



Australian Government

Australian Public Service Commission

Australian
Public Service
Commissioner
Annual Report

2005–06



Incorporating the Annual Report of the Merit Protection Commissioner

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Part 3

Management and accountability



Management and accountability

Executive and senior management structure

The Commissioner is the agency head and chief executive officer of the Australian Public Service Commission. She heads the Commission's Executive, which also comprises the Deputy Public Service Commissioner and the Merit Protection Commissioner. Until Ms Patricia Turner retired in April 2006, the Executive included the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Coordinator.

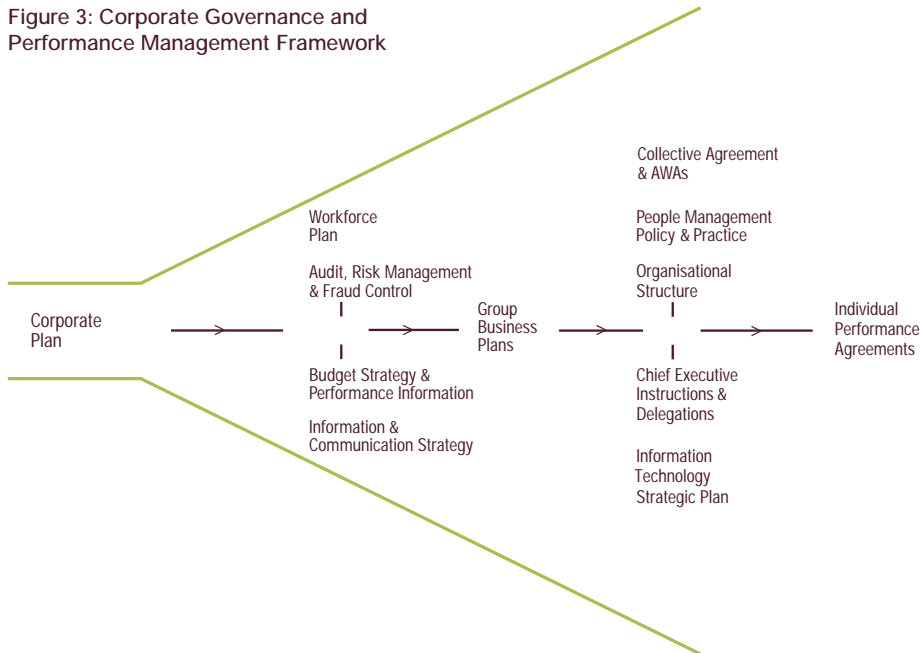
The Executive is supported by six Group Managers. During 2005–06, the Commission made a number of new appointments to its

senior executive team. Ms Ngaire Hosking and Mr Patrick Palmer were promoted to lead groups responsible for Evaluation and Regional Services respectively, and Ms Georgia Tarjan moved on promotion from the Department of Transport and Regional Services to lead the Policy Group.

Corporate governance framework

The Commission has an integrated corporate governance and performance management framework which is outlined schematically in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Corporate Governance and Performance Management Framework



The Commission's performance expectations and planned use of resources are set out in its portfolio budget statements and corporate plan. These expectations and plans cascade down through group business plans to individual performance agreements and provide the framework for conformance and accountability to take place. Figure 3 also shows how our information support systems and management strategies, including risk management and fraud control, contribute to the Commission's performance management.

The Commission's *Corporate Plan 2005–06* guided the Commission's work for the year by setting out its top strategic priorities, other priorities framed against the output structure, and the corporate support and culture necessary to deliver those priorities.

Corporate committees

The Executive meets regularly, usually every fortnight, as a strategic decision-making body. A number of advisory committees support the Executive in its management role.

- *Commission Management Committee*—comprises the Executive, Group Managers and the Adviser to the Merit Protection Commissioner. It is responsible for:
 - signing off the corporate plan and corporate policies and leading the implementation of strategic priorities
 - reviewing and monitoring performance against budgets, ensuring they are consistent with overall strategic directions
 - providing a forum for discussing APS policy issues.
- *Audit Committee*—in accordance with the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* (FMA Act), the Commissioner has established an Audit Committee. It is chaired by the Merit Protection Commissioner, and comprises two senior staff and an independent

external member. Representatives from the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) attend committee meetings as observers, and the Commission's internal auditors, Ernst and Young, and the Chief Finance Officer, attend meetings to report on particular matters. The Committee meets at least three times a year.

