

Job Satisfaction and Work-Life Balance

- Seventy-one per cent of employees agreed that their workplace culture supports work-life balance, up from 63%, and almost three-quarters of employees (74%) were satisfied with their work-life balance in their current job—up from 68% last year.
- Overall levels of job satisfaction have increased in the APS, with 81% of employees generally satisfied with the attributes that they nominated as important.
- The three most important job satisfaction attributes remained fairly stable compared to last year. These were:
 - good working relationships (89% of relevant employees satisfied)
 - flexible working arrangements (91% of relevant employees satisfied)
 - salary (68% of relevant employees satisfied).

Whole of Government

- Seventy-nine per cent of relevant EL and SES employees reported that their agency's culture always or usually encourages a constructive approach to collaboration.
- Forty-seven per cent of relevant EL and SES employees reported that, in their experience, other agencies are usually willing to collaborate to achieve whole of government outcomes.
- Fifty-five per cent of SES employees view themselves as definitely part of an APS-wide leadership group. Fourteen per cent of EL and APS 1–6 level employees view their SES as definitely part of this broader group.

Skills Shortages

- Half of agencies reported that shortages in information technology were having a moderate or severe impact on their agency's organisational capability. Around one-third of agencies reported that this was the case in the areas of financial management and accounting.

Working with the Community

- Almost half of APS employees (49%) were involved in delivering services to the general public.
- The jobs of the majority of APS employees (84%) require them to have direct dealings with other levels of government and other external stakeholders.

Related Publications

Publications in the 2006–07 State of the Service series are:

- *State of the Service Report 2006–07*
- *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2006–07*
- *APS Statistical Bulletin 2006–07*.

These publications are available on the Commission's website at: <<http://www.apsc.gov.au>>. Publications can also be obtained by calling our publications line on 02 6293 8383.

Challenges Facing the APS

There are some specific issues which require attention to ensure the sustainability of the APS into the future.

- 1. Focusing on Agency Health and Agency Culture.** A critical issue for agencies is monitoring their corporate health. Corporate health encompasses a broad spectrum of governance issues such as organisational direction, leadership, organisational capability, corporate governance processes, relationships and integrity, and agency culture. Monitoring corporate health can help to identify and address signs of poor performance before they affect agency outcomes. Relatively poor results for agency culture in this year's employee survey suggest that this area should be a particular focus.
- 2. New Ways of Doing Business.** To address the range of challenges that the APS faces, different ways of doing business are emerging. There is no longer a presumption about how a particular policy issue should be addressed or what approach should be taken to its implementation. Approaches include 'whole of government' collaboration, new approaches to engaging with the community, greater use of third-party service providers and a more citizen-centred approach to service delivery. It is time to take a strategic look at what these changes mean for the APS.
- 3. Modernising APS Employment.** An important part of organisational capacity is a modern employment framework that provides sufficient flexibility to attract and develop people with the skills to meet current and future challenges. Ongoing skills shortages in a range of areas, particularly in ICT, finance and accounting, are having a noticeable impact on agencies' ability to achieve outcomes. Streamlining our recruitment practices and positioning the APS as a modern, flexible and attractive employer to diverse groups of employees is an imperative. Corporate areas must support line areas in achieving this goal.
- 4. Interactions with Government.** Consistent with changes in our operating environment, there have also been changes in the way that the public service interacts with and supports the Government. It is timely to look more closely at the interaction between public servants, Ministers and ministerial advisers.
- 5. Leadership.** A strong and effective leadership team is essential in addressing each of the challenges outlined above. It is important that the APS continues to invest in developing leadership skills, particularly at the middle-management level. APS leaders are now required to work in more innovative and entrepreneurial ways and to adopt a leadership style marked by holistic thinking and collaboration. The demands of a modern APS also require that all employees contribute to setting directions within their agency based on their experience on the ground.



Australian Government
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State
of the Service

2006–07

At a Glance

From the Public Service Commissioner

At a Glance provides a summary of the highlights from the *State of the Service Report 2006–07*. It lets people know about developments in the Australian Public Service (APS) and the key challenges facing the public service.

The report is underpinned by two surveys—one of APS agencies and the other of APS employees. This year, almost 5,500 APS employees took the opportunity to have their say. The response rate of 64% matched last year's all time high, and I thank all of you who participated in the survey.

