

Appendix 5

Human resources and administrative services

Performance management and staff development

The Commission's Performance Management Scheme provides a framework to manage and develop our staff to achieve our corporate objectives. The scheme provides regular and formal assessment of an employee's work performance and allows for access to training and skill development. During the year, the APS Commission provided training on the Scheme to new staff and supervisors.

The Commission's Certified Agreement recognises the need to provide adequate training for staff to support workplace changes. This is especially relevant with changes in the information technology area where staff are provided with relevant and ongoing training.

Training is identified through an individual's training and development plan in conjunction with the Performance Management Scheme. Training encompasses a range of development activities including: professional development courses, on-the-job training and the opportunity to represent the organisation at seminars/ fora. These may broaden the skills and experience of staff, and where overseas/ interstate travel is involved, may also provide an opportunity to reward staff for their performance. As part of the Commission's staff development strategy, staff are also provided with support under our Studies Assistance policy. The policy provides for access to study leave and financial assistance where study is relevant to the work of the Commission, an individual's work responsibilities and where it assists with career development.

Workplace diversity and equal employment opportunity

The Commission recognises that diversity in our staff is one of our greatest strengths and assets and is committed to valuing and promoting the principles of workplace diversity through our work practices. The Commission's Workplace Diversity Committee continued to implement a revised Diversity Plan.

Throughout the year, the Commission supported diversity events, including International Women's Day, NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day.

Other strategies under the plan focus on supporting staff with family responsibilities. Family friendly workplace policies were enhanced in the current Certified Agreement which increased paid parental leave and provided access to extended leave following maternity or parental leave. Staff can apply for part-time employment up until the school age of their child. A Family Support Service was also introduced in the year. Staff can access the Service to obtain information on dependent care including child care and elder care options.

In March 2006, the Commission received an award to recognise long term support of the Jobsupport Program, which supports staff with intellectual disabilities in the workplace. The award recognises a staff member's 15 years of employment with the Commission and was presented to the Commission by the Minister for Workplace Participation, Dr Sharman Stone at an awards ceremony.

Occupational health and safety

It is the policy of the Commission to promote and maintain the highest degree of health, safety and wellbeing of all staff. The Commission monitors health and safety through its OH&S Committee, which includes a staff health and safety representative and four corporate support staff who meet regularly through the year. Minutes of the committee are placed on the Commission's intranet and any issues that require action are brought to the attention of management. The Commission had no compensation claims lodged in the year and has no ongoing cases.

A hazards survey is conducted annually and the committee monitors any OH&S issues that arise. Personnel staff have been trained as case managers and regularly attend Comcare forums and training as required. Ongoing assistance and support on OH&S and ergonomic issues is provided to new and existing staff.

New ergonomic chairs were supplied to all staff during the year. Several staff also had their workstation assessed by a qualified physiotherapist. A software program called 'Workpace' assists staff in taking regular pause breaks throughout the day. The Commission offers support to staff through the promotion of QUIT smoking programs and flu vaccinations.

The Commission introduced a Healthy Lifestyle Program to promote health and fitness as a means of achieving work/life balance and improving the health and wellbeing of our employees.

The Commission continues to provide staff with access to counselling services through its Employee Assistance Program. This is a free and confidential service for staff and their families to provide counselling on personal and work-related problems if required.

Workplace relations and employment

Staff in the Commission are employed under section 22 of the *Public Service Act 1999*. The Commission's current agreement was certified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission on 23 December 2005 and is in operation for three years. The agreement is comprehensive and was certified under section 170LJ of the *Workplace Relations Act 1976*. The number of Commission employees covered by the agreement as at 30 June 2006 was 95, including both ongoing and non-ongoing staff. Productivity savings funded a 10.5% salary increase to

staff, delivered in three instalments over the life of the Agreement. An additional 1.5% will be payable if expected productivity savings are achieved.