- *Information Technology Advisory Committee*—chaired by the Merit Protection Commissioner, it comprises Group Managers Corporate, Programmes and Evaluation. It is responsible for guiding and managing the Commission's information services and oversees the development and implementation of the Commission's information technology (IT) strategy.
- *Workplace Relations Committee*—is chaired by the Deputy Public Service Commissioner, and for most of the year also comprised management, employee and union representatives. The composition of the committee changed with the approval of the Commission's *Collective Agreement 2006–09*, and while still chaired by the Deputy Public Service Commissioner, now comprises three management representatives and five elected staff representatives. It is responsible for advising the Commissioner on the implementation and development of the Commission's certified/collective agreements.
- *Occupational Health and Safety Committee*—comprises employee and union representatives and is chaired by the Group Manager Corporate. It is responsible for advising the Commissioner on the administration of the Occupational Health and Safety Agreement between the Commission and the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU).
- *Security Committee*—is chaired by the Group Manager, Corporate and comprises the Commission's Security Officer, the Security Officer IT and the Chief Finance Officer. It is responsible for advising the Executive on security matters.

Internal audit programme

The 2005–06 audit plan was developed following a planning session attended by members of the Audit Committee, the Chief Finance Officer and a Group Manager. The Commission's provider of internal audit and related services, Ernst and Young, facilitated the planning session and provided advice to the Commission's Audit Committee, particularly in relation to planning a longer-term audit strategy, and conducted a programme of internal financial and performance audits.

No areas of significant operational or financial risk were identified after consideration of past experience, risks identified by Group Managers, a recent fraud risk assessment and current areas of potential risk across government provided by Ernst and Young. Identified areas of risk are managed by the internal audit programme, action items in the Fraud Control Plan, and review by Group Managers and the Executive.

Ernst and Young completed six audits in 2005–06 related to the 2005–06 audit programme and a further six audits are underway. The completed audit reports, which the committee considered, did not identify any significant or systemic issues. The Commission is implementing the recommendations.

Business continuity

The Commission's Business Continuity Plan provides practical guidance to ensure continuity of essential services by the Commission and to minimise the impact on clients of any disruption to services following a disaster.

The major focus of business continuity planning during the last half of 2005–06 has been preparing for the possibility of an influenza pandemic. This work will continue into 2006–07.

Risk management and fraud control

The Commission is reviewing its risk register and risk management framework with the

assistance of Comcover. A member service plan has been agreed with Comcover, and they have provided a consultant to work with the Commission to refresh our approach to managing and recording risk.

Certification of fraud measures

The Commission's *Fraud Control Plan 2006–07* and current fraud risk assessment comply with the *Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines* issued in May 2002. The Commission has in place fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and annual fraud data collection procedures and processes that meet the Commission's specific needs and comply with the guidelines.

The Audit Committee oversees implementation of the fraud control plan. The plan is brought to the attention of new staff as part of the Commission's induction process and is available electronically to all staff. Ongoing fraud awareness seminars are provided.

Ethical standards

The Executive works to promote a workplace culture that gives visible and strong commitment to the Australian Public Service (APS) Values. Activities in 2005–06 included:

- making clear in the *Corporate Plan 2005–06* that people are expected to treat each other decently and observe the APS Values
- scheduling development programmes for all staff which are aimed at making the APS Values and Code of Conduct relevant to their day-to-day work and decision-making, and including targeted programmes for staff with management responsibilities. Both programmes are often opened by a member of the Executive
- providing timely development programmes to our new staff about the APS Values and the Code of Conduct

- ensuring the identification and management of conflicts of interest is covered in other relevant development programmes e.g. business acumen training
- explicitly providing in our new collective agreement that our performance appraisal system should include the APS Values and the Code of Conduct.

