



WORKFORCE AGEING:
MATERIALS FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE PRACTITIONERS IN THE APS

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■ FOREWORD

The Australian Public Service (APS) Commission has compiled this package of materials in response to the Management Advisory Committee's (MAC) report *Organisational Renewal*, which documented the demographic shifts in the APS.

The report identified the key implications for the APS and individual agencies of actively managing a workforce characterised by significant demographic change and began the process of mapping out strategies for ongoing organisational renewal.

This package has been compiled to assist agencies to develop human resource management strategies to retain and attract mature-aged employees. The package is divided into two parts that provide guidance on:

- strategic management issues, such as workforce planning in the context of broader demographic change, strategies for succession management and knowledge transfer, and approaches to injury prevention and management
- practical measures for retaining mature-aged employees by addressing individual concerns about workplace issues and superannuation entitlements.

The effective management of a mature-aged workforce should be a priority issue for agency heads and senior managers in all agencies irrespective of their size or the nature of their business. However, the material is designed primarily as a resource for human resource practitioners who will play a key role in determining how agencies address workforce planning.

We are grateful to the agencies that provided materials for inclusion in this package: Comcare, the

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Department of Finance and Administration. We are also grateful to the Australian Bureau of Statistics for making available the mature-aged workers survey prepared as part of the Organisational Renewal project, and to the Boards of the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme and the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme for making available their fact sheets on superannuation and part-time work and phased retirement. Finally, we would like to thank the individual APS employees who provided us with their experiences.



Andrew Podger
Public Service Commissioner
November 2003

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Mature-aged employees
represent the only
segment of the workforce
where **significant** increases
in participation rates
can be **achieved**.

PART 1: PLANNING FOR A MATURE-AGED WORKFORCE

■ TAKING ACCOUNT OF BROADER WORKFORCE FACTORS

Agency workforce planning occurs within a broader context.

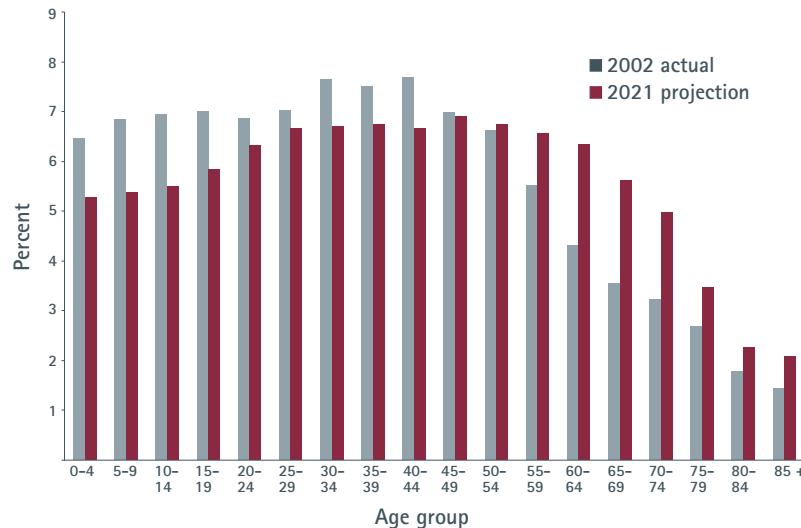
The agency workforce is a subset of the APS workforce, which in turn is a subset of the Australian workforce as a whole. Labour market pressures are not uniform at all three levels. There are likely to be variations in capabilities and skill demands between individual agencies, the APS as a whole and the Australian workforce more generally. Attraction and retention issues may also vary between these levels. But demographic pressures are being brought to bear which affect the labour market across the board. Critical among these is the ageing of the workforce.

THE AUSTRALIAN WORKFORCE IS AGEING

The *Intergenerational Report* released by the Department of the Treasury in 2002 provides a challenging picture of the Australian labour market within 20 years.¹ The report confirmed that Australia, like other OECD countries, is experiencing an ageing of its population and labour force, driven by declining fertility and mortality rates. Figure 1 clearly shows the projected ageing of the population.²

Access Economics forecasts that the working age population will grow by just 125,000 for the entire decade of the 2020s, compared with around 170,000

FIGURE 1: AGE PROFILE OF POPULATION, 2002 AND 2021



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

¹ Commonwealth of Australia, *Intergenerational Report 2002-03*, May 2002.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force projections 1999-2016*, Catalogue no. 6260.0.

people a year currently. The number of people aged 55 to 64 is expected to increase by more than 50% over the next two decades.³

Demographers, academics and policy makers have been discussing the social and economic impact of the ageing of the workforce since the mid-1990s. But the future has arrived, and though preparedness varies between organisations, many are yet to examine the organisational capability they will need in order to respond to the contracting labour market they will encounter in the years to come.

Mature-aged employees will be a key focus of private and public sector strategies responding to the ageing of

the workforce—not just because of the existing corporate knowledge and networks of these employees, but because they represent the only segment of the workforce where significant increases in participation rates can be achieved. This is not hypothetical—it is what is already known about the Australian workforce in the next 20 years, because those who will make up its numbers have already been born.

THE APS IS AGEING

The APS workforce is older than the Australian workforce overall (see Figure 2), and on average is now four years older than it was only a decade ago.

FIGURE 2: AGE PROFILE OF APS AND EMPLOYED PERSONS, 2003



Source: Australian Public Service Employment Database, APS labour force

³ Access Economics, 'All in it together', a paper prepared for the Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra, June 2000, p. 1.

This reflects, among other things, the large number of 'baby boomers' recruited in the late 1960s and 1970s and the relative stability of the APS labour force. At the same time, there has been a general decline in the proportion of APS staff aged under 25 over much of the past decade, although there has been a slight turnaround in recent years.

The MAC report on *Organisational Renewal* identified the ageing of the APS workforce as a core issue. Projections prepared for the MAC indicate that the age profile of the APS will continue its upward trend as large numbers of baby boomers enter the 55 and over age group, without corresponding numbers of young people joining the APS. The full text of the report is available at <http://www.apsc.gov.au/mac>.

The report foreshadowed increased competition for new entrants to the labour market, and identified the attraction and retention of younger people as a critical part of the response to changing APS workforce demographics. Another part of the response, which is the focus here, is the retention of skilled and experienced mature-aged employees.

Early departure (through resignation or retirement) has been an ongoing feature of employment in the APS, where employees have access to retirement benefits from age 55. Given its current age profile, the APS is facing the likely departure of about 23% of its workforce over the period to 2008.⁴

Agencies are being asked to critically examine how they will compete for a declining pool of qualified young people, and to rein in the expected rate of separation of valued mature-aged workers. From an APS-wide perspective, the aim is to maximise the Commonwealth's investment in its workforce by taking a strategic approach to addressing those factors which are a disincentive to employees' workforce participation beyond the point at which they would otherwise resign or retire.

The challenge for APS agencies is to develop strategies that optimise the contribution and job satisfaction of mature-aged workers. In this they are supported by a devolved legislative and policy framework that gives them the flexibility to develop innovative responses that meet their business needs.

This challenge will necessarily involve developing strategies for succession management and knowledge transfer. It will also involve taking a long-term view to preventing and managing workplace injury and to promoting employees' health throughout their working lives.

There is also a need to challenge cultural expectations of early retirement, and to develop and promote flexible workplace arrangements that make continued workforce participation attractive to those over 55 (and to the significant number of employees who leave the APS mid-career and may return). At the same time, there will be a need to address misconceptions identified in

⁴ Management Advisory Committee, *Organisational Renewal*, 2003, p. 3.

Organisational Renewal that phased retirement and part-time work have a negative impact on superannuation entitlements.

Flexible working arrangements are also likely to be attractive to, and benefit, younger workers as they navigate personal circumstances and life stages.

The change required of Australian businesses is firstly an attitudinal one, to junk the falsehood that productivity declines with age, and secondly, to adopt new employment practices which recognise the value of mature-aged workers.

The change required of employees is to abandon expectations of early retirement and ensure they update their skills so they remain employable.

The Hon. Kevin Andrews, MP, 27 August 2003



There is also a **need**
to **challenge** cultural expectations
of early **retirement**,
and to develop
and **promote** flexible
workplace **arrangements**

■ AGENCY WORKFORCE PLANNING

A short-term approach to recruitment may have been sufficient when labour supply was plentiful, but it is unlikely to be effective in the current and future environment.

Workforce planning is a continuous process of shaping the workforce to ensure that it has the capabilities it needs to deliver organisational objectives now and into the future. It is a necessary first step for agency retention of valued mature-aged workers, and for strategic people planning in general.

KNOWING YOUR WORKFORCE

In addressing their longer-term capability requirements APS agencies will need a detailed demographic profile of their workforce. In addition to internal data sources, external information sources are available.