The agreement maintains core employment conditions and supports family friendly policies. The current Agreement enhanced paid parental leave, access to extended leave following maternity or parental leave and access to part-time employment up until the child reaches school age. The Agreement also introduced a Healthy Lifestyle Program to encourage staff to undertake healthy activities. New allowances were introduced for staff undertaking roles such as fire warden or health and safety representative. Salary progression within classification levels is subject to performance assessment. Salary ranges are reflected in the table on page 178. The Commission has six staff covered by Australian Workplace Agreements, including two senior executive service (SES) level staff members.

Consultancy services

The Commission did not engage any reportable consultancy services during 2005–06.

Purchasing

The Commission's purchasing procedures adhere to the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines issued by the Department of Finance and Administration and updated to incorporate policy changes effective 1 January 2005. The procedures address a wide range of procurement situations, allowing managers to be flexible when making procurement decisions, while complying with the Commonwealth's core procurement principle of value for money. There were no contracts exempt from publishing through AusTender in 2005–06.

There was no competitive tendering and contracting during 2005–06 that resulted in a transfer of providers of goods and services from a Commonwealth organisation to a non-government body.

Ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance

The Commission uses energy saving methods in its operations and endeavours to make the best use of resources. Purchase and/or leasing of 'Energy Star' rated office machines and equipment with 'power save' features is encouraged, and preference is given to environmentally sound products when purchasing office supplies.

The Commission has implemented a number of environment friendly initiatives to reduce environmental impact. Waste paper, cardboard, printer cartridges and other materials are recycled subject to the availability of appropriate recycling schemes. The Commission also uses new generation low mercury triphosphor fluorescent tubes.

Audit Committee

Consistent with the principles of good corporate governance and the requirements of the FMA Act the Commission maintains an audit committee to advise the CEO on the compliance with external reporting requirements and the effectiveness and efficiency of internal control and risk management mechanisms.

Fraud control

The Commission has a Fraud Risk Assessment and Fraud Control Plan and has procedures and processes in place to assist in the process of fraud prevention, detection, investigation and reporting in line with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines. The Fraud Control Plan is made available electronically to all Commission staff.

Staffing overview

The Commission’s average staffing level for the year was 95.3 staff, with a turnover of 17 percent for ongoing staff. An overview of the Commission’s staffing profile as at 30 June 2006 is summarised in the table below.

<i>Classification</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Full time</i>	<i>Part time</i>	<i>Total Ongoing</i>	<i>Total Non-ongoing</i>
Statutory Office Holder	3	1	3	1	–	4
SES Band 2	–	1	–	1	1	–
SES Band 1	–	1	–	1	1	–
EL2 above the barrier (\$97,891)	1	1	1	1	2	–
EL 2 (\$81,468–\$93,827)	8	10	15	3	18	–
EL 1 (\$70,637–\$77,461)	5	12	13	4	13	4
APS 6 (\$56,742–\$63,598)	7	21	26	2	22	6
APS 5 (\$51,015–\$55,100)	3	3	6	–	2	4
APS 4 (\$45,738–\$49,662)	1	8	7	2	5	4
APS 3 (\$41,038–\$44,293)	3	14	15	2	16	1
APS 2 (\$37,022–\$39,955)	–	1	1	–	1	–
APS 1 (\$31,836–\$35,186)	1	–	–	1	1	–
<i>Total</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>23</i>

Commonwealth Disability Strategy

The Commission, along with all other Commonwealth agencies, reports against the CDS performance framework annually. Full details on the CDS can be found on the Department of Family and Community Services website at: www.facsia.gov.au/disability/cds/index.htm

Through the CDS, the government seeks to ensure its policies, programs and services are as accessible to people with disabilities as they are to all other Australians. This, of course, is integral to the work of the Commission and evident in the work we do. The CDS identifies five core roles that may be relevant to the agency. The Commission's primary roles are that of policy adviser, service provider and employer. Full details on the policies and services highlighted in the Appendices can be found within the relevant section of the Annual Report.