External scrutiny

Significant developments

During 2006, the Commission made a submission to, and appeared before, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs. The Committee was asked in March 2005 to inquire into Indigenous employment, particularly focusing on positive factors and examples amongst Indigenous communities and individuals, which have improved employment outcomes in both the public and private sectors. The Commission's submission outlined the key initiatives of the *APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees* and the outcomes that have occurred to date, the partnerships that are being forged to give effect to those outcomes, and provided overall data on the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the APS.

There were no judicial decisions or decisions of administrative tribunals during 2005–06 that had a significant impact on the operations of the agency.

Reports by the Auditor-General

The Commission was involved in three ANAO cross-agency audits in 2005–06. They were:

- Audit Report No. 22 2005–06 Cross Portfolio Audit of Green Office Procurement
- Audit Report No. 27 2005–06 Reporting of Expenditure on Consultants

- Audit Report No. 28 2005–06 Management of Net Appropriation Agreements.

The Commission's Audit Committee accepted the recommendations of the ANAO where they were applicable to the Commission.

People management

The Commission's *Corporate Plan 2005–06*, *Certified Agreement 2003–2006*, and the new *Collective Agreement 2006–2009* (which was approved in June 2006), make commitments to building the Commission's strategic capability through a planned approach to meeting the organisation's future workforce needs. The Commission's workforce initiatives, which are described below, aim to provide a workforce that supports its contemporary role.

Workforce planning

At 30 June 2006, the Commission employed 194 staff, of which 167 were employed on an ongoing basis. The majority of the Commission's staff are based in Canberra (77.3%).

A Workforce Planning Strategy was finalised in September 2005 which sets out the Commission's medium to long-term approach to managing workforce issues, in the support of our business planning operations.

Table 17 outlines ongoing and non-ongoing staff numbers for the last six years.

Table 17: Commission staff numbers, as at 30 June

	June 2001	June 2002	June 2003	June 2004	June 2005	June 2006
Ongoing	122	135	159	165	168	167
Non-ongoing	36	26	27	25	16	27
Total	158	161	186	190	184	194

Note: More detailed information about the Commission's workforce is set out in Appendix H.

Overall trends include:

- The Commission's total workforce has remained relatively stable in 2005–06. Over the last two years non-ongoing employees comprised between 8.7% and 13.9% of our workforce. The increase in non-ongoing employment is partly due to staff turnover and the need to be more flexible in the recruitment of staff to address the contingencies of the organisation's revenue base.
- A modest shift in the classification mix with increased employment at Executive Levels (up from 42.4% in 2004–05 to 46.4% in 2005–06) while the proportion of APS 1–6 employees decreased (from 51.1% in 2004–05 to 46.9% in 2005–06).
- The number of women working in the Commission has increased to 69.1% of our workforce in 2005–06 compared to 66.3% in 2004–05.
- Part-time employment continues to be dominated by women, with only six men taking up this employment option in the last year. However, the level of accessing of part-time arrangements by men is consistent with total Commission workforce demographics.
- The proportion of employees identifying as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent has increased slightly from 4.4% in 2004–05 to 4.6% in 2005–06.

Graduate, cadet and traineeship recruitment

Three graduates commenced in our graduate development programme in January 2006. The programme offers a variety of structured learning and development activities, including a Diploma of Government (Management).

The Commission is also piloting a cadetship and traineeship programme in 2006. An Indigenous cadet was recruited through the National Indigenous Cadetship Project (NICP), and two trainee APS employees have also been recruited.

Corporate learning and development

The 2005–06 corporate learning and development calendar continued the practice of linking Commission, Group and individual capability to organisational performance improvements. The calendar represented a significant investment by the Commission in the development of staff. Participation and expenditure information in Table 18 provides a measure of this investment. In addition to the corporate learning and development programme, Groups funded training and development opportunities that addressed individual development needs.

Table 18: Participation rates in training and development activities, 2000–01 to 2005–06

Participation rates	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Total staff days	761	562	678	1176	570	420
Average days per staff member	4.8	3.5	3.7	6.1	3.1	2.3
Total cost	\$140,000	\$145,000	\$247,000	\$617,000	\$280,000	\$175,000
Average cost per staff member	\$886	\$900	\$1330	\$3250	\$1519	\$902

Note: Figures include indirect costs (e.g. salary during training).

