

Dear GovTechies,

Over the past few days, our leaders have spoken with every colleague whose role is directly affected in the first phase of GovTech's workforce transformation.

Some will retrain for new roles. Some will move to other roles in GovTech or the wider Public Service. Some will leave GovTech.

I know this is difficult news. You should hear it directly from me, not first from the media. The figures for this phase are in the statement we are publishing today.

This letter answers four questions:

1. Why are we doing this?
2. What does it mean for you?
3. What happens next?
4. How are we supporting colleagues who leave?

Why we are doing this

GovTech must move from managing projects delivered by vendors to owning and running products ourselves. That requires a different mix of skills.

We have found that while many systems can be delivered well by vendors, critical systems increasingly demand in-house capabilities so we can respond and adjust quickly to national needs. Working with vendors works well when goals can be clearly specified in advance. But modern technology development requires far more control and agility.

Especially as the world becomes more digital, the need for critical government digital infrastructure has grown tremendously. Left unchanged, our legacy systems become harder to secure, harder to change and more vulnerable to failure.

We need people inside GovTech who can define the problem, shape the architecture, make sound build-or-buy decisions, defend our systems and improve critical services every day. Vendors will remain important partners, but accountability for our core systems now sits with us.

This is not an AI-driven downsizing exercise. This shift began years before the current AI wave.

Examples of services that illustrate this are Singpass, Parents Gateway and CDC Vouchers. These cannot be specified once, handed to a vendor and considered done. Teams must build, operate, secure and keep improving them, with full accountability.

GovTech is changing shape, not shrinking. We need more software engineers, product managers, designers, data specialists and cybersecurity professionals. We expect to employ more people at the end of this transformation than we do today.

It will be a different GovTech, and not every current role maps onto it.

We could have stretched this transition over many years and relied mainly on natural attrition. We chose not to. Every year of delay leaves critical systems older and widens the gap between what Singaporeans need and what our current model can deliver. That is why we have had to

make difficult choices. The GovTech leadership team and I made these decisions. I stand behind them.

What this means for you

If you have not been contacted, your role is not affected in this phase.

This is the first of three phases over the next two years. This phase covers six GDT Forward Deployed Teams and one central GovTech function. We expect the remaining two phases to cover the rest of GDT's Forward Deployed Teams.

I will not offer guarantees I cannot keep. Here is what I can commit to:

- The same basis for every phase. We will look at whether a role exists in the future operating model. This is not a performance-ranking or cost-cutting exercise.
- The same sequence for every phase. Retraining and redeployment will come first.
- Direct communication. We will announce the scope of the next phase by November 2026. If your role is affected, you will hear from your leaders before anything is made public.
- A clearer path forward. We will make available the priority skills, apprenticeship pathways and people you can approach for guidance.

What happens next

We have established Product Development Offices across the Ministry Families we support. More than 50 systems are undergoing modernisation. Other Forward Deployed Teams are already building and running products.

Many of you have pushed for this shift for years. You now have the mandate: fewer layers between you and the product, clear ownership and direct responsibility for outcomes.

This means better products, stronger security, faster improvements and clearer accountability to the public.

For colleagues moving into future roles, you will have full-time, full-pay apprenticeships. We will invest heavily in your development and create the conditions for you to succeed.

How we are supporting colleagues who leave

Support cannot be an afterthought. Together with AUSBE, we have agreed on:

- One month's salary for every year of service, capped at 25 years
- A three-month ex-gratia payment to provide additional support amid rapid change in the technology sector
- Salary and benefits through the six-week handover and notice period
- Structured career guidance and active job matching, in the Public Service and beyond
- An additional completion payment for colleagues asked to remain to complete handovers or operate critical systems

Some colleagues who are leaving have performed well in roles GovTech will need less of. The judgement we made is narrow: whether there is a credible fit with a specific role in the future organisation. We will not put someone through months of retraining without a genuine

opportunity to convert at the end. It is not a judgement on your commitment, your performance or the value of what you have contributed.

Wei Boon and I will hold an all-hands AMA tomorrow. Ask us what is on your mind. We will answer directly. Where we do not yet have an answer, we will say so.

To colleagues who are leaving: the systems you built are running in production today and serving Singaporeans. That contribution endures and it will remain part of GovTech's story. I am sorry for the disruption to you and your families. Thank you for what you have given GovTech and Singapore.

To colleagues who are staying: we owe it to those leaving to make this transformation real, not another reorganisation on paper.

Our mission has not changed: Engineering Digital Government, Making Lives Better.

Kaif