



Office of the  
Commissioner for  
Public Employment

# State of the Service Report

2005-2006





# Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment

## State of the Service Report 2005-2006

### Purpose of the Report

The Office is responsible for giving an account of the performance of the Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) in the State of the Service Report (with Statistical Supplement) in a separate report.

Published by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment

© Northern Territory Government of Australia, 2006

Apart from any use permitted under the *Australian Copyright Act*, no part of this document may be reproduced without prior written permission from the Northern Territory Government through the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment.

ISSN 1323-2894

Enquiries should be made to:

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment

GPO Box 4371  
Darwin NT 0801

Telephone: (08) 8999 4282

Facsimile: (08) 8999 4358

Email: [ocpe@nt.gov.au](mailto:ocpe@nt.gov.au)

Web: [www.nt.gov.au/ocpe](http://www.nt.gov.au/ocpe)



# Contents

Letter to the Minister .....	7
<b>The Reporting Framework .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Principles and Code of Conduct .....	11
Employee Instructions .....	13
Employee Framework .....	14
<b>Northern Territory Sector Personnel Statistics Report .....</b>	<b>25</b>
Staffing Levels .....	26
Staffing Overview .....	30
Staffing by Employment Status .....	32
Staffing by Gender .....	33
Age by Gender .....	36
Staffing by Classification Stream .....	40
Executive Contracts .....	42
Staff Separation and Recruitment .....	43
Sick Leave .....	46
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>49</b>
How to contact us .....	50
Agency Reporting Requirements in accordance with section 18 & 28 of the PSEMA & AEDA 2005 - 2006 .....	51



# Letter to the Minister

The Hon. Paul Henderson MLA  
Minister for Public Employment  
PO Box 3146  
Darwin NT 0801

Dear Minister Henderson

**RE: ANNUAL STATE OF THE SERVICE REPORT 2005-2006**

In accordance with the provisions of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* (the Act) the Annual State of the Service Report for the year ending 30 June 2006 is submitted for your consideration.

Section 18(1) of the Act requires me, within three months of the end of each financial year, to provide you with a report on the extent to which observance of the prescribed principles of human resource management have been achieved in the Northern Territory Public Sector over the preceding twelve months.

The attached report summarises individual reports provided by agency Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). In completing their reports, each CEO is required to sign off on the extent to which the agency has established processes to apply the principles of human resource management, as embodied in the various Employment Instructions.

CEO's were also requested to report on:

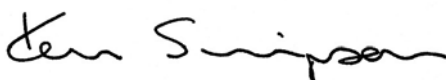
- the extent to which observance of the principles has been achieved over the reporting period;
- any significant breaches or evasion of the principles;
- measures, if any, taken to improve human resource management in the agency; and
- the extent to which disciplinary, redeployment and inability procedures were invoked.

I am pleased to report that all agencies, with the exception of one agency that was established in July 2005, have processes in place to ensure application of the principles of human resource management (the CEO of the newly established agency reports the agency will have processes in place by December 2006). It is even more pleasing to report that a clear majority of agencies are progressing towards best practice human resource management practices.

In past years, this State of the Service Report formed part of my Office's Annual Report. However I have decided to separate the two reports to more clearly delineate the Office's performance from broader sector-wide legislative compliance reporting.

It is my intention to review the information for the State of the Service Report with a view to providing you with a more comprehensive summary of agencies human resource management performance in 2007-08.

Yours sincerely



KEN SIMPSON  
Acting Commissioner for Public Employment







# The Reporting Framework

**Principles and Code of Conduct**  
**Employment Instructions**  
**Employment Framework**

# The Reporting Framework

Section 18 (1) of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* (PSEMA) requires the Commissioner for Public Employment to report annually on the extent to which observance of the prescribed principles of human resource management have been achieved in the Northern Territory Public Sector and include reference to:

- measures taken to ensure observation of the principles;
- any significant breaches or evasions of the principles detected by or brought to the attention of the Commissioner;
- measures, if any, taken to improve human resource management in the various agencies;
- the extent to which disciplinary, redeployment and inability procedures were invoked in the public sector;
- those matters specified in section 28 (2) in so far as they related to the Office; and
- such other matters, if any, as are prescribed.

Each chief executive officer is responsible for the processes underpinning application of the principles in their agency. Comprehensive reporting against the Employment Instructions is the main, but not only, way that the Commissioner can assess observation of the principles and employment relations practices within the sector.

