or team meetings to determine the needs of their staff?" — 50.0% favourable
- "Does your Manager create new or different methods for planning and carrying out Agency objectives?" — 55.0% favourable
- "I am able to rest and recover adequately between workdays" — 71.4% favourable

As with several other agencies, the two lowest items sit within Manager Leadership — a domain that otherwise scores well above the Public Service average (4.06 vs. 3.81). Regular one-on-ones in particular stand out as a specific, addressable behaviour worth attention, even amid an otherwise strong leadership picture.

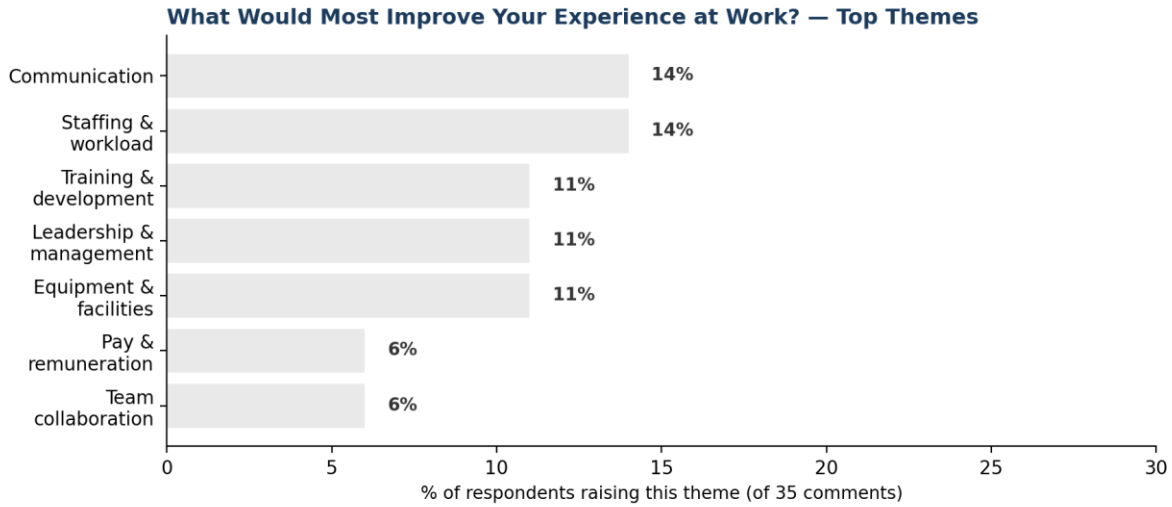
Disputes & Grievances

16.7% of respondents (7 of 42) reported experiencing an employment dispute or grievance in the past 12 months. Of those who specified an outcome, most were resolved within one month, and views on the resolution were evenly split between satisfied and not satisfied — a reasonable area for HR to keep an eye on, though not out of step with other agencies.

92.7% of respondents (38 of 41) said they had received a performance appraisal in the last 12 months; the remaining 7.3% had not.

What Employees Said

35 of 42 respondents left a comment on what would most improve their experience at work, and comments were, on balance, positive — several said there was nothing they'd change. No theme was raised by 10 or more respondents, so none meet OPSC's threshold for including a direct quote; themes are reported as percentages only below. Communication and staffing/workload were the most common (14% each), followed by training & development and leadership/management (11% each).



SECTION 04

4. Priority Areas & Strengths to Sustain

Unlike many agencies in this survey round, no domain for the National Environment Service falls into the Priority band — every domain is either a Strength or On par with the Public Service average. The areas below are therefore framed as targeted, item-level opportunities rather than broad domain-level concerns, alongside what's worth sustaining.

Areas worth attention

1. Manager one-on-ones and check-ins

At 50.0% favourable, this is the single lowest-scoring item across the whole survey for the Service, despite Manager Leadership overall being a clear strength (4.06 vs. the Public Service average of 3.81). Regular one-on-ones are a specific, low-cost behaviour to reinforce.

2. Rest and recovery

At 71.4% favourable, this is the lowest-scoring Health & Wellbeing item, even though the domain overall (4.06) is comfortably above the Public Service average (3.90). What staff said: this lines up with staffing & workload being one of the most common improvement themes raised unprompted (14% of comments).

Strengths worth sustaining

Nearly every domain is a Strength relative to the Public Service average, led by Senior Leadership (4.21) and Organisational Culture (4.13) — both well ahead of sector norms. Staff also rated taking initiative, caring about the Agency's success, and problem-solving among the highest in the whole survey (all above 97% favourable). This is a strong foundation, and the priority for the next cycle is largely to protect and reinforce what's already working.

SECTION 05

5. Action Planning for the Next Cycle

OPSC is moving the Employee Engagement Survey to a bi-annual cycle. This gives the Service roughly a year between surveys to work through this report before the next round runs — with the expectation that the areas above show measurable improvement, and the strengths above are sustained, by the time it does.

This report doesn't prescribe specific actions. OPSC doesn't have full visibility into what's already under way, and some of the areas above may already have work in progress. Instead, the suggested process below is intended to help the Service's leadership turn this report into their own action plan.

Suggested process

- Share this report with section/team leadership and discuss whether each area is already being addressed, planned, or not yet started.
- For each area, agree whether the action is to close a gap or to continue/strengthen something already working — and assign an owner and a rough timeframe.
- For the strengths noted above, consider how those practices could be reinforced or shared more widely.
- Revisit the plan partway through the cycle, and again ahead of the next EES, to check progress.

Service action plan (for internal use)

Priority / strength area	Status	Planned action & owner	Target timeframe
Manager one-on-ones & check-ins	*[Already underway / Planned / Not started]*	*[Action and owner]*	*[Timeframe]*
Rest and recovery	*[Already underway / Planned / Not started]*	*[Action and owner]*	*[Timeframe]*
Strengths to sustain / extend	*[Already underway / Planned / Not started]*	*[Action and owner]*	*[Timeframe]*

Support available from OPSC

If useful, OPSC can offer:

- Manager-capability training (structured check-ins, coaching, innovative planning) through OPSC's Training & Development programme.
- De-identified national benchmarking data, so the Service can compare its plans against what's worked in comparable agencies.
- Recognition of good practice — given how strong these results are, the Service may be a useful case study for other agencies.

APPENDIX

Appendix: National Benchmark Reference (2026)

The Service's composite domain scores alongside the 2026 Public Service-wide averages, for easy reference:

■ Strength	■ On par	■ Priority

Strength: at least 0.05 above the Public Service average. On par: within 0.05 either way. Priority: at least 0.05 below the Public Service average.

Domain	Agency score	Public Service avg	Status
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