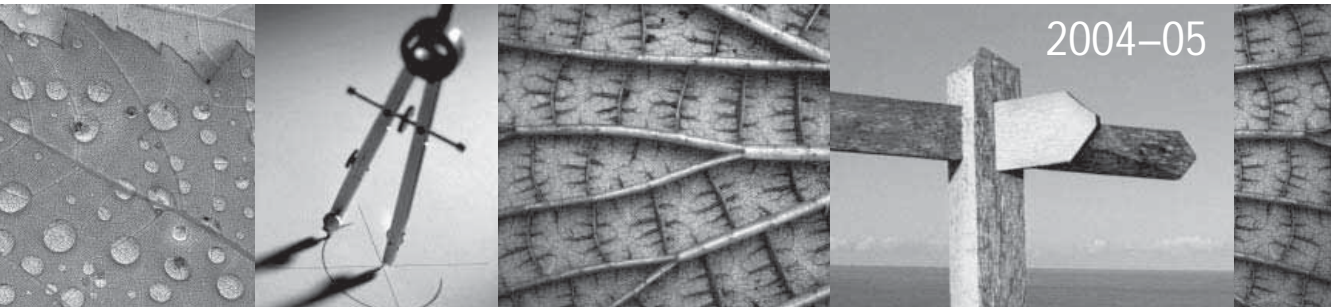




Australian Government
Australian Public Service Commission

State of the Service Report

2004–05



State of the Service Series 2004–05



Australian Government
Australian Public Service Commission

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

Dear Prime Minister

In accordance with the provisions of section 44 of the *Public Service Act 1999*, I present to you the component of my annual report reporting on the state of the Australian Public Service for the year 2004–05. The report incorporates the annual report on workplace diversity required under clause 3.5(2) of the Public Service Commissioner's Directions.

The Australian Public Service Commission will be separately publishing supporting statistical documents, the *State of the Service 2004–05 At a Glance*, the *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2004–05* and the *Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin 2004–05*.

The Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit agreed in 2003 to extend the tabling deadline of the state of the service component of my annual report to one calendar month after the tabling date for agencies' annual reports.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Lynelle Briggs'.

Lynelle Briggs
30 November 2005

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Preface

Section 44 of the *Public Service Act 1999* (the Act) provides that the Public Service Commissioner (the Commissioner) must provide a report each year to the Prime Minister (as the relevant agency Minister) for presentation to the Parliament. The report must include a report on the state of the Australian Public Service (APS) during the year.

The State of the Service report draws on a range of information sources. One of its main sources is a survey sent to all APS agencies employing at least 20 staff under the Act. Eighty-two APS agencies, or semi-autonomous parts of agencies, were sent the agency survey in June 2005 for completion. All 82 agencies responded to the online survey. They are listed at Appendix 1.

To assist with analysis of data from the agency survey in this year's report, agencies have been grouped according to size. Of the 82 responding agencies, 21 were classified as large (>1000 APS employees), 26 as medium (251–1000 APS employees) and 35 as small (20–250 APS employees). These size categories are generally consistent with those used by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).¹ Appendix 1 provides information on agencies' APS employee numbers.

The results of an annual APS employee survey provide another main information source used for the report. The employee survey involved a stratified random sample of 6160 APS employees from APS agencies with at least 100 APS employees. A total of 3654 valid responses were received, representing a response rate of 59%. The sample size and number of valid responses allows a number of cross-tabulations with a degree of confidence. Generally, only individual agency results are reported to indicate agencies with good practice; however, as foreshadowed last year, agencies with poor results in some areas have been identified. Portfolio departments and other large agencies are provided with their own individual agency results for internal management purposes.

¹ ANAO, *Staff Reductions in the Australian Public Service*, Performance Audit Report No. 49, June 1999, <<http://www.anao.gov.au>>

While the size groupings for large and medium agencies are the same for the agency and employee surveys, it should be noted that for the purposes of the employee survey 'small' refers to agencies with between 100 and 250 APS employees. Appendix 2 provides information on the employee and agency survey methodologies.

The Commission engaged the services of ORIMA Research to assist with the design, delivery and statistical outputs of both surveys. The Commission also engaged the services of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to advise on aspects of survey methodology.

Assistance in the development and pilot testing of the agency survey was provided by employees in a number of agencies including the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), the Australian Customs Service (Customs), Centrelink, the Department of Defence (Defence), the Department of Finance and Administration (Finance) and IP Australia.

The report also draws on the results of the evaluation conducted by the Commission during 2004–05 on agencies' workplace diversity programmes. Appendix 3 provides information on the methodology used for this evaluation.

The report has also relied heavily on published reports from parliamentary committees and the ANAO. Input has been sought from central agencies, particularly Finance, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and the ANAO, and their assistance is gratefully acknowledged. Contributions were also appreciated from Customs, the ATO, the Australian War Memorial (AWM), Centrelink, Comcare, the Child Support Agency (CSA), the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources (DITR), the Department of the House of Representatives, the Department of the Senate, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), the National Archives of Australia (NAA) and the Commonwealth Ombudsman (Ombudsman).

Associated with the *State of the Service Report 2004–05* are two other publications—the *Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin 2004–05* and the *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2004–05*. A summary pamphlet, *State of the Service 2004–05 At a Glance*, has also been prepared. These publications are available on the Commission website at <<http://www.apsc.gov.au>>.