The agency annual reporting statement provides a critical and comprehensive summary of the measures agencies have taken to improve human resource management/employment relations.

A reporting framework has been developed progressively since the Act came into effect. The major components are summarised below.

TYPE OF INFORMATION	METHOD OF COLLECTION	SOURCE
Quantitative data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistical data collected</li> </ul>	Internal, DCIS, agency reporting
Qualitative data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self assessment and reporting against key indicators</li> <li>• Commissioner and OCPE staff visits to agencies</li> <li>• Coordination committee, Commissioners and other conferences</li> </ul>	All agencies covered by PSEMA
Policy/Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of employment relations issues associated with NT Government strategic objectives.</li> <li>• Reports and reviews on application of policies/strategies issued by the Commissioner e.g. Indigenous recruitment and career development, remote locality conditions, job evaluation, etc.</li> </ul>	Specific reports, EBA negotiations

## Critical elements of the reporting framework

One of the principal means of obtaining qualitative reporting data is through agency reporting against Sections 18 and 28 of the Act. The quality of this reporting relies on critical self-assessment. Each chief executive officer is required to sign off on the extent to which they have established processes and procedures to apply the principles of human resources management, as embodied in the various Employment Instructions (EI), within their agency.

# Principles and Code of Conduct

## The Principles

The principles of:

- public administration and management;
- human resource management; and
- public sector Code of Conduct,

are detailed in Part 2 of the Public Sector Employment and Management Regulations.

## Principles of Public Administration and Management

The following Principles of Public Administration and Management shall be observed in the public sector:

- the public sector shall be administered in a manner that emphasises the importance of optimum service to the community;
- the formulation and delivery of information and advice to the government shall be done in an objective and impartial manner with integrity;
- administrative responsibility and authority shall be clearly defined to allow the expeditious discharge of that responsibility and exercise of authority with appropriate levels of accountability;
- the public sector shall be structured and administered so decisions can be made and actions taken without excessive formality and with a minimum of delay; and
- proper standards of financial management and accounting shall be exercised at all times.

## Principles of Human Resource Management

The Northern Territory Public Sector principles of human resource management are:

- the selection of persons to fill vacancies in the public sector shall be on the basis of merit;
- human resource management actions shall be taken in such a manner as to ensure the exclusion of nepotism, patronage, favouritism and unlawful and unjustified discrimination on any ground in respect of all employees and persons seeking employment in the public sector;
- employees shall be treated fairly and shall not be subject to arbitrary or capricious administrative acts;
- human resource administration and management in the public sector shall be consistent with the principles of equal employment opportunity; and
- employees shall be:
  - afforded reasonable, independent avenues of redress against improper or unreasonable administrative acts
  - afforded reasonable access to training and development and
  - remunerated at rates commensurate with their responsibilities.

These principles of human resource management are complemented by a Code of Conduct that provides more detailed guidance on the rights and delegations of employees, matters of ethics, accountability and transparency.

## Principles of Conduct

The following Principles of Conduct shall be observed by all employees:

- employees shall perform their official duties with skill, impartiality, professionalism and integrity;
- employees shall disclose their private financial and other interests where those interests may, or may appear to conflict with their official duties, and shall take all reasonable steps to prevent such conflict;
- employees who are responsible for incurring or authorising expenditure shall exercise due economy and ensure the efficient and economical use of government resources and facilities;
- employees shall not take advantage of their official duties, status, powers or authority in order to seek or obtain a benefit for themselves or for any other person or body;
- employees shall exercise proper courtesy, consideration and sensitivity and shall act with fairness and equity in all their dealings with members of the public and with other employee; and
- employees shall not engage in improper conduct, in their official capacity or otherwise, that adversely affects the performance of their duties or brings the public sector into disrepute.

## Breaches or evasion of the Principles

No significant breaches or evasion of the Principles of Human Resource Management have been brought to the notice of the Commissioner. While a number of breaches of discipline have occurred (details are contained in the section titled Discipline and Inability Procedures at page 20, they could not be considered significant in a public sector of around 17,000 employees.

Similarly, whilst the grievance process reveals occasional examples of poor management or decisions, the number of grievances does not indicate an endemic tendency towards poor management practices.

## Public Sector Consultative Council

The PSCC was established by Regulation 22 of the *Public Sector Employee Management Act* and the Office is represented on the council by the Commissioner.