These include:

- the APS Employment Database (APSED) maintained by the APS Commission
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/apсед>
- the annual State of the Service report issued by the Public Service Commissioner
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/apsprofile/index.html>
- the annual Australian Public Service Statistical bulletin <http://www.apsc.gov.au/apsprofile/index.html>

In addition to knowing how many employees are shortly to become eligible to access their retirement benefits, and what skill sets those employees possess, agencies need to understand the factors that contribute to employees' decisions to resign or retire. For some agencies, this may mean that an employee survey or a separate data collection exercise is warranted (Part 2 of this publication contains more information about using surveys to understand employee intentions).

WHAT IS APSED?

APSED stores employment and socio-demographic data relating to all current and former APS employees. It includes information about employment status, career history, age, gender and, where employees have chosen to provide the information, whether the person is an Indigenous Australian, whether they have a disability, country of birth, language and education details. APSED data are provided to the APS Commission by APS agencies.

To assist agencies in workforce planning, the APS Commission has developed an internet interface that allows authorised personnel in agencies direct access to their agency data on APSED. Human resource managers are able to extract customised tables providing a demographic profile of staff in their agency, as well as APS averages for benchmarking. Data items include age, length of service, employment status, gender, equal employment opportunity group and location. Where agencies have not experienced significant machinery of government changes, historical data are also available to assist in examining trends.

The data are easily manipulated, and are available in both tables and charts that can be downloaded into reports.

People count—using APSED data for workforce planning is an appendix to this publication.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Workforce planning is a system to deliver the right people to the right place at the right time. To be effective it must be undertaken as part of an agency's overall strategic planning. Like other planning, it should be based on an assessment of the risks (such as demographic change) to the organisation's longer-term capacity to deliver on its organisational objectives. It should link directly to business planning and capability development.

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) has reported that many agencies are only in the early stages of strategic business/people planning, including the integration of workforce planning and other people management initiatives.⁵

APS agencies' physical, organisational and operational requirements and business objectives vary considerably. However, broad guidance on the key elements of effective workforce planning is available in the ANAO's 2001 Better Practice Guide, *Planning for the workforce of the future* (available on the ANAO website at <http://www.anao.gov.au/WebSite.nsf/Publications>).

The key principles identified in the guide are set out below and in the diagrammatic framework in Figure 3.

Identify future business direction and workforce needs

- What organisational capabilities are going to be required?
- What are the characteristics of your current workforce?

- What is the current profile of individual capabilities in the organisation?
- What workforce data are available on current demographics?

Bridge the gap—identify and address workforce issues

- Analyse workforce attraction, retention and development issues (survey data may be critical here).
- Use strategic HR intervention to address gaps in present and future capability.

Provide a sound basis for effective implementation

- Develop an investment plan.
- Integrate workforce development with agency business direction.
- Establish implementation roles and responsibilities for the plan.

Monitor and evaluate progress against the plan

- Revisit any step as required, bearing in mind that workforce planning is a continuous process.

Throughout the workforce planning process it will be important to consider the broader context in which planning is taking place. In addition to APS and broader workforce factors such consideration should include the corporate governance framework, the broader business planning cycle, and organisational vision and values.

⁵ ANAO, Report No. 61, *Managing people for business outcomes*, June 2002. The importance of the integration of people management systems with other corporate/business systems is also discussed in the 2001 Management Advisory Committee report *Performance management in the APS: a strategic framework*.

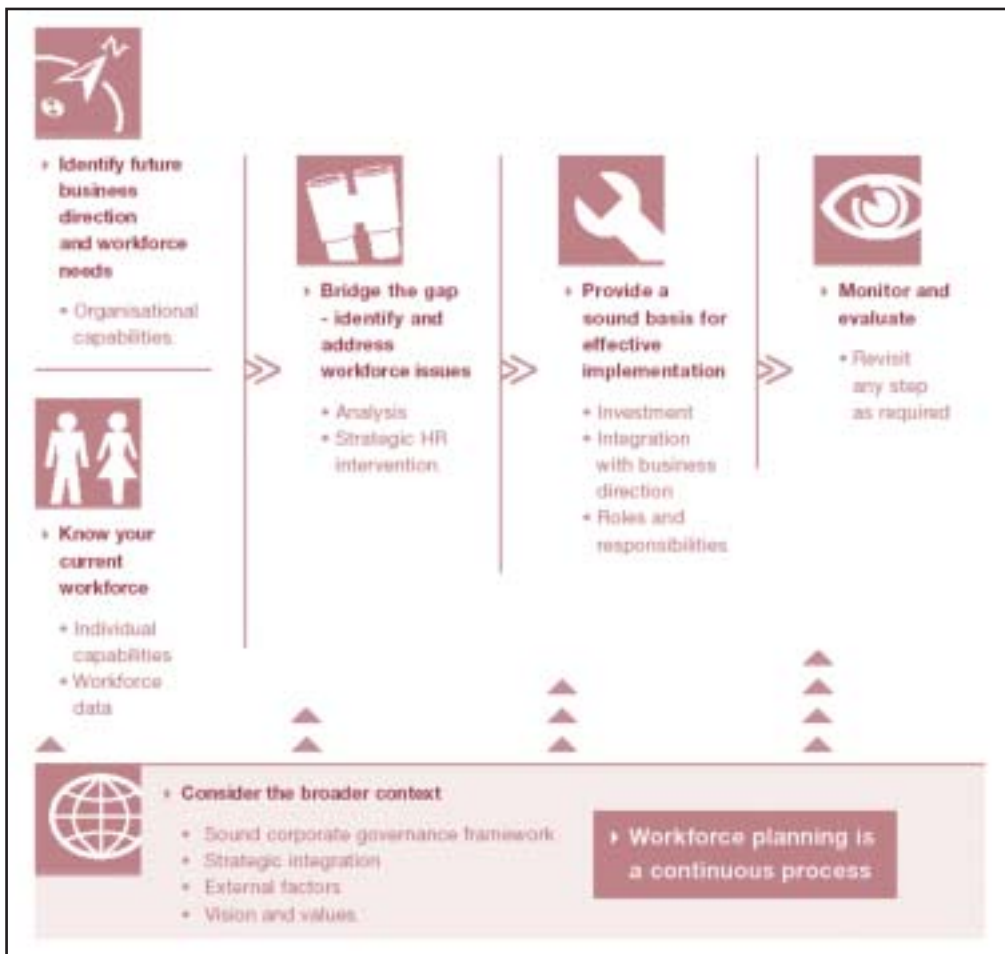
Section 5 of the ANAO Better Practice Guide provides a useful checklist to support the establishment of an effective planning process for those agencies still in the early stages of workforce planning.

Part 2 of this booklet examines some aspects of workforce planning in more details, including flexible working arrangements, phasing retirement and changing job roles.

MANAGING FOR SUCCESSION

Senior employees and those with above average corporate knowledge are disproportionately represented in the mature-aged cohort. *Organisational Renewal* found that increases in length of service are correlated with increases in age and classification. For example the median length of service

FIGURE 3: KEY PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE WORKFORCE PLANNING



Source: ANAO 2001, *Better Practice Guide: Planning for the workforce of the future*



Agencies that do not have **effective** succession and knowledge management **strategies** in place, and fail to retain key **senior** staff may be exposed to a **significant** loss of organisational capability.

for employees aged 50–54 years had increased over the last 10 years, from 12 to 15 years.

Agencies are likely to be differentially affected by the loss of key staff, depending partly on their existing age profile, the spread of the mature-aged population in their workplaces, the success of their retention strategies, and the nature of the work being undertaken by departing employees. Agency age profiles in Figure 4 opposite are indicative of how widely any of these factors can vary between agencies. The graph includes all those agencies with more than 1500 ongoing staff, as well as some others with particularly young or old age profiles.

Agencies that do not have effective succession and knowledge management strategies in place, and fail to retain key staff may be exposed to a significant loss of organisational capability.

Succession management is a deliberate response to the potential loss of critical capabilities in an organisation. The aim is to build bench strength—that is, a robust field of employees with the capabilities, flexibilities and skill sets to fill emerging roles/vacancies.

The APS Commission's 2003 publication *Managing succession in the Australian Public Service* (available on the Commission's website at <http://www.apsc.gov.au>) defines succession management as 'a strategic, systematic deliberate activity to ensure an organisation's future capability to fill vacancies.'⁶

The publication also provides advice on approaching succession management, including:

- designing a succession management process
- ensuring that it is integrated with other agency human resource processes (such as performance management and learning and development)
- undertaking a risk assessment of potential departures from existing critical roles
- identifying and assessing high-potential employees (including identifying the assessor and the assessment processes)
- planning and implementing development opportunities for high-potential employees
- ensuring that there are opportunities for feedback and regular review of developmental assignments and other opportunities
- evaluating the succession management system itself as well as its outcomes for individuals and ensuring that the system and its operation are consistent with the APS Values and the merit principle.

