

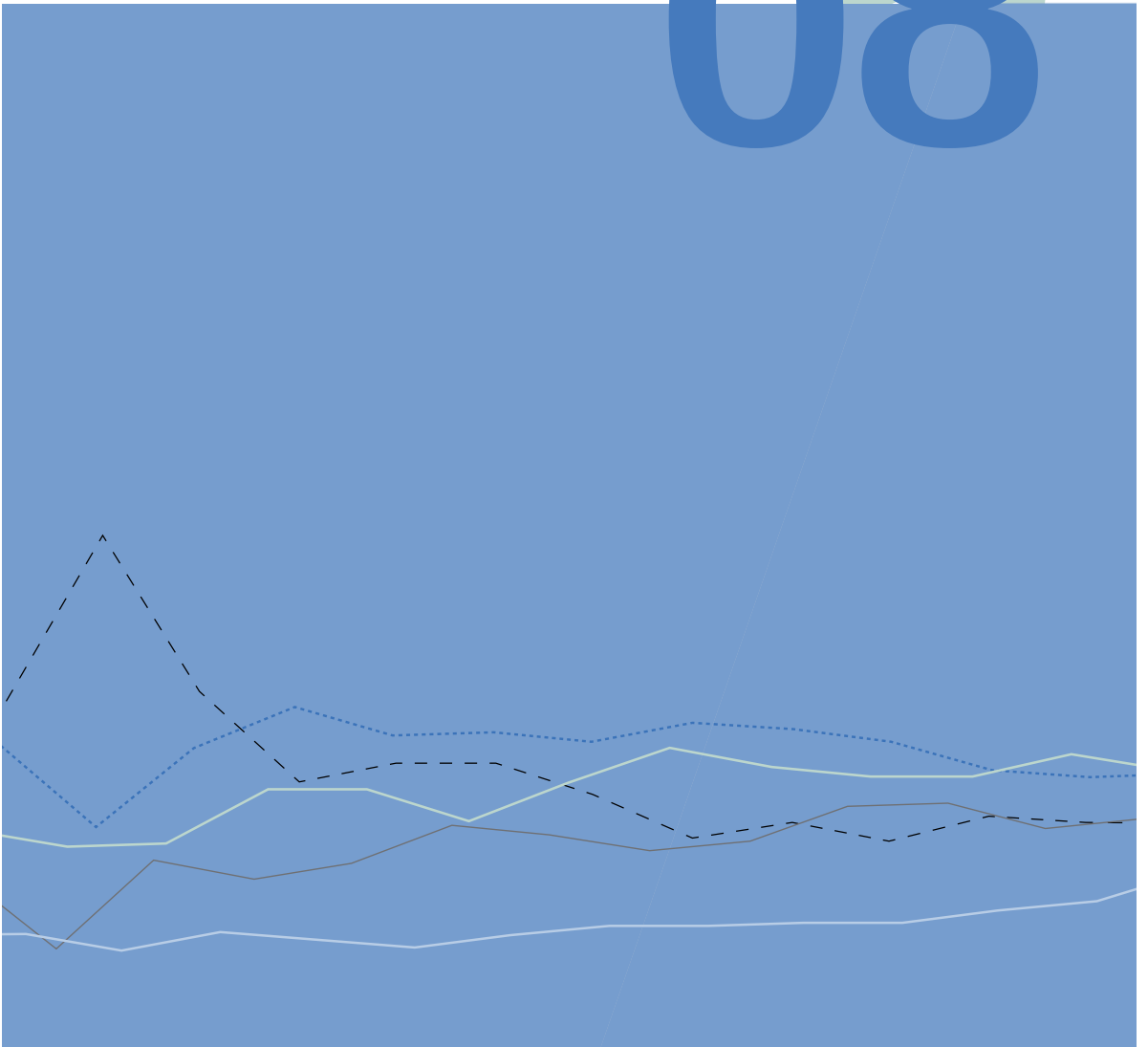


Australian Government
Australian Public Service Commission

STATE OF THE SERVICE REPORT

State of the Service Series 2007–08

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08



CONTACT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT INFORMATION

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HTML and PDF versions of the report are available from the Commission's website at: <<http://www.apsc.gov.au>>.

