



# STATE OF THE SERVICE REPORT 2002-03

STATE OF THE SERVICE SERIES 2002-03



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## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

The Honourable John Howard MP  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

In accordance with the provisions of section 44 of the *Public Service Act 1999*, I present to you the annual report of the state of the Australian Public Service for the year 2002–03.

This State of the Service report for the first time incorporates the annual report of workplace diversity in the APS. The APS Commission will be separately publishing supporting statistical documents, the *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2002–03* and the *Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin 2002–03*.

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit and the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet agreed to extend the tabling deadline of the State of the Service report to one calendar month after the tabling date for agencies' annual reports.

Section 34C of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1901* requires that you lay a copy of the Report before each House of Parliament within 15 sitting days after the day on which you receive the Report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A S Podger', written in a cursive style.

A S Podger  
27 November 2003





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Section 44 of the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act) provides that the Public Service Commissioner must provide a report each year to the Minister for presentation to the Parliament, which includes a report on the state of the Australian Public Service (APS) during the year. The State of the Service report draws on a range of information sources. One of its main sources is a survey sent to all APS agencies employing more than 20 staff under the PS Act.

Eighty-nine APS agencies, or semi-autonomous parts of agencies, employing 20 or more staff under the PS Act were sent the agency survey in May 2003 for completion. All 89 agencies responded to the online survey by the due date. This represents a 100% response rate. Appendix 1 lists the agencies that submitted a response to the agency survey.

To assist with analysis of data from the agency survey in this year's report, agencies have been grouped according to size. Of the 89 responding agencies, 22 were classified as large (>1000 APS employees), 26 as medium (251–1000 APS employees) and 41 as small (20–250 APS employees). These size categories are generally consistent with those used by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).<sup>1</sup>

Another main information source used in the preparation of the report is the results of the APS employee survey. This year the APS Commission introduced a survey of APS employees from agencies with more than 100 APS employees. The employee survey involved a stratified random sample of 6279 APS employees. A total of 3181 valid responses were received, representing a response rate of 51%. The sample size and number of valid responses allows a number of cross-tabulations with a degree of confidence. The survey was conducted, however, on the clear understanding that individual agency results would not be published, except to indicate agencies with good practice. Individual agency results are available for large agencies that want them for internal management purposes.

While the size groupings for large and medium agencies are the same for the agency and employee surveys, it should be noted that for the purposes of the employee survey 'small' refers to agencies with between 100 and 250 APS employees.

Appendix 2 provides information on the employee and agency survey methodologies.

The APS Commission engaged the services of ORIMA Research to assist with the design, delivery and initial analysis of both surveys. The APS Commission also engaged the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as a key consultant to advise on aspects of survey methodology.

Assistance for the agency survey was also provided by a number of agencies including the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), the Department of Finance and Administration (Finance), the National Archives of Australia (NAA) and the National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE).

The report has also relied heavily on published reports from parliamentary committees and the ANAO. Input has been sought from central agencies, particularly Finance, DEWR and the ANAO and their

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<sup>1</sup> ANAO, *Staffing reductions in the Australian Public Service*. Performance Audit Report No. 49, 1998–99.

assistance is gratefully acknowledged. Contributions were also appreciated from the Attorney-General's Department (AGD), Comcare, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), the Department of the Senate, the Department of the House of Representatives, NAA, NOIE and the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman (Ombudsman).

This year's report is closely structured around the four groups of the APS Values (as included in the inside cover), which the APS Commission has been using to explain and promote the Values. Chapter 3 deals with the strategies that agencies are using to promote the Values and the Code of Conduct as a whole, and embed them within their agencies. The Values that link to the first group, relations with the Government and the Parliament, are discussed in Chapter 4. The Values that are part of the second group, relations with the public, are covered in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 looks at some of the Values linked to workplace relationships, and Chapter 7 examines the Values that relate to personal behaviour. Although diversity is part of the workplace relationships group, it has been the subject of a separate annual report until this reporting year. Diversity is covered this year in Chapter 8. Building APS capability, which relates in part to the workplace relationships group of Values, is discussed in Chapter 9.

Associated with the *State of the Service Report 2002–03* are two other publications, the *Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin 2002–03* and the *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2002–03*.

This report, the bulletin and the employee survey results will be available on the APS Commission website at [www.apsc.gov.au](http://www.apsc.gov.au). Readers with enquiries about the State of the Service report can email [StateoftheService@apsc.gov.au](mailto:StateoftheService@apsc.gov.au).