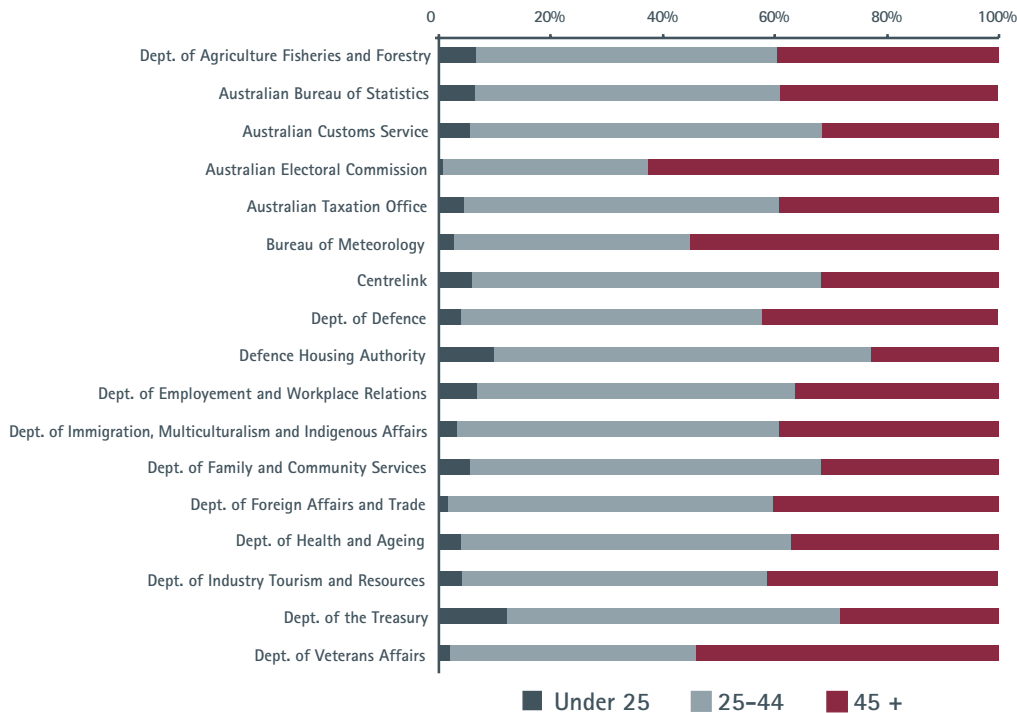
Organisational Renewal identified a range of succession management strategies. What these strategies have in common is the need to capitalise on the knowledge, talents and abilities of employees, and to maintain the momentum of their development. These strategies include:

- identifying those with potential through performance management frameworks

⁶ Australian Public Service Commission, *Managing succession in the Australian Public Service*, 2003, p. 3.

- encouraging employees who show potential through accelerated advancement and higher duties
- providing mentoring programs
- offering access to project work
- offering broad development opportunities to ensure capability across the organisation
- providing access to leadership development programs
- initiating temporary placements with other agencies in Australia or overseas.

FIGURE 4: ONGOING EMPLOYEES IN SELECTED AGENCIES BY AGE GROUP, JUNE 2003



Source: APSED

MANAGING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Succession management strategies must engage mature-aged employees in a process of consciously passing on information, knowledge and skills that they have gained through their exposure to the job. Simply briefing the next person in the job about the status of work under way will not be sufficient. Effective succession management cannot be separated from effective knowledge management.

Surveys of mature-aged workers undertaken for *Organisational Renewal* found that both current and former employees were uncertain that their corporate knowledge was being effectively transferred. Depending on the nature of the work in which these employees were involved, this could be an issue of concern to agencies.

At the most fundamental level, knowledge management is about appropriate recordkeeping. Employee surveys undertaken for the *State of the Service Report 2002–03* found that there is a correlation between seniority and reduced access to information and training around recordkeeping systems and procedures. Both awareness-raising and systems-based instruction would assist senior managers to record and pass on corporate knowledge that may otherwise be lost. Skills sets that may be required include routine document management and appropriate filing of electronic documents in a way that is accessible to others. Of course, all employees should be made aware of

their legal recordkeeping obligations, and how they apply in their workplace context.⁷

More broadly, however, knowledge management means putting in place strategies to facilitate and encourage knowledge sharing and transfer from employees who are planning to leave the workplace to those who will need to apply that knowledge. The broad aim is to ensure that knowledge is shared as an integral part of workplace practice and not as someone is actually poised to leave. These strategies can include but are not limited to:

- mentoring and coaching by departing employees
- job sharing between employees who may be staying and those who may be leaving
- handovers through planned arrangements such as phased retirement
- partnership approaches between departing staff and consultants
- team-based approaches to managing long-term projects
- as discussed above, consistently good record keeping practices.

A number of the approaches identified can be used to pass on more than factual or even contextual information. For example, mentoring, job sharing and handovers can be used to introduce new

⁷ National Archives of Australia, *Keep the knowledge—make a record: what every Commonwealth employee needs to know about recordkeeping*, 2003
<http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/training/keep/package.html>

employees to key formal and informal networks established by departing employees.

Investment in short-term mentoring can save considerable investment in reinventing the policy development or program management wheel, in rebuilding professional networks and in developing high-potential employees as part of a succession management program.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*, Commonwealth agencies have an obligation to take all reasonably practicable steps to protect the health and safety of their employees at work. The ageing of the Australian workforce has raised issues about whether there are any occupational health and safety issues specific to mature-aged workers.

Comcare's research shows that a range of factors determine healthy ageing and that these can be significantly affected by individual differences and the influence of non-age-related factors (such as physical activity). This means that, within the age range of our current workforce, chronological age is only a rough indicator of health or performance capacity. For this reason Comcare recommends that strategies to promote healthy ageing begin early and continue throughout life.

Comcare's contribution to this package of resource materials provides managers in APS agencies with assistance in developing strategies to address workforce ageing as a part of their human resource and risk management programs. Implementation of these strategies is an investment not only in current health and safety, but also in the future health and performance of the APS workforce.

The resource material developed by Comcare includes advice to assist agencies to develop an action plan for ageing. The appropriate mix of strategies will depend on the specific workplace and workforce characteristics of particular agencies and their risk assessments. The strategies outlined cover:

- health and well-being promotion to reduce the impact of risk factors and slow the changes associated with ageing
- improving job and work task design
- improving work organisation and the physical work environment to maximise the ability of mature-aged workers to participate in the workforce
- reducing the risk of injury
- providing training and information resources appropriate to the needs of mature-aged workers to further develop their performance capacities.



A **high** proportion
of mature-aged **employees**
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PART 2: PLANNING FOR MATURE-AGED EMPLOYEES

■ WHY DO WORKERS LEAVE AND HOW CAN YOU ENCOURAGE THEM TO STAY?

In surveys undertaken for *Organisational Renewal*, current employees aged 50–54 years and over 55 years identified the main reasons for leaving the APS as:

- retirement
- financial security at that point
- superannuation scheme design features.

Other reasons also identified were: partner's retirement intentions, personal reasons (for example, carers' responsibilities) and health.

The median intended retirement age reported by current employees in the same survey was:

- 60 years for those aged 50–54
- 63 years for those aged 55 and above.

This would indicate that a high proportion of mature-aged employees already intend to work beyond 55, and

service-wide data on retention suggest that this is likely to be increasingly the case.

Of those employees who indicated they intended leaving the APS at a particular time, some reported that their intention was a response to long periods of service, while others specifically referred to change fatigue and burnout.⁸

SOURCES OF JOB SATISFACTION

A recent survey of a large sample of APS employees conducted for the 2002–03 State of the Service report provides some interesting insights into the factors which most contribute to job satisfaction amongst employees in different age groups.

Survey respondents were asked to rate the five most important factors from among 15 contributing to their job satisfaction, and then to rate their satisfaction with those factors.

PROFILE OF A MATURE-AGED APS EMPLOYEE

Jenny is an EL2 in her early 50s. She has no intention of leaving the workforce any time soon, having only joined the Service in 1998. She would like to have at least ten years of service for superannuation purposes. Her teenage daughter is still in high school and will go to university. She could be persuaded to leave the APS for interesting work with satisfactory superannuation arrangements, but is not actively seeking to do so. Jenny's husband doesn't have any firm retirement intentions either.

This profile was provided by an APS employee for the purpose of illustrating some of the issues raised in this document.

⁸ Management Advisory Committee, *Organisation Renewal*, 2003, p.39

The five most important factors as rated by APS employees across all age groups were:

- good working relationships
- flexible working arrangements
- opportunities to utilise skills
- interesting work
- salary.

For those aged 55 years and over the most important factors vary somewhat:

- good working relationships
- opportunity to utilise skills
- chance to make a useful contribution to society
- flexible working arrangements
- seeing tangible results from work.