The Commission is committed to implementing best practice in providing and improving access to its services for people with disabilities. In particular, our Complaint Handling processes, online access to our services, website and education material, and consultation with disability groups provide examples of what we are doing to achieve this. In March 2005, the Commission launched a National Inquiry on Employment and Disability and released an interim report *WORKability I: Barriers – People with Disability in the Open Workplace*, in August 2005 and a final report *WORKability II: Solutions – People with Disability in the Open Workplace*, was tabled in parliament in February 2006. Results of the Inquiry can be found within the Disability Rights section of the Annual Report and at www.humanrights.gov.au/disability_rights/employment_inquiry/index.htm. Follow-up work will involve reviewing progress in implementing the report's recommendations.

Commonwealth Disability Strategy Performance reporting June 2006

Further details on programs and policies outlined against the performance indicators can be found in the Annual Report.

POLICY ADVISOR ROLE

Performance indicator 1

New or revised policy/program assesses impact on the lives of people with disabilities prior to decision

Performance measure

Percentage of new or revised policy/program proposals which document that the impact of the proposal was considered prior to the decision-making stage.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- Commission public Inquiries and exemption applications include people with disabilities to seek views on the issue before finalisation.
- National peak disability groups and selected regional groups are consulted on new projects in development phase to seek their views on impact. In the Disability Rights Unit (DRU) compliance is 100 percent.
- All submissions to Inquiries are taken in a range of formats, including verbal/audio (transcribed by the Commission), e-mail and handwritten letters.
- All new initiatives are made publicly available through the Commission's webpage and key disability organisations are informed of developments through the Commission's listserv.
- Through the use of the Commission's website and e-based networks the Commission provides extensive information on new and revised policies and programs and seeks feedback at any stage on their effect.

Performance Examples

- The Sex Discrimination Unit (SDU) project *Striking the Balance: Women, men, work and family* is examining how Australians undertake their caring responsibilities across the life course and what sorts of support for that caring role is needed. The project encompasses all forms of caring, including caring for people with disability. People with disability and people caring for others with disability are key stakeholders in the project, and the needs of these groups of people are considered throughout the project.

Performance indicator 2

People with disabilities are included in consultation about new or revised policy/program proposals

Performance measure

Percentage of consultations about new or revised policy/program proposals that are developed in consultation with people with disabilities.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- Consultation with people with disabilities and their representative organisations occurs at a number of levels:
 - ◊ direct contact with representative organisations at a national and state/territory level.

- ◊ through invitation to respond to new and revised policy/programs through the Commission's website, e-based networks, in writing or by phone.
- ◊ through public forums, conferences and public meetings.
- New initiatives are made publicly available through the Commission's webpage and disability organisations and individuals are informed of developments through the Commission's listserv.
- Public consultation events all occur in accessible venues with hearing augmentation and sign language interpreters available.

Performance Examples

- The Commission conducted a National Inquiry into Employment and Disability during the year and details on the consultation with stakeholder groups are available within the annual report and on the Commission's website. The Inquiry received 133 written submissions, conducted five group consultations and published five Issues Papers for public comment.
- The SDU has conducted consultations on the *Striking the Balance: Women, men, work and family* discussion paper over the last 12 months. During that process, the SDU consulted with People with Disabilities Australia (PWD). A representative from PWD was on the community advisory panel.
- The Commission's submission regarding the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Electoral Integrity and Other Measures) Bill 2005 (the Bill) considered the impact on people with disabilities and the submission regarding Inquiry into Civics and Electoral Education considered the measures needed to provide appropriate education in accessible formats.

Goals 2006–07

- Monitor progress in implementing the recommendations in the Commission's report on *WORKability II: Solutions – People with Disability in the Open Workplace*.

Performance indicator 3

Public announcements of new, revised or proposed policy/program initiatives are available in accessible formats for people with disabilities in a timely manner

Performance measure

- Percentage of new, revised or proposed policy/program announcements available in a range of accessible formats.

- Time taken in providing announcements in accessible formats.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- All information about new Commission initiatives is available on a W3C/WAI compliant website, simultaneous with public release.
- 100% of announcements and information material available in accessible electronic format.
- 100% of material produced is also available in standard print, large print, audio and Braille on request.
- Time taken to produce in other than electronic format varies according to the size of the document, but generally within seven days.