Corporate Training for 2005–06 focused primarily on core capability development priorities such as project management, financial management, contract management, policy development, leadership development, business acumen and APS Values training.

In 2005–06, staff participated in specialist development programmes such as the Executive Masters in Public Administration from the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, Career Development Assessment Centre, and Executive Level and SES residential leadership development programmes.

More staff are taking advantage of the Commission’s Study Encouragement Scheme, which supports study towards qualifications in the fields of public administration, human resource management, learning and development, public policy and governance. The number of staff accessing the Study Encouragement Scheme has increased by almost 30%, from 11 staff in 2004–05 to 14 staff in 2005–06.

Payroll services

The Commission participated in a portfolio-wide tender for the provision of payroll services in 2005–06. United Group commenced service provision in April 2006.

Health Week

A Health Week took place between 14–18 November 2005, and the programme included:

- health awareness information sessions, including men’s and women’s health, stress management, and a library display which included health-related books and pamphlets
- clinical assessments, including lifestyle and bone density screenings and ECG assessments
- activities and exercise, including back and neck management, introduction to healthy exercise, indoor rock climbing, boxercise and a health lunch.

The Health Week programme was very popular with staff, many of whom participated in multiple events.

Agreement-making in the Commission

The Commission provides terms and conditions of employment under either its collective agreement or through Australian Workplace Agreements with individual employees. As at 30 June 2006, 150 employees were covered by the collective agreement while 42 employees entered into Australian Workplace Agreements. The Commission has two statutory office holders whose conditions of employment are established by the Remuneration Tribunal.

The salary ranges for the Commission’s classification levels are set out in Table 19.

Table 19: Salary ranges (as at 30 June 2006)

Classification	Minimum	Maximum
APS 1–2	\$32,957	\$42,000
APS 3–4	\$43,865	\$52,000
APS 5–6	\$54,207	\$67,000
EL 1	\$72,483	\$87,500
EL 2	\$83,527	\$110,160
SES 1	\$113,000	\$143,000

Note: The Commission employs only one SES Band 3 employee and therefore the salary is not included in this table.

Collective agreement

Staff approved the *Australian Public Service Commission Collective Agreement 2006–2009* on 20 June 2006 and it was lodged with the Office of the Employment Advocate on the same day.

It is a comprehensive agreement made directly with staff under section 327 of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* and notionally expires in June 2009.

The agreement has a strong focus on productivity and includes a 4% productivity based salary increase from lodgement of the agreement and two further 4% increases on 1

July 2007 and 2008. It continues to provide flexible terms and conditions of employment. The key improvements incorporated into the new agreement include:

- significant improvements in pay
- simplification of the performance appraisal scheme
- paid paternity and adoption leave
- increased financial assistance under the Study Encouragement Scheme
- reduction in the qualifying period for payment of a higher salary while on temporary assignment
- increased flexibility in regular part-time employment and job-sharing.

Workplace Relations Committee

The Workplace Relations Committee met eight times in 2005–06, which is double its normal level of meetings. Its work was focused on the development of the new collective agreement and it was instrumental in achieving an agreement that received a high ‘yes’ vote from staff (90.8% of votes cast).

Performance management

A significant feature of the Commission’s collective agreement is the performance appraisal scheme that directly links annual assessment of individual performance with remuneration. The scheme operates as part of the Commission’s overall approach to performance management and integrates corporate, group and individual performance planning and management. The scheme also provides a basis for planning individual development and for managing poor performance.

The Commission’s scheme provides for annual productivity increases in base pay and depending on performance, the possibility of salary advancement. A similar scheme operates for staff covered by Australian Workplace Agreements.

In 2005–06, the Commission paid \$135,778 in performance bonuses to 71 employees. Details of payments made to staff are included in Table 20. These payments relate to performance during 2004–05 as the Commission’s appraisal cycle operates on a financial year basis with performance-linked increases in remuneration being made in July each year, based on an assessment of performance in the preceding year. The Commission’s new Collective Agreement does not provide for performance bonuses.