The very substantial overlap of reasons for job satisfaction between age groups suggests that the factors that most contribute to job satisfaction remain reasonably stable through life-cycle stages, though their relative importance changes at different times. Those aged under 25, for example, rate the opportunity for skill and career development as important factors contributing to job satisfaction, whereas older workers are more interested in having the opportunity to use their skills, to make a contribution and to see tangible results.

Although data from employee surveys present a reasonably complex set of factors affecting job satisfaction and intentions to leave, most mature-aged employees are satisfied with their work—and are generally more satisfied than their younger colleagues. Employees over 55 tend to be even more satisfied than most other mature aged employees—most of them have made a conscious decision to continue working in the APS, even though their experience and financial situation would in many cases allow them to explore other options.

Some respondents to the *Organisational Renewal* survey cited poor management and supervision, workload and the perception that their work was undervalued as factors that may encourage their departure from the APS earlier than otherwise intended.

Of course employee experiences and motivations may vary considerably between agencies. Even though mature-aged workers, on average, have generally higher levels of job satisfaction than younger workers, the issue for agencies is to identify those areas that influence leaving and retirement intentions and to act to influence valued employees to stay longer. These may include, for example, learning and development, recognition for effort, flexibility and superannuation.

UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYEES' INTENTIONS AND THE REASONS FOR THOSE INTENTIONS

Having developed a profile of its workforce, as recommended above, an agency may see a clear business case for surveying its employees in order to get an agency-wide picture of retirement intentions and factors which may influence those intentions. Agencies should take care that in collecting personal information from their employees, they adhere to the information privacy principles. Employees should be advised of the rationale for the survey, the purposes for which it is to be used, and the fact that their participation in the survey is voluntary.

HR practitioners may want to gather agency-wide data for their mature-aged workers on a number of matters, such as:

- the age they intend leaving the agency
- why they intend leaving the agency at that age
- what would keep them working beyond the age when they currently intend to leave
- whether they have preferred working time arrangements (employees should be encouraged to respond in a realistic way, bearing in mind that superannuation can facilitate part time work and working at a reduced classification level)
- possibilities for re-joining the agency at a later time.

A mature-aged workers' survey was prepared for the MAC *Organisational Renewal* project and distributed to employees over 50 years old in a selection of agencies

taking part in the project. The survey was prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and addresses the set of issues listed above. Participation was voluntary and responses from all agencies were aggregated for use in *Organisational Renewal*. A copy of the survey questions is attached as a resource at Appendix B. Agencies may find it a useful basis for designing their own surveys. The questions seek demographic information and information on employee intentions and motivation, and provide a wide range of possible responses to the issues listed.

Agencies will need to analyse the information they have collected and consider how it will influence workforce planning, including the development of strategies.

USING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

It is not surprising that highly experienced and often senior employees appear to be more interested in using their skills than in acquiring new ones. However, it is in the interests of both employers and employees to ensure that the desire to use skills remains closely associated with the desire to maintain and upgrade skills, and that all employees are encouraged to do both.

Although the APS has undergone a structural change towards a more highly skilled workforce, all skills require, over time, to be adapted, extended, or even replaced. A first qualification is no guarantee of lifelong employment. Agency business structures and needs are changing, and with them the work environment and the technology it uses. It is increasingly important that all workers have access to relevant training.

Research suggests that there are no particular styles of training delivery that are particularly suited to mature-aged employees. Training methods developed to target the performance of older employees have been found to have the same positive impact on the performance of all employees.⁹

However, it is important to ensure that the learning and development agenda for mature-aged employees is closely linked to the broader organisational performance agenda. Of course such links should be established for all learning and development activities, but it is particularly critical with individuals in this group that neither managers nor employees should assume that mature-aged workers are or should be choosing to run down their investment in training or any other developmental opportunity.

It is therefore critical to ensure that training and development for mature-aged employees, like that for all others, is:

- linked to the agency's future capability requirements
- linked to the individual's career development plan
- linked to the employee's performance plan and feedback.¹⁰

It is a matter of concern that among those over 45 who responded to the 2003 State of the Service employee survey and identified career development as a key contributor to job satisfaction, there was a high level of dissatisfaction with the career development opportunities being provided.

...it seems fair to say that we must challenge the entrenched life-cycle mindset that sees a one-way path from full-time education to full-time work to full-time retirement. Life-long learning, phased retirement, and the capacity for individuals to engage and re-engage in the workforce at different levels of intensity are likely to be characteristics for business, economic and social success in the future. We must ensure that our social and economic infrastructure is capable of supporting this—not just for the sake of older workers, but for all Australians.

50+ Age can work: a business guide for supporting older workers, Business Council of Australia, August 2003

9 Mark Wooden, Mark Cully, Adriana VandenHeuvel, Richard Curtain, *Barriers to training for older workers, aged 45 years and over and possible policy solutions*, Department of Education, Science and Training, 2001, <http://infocat.dest.gov.au> The researchers undertook a review of relevant Australian and international literature; statistical analyses of large, nationally representative surveys, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics education and training

surveys for 1989, 1993 and 1997, and the 1995 Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey; focus groups with older persons, employed and unemployed, and with human resource managers; and three enterprise case studies.

10 See Wooden et al., *Barriers to training for older workers*, pp. 41 ff.

USING REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Data collected for *Organisational Renewal* showed that for mature-aged workers 'recognition for effort' was the area in which there was the greatest gap between the workplace factors that were important to them and their level of satisfaction with those factors. This gap existed for those who were still in the workplace and those who had already left it.

Recognition for effort is a key part of a performance management system. It is important to ensure that mature-aged employees remain full participants in an agency management system. Less than full participation because of unspoken assumptions related to their age will be counter productive.

For all employees, performance management should be used to sustain a formal career planning process with access to learning and development opportunities. It should not be assumed that mature-aged employees have waning interest in training or new job challenges. On the other hand, direct discussions with employees about their career desires and intentions can assist both

managers and employees to design arrangements which suit and reward them both.

In this context there is scope to use performance management systems to plan for different types of work (for example, a shift from management to mentoring) or for different work timing (for example, part-time or task-specific timing) or interrupted work (for example, allowing for a sabbatical, or for caring responsibilities). A number of these options are raised below and canvassed in *Flexible working arrangements for older workers*, which is part of this package of materials. Changes should be integrated with appropriate skills and capability development and remain forward-looking.

PROFILE OF A MATURE-AGED APS EMPLOYEE

Matthew turned 65 in 2003 and plans to retire in July 2005 after 40 years of service. The timing of his leaving is calculated to maximise the benefit of several factors: age on retirement, length of service, remuneration (having received the final pay rise under his agency's certified agreement) and tax advantages. While Matthew's age is probably the most influential factor in his decision to retire, he considers that the current performance assessment scheme in his agency is a disincentive to continuing to work. Matthew doesn't think he could be persuaded to return to the APS in any capacity.

This profile was provided by an APS employee for the purpose of illustrating some of the issues raised in this document.

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is providing its managers with aggregated demographic data about their work areas, to assist them with workforce planning and knowledge management issues.

The data include classification, age group, superannuation scheme, length of APS service and employee group (ongoing, non-ongoing or casual). More detailed information will also be provided about employees aged 50 and over.

The information should assist managers to identify areas where succession planning and knowledge management are likely to be an issue in the short to medium term, and to identify key employees they may want to take specific action to retain.

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES—RETAINING OLDER WORKERS

The Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) has established a strong commitment to the employment of mature workers through their latest certified agreement, in which FaCS has undertaken to implement a retention strategy for mature employees. A reference group has also been established to focus on the development and implementation of the Mature Workers Strategy.

To gather the information necessary to develop the Strategy, FaCS surveyed current employees aged 45 and over about their retirement intentions, preferred working patterns and attitudes to post-retirement employment. The survey results were considered in conjunction with demographic analysis and scrutiny of current human resource and management policies. The analysis enabled FaCS to determine the issues influencing the employment of mature employees, and to develop a range of innovative and appropriate approaches to improving their retention, including:

- integration of age retirement and succession planning issues into the performance management system
 - FaCS envisages that this will assist managers make informed workforce planning decisions and provide employees with an opportunity to discuss their employment options leading up to retirement
- application of broader workplace policies such as flexible working arrangements to encourage the retention of mature employees

- this includes building the capability and confidence of managers to utilise the current range of flexible policies that are generally available as 'family friendly', to retain mature employees
- detailed monitoring of age statistics to better inform recruitment and retention policies
 - this will include providing corporate managers with the technology to monitor the demographic profile of the agency, and line managers with the ability to dissect and analyse demographic information specific to their areas
- monitoring of OH&S and learning and development statistics to gauge whether mature employees require targeted policies on these issues
- establishment of an alumni association to maintain connections between former employees and the 'FaCS community'
 - the alumni network will enable employees to be contacted post retirement when employment opportunities arise, to be invited to seminars on family and community issues and to receive workplace newsletters
- development of performance indicators which will enable the effectiveness of the strategy to be reviewed every 12 months.