PROVIDER ROLE

Further details on the Commission’s complaint handling function, with a full description of its services and relevant statistics can be found in the Complaint Handling Section of the Annual Report.

Performance indicator 1

Complaints information service provides information about complaint handling service to people with disabilities

Performance measure

- Complaints information service accessible to people with disabilities.
- Number of calls/e-mails/visits to complaints information service related to disability issues.
- Number of groups that attended complaint handling information session, or were visited by the Complaint Handling Section (CHS) during regional and interstate visits, included disability advocacy and disability legal services.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- Commission complaints information is available in electronic and alternative formats. E-mail facility and accessible online complaint form for the lodgement of complaints is available. Telephone and TTY facilities are available with a national 1300 number at local call cost.
- All complaint handling brochures and publications are available on the Commission’s website in accessible electronic format and are available in alternative formats on request. Information about the complaints process

and legislation is available in plain English format on the Commission's website. The website is updated regularly.

- 21% of phone/e-mail/written enquiries to the CHS are related to disability issues.
- 150 groups attended a CHS information session or were visited by CHS staff.
- A complaints information referral list is updated regularly to ensure callers with disabilities can be referred to appropriate advocacy groups and other appropriate services.

Goals 2006–07

- Increase targeted community education and liaison with disability groups and advocacy organisations in all states, in particular regional areas.
- Targeted community education and liaison with Indigenous and multicultural disability networks in each state.

Performance indicator 2

Complaint handling service accessible to people with disabilities

Performance measure

- Number of complaints received under the DDA.
- Number of complaints lodged by people with disabilities under all legislation administered by the Commission.
- Number of complainants who identify the need for specific assistance on intake form.
- Complaints received about accessibility of service.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- 561 complaints were received under Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) legislation for 2005–06. Refer to the Complaint Handling Section of the Annual Report for further details.
- Complaints were received from people identifying as having a disability under all Acts administered by the Commission. 57 percent of responses to a survey question on demographics indicated the complainant had a disability.
- 77 requests for assistance were recorded, including assistance with language interpreters and sign language interpreters, provision of information in alternative format, TTY and assistance with writing.

- There were no formal complaints received regarding accessibility of the Commission complaint handling service or premises. Performance measure = 100 percent.
- The Commission's premises are accessible. Premises used for remote and regional conciliation conferences are accessible. Performance measure = 100 percent.
- The Complaint Handling Section Access Committee reviews access to the CHS service by the community, including specific focus on people with disabilities. Further details are available in the Annual Report.
- The Commission's premises are accessible. Premises used for remote conciliation conferences are accessible. Performance measure = 100 percent.
- The Complaint Handling Section (CHS) Access Committee reviews access to the CHS service by the community, including specific focus on people with disabilities. Further details are available in the annual report.

Performance indicator 3

Staff training and development, includes training related to people with disabilities

Performance measure

Percentage of training programs that include information regarding people with disabilities and relevance to complaint handling processes.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- CHS investigation and conciliation training courses include specific training on accommodating people with disabilities in the complaint handling investigation and conciliation processes. Performance measure = 100 percent.
- Ad hoc CHS training sessions specifically address relevance to people with disabilities who use complaint handling services. Performance measure = 100 percent.
- CHS Complaint Handling Manual advises staff to consider reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities is provided during the investigation and conciliation process such as provision of Auslan interpreters, use of TTY, use of alternative formats for information. Performance measure = 100 percent.

Performance indicator 4**Complaint mechanism in place to address concerns raised about service and addresses requirements of people with disabilities*****Performance measure***

Established complaint/grievance mechanism in operation. Detailed in Charter of Service which is provided to all parties to a complaint and available on website. Provided in alternative format on request.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- Charter of Service addresses roles and responsibilities of the Commission and parties.
- No complaints about accessibility of service or disability-related issues were received under the Charter in the year.
- Performance measure = 100 percent.