Table 20: Performance pay, 2005–06

Classification	Number of staff	Number receiving	Total payment	Average payment	Range
APS 1–2	5	1	\$1200	N/A	N/A
APS 3–4	38	9	\$10,800	\$1200	\$1200
APS 5–6	51	20	\$25,320	\$1266	\$1200–\$2400
EL 1	52	24	\$34,980	\$1457	\$1200–\$3000
EL 2	26	13	\$29,475	\$2267	\$1200–\$4500
SES	10	4	\$15,750	\$3937	\$2250–\$6000

Note: These amounts represent payments for the performance cycle 2004–05 and were paid in August 2005.

Australian Workplace Agreements

As at 30 June 2006, 42 Australian Workplace Agreements were in place covering 10 senior executives, 27 EL employees and 5 APS 1–6 employees. This represents 21.6% of the Commission’s workforce.

Non-salary elements of Australian Workplace Agreements cover a range of possible options and include car parking for senior staff, home access to information technology, annual leave cash out option, business class air travel and executive lease vehicles.

Other people management matters

A number of matters arose during 2005–06 leading to an investigation into the conduct of a member of staff under the Commission’s procedures for dealing with suspected breaches of the APS Code of Conduct. It was determined that the employee had breached the Code of Conduct and a sanction was imposed.

Financial management

Financial performance

The Commission’s income for 2005–06 totalled \$38.2 million. Revenue from government accounted for 47.3%, sales of goods and services accounted for 52.6% and other income the remaining 0.1%.

Table 21: Income sources, 2002–03 to 2005–06

Income source	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Appropriation from Government	55.6%	57.3%	52.8%	47.3%
Sale of goods and services	43.8%	42.6%	47.1%	52.6%
Other income (e.g. interest and resources received free of charge)	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

Appropriation funding

The Commission was granted funding for the 2005–06 Portfolio Additional Estimates

measure to improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Public Service. Funding totals \$6.4 million over 3 years with \$1.2 million received in 2005–06.

Table 22: Funding for measure to improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Public Service 2005–06 to 2007–08

	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
Appropriation from Government	\$1.200m	\$2.624m	\$2.625m

Non-appropriation income

Income from the sale of goods and services in 2005–06 is earned from development programmes (70.0%), employment services (18.2%), international assistance (6.2%), better practice and evaluation (5.2%) and other services (0.4%).

Income from development programmes and employment services amounted to \$17.7 million in 2005–06 and made up 46.4% of the Commission’s total income from all sources. This income is earned in an open market where agencies have choice about where they source their services and the level of services they acquire. This potentially volatile context means the Commission must devote considerable effort to estimating revenue, expenditure and cash flows and to monitoring its financial performance during the year.

The Commission has become increasingly dependent on non-appropriation income in recent years as can be observed in Figure 4.

Operating result 2005–06

The Commission’s operating result for 2005–06 was a surplus of \$1.1 million. The surplus resulted primarily from increased demand for employment services. The operating surplus achieved in 2005–06 is consistent with the modest operating surplus achieved in 2004–05.