Whilst many initiatives are already in place, FaCS intends to launch the Strategy in late 2003.

If you would like to know more about the FaCS mature aged retention strategy contact Jenny Ransley at jenny.ransley@facs.gov.au



The **challenge** for agencies will be to develop **flexible** working arrangements that support the **retention** of mature-aged workers and the **capacity** of managers to use those employees effectively.

MAKING WORK WORK FOR MATURE-AGED WORKERS

Organisational Renewal reported that most APS employees aged 50 and over intend to work beyond age 55. The report also found that flexibility around working arrangements and type of work undertaken can significantly influence the decisions of mature-aged workers about the timing of their retirement.

While superannuation is considered separately below, it is important that both agencies and employees understand the superannuation implications of flexible employment options, especially in the context of distinguishing between retaining valued employees and re-engaging former employees.

Where employees have a planned retirement date and the agency is negotiating to extend the period of APS employment on, say, a part-time basis and/or at a lower classification level, superannuation can be presented as a positive factor for the large majority of employees. This is because most employees who extend their APS workforce participation will experience a positive impact on the level of their superannuation benefit.

Where this is not the case (most notably in the shrinking group of employees affected by the 54/11 retirement incentive) agencies have available to them options for counteracting any negative impact that valued employees might otherwise experience.

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Agency-level agreement making has underpinned a shift from APS-wide conditions of employment to agency-specific arrangements. This devolved environment provides APS managers with the opportunity to promote flexible working options that assist mature-aged workers to combine employment with personal responsibilities and lifestyle choices.

The challenge for agencies will be to develop flexible working arrangements that support the retention of mature-aged workers and the capacity of managers to use those employees effectively. While agency capacity may vary, there is still considerable scope to introduce flexible working arrangements into the APS. Australian private sector employers of individuals in occupations similar to those of the APS are, for example, managing a workforce which is 33% part-time, while their APS equivalents are currently managing a workforce which is only nine per cent part-time.

Agencies need to ensure that there is no tacit belief that policies currently applying to flexible working arrangements only relate to particular sub-groups of employees. Comments made in response to the *State of the Service Report 2002–03* employee survey suggest that significant numbers of employees believe that the flexible working time arrangements in place in their agency are skewed to support working parents, to the exclusion of others, or are only available in principle.

EMPLOYEE SURVEY COMMENT

I am sometimes disappointed that home life issues are always equated with family responsibilities. I don't have family but I still want a work/life balance.

Source: *State of the Service Report 2002–03* employee survey

Some of the flexible working arrangements currently available in APS agencies which may contribute to the retention of mature-aged employees include:

- flex time and span of hours
- part-time work, variable on a weekly, monthly or seasonal basis
- job sharing
- home-based work (telecommuting)
- purchased leave
- career breaks (leave without pay)
- working at a reduced level.

Other effective flexible working arrangements identified in private sector studies include full or part-time sabbaticals (providing opportunities for further education, travel etc.) and alternative attendance patterns.

RESIGN AND RETURN

Rather than changing their existing working arrangements, some employees resign and seek at some later point to return to some form of employment on either a full-time or a part-time basis. Re-engagement of former APS employees on different

arrangements such as contracts, or as non-ongoing employees, has become common. Such an option can provide valuable flexibility for agencies as well as for the former employees concerned.

Such re-engagement should occur only in genuine circumstances, and agencies should not engage in contrived arrangements to provide for the continued employment of employees.

One aspect of an employee's decision whether or not to return to employment in some form is the impact this decision may have on their superannuation entitlements. Employees should be advised to consult their superannuation scheme and to seek financial advice prior to finalising any such arrangements, particularly in circumstances where payment of a person's deferred pension has not commenced and that person proposes returning to public sector employment. This issue is canvassed in *Superannuation and mature-aged APS workers: information on retention options and phased retirement* in this package of materials.

There are a number of measures that agencies can use to keep in touch with former employees and to enable those employees to express interest in re-employment. Agencies may simply choose to establish registers which enable former and departing employees to register their interest in certain types of work and employment

arrangements. This could be incorporated into standard exit surveys or separation procedures. There is scope for agencies to use interactive website-based databases which will allow people to update their own details and, by opening or closing certain fields, keep in touch with line managers as well as HR areas either directly or indirectly should they so choose.

Depending on the type of work involved, making best use of former employees may call for tailored management approaches to keep them up-to-date and project ready. FaCS has undertaken to establish an alumni network that will enable employees to be contacted post-retirement when employment opportunities arise, to be invited to seminars on family and community issues and to receive workplace newsletters.

More detailed information about flexible strategies, and how they can be used to maximise the performance of mature-aged workers can be found in the resource material prepared by the DEWR, *Flexible working arrangements for older workers*, which is included in this package.

USING WORKPLACE AGREEMENTS

A number of APS agencies have included in their workplace agreements commitments to the development of strategies to retain their mature-aged workers, and have specifically identified flexible working arrangements as a means of achieving this. *Flexible working arrangements for older workers* provides examples of agency agreements that have articulated a commitment to using such arrangements. DEWR has put together a database of family-friendly agreement clauses that agencies can use in their agreement making. It is at <http://www.wagenet.gov.au/FFAC>.

PHASED RETIREMENT AND CHANGING JOB ROLES

Employees may wish to phase in their retirement by changing their roles in the workplace. Depending on their personal circumstances, they may choose to do this before retiring or following retirement, for example by returning as a contractor.

PROFILE OF A MATURE-AGED APS EMPLOYEE

Gary, a senior public servant, plans to retire at the end of 2003 at age 60. He has been in the APS for more than 40 years and wants to enjoy himself and his extended family while he's still healthy. He no longer feels any passion for his work, and the death of former colleagues and friends has reminded him of his mortality. He has no intention of returning to the workforce, but may be interested in part-time advisory or committee work.

This profile was provided by an APS employee for the purpose of illustrating some of the issues raised in this document.

Typically, phased retirement may involve shedding management responsibilities in order to focus on project or mentoring work, perhaps in conjunction with more flexible working time arrangements. But it can also involve 'handover' work such as that identified above under knowledge management. That is, employees aiming to retire might be encouraged to stay on in an agency for a period of time to:

- focus on mentoring and coaching employees being targeted through succession management plans
- job-share with an employee who may be staying, in order to hand on skills, knowledge and networks
- enter into a handover role, partnering with consultants who may be taking over a function.

Phased retirement could also involve remaining with, or returning to, an agency but dropping back one or more classification levels and perhaps also working a reduced number of hours. To the extent that such an option is a response to burnout, agencies will need, as

a matter of priority, to review their arrangements for managing leave and excessive hours. But to the extent that phased retirement is chosen as a mutually beneficial approach to leaving the APS workforce, it can offer a constructive means of making the best use of the skills and abilities of employees nearing departure.

ELDER CARE

While mature-aged employees are less likely than their colleagues to have young dependents, they are more likely to have adult relatives, particularly parents and partners or spouses, who may require short-term or longer-term care.

Some of the stress and difficulties faced by care givers who are trying to juggle caring and work responsibilities could be relieved if they were able to access flexible working arrangements, or changes in the overall design of work, such as those outlined above.

PROFILE OF A MATURE-AGED APS EMPLOYEE

Miriam is a career public servant in her early 50s. She is married and has no dependent children. Miriam may decide to leave the APS so as to capitalise on the financial advantage of 54/11, but she noted that the monetary value of this option had been eroded in recent years. Miriam's partner has already retired and this is likely to influence her to leave sooner rather than later. Miriam says she may be interested in returning to the APS 'in a mentoring capacity: that is, working as part of a smaller team, contributing to outcomes but not necessarily driving them—more sharing knowledge and expertise but not necessarily taking a management role.'

This profile was provided by an APS employee for the purpose of illustrating some of the issues raised in this document.

EMPLOYEE SURVEY COMMENT

I 'retired' from a senior position 18 months ago and re-entered the APS at a lower level. Work-life balance is now very satisfactory, whereas my life was previously very work-centric—I did not realise how much until after making the change.

Source: *State of the Service Report 2003–03* employee survey

Agencies can also adopt targeted strategies that can assist employees with elder care requirements, including the provision of short-term facilities and advice on longer-term support.

Staff may also need to be able to take time off after a relative dies in order to help wind up their personal affairs.

The Commission has prepared a short pamphlet for line managers addressing the key issues raised in this package of materials. This pamphlet can be adapted by HR areas to address demographic and operational issues specific to the agency. *Managing ageing in the workplace: advice for APS managers* is at Appendix 3.