EMPLOYER ROLE***Performance indicator 1*****Employment policies, procedures and practices comply with the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992******Performance measure***

Number of employment policies, procedures and practices that meet the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- The Corporate Plan includes reference to the APS Values and social justice principles to ensure access to the Commission's services.
- The Commission's Certified Agreement 2005–2008 contains a commitment to the acceptance of diversity in the workplace and preventing and eliminating discrimination. Most of the Commission's policies on employment are contained within the Certified Agreement.
- The Workplace Diversity Plan outlines strategies to maximise employment and developmental opportunities for people with disabilities. The Plan is available to all staff on the Commission's intranet.

- The Commission's E-mail/Internet Policy is reviewed regularly. It specifically refers to the inappropriate use of e-mails that may demean people with disabilities.
- No formal complaints/grievances were made by staff with disabilities with regard to current work practices.
- Reasonable adjustment principles are adhered to in the modification of employee's duties in the workplace. Two employees have been provided with voice-activated software to enable them to undertake their duties and another staff member with CCTV equipment.

Performance indicator 2

Recruitment information for potential job applicants is available in accessible formats on request

Performance measure

- Percentage of recruitment information requested and provided in alternate electronic formats and accessible formats other than electronic.
- Average time taken to provide accessible information in electronic formats and formats other than electronic.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- Performance in providing accessible formats for recruitment material = 100 percent.
- Applicants are advised on the Commission's website that recruitment information is able to be provided in any format. All recruitment material is on the Commission's website and available by download at the same time it is advertised in the press. Advertisements in the press advise that information is available by contact phone, by TTY phone and on the Commission's website. The Commission website meets the criteria for accessibility as outlined in the Government Online Strategy. The Jobs Page (www.humanrights.gov.au/jobs/index.html) received 41 903 page views during the last financial year.
- There were no requests for Braille during 2005–06. The Commission is able to supply any requests within three to seven days.

Performance indicator 3

Agency recruiters and managers apply the principle of reasonable adjustment

Performance measure

Percentage of recruiters and managers provided with information on reasonable adjustment.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- Selection guidelines include information on reasonable adjustment and guidelines for interviewing staff with disabilities.
- Recruitment action is managed internally and not outsourced and all committees are provided with selection information on reasonable adjustment.

Performance indicator 4

Training and development programs consider the needs of staff with disabilities

Performance measure

Percentage of training and development programs that consider the needs of staff with disabilities.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- Due to the small number of staff in the agency, training is coordinated by each of the unit managers under the Commission's Performance Management Scheme. The majority of training is provided off-site with external providers. Any in-house training programs recognise the needs of people with disabilities.
- Training nomination forms allow staff to advise any specific requirements such as:
 - ◊ wheelchair access
 - ◊ accessible toilets/parking
 - ◊ a hearing device
 - ◊ sign language interpreter
 - ◊ an attendant
 - ◊ a support person
 - ◊ information in Braille, audio cassette, large print, ASCII format.

Performance indicator 5

Training and development programs include information on disability issues as they relate to the content of the program

Performance measure

Percentage of training and development programs that include information on disability issues as they relate to the program.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- As noted above, training is coordinated by each individual section.
- Induction includes information on workplace diversity and relevant legislation that the Commission administers, including the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.
- The Complaint Handling Section conducts training and information on disability issues for staff.

Performance indicator 6

Complaint / grievance mechanism, including access to external mechanisms, in place to address issues and concerns by staff

Performance measure

Established complaints/grievance mechanisms, including access to external mechanisms in operation.

Current level of performance 2005–06

- There is an established process in the HREOC Certified Agreement for complaints/ grievances, which includes access to external review through the Australian Public Service Commission.
- All staff are advised of access to the Commission's Employee Assistance Program and encouraged to use this service when needed. This free service provides counselling and support for staff and their families.
- Provision of access to complaints/grievance mechanisms = 100 percent.

Note: Accessible electronic formats include ASCII (or .txt) files and html for the web. Non electronic accessible formats include Braille, audio cassette, large print and easy English. Other ways of making information available include video captioning and Auslan interpreters.