Figure 4: Commission income 2001-02 to 2005-06

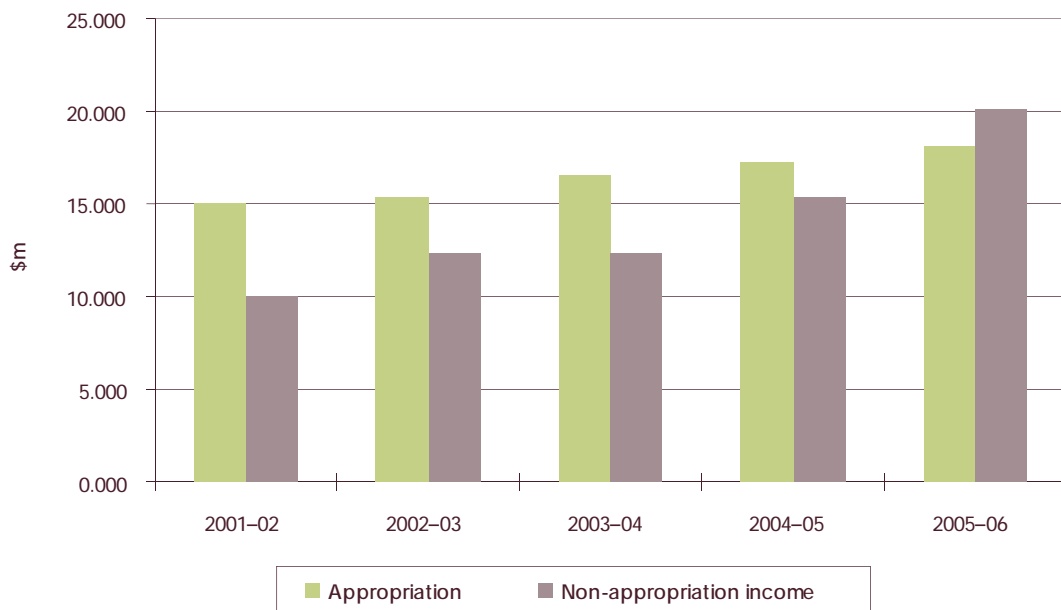


Table 23: Operating result 2002-03 to 2005-06

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Surplus	\$0.074m		\$0.872m	\$1.134m
Loss		\$1.229m		

The 2005-06 operating surplus helps the Commission to build a level of accumulated reserves sufficient to cover liabilities and the 2006-07 capital investment programme.

Budget outlook

In developing its 2006-07 budget the Commission has continued to adopt a conservative approach with the aim of achieving a balanced outcome in the 2006-07 year and forward estimates.

The Commission is continuing to strengthen its budget and business planning and management practices as funding will continue to be tight and the organisation's reliance on potentially volatile income from the sale of goods and services remains high.

Appropriation funding will increase as funding approved at the 2005-06 Additional Estimates for the measure to improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the APS increases from \$1.2 million in 2005-06 to \$2.6 million in 2006-07. The Commission will also receive an additional \$1.4 million for measures approved in the 2006-07 Budget.

Table 24: Total planned budget for 2006-07

Sources of revenue	Value
Base appropriation funding	\$16.444m
Investment in programme development	\$0.166m
Improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	\$2.624m
2006-07 budget measures	\$1.357m
Total appropriation funding	\$20.591m
Non-appropriation income	\$14.840m
Total	\$35.431m

Non-appropriation income will decline from 2005–06 levels as the Commission implements a new consultancy service business approach in 2006–07. The new approach results in a corresponding decrease in expense and will have no net impact on the Commission’s operating result.

Purchasing

The Commission undertakes its purchasing consistent with the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines—January 2005 (CPG), our Chief Executive Instructions and operational guidelines.

The Commission uses a devolved procurement model and, to ensure performance against core purchasing policies and principles, information about procurement policies and procedures is provided to all staff. The Commission has established a framework for managing risks in respect of procurement activities and operational guidelines to support staff assessing risks associated with their projects.

The Commission has published the Annual Procurement Plan on AusTender (as required under the CPG) to facilitate early procurement planning and draw businesses’ attention to our planned procurement for the 2006–07 financial year.

Consultants

During 2005–06, 16 new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$183,000. In addition, four ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the 2005–06 year, involving total actual expenditure of \$180,000 (refer to Table 25).

Further information on consultancy services for 2005–06, including details of consultancy contracts over \$10,000, can be found on the Commission’s website.

Competitive tendering and contracting

During 2005–06, the Commission did not undertake any competitive tendering and contracting activities as defined in the *Requirements for Annual Reports for Departments, Executive Agencies and FMA Act bodies*.

Asset management

The Commission manages assets with a gross value of \$4.2 million. The major asset categories are infrastructure, plant and equipment, land and buildings and intangible assets (software and intellectual property). These assets are managed by Groups to meet their business needs. The Commission annually reviews its capital budget and plan. As a result, a four year capital investment plan is developed from which the Commission manages its future asset purchases and disposals. All assets owned by the Commission, including any IT assets, are subject to an annual stocktake, which is used to update and verify the accuracy of asset records. Assets are depreciated at rates applicable for each asset class, as verified by the ANAO.

Exempt contracts

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the Commissioner can issue exemptions from the requirement to publish any contract or standing offer in AusTender on the grounds that it would disclose matters that might normally be exempt from disclosure under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. The Commissioner did not issue any such exemptions during 2005–06.