The council meets regularly to discuss matters of broad concern to the NTPS and makes appropriate recommendations to the Commissioner for Public Employment.

# Employment Instructions

Employment Instructions, issued in accordance with Section 16 are the principal means by which the Commissioner gives effect to measures “. . . to improve human resource management in the various agencies.”

The Employment Instructions provide a framework to support the Commissioner’s partnership arrangement with agency chief executives. As such they are important for three reasons:

- agency reports against the Employment Instructions provide information to the Commissioner so he can report to the Minister and the Legislative Assembly on corporate governance of the sector;
- the reporting requirement provides an opportunity for chief executive officers and managers to reflect on application of the principles of public sector employment and conduct, as well as a range of employee relations practices in their agency; and
- preparation of the reports provides agencies with the opportunity to assess their internal communication, processes and procedures.

Employment Instruction	Objectives
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop procedures for the selection, appointment, transfer and promotion of employees that are consistent with the Public Sector Employment and Management Act (the Act), Regulations, By Laws, Employment Instructions and relevant Awards.</li> <li>• Ensure selection is made in accordance with merit and equal opportunity principles and applicants are assess by a panel competent for the purpose.</li> </ul>
2	Develop procedures to ensure probationary employees are aware of the details of the probationary process within one week of reporting for duty.
3	Ensure natural justice is observed in all dealings with employees under the Act.
4	Develop and implement performance management systems.
5	Identify necessary procedures when CEO is of the opinion that an employee may be medically incapacitated.
6	Identify the issues to be addressed when an employee is not performing his or her duties to the required standard. Describe the action to be taken prior to commencing the formal mobility process under the Act.
7	Establish procedures regarding breaches of discipline within agencies consistent with the Act, Regulations, By Laws and Employment Instructions.
8	Establish grievance settling procedures within individual agencies.
9	This Employment Instruction is now incorporated into E1.1.
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure recording of required details for every employee and establish procedures for access to records by individual employees while ensuring confidentiality.</li> <li>• Establish systems and procedures regarding the authority to access employee records.</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement programs that ensure employees have equal employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Implement programs for the employment and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders within the framework of the Act, Employment Instructions and the NTPS Aboriginal Employment Career Development Strategy.</li> </ul>
12	Consult with employees and their representatives for the purpose of developing and implementing agency occupational health and safety programs.
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEOs may issue agency specific codes of conduct consistent with the Act, Regulations, By Laws and Employment Instructions.</li> <li>• CEOs may issue guidelines regarding acceptance of gifts and benefits by employees.</li> <li>• The Code of Conduct applies to all public sector employees, including CEOs.</li> </ul>
14	Enhance employment flexibility through effective part-time employment provisions.

# Employment Framework

## Agency self assessment

For the purpose of reporting to the Commissioner, 18 agencies were requested to complete the Agency Reporting Requirement Statement in accordance with Sections 18 and 28 of the Act.

As a result of the creation of a number of new agencies, as well as ongoing restructuring and redesign of reporting systems over the reporting period, any trend analysis using previous data would be of limited value. However, where possible statistic comparison over the previous 24 months is provided. The Office will continue to work with agencies to enhance their employment relations practices and procedures.

## Agency Reporting – Summary Statement

Chief executive officers were requested to affirm their understanding of responsibilities relating to the principles of human resource management and indicate, by selecting one of the four statements shown below, the agency's level of compliance.

- 1A the agency has established processes that ensure application of the principles of human resource management and is moving towards best practice in people management;
- 1B the agency has established processes that ensure application of the principles of human resource management;
- 1C the agency will complete the development of processes to ensure application of the principles of human resource management by 31 December 2006; and
- 1D the agency will not complete the development of processes to ensure application of the principles of human resource management by 31 December 2006.

In response to the survey statement question, CEOs responded as follows:

INDICATOR	NUMBER OF AGENCIES	%
1A	14	78
1B	3	17
1C	1	5
1D	NIL	

It is clear from the table above that all agencies, with one exception, have processes in place to ensure application of the established principles of human resource management; with two thirds reporting they are moving towards best practice in people management processes.

The one agency reporting a 1C indicator was established in July 2005 and is currently developing new processes and procedures.

