

## Workplace relations

- This year a lower proportion of employees were satisfied with their overall say in decisions that impact on their work (45% in 2004–05 compared with 49% in 2003–04).
- This year employees were less likely to agree that merit had been applied in relation to APS employment decisions that involved a competitive selection process—for example, 53% of employees agreed that their agency routinely applied merit in engagement and promotion decisions (down from 59% in 2003–04).

## Developing APS capability

- Consistent with last year's result, 43% of agencies indicated that they had policies, strategies and/or frameworks that aimed to ensure they have the skills and capabilities needed for the next 1–5 years.
- Also consistent with last year, the most common workforce planning challenge faced by agencies in 2004–05 was in accessing adequate information to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and development (identified as a challenge by 54% of agencies).
- Fifteen per cent of employees indicated that they intended to leave the APS in the next three years. Of those that intended to leave the top two reasons for leaving were:
  - to retire (38%)
  - lack of job satisfaction (36%).
- Three in five employees (60%) felt that their productivity in their current job had increased 'markedly' or 'somewhat' in the last 12 months.
- A similar proportion of employees this year compared to last (79% and 78%, respectively) had accessed at least one day of off-the-job learning and development in the last 12 months.
- A slightly lower proportion of employees this year compared to last (51% and 53%, respectively) rated their supervisor as highly effective at managing people—this year's result remains higher than that of 2002–03 (47%).

## For further information

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## Critical challenges for the APS

This year's data tells us that the challenges outlined last year are not going away, although they are being reshaped by changing circumstances. The four critical challenges for the APS as a whole are summarised below, however, the *State of the Service Report 2004–05* also outlines challenges for particular agencies.

### 1. Building trust in the APS

The challenge is to make the Values framework work in practice. Senior leaders have a vital role to play in establishing a supportive and professional culture and showing decision-makers how to balance values like fairness and effectiveness, impartiality and courtesy, responsiveness and apolitical professionalism.

### 2. Building the right capability for the future

The challenge centres around the ageing demographic and changing skills profile of the APS workforce, in particular the need to take a systematic approach to succession planning and to developing future leaders.

Agencies will need to ensure they are competitive in the labour market and have strategies in place to develop and retain high quality employees—employee engagement may be one of the best mechanisms available to all agencies to gain the edge.

### 3. Attracting and retaining Indigenous employees and people with a disability

It is essential to act quickly and constructively to turn the declining trend around and increase the number of Indigenous employees and people with a disability working in the APS.

### 4. Ensuring whole of government capability

The challenge here is to work productively across agencies, with other jurisdictions and non-government organisations (both private and not-for-profit), and to engage with citizens.

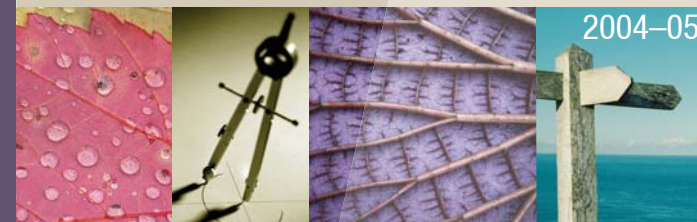
## Abbreviations used

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



Australian Government  
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Commission

State of the  
Service



At a Glance

## From the Public Service Commissioner

Thank you for taking the time to read *State of the Service 2004–05 At a Glance*, part of the annual State of the Service series of publications.

I have introduced ‘at a glance’ to improve awareness among APS employees of developments in the public service, and to generate discussion of the issues we are facing. It provides a snapshot of some of the key findings from this year’s State of the Service report and outlines the challenges we face as a professional public service.

The report draws on wide-ranging sources of information, including surveys of APS agencies and employees.

I especially want to thank those of you who participated in the employee survey, and took the time to share your views about working in the APS. Your responses ensure that the assessment the State of the Service report makes about what we do and how well we do it reflects a broad range of views. The response rate to this year’s survey was 59%—the highest we have achieved. I look forward to your support again next year.

I hope you find ‘at a glance’ interesting and useful. If it generates discussion among your colleagues, it will have done its job. If it encourages you to think about the challenges facing the APS and your role in how we deal with them, it will have met all of my expectations.