Discretionary grants

During 2005–06, the Commission did not administer any discretionary grant programmes.

Information management

An important activity this year has been the development of the Commission’s first IT Strategic Plan. The plan defines the

Table 25: Expenditure on consultancy contracts

	Number of new consultancies let	Number of ongoing consultancy contracts that were active	Total actual expenditure on new consultancy contracts \$'000	Total actual expenditure on ongoing consultancy contracts that were active \$'000	Total actual expenditure on all consultancy contracts \$'000
2003–04	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	901
2004–05	8	2	254	231	485
2005–06	16	4	183	180	363

organisations IT strategic directions and guides IT investment decisions over the period 2006–09.

The IT Strategic Plan outlines the actions that will allow the Commission to address the drivers of change and meet its corporate objectives over the next three years, including:

- a secure, robust, flexible and capable IT environment that meets business needs and aligns with Government directions
- a consolidated and integrated information environment where information and data are well managed and easily accessible both internally and externally
- a sound partnership with internal customers and other agencies for cost effective IT service delivery
- a well governed IT organisation and environment supported by quality processes and standards
- efficient and innovative use of IT resources.

Information Technology outsourcing

The Commission has outsourced many of its IT support services to Volante in a group contract with other agencies known as Group 8. Other members of the group are the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Department of the Environment and Heritage, the Australian Communications and Media Authority, and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority. The contract expires in June 2009.

The core infrastructure services managed by Volante include:

- desktop services
- network services
- help desk
- midrange management
- backup and recovery services
- virus detection, prevention, management, and protection
- subcontractor management (end to end services).

Internet and Intranet

The Commission's internet is one of the most significant dissemination channels for information produced by the Commission. For example, it is used to promote our growing involvement in Indigenous employment. The Commission's website www.apsc.gov.au has continued to improve in quality, usability and accessibility.

The Commission's intranet has been set up as a corporate portal. It continues to be a central repository to share documents and information across the Commission, and has the capability to run interactive applications, such as registrations for our Health Week activities. The intranet home page is set up based on individual profile. Feedback is continually sought from staff to improve this communication channel within the Commission.

Library

The library provides a comprehensive information research and lending service by developing, managing and maintaining resources to support the work and professional development of staff. During 2005–06, the library:

- undertook a review of its collection and services
- rationalised the main collection and increased the use of electronic delivery of journals
- targeted acquisitions to high priority areas, such as Indigenous employment and people with disability
- delivered information literacy training to staff, including internet searching techniques and use of desktop databases.

The library collection is well used with annual loans totalling 1053 in 2005–06.

Other information

New accommodation

The Commission's lease for its Canberra office in the Edmund Barton Building, Barton is due to expire, without the option of further extension, in February 2007. The Commission conducted a thorough evaluation of its options before announcing in May 2006 that our headquarters would be moving to the 'Glasshouse', corner of Worgen and Furzer Streets in Woden, Canberra. A 15 year lease has been negotiated.

The process for selecting the Commission's future accommodation included evaluating options to ensure that the building selected would be of an environmentally sustainable and energy efficient design—the aim is to achieve a 4.5 Australian Building Greenhouse Rating and a sound 'Greenstar' rating.

The accommodation is being designed to achieve a modern, versatile, secure, ergonomic and functional working environment that will meet the Commission's long term accommodation

needs. It includes a new training centre which will allow the Commission to deliver development programmes not only more efficiently, but also in an environment which is tailored to the needs of employees enrolling on our programmes.

In June 2006 the Commission's Adelaide office moved to new accommodation. The new Adelaide office provides for a suite of rooms more suitable for conducting the review work undertaken on behalf of the Merit Protection Commissioner.

Security plan

The Commission has continued to review the status of its security processes and obligations, as set out in the Protective Security Manual 2005 and the Commission's security plan. The Commission is planning to update the security plan during 2006–07.

The Commission's security committee met twice in 2005–06. The outcomes of these meetings, together with responses to internal audits and/or reviews and consideration of the Commission's position on relevant ANAO audits, are presented to the audit committee.