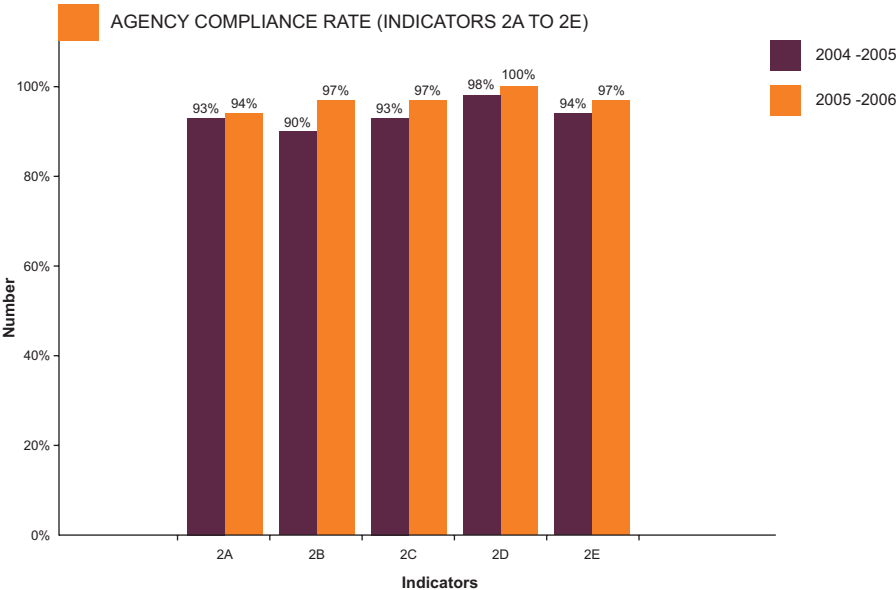
## Key Indicators Supporting the Summary Statement

To support their summary statement, CEOs were requested to submit information regarding the extent to which application of the principles was being actively managed within their agency. This assessment provided an indication of the extent to which a range of key process indicators have been met in relation to the core aspects of the human resource management principles set out in the various Employment Instructions. The key indicators are explained below, together with a sample of agencies responses to support their assessments.

INDICATOR	INDICATOR STATEMENT	EXAMPLE AGENCY RESPONSE SUPPORTING STATEMENT
2A	Policy and processes explicitly approved by senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency policies and procedures developed to meet EIs have been endorsed by Management Board and are available on line.</li> <li>• Where relevant, the Employment Instructions have been adopted to meet agency needs. Procedures are signed off by CEO before implementation.</li> <li>• Agency human resource policies and procedures are approved by the CEO and are available in hard copy and on the Department's intranet site.</li> </ul>
2B	Policy and processes issued and made known to all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During their induction all new staff are given copies and taken through the Department's main policies and procedures.</li> <li>• A specific objective of the Corporate Services Unit is to ensure there is a full understanding of the agency's human resource policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Information on HRM policies and procedures is published on the agency website and provided to new staff during their induction course.</li> </ul>
2C	Policy and processes are documented and readily available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All human resource policies and procedures are published on the agency website, to which all employees have immediate access.</li> <li>• A review of all HR policies and procedures has commenced and the website is being updated to reflect changes.</li> <li>• The Code of Conduct policy is available on the Intranet and has been reinforced through both the HR Consultancy activities and HR Newsletter.</li> </ul>
2D	Processes are fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR consultants provide a check on recruitment and selection practices to ensure fairness and merit are applied.</li> <li>• There has been an added focus on management training to ensure policies are applied equitably and fairly.</li> <li>• The Equity and Diversity Framework has been developed and is now being implemented across the Department.</li> </ul>
2E	Policies and process applied consistently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The newly created Corporate Services Unit will develop and ensure consistent implementation of all HR policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Training for staff is aimed at empowering them to participate fully in the process and ensure consistency.</li> <li>• Implementation of policies and procedures is monitored by the Department's executive to ensure consistency.</li> </ul>

Agency responses, together with supporting information, provide a good indication of compliance with each of the Employment Instructions.

The chart below indicates the compliance rate reported by agencies. Also provided for comparison is the compliance rate for the 2004 – 05 periods. It should be noted that of the current 13 Employment Instructions (E1 9 has been incorporated into EI 1), agencies are not required to report specifically against EI 5 (Medical Incapacity) in this section. Therefore a total of 12 Employment Instructions are considered.