PROVIDING ADVICE TO LINE MANAGERS

As the FaCS case study indicates, it will be important for HR practitioners to build the capability and confidence of line managers to use the flexible policies available in an agency and generally designed to be 'family friendly' in order to retain older employees. Line managers need to be aware of the implications of the ageing of their agency's workforce, and the strategies available to them to respond to those issues. Line managers should also be encouraged to use their agency's performance management and feedback arrangements to ensure that valued employees are aware that they are valued and that there are options which can be used to encourage them to stay.

EXAMPLES

The Australian Taxation Office provides carers' rooms that can be used for sick children or elderly parents or other relatives. This would allow an elderly relative, for example, to attend a medical appointment and wait comfortably until his or her carer is able to take them home.

The Bureau of Meteorology has purchased a licence for an elder care kit, which is available to its employees. The kit is updated regularly under the terms of the licence. It means that as the need arises employees have access to current information about a range of elder care issues, which they can download and take home to discuss with their family. It also means that employees don't need to spend time on the phone or internet hunting around for information.

If you would like to know more about the Bureau of Meteorology's elder care kit contact Lynette Power at l.power@bom.gov.au

SUPERANNUATION

While a number of factors influence decisions to separate from the APS, 15% of current employees surveyed by the MAC gave superannuation as the main driver underlying their decision to leave the APS. In addition, 47% indicated retirement and 21% gave financial security as their main reasons for leaving—both of which are also more than likely linked to superannuation.

As the separation intentions of older employees are highly influenced by superannuation-related issues, it is crucial that agencies understand how superannuation rules impact on the retention of employees approaching retirement age.

Organisational Renewal examined factors specific to the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS) and the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS) that encourage mature-aged workers to leave the APS. The report found that agencies need to understand and provide accurate information on these schemes and the options that exist to encourage mature-aged workers to remain in, or return to, the APS. The report also found that the impact on agencies of superannuation arrangements is manageable if they develop strategies and policies to address these factors as part of their workforce planning.

To assist agencies to deal with the potential impact of superannuation on the retention of older workers, the Department of Finance and Administration (Finance)

developed guidelines for setting superannuation salary, which were issued to APS employers in August 2003. The guidelines set out circumstances in which it may be appropriate for an employer to set a higher superannuation salary for PSS or CSS members (without increasing take-home pay) to address the financial incentive that the member may have to cease APS employment.

Finance has also developed guidance material for this package, as have the PSS and CSS Boards. The Finance material, *Superannuation and mature-aged APS workers: information on retention options and phased retirement*, and the PSS and CSS Boards' fact sheets address:

- the design features of the PSS and the CSS and their implications for early retirement
- strategies for agencies wanting to retain employees affected by the 54/11 or maximum benefit limit issues
- for both schemes, the availability of retirement benefits from age 55, and in particular the fact that superannuation is not a barrier to having a phased retirement such as by working part-time or at a reduced classification level.

Additional information for human resource practitioners on these issues can also be found:

- at Appendix C of *Organisational Renewal* at www.apsc.gov.au/mac

- by emailing Comsuper at employer.help@comsuper.gov.au
- for employees who are not members of the PSS or CSS, by telephoning Finance on (02) 6215 3479.



Superannuation is not a **barrier**
to having a **phased** retirement
such as by working **part-time** or
at a reduced
classification level.

■ CONTACT LIST

- For information on the *National physical activity guidelines*, visit the website:
<http://www.health.gov.au> or direct address
<http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/publicat/document/physguide.pdf>
- For information on the changing APS workplace, mature-aged employment in the APS, and the 54/11 superannuation and retirement issue, visit the Management Advisory Committee website
www.apsc.gov.au/mac or direct address
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/mac/organisationrenewal.pdf>
Management Advisory Committee, *Organisational Renewal*, 2003.
- If you wish to locate the range of anti-discrimination legislation, visit the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission website:
<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/legal/legislation.html>
- If you wish to locate the database of family-friendly clauses in workplace agreements, visit the Family Friendly Agreement Clauses website:
<http://www.wagenet.gov.au/FFAC>
- If you wish to access the Australian National Audit Office's Better Practice Guide *Planning for the workforce of the future*, visit the website:
<http://www.anao.gov.au> and navigate via publications > Better Practice Guides
- If you wish to access the Australian Public Service Commission's APS Employment Database, visit the website: <http://www.apsc.gov.au/apsed>
- To access the *Long Service Leave (Commonwealth Employees) Act 1976*, visit the following website:
<http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/html/pasteact/0/293/top.htm>
- To access the *Superannuation (Productivity Benefit) Act 1988*, visit the following website:
<http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/html/pasteact/0/396/top.htm>
- For information on the issue of phased retirement and its implications on superannuation, visit the following websites:
www.pss.gov.au/pss/factsheets/psf10.htm
www.css.gov.au/css/factsheets/csf10.htm
www.pss.gov.au/pss/infosheets/mac_report.htm
- For individual Public Sector Superannuation Scheme and Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme member enquiries, including where a member seeks a projected benefit, the contacts are:
Phone: 13 23 66
Email: pss.members@comsuper.gov.au
css.members@comsuper.gov.au
Mail: ComSuper
PO Box 22
Belconnen ACT 2616
Fax: 02 6272 9801
or 02 6272 9808.

■ FURTHER READING

Access Economics, 'All in it together', a paper prepared for the Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra, June 2000

ANAO, *Managing people for business outcomes*, June 2002

ANAO, *Planning for the workforce of the future*, March 2001

Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour force projections 1999–2016*, Catalogue no. 6260.0

Australian Public Service Commission, *Managing succession in the Australian Public Service*, 2003

Australian Public Service Commission, *State of the Service Report 2002–03*
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/stateoftheservice>

Australian Public Service Commission (APS), *Statistical Bulletin 2002–03*,
<http://www.apsc.gov.au/apsprofile/index.html>

Business Council of Australia, *50+ Age can work: a business guide for supporting older workers*, August 2003

Commonwealth of Australia, *Intergenerational Report 2002–03*, May 2002

Management Advisory Committee, *Organisational Renewal*, 2003

Management Advisory Committee, *Performance management in the APS: a strategic framework*, 2001

Wooden M, Cully M, Vanden Heuvel A, Curtain R, *Barriers to training for older workers, aged 45 years and over and possible policy solutions*, Department of Education, Science and Training, 2001

■ APPENDIX 1

PEOPLE COUNT—USING APSED DATA FOR WORKFORCE PLANNING

WHAT IS APSED?

The Australian Public Service Employment Database (APSED) stores employment data for all APS employees. APSED is maintained by the APS Commission and the data is supplied to APSED from the HR systems of APS agencies.

Data items for individual APS employees include:

- employment status and category (ongoing/non-ongoing, full-time/part-time)
- movement details (agency, classification, location etc)
- age
- gender
- and, if provided, education details and EEO data (whether the individual is an Indigenous Australian, whether they have a disability, their country of birth, and details of first language).

WHAT CAN APSED DO FOR AGENCIES?

APSED can assist the workforce planning of APS agencies by providing evidence for evaluation of the changing nature of the APS or agencies and the impact of people management policies on the structure of the APS or agencies:

- APSED can benchmark an agency against the whole of the APS or other agencies
- APSED can assist the comparative analysis of an agency's employment issues over time
- APSED can be used as part of wider APS or research projects and in conjunction with other data sources such as surveys and other databases.

APS Commission staff working on APSED are qualified and experienced in data extraction, manipulation and analysis and possess specialised IT knowledge, providing you with a knowledgeable, managed service. As well as providing a tailored service, we now have a feature that allows users to access some data directly, through the APSED Internet Interface.

THE APSED INTERNET INTERFACE (APSEDII)

APSEDII is a new facility providing user friendly, internet based access to APSED data. The interface facilitates workforce planning and benchmarking by allowing agencies to produce data similar to that published in the APS Statistical Bulletin. Agencies are able to run restricted queries to provide Bulletin style tables with data about their own organisation and, for comparative purposes, about other agencies in their size grouping.

The interface produces charts and tables and also allows users to download the queried results and manipulate the data further in other applications such as Excel. For example a small agency might be interested to see how its classification distribution by gender compares to other small agencies or it might be interested in comparing its classification by age profile

to other agencies. The interface will allow the user to make the appropriate selections on the web page then generate the query and any charting or download requirements.

ACCESS TO THE SYSTEM

The internet interface site can be accessed by following links on the Australian Public Service Commission's Internet site at www.apsc.gov.au.

The interface is presented in a user-friendly point and click style with instructions and help available on the website.

There are two modes of access, general users and restricted users. General users include everyone with access to the Internet. Restricted users are designated individuals within agencies who can access the system through a secure logon and password procedure. These users will be able to view individual records on the system for their own agency only. As privacy considerations are paramount and the individual record data sensitive, general users will only have access to confidentialised data groupings.