The Commission continues to provide basic security awareness briefings for staff that focus on internal security practices and procedures.

In 2005–06 the Commission also conducted a security awareness programme which will be evaluated in 2006–07, with a view to guiding future security awareness training.

Australia Day awards

The Commission's Australia Day celebrations include the presentation of Australia Day medallions to non-SES members of the Commission who have worked in the Commission for longer than 12 months and made an exceptional contribution to the performance, culture or identity of the Commission.

Contributions in many areas and regions of the Commission were recognised in 2006.

Six awards, comprising four individual awards and two team awards, were presented in January 2006 to:

- David Judge for his commitment and dedication to his work and to the clients of the APSED team
- Kathie Potts for her outstanding contribution to the *Foundations of Governance in the Australian Public Service* publication
- Alison Flack for her outstanding commitment and dedication to her work and to the clients of the Western Australian Regional Office
- Gabriel Walsh for his outstanding commitment and dedication to his work and to the clients of the finance team
- Debbie Phillips and Michael Heard for their outstanding contribution to the Commission's Graduate Development Programme
- the Indigenous Pathways Team—Pete Mitchell, Gerrit Wanganeen, Gary Absolom, Tamara Whyte and Aaron Williams for their outstanding contribution to the Commission's Indigenous employment initiatives.

Workplace diversity

The Commission's Workplace Diversity Programme continues to contribute to ensuring the Commission fosters an environment that values diversity of backgrounds and ideas and achieves the creativity and performance that flows from diverse contributions.

The Commission's collective agreement continues to provide staff with flexible forms of employment and increased access to personal leave. Over 12.8% of Commission staff work

part-time and about 11% of staff have made use of the purchased leave arrangements to increase their leave entitlements. Purchased leave is particularly popular as a means of caring for children during school holidays.

The Commission's representation of women, Indigenous people, people born overseas, people born overseas with English not their first language, and people identifying as having a disability are set out in Table 26.

The Commission's representation of Indigenous people and people with disability compares favourably with APS-wide averages. Historically, the Commission has reported annually on employment of these groups as a proportion of all employees (ongoing and non-ongoing) owing to the organisation's relatively high proportion of non-ongoing employment, whereas APS-wide employment figures reported in the annual APS Statistical Bulletin report EEO status only for ongoing employees. The APS Statistical Bulletin 2005–06 is due for release in December 2006.

Table 26: Representation of EEO groups as a percentage of all staff, as at 30 June

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Women	67.7	68.3	68.4	66.3	69.1
Indigenous	3.7	3.8	3.2	4.3	4.6
People with disability	3.1	5.4	7.9	9.2	8.2
Born overseas	16.1	15.1	16.3	20.7	21.1
Born overseas and English not first language	5.0	7.5	5.3	7.6	7.2

Note: Figures provided in this table include non-ongoing employees. Further information on the Commission's staffing numbers and equal employment opportunity (EEO) statistics are included in Appendix H.

NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC Week was held on 7 July 2005 and included a flag raising event, quiz, touch football competition and afternoon tea. Ms Pat Turner from the Commission welcomed participants to a NAIDOC week celebration before traditional elder, Ms Matilda House, opened the event. The Commissioner also made a presentation.

International Day of People with a Disability

The International Day of People with a Disability is an annual celebration of the abilities and achievements of people living with disability. Together with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Commission hosted a highly successful celebration on 1 December 2005.

The guest speaker was Dean Clifford, who is a motivational speaker, the Ambassador for the Association of Competitive Employment, and the Goodwill Ambassador for the Brisbane Broncos.

Harmony Day

On 21 March 2006, the Commission hosted a Harmony Day morning tea to celebrate Australia's culturally diverse community. It was discovered that the Commission's Indigenous staff come from six different countries within Australia. For other staff, their ancestors are from many parts of the world, including Scotland, Romania, Cyprus, Sri Lanka and Russia.



A team from the Commission participated in the 2005 NAIDOC Week Touch Football competition. Departments and agencies from across the APS were represented in the competition.



Guest speaker at the the International Day of People with a Disability celebration, Dean Clifford (centre), with Jeff Lamond, Merit Protection Commissioner (second from right), December 2005.