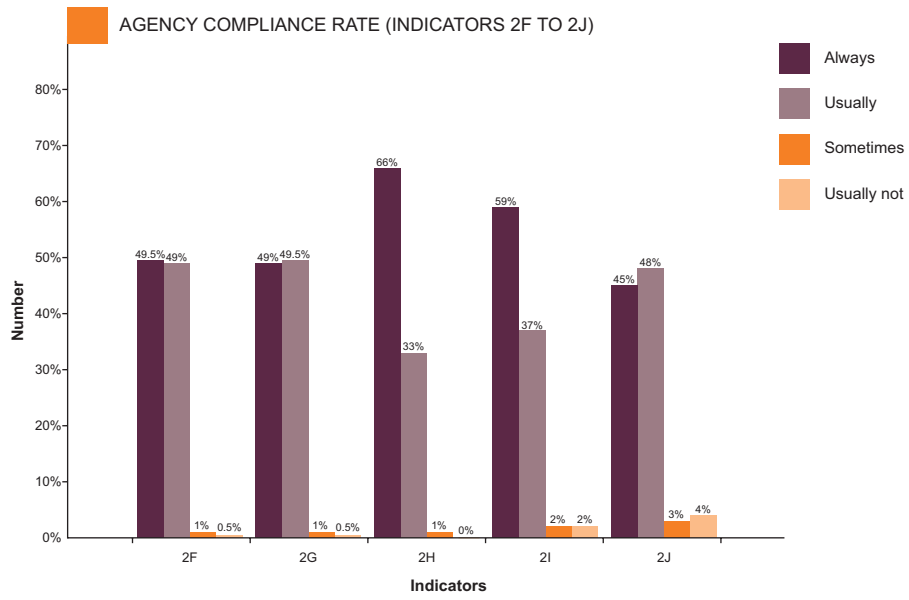




## Better Practice Indicators

Agencies were also asked to respond to a range of process indicators that demonstrated their progress towards better human resource management practice. These better practice indicators are described in the table below, together with sample agency responses to support their statements.

INDICATOR	INDICATOR STATEMENT	EXAMPLE AGENCY RESPONSE SUPPORTING STATEMENT
2F	Managers observe policies and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All managers are assessed on their observation of policies as part of their annual performance assessment.</li> <li>• Regular training sessions are conducted for all managers and supervisors to increase their awareness of HR policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Low incidence of grievances indicate managers are observing policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
2G	Other staff members observe policies and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See responses above</li> <li>• All staff have received information sessions on the policies and procedures covered by the Employment Instructions.</li> <li>• The Department's performance management system recognises staff observation and participation in policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
2H	Policies and processes support their desired outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to enhance the skill set of managers and staff has been addressed through tailored training sessions.</li> <li>• Statistical evidence indicates that the policies and procedures in the Department are effective and achieving the objectives.</li> <li>• All Departmental policies and procedures are reviewed annually to ensure they contribute to the Department's strategic plan.</li> </ul>
2I	Policies and processes included as part of broader business process review/ development activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See responses above</li> <li>• All human resource policies and procedures have been reviewed to ensure they are integrated and support the agency's strategic objectives.</li> <li>• Regular strategic planning activities ensure all human resource management policies and procedures align with business objectives.</li> </ul>
2J	Development and review of policies and processes is informed by staff views or needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff involvement in policy development and future direction is one of the corporate strategies considered a critical success factor for the agency.</li> <li>• Extensive consultative mechanisms are an integral part of the Department's strategic planning process.</li> <li>• Consultative processes are utilised in development of policy and procedures.</li> </ul>