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Australian Government

Australian Public Service Commission

The Honourable Kevin Rudd 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* and clause 3.5(2) of the Public Service Commissioner's Directions, I present to you the component of my annual report reporting on the state of the Australian Public Service for the year 2007–08.

The Australian Public Service Commission will separately publish supporting documents, the *State of the Service 2007–08 At a Glance*, the *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2007–08* and the *Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin 2007–08*.

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 black ink that reads 'Lynelle Briggs'.

Lynelle Briggs
27 November 2008



PREFACE

Section 44 of the *Public Service Act 1999* (the Act) provides that the Australian Public Service Commissioner must provide a report each year to the 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 2007–08* details the activities and human resource management practices of APS agencies during the 2007–08 financial year. The report outlines some of the key achievements and contributions agencies have made in assisting the Government during this period to meet its policy objectives and achieve its stated outcomes.

This year's State of the Service report is the eleventh annual report on the state of the APS that Australian Public Service Commissioners have presented to Parliament. The report has been significantly enhanced since it was commenced in 1998, including by the addition of an annual online agency survey and a representative employee survey with up to six years of data available on key issues. This year's agency survey included a focus on the impact of the increased efficiency dividend on APS agencies, and these particular findings have been made available to the Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Audit for the purposes of informing their inquiry into the impacts of the dividend on small APS agencies.

The State of the Service report draws on a range of information sources but its main data sources are two State of the Service surveys—one of agencies and the other of employees. The agency survey includes all APS agencies employing at least 20 staff under the Act. All 90 APS agencies, or semi-autonomous parts of agencies, which were invited to participate in the online agency survey in June 2008 completed the survey. These agencies are listed at Appendix 1.

To assist with analysis of the agency survey data, and for comparability with previous years' data, agencies have again been grouped according to size. Of the 90 responding agencies, 24 were classified as large (>1,000 APS employees), 28 as medium (251–1,000 APS employees)

and 38 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 second State of the Service survey involved a stratified random sample of 9,078 APS employees from APS agencies with at least 100 APS employees. A total of 5,910 valid responses were received, representing a response rate of 65%—the highest response rate ever achieved. The sample size and number of valid responses allows a range of cross-tabulations to be used with a degree of confidence. Consistent with last year's report, this year's draws on factor analysis to interpret employee survey data. Agencies with at least 400 employees, and all members of the Management Advisory Committee are provided with their own individual agency-specific results for internal management purposes.

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. When designing the first employee survey the Commission also engaged the services of the Australian Bureau of Statistics to advise on aspects of survey methodology; this advice continues to be used. Assistance in the development and pilot testing of the agency survey was provided by our agency contact officers in a number of agencies, including the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, Centrelink, the Department of Climate Change and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Assistance with pilot testing of the employee survey was provided by a range of individual APS employees from across a variety of agencies. The Commission is very grateful for this input.

The report has also relied heavily on published reports from parliamentary committees and ANAO. Input has been sought from key coordinating agencies, particularly the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, the Department of Finance and Deregulation, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and ANAO—their assistance is gratefully acknowledged. The contributions of the Australian Government Actuary, Australian Government Information Management Office, the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Department of the House of Representatives and the Department of the Senate were also much appreciated.

Two publications have been produced in association with the *State of the Service Report 2007–08*—the *Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin 2007–08* and the *State of the Service Employee Survey Results 2007–08*. A summary pamphlet, the *State of the Service 2007–08 At a Glance*, has also been prepared. These publications are available on the Commission's website at: <<http://www.apsc.gov.au>>.

¹ ANAO 1999, *Staff Reductions in the Australian Public Service*, Performance Audit Report No. 49, 1998–99, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, <<http://www.anao.gov.au>>