This year's report shows that the APS continues to be a fundamentally healthy institution. APS employees report high levels of job satisfaction and pride in their work. The APS also has high levels of productivity that compare very favourably with those of the economy as a whole. This positions the APS well as it is asked to take on a range of complex new work in many different areas.

APS employees should be proud of their impressive achievements and the work they do. There are, of course, specific areas which require attention to ensure the sustainability of the APS into the future. The most critical challenges are:

- the need for a greater focus on agency health and agency culture
- building organisational capacity to support new ways of working
- modernising APS employment
- interactions with Government
- developing and sustaining the capacity of our leaders to meet these challenges.

At the same time, in this election year, there are significant opportunities for the APS to play a leading role in developing new policies and new and more effective approaches to government business.

How we respond to these opportunities will have major implications for our relevance. It will help to determine whether Australia can reap the long-term benefits of a period of unprecedented economic boom and make real headway in addressing some of our intractable policy problems. By embracing these opportunities we are taking the right steps towards ensuring the APS remains a valuable national asset.



Lynelle Briggs
20 November 2007

APS Workforce Statistics

As at 30 June		2005	2006	2007
Total Staff	No.	133,581	146,234	155,482
Ongoing staff	No. %	123,500 92.5	134,802 92.2	143,525 92.3
Non-ongoing staff	No. %	10,081 7.5	11,432 7.8	11,957 7.7
Full-time (ongoing)	No. %	109,604 88.7	119,595 88.7	126,756 88.3
Part-time (ongoing)	No. %	13,896 11.3	15,207 11.3	16,769 11.7
EEO groups (ongoing only)				
Women	No. %	66,910 54.2	75,247 55.8	81,187 56.6
Indigenous staff	No. %	2,842 2.3	2,880 2.1	3,018 2.1
People with disability	No. %	4,873 3.9	4,818 3.6	4,717 3.3
NESB1	No. %	6,783 5.5	7,733 5.7	8,289 5.8
Age group (ongoing only)				
Under 25 years	No. %	4,993 4.0	6,028 4.5	7,127 5.0
25–34	No. %	31,037 25.1	33,498 24.8	35,700 24.9
35–44	No. %	37,614 30.5	40,379 30.0	41,786 29.1
45–54	No. %	37,435 30.3	40,572 30.1	42,766 29.8
55 and over	No. %	12,421 10.1	14,325 10.6	16,146 11.2
Classification (ongoing only)				
APS 1–2	No. %	6,295 5.1	6,004 4.5	7,154 5.0
APS 3–4	No. %	43,993 35.6	48,482 36.0	49,907 34.8
APS 5–6	No. %	42,065 34.1	45,534 33.8	48,310 33.7
EL	No. %	27,915 22.6	31,031 23.0	34,048 23.7
SES	No. %	2,028 1.6	2,257 1.7	2,509 1.7
Graduate/Trainee	No. %	1,204 1.0	1,494 1.1	1,597 1.1

General Perceptions

- Four out of five employees (81%) would recommend the APS and 65% of employees would recommend their agency as a good place to work.
- Almost three-quarters of employees (74%) agreed that their manager provided them with support to do their job.
- Forty-nine per cent of employees agreed that their agency's leadership was of a high quality.
- Fifteen per cent of employees indicated that, in the last 12 months, they had been subjected to harassment or bullying.

Identity

- Employees continue to be more likely to primarily consider themselves to be an employee of their agency (60%) than an APS employee (40%).
- The proportion of employees who were proud to work in the APS and their agency was 79% and 69% respectively.

Attraction

- The top two attributes that attracted APS employees to their jobs were:
 - job security (nominated by 61% of respondents)
 - my interests match the responsibilities of the job (nominated by 46% of respondents).

Organisational Productivity

- The APS has had to make considerable cost savings to fund wage increases (around 1.75% per annum over wage cost indexes) and the efficiency dividend (1.25%). This compares very favourably with annual labour productivity growth in the economy more broadly.
- Over half of employees (55%) reported that their personal productivity had improved in the last 12 months.
- The most common actions nominated by SES and EL2 staff as assisting their agency to improve efficiency and/or effectiveness were:
 - more streamlined processes within the agency (47%)
 - better internal communication (42%)
 - the recruitment of high quality staff (41%).
- The median APS-wide workplace absence (unscheduled leave) rate was 9.4 days per employee.

Abbreviations used

APS	Australian Public Service	No.	Number
EEO	Equal employment opportunity	SES	Senior Executive Service
		NESB1	Non-English speaking background
EL	Executive Level		