**Lynelle Briggs**  
30 November 2005

## Related publications

Publications in the 2004–05 State of the Service series are:

- *State of the Service Report 2004–05*
- *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2004–05*
- *APS Statistical Bulletin 2004–05*.

These publications are available on the Commission’s website at <http://www.apsc.gov.au>. Publications can also be obtained by calling our publications line on 02 6295 4422.

## APS workforce statistics

As at 30 June		2003	2004	2005
Total staff	No.	131,692	131,396	133,596
	%			
Ongoing staff	No.	120,268	122,305	123,242
	%	91.3	93.1	92.2
Non-ongoing staff	No.	11,424	9,091	10,354
	%	8.7	6.9	7.8
<b>Employment status (ongoing only)</b>				
Full-time	No.	109,005	109,889	109,350
	%	90.6	89.8	88.7
Part-time	No.	11,263	12,416	13,892
	%	9.4	10.2	11.3
<b>EEO groups (ongoing only)</b>				
Women	No.	63,460	65,001	66,760
	%	52.8	53.1	54.2
Indigenous staff	No.	3,022	2,946	2,770 <sup>(a)</sup>
	%	2.5	2.4	2.2 <sup>(a)</sup>
People with a disability	No.	4,815	4,776	4,642
	%	4.0	3.9	3.8
NESB1	No.	6,191	6,335	6,536
	%	5.1	5.2	5.3
<b>Age group (ongoing only)</b>				
Under 25 years	No.	5,984	5,273	4,967
	%	5.0	4.3	4.0
25–34	No.	31,321	31,235	30,945
	%	26.0	25.5	25.1
35–44	No.	37,793	37,783	37,555
	%	31.4	30.9	30.5
45–54	No.	35,233	36,683	37,371
	%	29.3	30.0	30.3
55 and over	No.	9,937	11,331	12,404
	%	8.3	9.3	10.1
<b>Classification (ongoing only)</b>				
APS 1–2	No.	7,725	7,713	6,353
	%	6.4	6.3	5.2
APS 3–4	No.	44,761	44,823	44,180
	%	37.2	36.6	35.8
APS 5–6	No.	39,887	41,092	41,809
	%	33.2	33.6	33.9
EL	No.	24,711	25,985	27,727
	%	20.5	21.2	22.5
SES	No.	1,900	1,899	2,025
	%	1.6	1.6	1.6
Graduate/Trainee	No.	1,284	793	1,148
	%	1.1	0.6	0.9

<sup>(a)</sup> During 2004–05, 48 Indigenous employees moved out of coverage of the *Public Service Act 1999*. If these employees were still in the APS, the representation rate for Indigenous employees would have been 2.3% at 30 June 2005, rather than 2.2%.

## The APS Values and Code of Conduct

- The great majority of employees (85%) continued to report being familiar with the APS Values.
- Almost nine out of ten employees agreed that colleagues (87%) and their immediate supervisor (86%) act in accordance with the Values.
- Seven in ten employees (69%) agreed that the most senior managers in their agency act in accordance with the Values.
- Approximately four out of five employees (83%) indicated that they were familiar with the Code of Conduct.

## Identity

- Employees were more likely to primarily consider themselves to be an employee of their agency (60%) than an APS employee (40%).
- However, employees were more likely to agree that they were proud to work in the APS (71%) compared to their current agency (65%).
- Two-thirds of employees agreed that their agency had achieved its stated objectives in 2004–05.

## Work/life balance and job satisfaction

- Just over two-thirds (68%) of employees agreed that their workplace culture supported people to achieve a good work/life balance.
- The top two job satisfaction factors were:
  - good working relationships (selected as one of the five most important by 52% of employees)
  - salary (selected as one of the five most important by 46% of employees).

## Whole of government and service delivery

- The great majority (83%) of SES employees indicated that their agency head had communicated to them the importance of working collaboratively with other APS agencies.
- Just over half (55%) of employees were directly involved in service delivery.
- About one-third (35%) of these employees reported an improvement in cooperation between their agency and other APS agencies over the last 12 months.