WHAT DOES THE APS COMMISSION USE APSED FOR?

Data from APSED is used for the annual State of the Service Report and the APS Statistical Bulletin, as well as research for policy development.

HOW IS APSED DATA BEING USED?

The following recent requests for APSED data are from agencies and external clients who are using the information to assist in the accurate formulation of workforce planning and workplace studies:

- time series analysis between a particular agency and the whole of the APS on age profiles and separation rates
- age and classification profile for an agency to allow them to undertake a comparative analysis between their agency and the whole of the APS
- analysis of an agency's graduate recruitment program numbers over time to benchmark against APS-wide trends
- time series analysis of ongoing APS staff by agency, classification, gender and employment status for an academic study.

Some publicly available current publications that have used APSED data include the State of the Service report, the APS Statistical Bulletin and the Management Advisory Committee report on *Organisational Renewal*. These can be found on the APS Commission web site at www.apsc.gov.au.

APSED AND PRIVACY

The APS Commission ensures that all use of APSED data for research purposes complies with the *Privacy Act 1988*, in particular the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs).

Access to an individual employee's employment record is regulated by the IPPs, which limit the use and disclosure of data to ensure that individuals cannot be identified.

Access to APSED in the Commission is limited to the APS Commission Executive and to authorised employees responsible for ensuring that the records are accurate and complete, or who are authorised to access data from APSED for accountability or research purposes.

For more details, see the Privacy Statement on our web site.

COSTS

Access to APSEDII is free. Research and analysis projects will be undertaken on a cost recovery basis, and cost will be dependent on the size and nature of the request.

FIND OUT MORE

Enquiries regarding research and analysis services should be directed to

Sue Johnson

Director

APSED

Review and Evaluation Group

T: 02 6272 5505

E: Sue.Johnson@apsc.gov.au

■ APPENDIX 2

MATURE-AGED WORKERS QUESTIONNAIRE

The following survey questions were used by the Management Advisory Committee as part of the Organisational Renewal project. Originally prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, they are now provided in this package as a possible basis for agencies to design their own survey of mature-aged workers.

QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE RESPONDING TO SURVEY

- Answer questions by ticking the appropriate box or circling the appropriate number.
- You may not be required to answer all the questions in the form. Follow the "Go to" instructions to the next relevant question, otherwise simply answer each question, one after the other.

1 DATE OF BIRTH:

...../...../.....

DD MM YYYY

2 GENDER:

Male

Female

3 DATE FIRST JOINED THE APS:

...../.....

MM YYYY

4 CURRENT WORK LOCATION:

ACT

NSW

Vic

Qld

WA

SA

Tas

NT

5 SUBSTANTIVE EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION (EXCLUDING HIGHER DUTIES):

[Tick the relevant box]

Note: If broadbanded, tick classification which most closely corresponds.

APS1

APS2

APS3

APS4

APS5

APS6

EL1

EL2

SESB1

SESB2

SESB3

Statutory Appointment

6 HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN AT THIS CLASSIFICATION?

.....years

7 WHAT IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOL THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED?

[Tick only one box]

- Did not go to school
- Year 8 or below
- Year 9 or equivalent
- Year 10 or equivalent
- Year 11 or equivalent
- Year 12 or equivalent

8 HAVE YOU COMPLETED A QUALIFICATION (INCLUDING TRADE CERTIFICATES)?

- Yes Go to 9
- No Go to 11
- No, still studying for first qualification Go to 11

9 WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF THE HIGHEST QUALIFICATION YOU HAVE COMPLETED?

[Tick only one box]

- Doctorate, PhD
- Masters
- Postgraduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate
- Undergraduate Degree or Honours
- Associate Diploma, Advanced Certificate, Technician Certificate or Certificate of Technology
- Vocational qualification, trade certificate/ apprenticeship

10 WHAT IS THE FIELD OF STUDY FOR YOUR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION COMPLETED?

[Tick up to any two of the following items]

- Administration (e.g. management, marketing, communication and tourism)
- Accountancy
- Economics
- Finance/banking
- Human Resource Management or Industrial Relations
- Education
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Medical (e.g. doctors, nurses and physiotherapists)
- Social sciences (e.g. social work, behavioural sciences, psychology and sociology)
- Science (e.g. mathematics, veterinary, geography, biochemistry)
- Engineering, Architecture or Surveying
- Arts (e.g. history, archaeology, anthropology, English, languages, music, fine arts, philosophy and political science)
- Business (e.g. business management, bookkeeping, secretarial studies and office management)
- Agriculture/forestry
- Trades, Labour or Hospitality (e.g. butchers, hairdressers and labourers)
- Other (please specify):.....

11 WHICH APS SUPERANNUATION SCHEME DO YOU BELONG TO?

- CSS
- PSS
- Other

12 WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN THE APS?

- Full-time
- Part-time

13 HOW MANY YEARS OF SERVICE IN TOTAL DO YOU HAVE IN THE APS?

.....years

14 HOW MANY YEARS OF SERVICE DO YOU HAVE IN THIS AGENCY?

.....years

15 HOW UNIMPORTANT OR IMPORTANT WERE THE FOLLOWING REASONS FOR YOU JOINING THIS AGENCY?

[Circle the appropriate number for each of the following reasons]

Scale:

1 = Very unimportant

3 = Neither unimportant nor important

5 = Very important

a) The work was related to my degree or experience:

1 2 3 4 5

b) Interesting work:

1 2 3 4 5

c) Location of the job:

1 2 3 4 5

d) The agency had a good reputation:

1 2 3 4 5

e) Job security:

1 2 3 4 5

f) Just wanted a job:

1 2 3 4 5

g) Knew someone who was working in the agency:

1 2 3 4 5

h) Wanted to work in the agency:

1 2 3 4 5

i) Ability to move between departments:

1 2 3 4 5

j) Starting and/or future salary:

1 2 3 4 5

k) Training provided:

1 2 3 4 5

l) Career development:

1 2 3 4 5

16 HOW UNIMPORTANT OR IMPORTANT ARE THESE WORKPLACE FACTORS TO YOU NOW?

[Circle the appropriate number for each of the following factors]

Scale:

1 = Very unimportant

3 = Neither unimportant nor important

5 = Very important

a) Duties/expectations made clear:

1 2 3 4 5

b) Regular feedback provided:

1 2 3 4 5

c) Chance to be creative/innovative:

1 2 3 4 5

d) Chance to contribute to corporate issues:

1 2 3 4 5

e) Recognition for effort:

1 2 3 4 5

f) Opportunities to utilise your skills:

1 2 3 4 5

g) Interesting work provided:

1 2 3 4 5

h) Doing the type of work you expected to do:

1 2 3 4 5

i) Good working relationships:

1 2 3 4 5

j) Appropriate workload size:

1 2 3 4 5

k) Training provided:

1 2 3 4 5

l) Career development:

1 2 3 4 5

17 HOW DISSATISFIED OR SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THESE WORKPLACE FACTORS IN YOUR CURRENT AGENCY?

[Circle the appropriate number for each of the following factors]

Scale:

1 = Very dissatisfied

3 = Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied

5 = Very satisfied

a) Duties/expectations made clear:

1 2 3 4 5

b) Regular feedback provided:

1 2 3 4 5

c) Chance to be creative/innovative:

1 2 3 4 5

d) Chance to contribute to corporate issues:

1 2 3 4 5

e) Recognition for effort:

1 2 3 4 5

f) Opportunities to utilise your skills:

1 2 3 4 5

g) Interesting work provided:

1 2 3 4 5

h) Doing the type of work you expected to do:

1 2 3 4 5

i) Good working relationships

1 2 3 4 5

j) Appropriate workload size:

1 2 3 4 5

k) Training provided:

1 2 3 4 5

l) Career development:

1 2 3 4 5

18 AT APPROXIMATELY WHAT AGE DO YOU INTEND TO LEAVE THE APS (EXCLUDING CONTRACTS AND CONSULTANCIES)?

.....years

19 WHAT ARE ALL THE REASONS FOR YOU TO LEAVE THE APS AT THAT AGE?

[Tick as many reasons as applicable]

- CSS financial incentive to resign before age 55
- Maximum Benefit Limit reached
- Optimal taxation situation
- Voluntary redundancy
- Partner retiring at that point
- Coincided with major activity (e.g. moving house or travel)
- Financial security at that point
- Retirement
- Another job outside the APS

Personal reasons (e.g. care for children or sick relatives)

Other (please specify):.....

20 WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON FOR YOU TO LEAVE THE APS AT THAT AGE?

[Tick one of the following reasons]

- CSS financial incentive to resign before age 55
- Maximum Benefit Limit reached
- Optimal taxation situation
- Voluntary redundancy
- Partner retiring at that point
- Coincides with major activity (e.g. moving house or travel)
- Financial security at that point
- Retirement
- Another job outside the APS
- Personal reasons (e.g. care for children or sick relatives)
- Other (please specify):.....