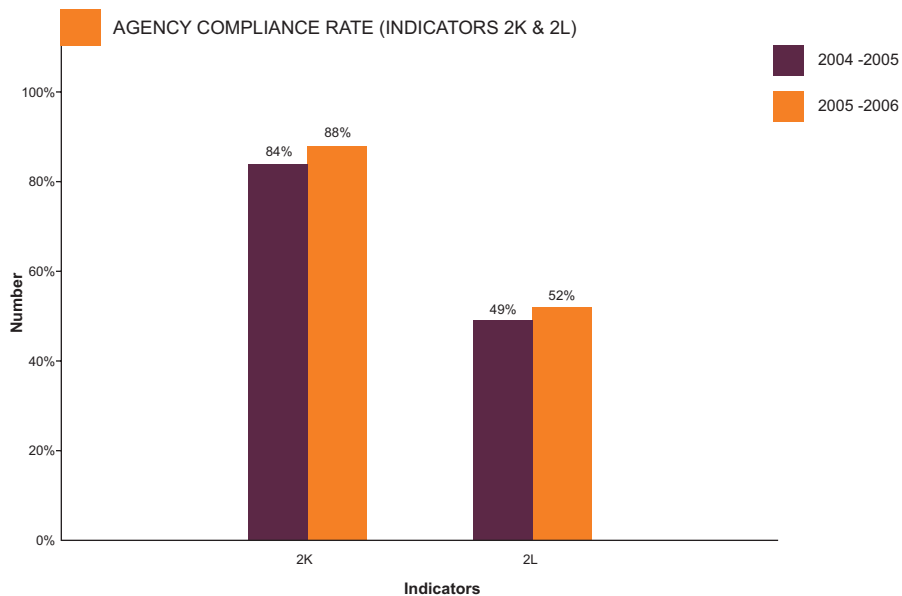


## MONITORING AND MODIFICATION OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Final component of the assessment process provides chief executive officers with the opportunity to indicate whether internal monitoring systems have been modified in the preceding twelve months.

Agency responses are summarised in the chart below

INDICATOR	INDICATOR STATEMENT	SAMPLE AGENCY RESPONSES TO SUPPORT STATEMENT
2K	Staff awareness of, and confidence in, policies and processes is monitored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency 'staff sensing' provides an indication of staff confidence in corporate policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Regular staff satisfaction surveys are conducted to assess awareness and confidence in the Department's HR policies.</li> <li>• Business Unit heads provide a monthly report to the executive relating to staff awareness and application of policies and procedures.</li> </ul>
2L	Policies and processes have been modified/ updated in the last 12 months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department has an ongoing rolling program for bi-annual review of HR policies and procedures.</li> <li>• The agency is implementing a structured program of development/ review of all human resource policies and procedures.</li> <li>• The agency was formed in July 2005 and is currently developing or modifying its policies and processes.</li> </ul>



## Discipline and Inability

Section 18 of the Public Sector Employment and Management Act requires the Commissioner for Public Employment to report on the extent to which discipline and inability procedures have been invoked in the public sector.

### Summary of Disciplinary and Inability Cases 2003-2006

Year	Provision	Cases B/Fwd	New Cases	Cases Completed	C/Fwd
2005/06	Inability	1	2	0	3
	Summary Dismissal	0	2	2	0
	* Discipline	17	25	26	16 <sup>^</sup>
2004/05	Inability	2	0	1	1
	Summary Dismissal	0	1	1	0
	* Discipline	7	42	32	17
2003/04	Inability	3	2	3	2
	Summary Dismissal	0	0	0	0
	* Discipline	11	49	53	7

- excluding summary dismissal



<sup>^</sup> As at 30 June 2006, the majority of outstanding cases were pending responses to intended action and a small number of cases were pending legal court action.

### Summary of Disciplinary and Inability Appeals 2003-2006

Year	Provision	Total Appeals Handled		Appeals Resolved	C/Fwd
		B/Fwd	New		
2005/06	Inability	0	0	0	0
	Summary Dismissal	0	0	0	0
	* Discipline	1	2	2	1
2004/05	Inability	0	0	0	0
	Summary Dismissal	0	0	0	0
	* Discipline	3	1	3	1
2003/04	Inability	0	0	0	0
	Summary Dismissal	1	0	1	0
	* Discipline	0	4	1	3

- excluding summary dismissal

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### Employee Development Initiatives

Several agencies were involved in employee development policies and pilot programs. These new initiatives have been designed to contribute to succession management plans and to enhance NTPS as an employer of choice.

- The Work Life Balance Pilot Program was undertaken by three agencies, DCM, DEET and DHCS. Other agencies have also provided awareness sessions for staff. It is anticipated that the pilot and its evaluation will lead to a revised framework for work life balance, as well as new guidelines and practical support for implementation across the sector before the end of 2006.
- DCIS' IT and Finance sections and DPIFM's Primary Industry Group participated in the *Women in Leadership and Management* pilot initiative. The pilot has identified cultural barriers to progression by women into executive positions in these agencies and has suggested some new practices for the agencies to introduce.
- The policy paper *Broadening Our Horizons—Avenues for Career Mobility* received positive support from across the sector and was approved by Cabinet in April. An implementation plan for the pilot program of staff mobility and exchange will contribute to succession management as well as future structured career development programs.
- Eight senior staff representing six agencies are currently undertaking a pilot project for NTPS Learning Sets as an alternative development option to formal leadership programs. The Learning Set model of professional development will be evaluated as a potential element in future Executive and Leadership Programs.

Agency specific initiatives have also shown positive outcomes for employee development.

- DCIS has re-vamped its *Performance Management* strategy to be more user friendly, rebadging it as the *Personal Planning Process*. The relevant training has been updated to cater for new staff and managers as well as existing staff.
- DBERD established a new Employee Advisory Committee which will guide employee development initiatives in the agency, particularly related to leadership and management development, Indigenous employment and career development and flexible work options.

- A tailored human and financial resource management program was developed and delivered by DHCS to 320 Cost Centre Managers, as a response to an immediate training need within the agency. Post-course evaluations were extremely positive with 97% of the participants reporting an increase in competence and leadership confidence related to the course objectives.
- NT WorkSafe was rewarded for its inclusive approach to workplace relations and capacity building, winning the Prime Minister's Employer of the Year Award for Excellence in Employment of People with a Disability, State and Territory Governments.
- DPIFM has created a development pool of employees at AO6 level and above who may be offered lateral transfer opportunities as they become available, against a range of criteria designed to assess the benefit for the employee and for the agency.
- The Correctional Services Division of DOJ invested in becoming an accredited International Computer Driver's Licence (ICDL) training and test centre. The ICDL program allows staff to work at their own pace ensures that staff develop the skills needed to work with the new electronic prisoner management tools.
- Staff at AO5 to AO7 level from various units in NTT collaborated together to develop the Mock Budget exercise for year 12 students. This provided an opportunity for staff to work collaboratively on a project to engage students in the functions of Treasury and Government and also provided the opportunity to further develop their public speaking skills.

All agencies are taking advantage of entry level programs, reporting 156 graduates which included 88 Nursing Graduates entering the Graduate Nurse Program, the largest nursing recruitment initiative in the Territory. There were also 67 cadets and 170 apprentices employed across agencies during the period. In partnership with the Australian Government, 53 of the cadets were recruited through the National Indigenous Cadetship Program.

## Future Challenges for Workforce Planning and Development

Agencies reported a wide range of challenges facing them in their efforts to build the capability of the NTPS workforce, including

- Increased workforce capability in the areas of governance, policy development and implementation, human resource management and financial management.
- Delivery of comprehensive, viable leadership and management training programs in line with succession planning and capability assessments.
- Development of flexible learning and skills development options to suit the various needs and contexts of all employees.
- Skills gap analyses and strategies to attract, develop and retain employees with specialist professional and technical skills.
- Change management initiatives in support of workplace reform and restructuring
- Effective performance management training for managers to provide them with the skills to identify and address under-performance.
- Increased effort to ensure that the Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy becomes core business rather than an extraordinary measure.
- Response to the ageing workforce and shrinking talent pool through creative workforce strategies.
- Innovative approaches to the recruitment and retention of remote-based employees, including support and development opportunities for their families.
- Create a culture of excellence in team leadership and develop highly motivated teams within and, increasingly, across agencies and with the non-government and private sectors.
- Continuous improvement in response to changing client demands and increasingly more complex service environments.
- Generate and sustain behaviours and attitudes that value and support diversity across the public sector and in the community.
- Knowledge management and information sharing strategies to ensure continuity of business within and across agencies.
- The development and sourcing of an appropriate training information system for effective planning and monitoring of learning and development across all agencies. ■









# Northern Territory Public Sector Personnel Statistics Report

Staffing Levels
Staffing Overview
Staffing by Employment Status
Permanent Part-time Staffing
Staffing by Gender
Staffing by Classification Stream
Executive Contracts
Staffing Separation and Recruitment
Sick Leave

For the purpose of this report, reference to the 'Northern Territory Public Sector' includes those agencies listed in Figure 4 on page 31. This list excludes the Northern Territory University, the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, Centralian College, NT Rural College, the Menzies School of Health Research, Territory Insurance Office and the Legal Aid Commission. However it includes a substantial number of persons employed under Acts other than the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* (PSEMA). The latter consist of uniformed police, employees of the NT Tourist Commission, employees of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority and ministerial staff.