21 AT THE MOMENT, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS ENCOURAGE YOU TO TRY AND LEAVE THE APS BEFORE THAT AGE?

[Tick as many reasons as applicable]

- Nothing is encouraging me to leave earlier
Go to 23
 - Poor management/supervision
 - Poor working relationships
 - Feel my work is under-valued
 - Better pay elsewhere
 - Skills better developed elsewhere
 - More stimulating work elsewhere
 - Too much work/under-resourced
 - Other (please specify):.....
-

22 AT THE MOMENT, WHICH OF THESE IS THE MAIN REASON ENCOURAGING YOU TO TRY AND LEAVE THE APS BEFORE THAT AGE?

[Tick one of the following reasons]

- Poor management/supervision
 - Poor working relationships
 - Feel my work is under-valued
 - Better pay elsewhere
 - Skills better developed elsewhere
 - More stimulating work elsewhere
 - Too much work/under-resourced
 - Other (please specify):.....
-

23 AT THE MOMENT, WHAT ARE ALL THE REASONS ENCOURAGING YOU TO STAY IN THE APS?

[Tick as many reasons as applicable]

- There are no reasons encouraging me Go to 25
 - Work is interesting
 - Feel my work is valued
 - Commitment to agency goals
 - Location of the job
 - Good working relationships
 - Pay is competitive
 - Superannuation provisions
 - Conditions are favourable (e.g. study, leave, flexibility in arrangements)
 - Ability to move between locations and departments
 - Relative job security
 - Training provided
 - Career path provided
 - Able to balance work and family
 - Other (please specify):.....
-

24 AT THE MOMENT, WHAT IS THE MAIN REASON ENCOURAGING YOU TO STAY IN THE APS?

[Tick one of the following reasons]

- Work is interesting
- Feel my work is valued
- Commitment to agency goals
- Location of the job
- Good working relationships
- Pay is competitive
- Superannuation provisions
- Conditions are favourable (e.g. study, leave, flexibility in arrangements)
- Ability to move between locations and departments
- Relative job security
- Training provided
- Career path provided
- Able to balance work and family
- Other (please specify)

25 WHICH, IF ANY, OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS WOULD KEEP YOU WORKING BEYOND THE AGE YOU CURRENTLY INTEND TO LEAVE?

[Tick as many reasons as applicable]

- None of these will keep me
Go to 29
- No loss to superannuation benefits
- No financial disadvantage (e.g. caused by taxation, reaching Maximum Benefit Limit etc.)

- More flexible working conditions
- A change in the type of work done

26 OF THESE REASONS, WHICH WOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT IN KEEPING YOU WORKING BEYOND THE AGE YOU CURRENTLY INTEND TO LEAVE?

[Tick one of the following reasons]

- No loss to superannuation benefits
- No financial disadvantage (e.g. caused by taxation, reaching Maximum Benefit Limit etc.)
- More flexible working conditions
- A change in the type of work done

27 IF THIS REASON WAS ADDRESSED, UNTIL WHAT AGE WOULD YOU THEN WORK IN THE APS?

.....years

28 WHAT WOULD BE YOUR PREFERRED WORKING ARRANGEMENT?

.....days per week, for.....months per year.

29 HOW UNSURE OR SURE ARE YOU THAT THE CORPORATE KNOWLEDGE YOU POSSESS WILL BE PASSED ON TO YOUR APS COLLEAGUES BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE APS?

[Circle the appropriate number]

Scale:

1 = Very unsure

3 = Neither sure nor unsure

5 = Very sure

1 2 3 4 5

30 WOULD YOU REJOIN THE APS SOMETIME AFTER YOU LEFT (INCLUDING CONTRACTS AND CONSULTANCIES)?

No (You have completed this survey)

Yes Go to 31

31 WHAT WOULD BE YOUR PREFERRED WORKING ARRANGEMENT (INCLUDING CONTRACTS AND CONSULTANCIES)?

.....days per week, for.....months per year

■ APPENDIX 3

MANAGING AGEING IN THE WORKPLACE ADVICE FOR APS MANAGERS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

THE AUSTRALIAN WORKFORCE IS AGEING

Declining birth and mortality rates have caught up with us. On average the Australian workforce is getting older, and the APS workforce is older than the workforce in general.

The ageing of the workforce is likely to create increased competition for workers. The APS, like other employers, will need to implement strategies that maximise the attraction and retention of valued employees of all ages. However, research shows that the only segment of the workforce where significant increases in workforce participation can be achieved is those aged over 55.

'WHY NOT'

In order to maintain organisational capability APS managers need to examine their attitudes and behaviour—to challenge old assumptions about how work is done and organised. In *Organisational Renewal* the Management Advisory Committee identified flexible working arrangements as being critical to the retention of mature aged employees. Many valued mature aged employees also want to have the option of a 'phased' retirement—that is, to reduce their hours and/or their level of responsibility. As the population ages, more and more employees will have caring responsibilities for adult relatives.

APS agencies have gone some way to incorporating flexible work practices into their workplaces, but more can be done. Rather than asking 'why', managers need to ask themselves 'why not'. Where practical this may mean re-organising how some work is done.

Mature aged employees will need to know the impact of any decision about their working arrangements on their superannuation entitlements

Organisational Renewal identified the risk of negative financial impacts as an issue affecting mature aged employees retirement intentions. In particular employees were concerned about the effect of working part-time or working beyond age 55 on their superannuation entitlements. For some individuals there may be issues that need to be addressed, but for most, accurate information is likely to neutralise their fears.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES

It is important that APS managers understand how the ageing of the workforce is likely to impact on their workplace and how they can respond to the challenges that arise.

UNDERSTAND YOUR OWN WORKFORCE PLANNING ISSUES

APS managers need to understand the workforce planning issues for their work area. What skills does your work area have? Are there any skill-gaps? How are skill-gaps going to be addressed? Are there strategies in place to deal with knowledge transfer and succession management when key people leave?

UNDERSTAND THE POLICY THAT SENIOR MANAGERS IN YOUR AGENCY HAVE DECIDED TO ADOPT

The impact of workforce ageing is not consistent across APS agencies and therefore it is likely that the approach adopted by agencies will vary. For example, 'career breaks' might be put to effective use in large agencies, but be difficult to absorb in a small agency. Managers should understand the approach their agency has adopted so that they can implement and apply it confidently and consistently.

STRATEGIES

WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU AS A MANAGER

- Understand employee leaving and retirement intentions
- Use learning and development to motivate and equip mature aged employees
- Use rewards and recognition to ensure that employees know they are valued
- Consider the flexible working and phased retirement options that are already available in your agency. They may be set out in a HR manual or in your certified agreement, or you can seek advice from your HR area.
- Make sure you're aware of the programs your agency has to support staff (e.g. employee assistance program, childcare kit or eldercare kit)

Also consider how rewards and recognition, learning and development and other corporate programs (e.g. mentoring) can contribute to employees' attitudes to work and their retirement intentions. Can you influence valued employees to work in your agency longer than they otherwise might?

You may want to refer to the Planning for Mature Aged Employees section of *Workforce ageing: materials for human resource practitioners in the APS* that was distributed to HR areas recently by the Australian Public Service Commission.

MATERIALS

The following materials may assist you in responding to the ageing of the workforce in your workplace:

The Australian Public Service Commission has distributed a package of materials, collectively titled *Implementing Organisational Renewal: Mature-aged Workers in the APS*, which includes:

- Australian Public Service Commission, *Workforce Ageing: materials for human resource practitioners in the APS*, 2003
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, *Flexible working arrangements for older workers*, 2003
- Department of Finance and Administration, *Superannuation and mature-aged APS workers: information on retention options and phased retirement*, 2003

- Comcare, *Productive and safe workplaces for an ageing workforce*, 2003

These are available on the Commission's website at www.apsc.gov.au/publications

Comsuper has developed fact sheets for members of the CSS and PSS that address the effect of phased retirement on superannuation. They are available at:
www.pss.gov.au/pss/factsheets/psf10.htm
www.css.gov.au/css/factsheets/csf10.htm
www.pss.gov.au/pss/infosheets/mac_report.htm

ANAO Better Practice Guide, *Planning for the workforce of the future*, 2001

<http://www.anao.gov.au/> and navigate via publications > Better Practice Guides

Managing succession in the Australian Public Service, (2003) at www.apsc.gov.au/publications

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you want to know more about the ageing of the workforce and how it is likely to impact on the economy, how we work and how we view retirement, you may be interested in the following:

Management Advisory Committee report on *Organisational Renewal*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2003.

All in it together, Access Economics report for the Department of Health and Ageing, 2001.