# Staffing Levels

Figures 1 and 2 show movements in total staffing in the Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) compared to changes in the Northern Territory population and employment numbers from 1983 to 2006. There has been an overall increase in public sector employment from around 14,200 to 15,830 persons over this period. While Public Sector data from the 1980s and early 1990s was compiled under a different methodology to that used subsequently, the basic definitions and assumptions are similar enough to make broad comparisons valid.

**Figure 1**

Growth in the Northern Territory Public Sector  
Compared to Labour Force,  
Employment and Population Movements - 1983 to 2006

		1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
NTPS	('000)	14.2	14.6	14.7	15.0	14.6	14.2	14.5	14.8	14.5	14.1
	%Growth/Yr		3	1	2	-2	-3	2	2	-2	-3
	Growth Index	100	103	104	106	103	100	102	104	102	99
Labour Force #	('000)	66.9	59.6	71.1	78.3	79.5	72.8	82.0	83.7	85.4	86.8
	%Growth/Yr		-11	19	10	2	-8	13	2	2	2
	Growth Index	100	89	106	117	119	109	123	125	128	130
Employment #	('000)	62.1	55.1	66.1	72.9	75.1	67.3	77.6	78.5	78.3	80.7
	%Growth/Yr		-11	20	10	3	-10	15	1	0	3
	Growth Index	100	89	106	117	121	108	125	126	126	130
Population *	('000)	135.9	142.2	148.5	154.4	157.9	159.0	160.5	162.1	165.0	167.0
	%Growth/Yr		5	4	4	2	1	1	1	2	1
	Growth Index	100	105	109	114	116	117	118	119	121	123



Sources: Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment and the Australian Bureau of Statistics

# Initially average over May, June and July & then ABS trend

\* December previous year population figures

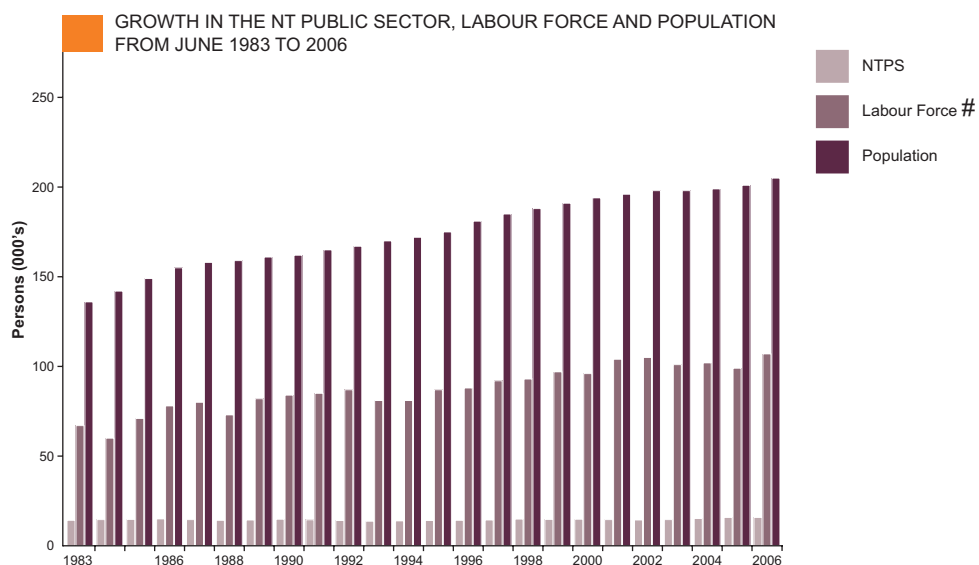
Figure 1 (continued)

1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
13.7	13.9	14.1	14.2	14.4	14.9	14.7	14.8	14.6	14.4	14.6	15.2	15.8	15.8
-2	1	1	1	1	3	-1	0	-1	-2	2	4	4	0
97	98	99	100	102	105	104	104	103	101	103	107	112	112
81.4	80.5	87.0	88.4	91.5	92.6	97.0	95.5	104.4	105.5	101.2	102.5	99.4	106.5
-6	-1	8	2	4	1	5	-2	9	1	-4	1	-3	7
122	120	130	132	137	138	145	143	156	158	151	153	149	159
75.4	75.4	81.0	83.4	86.7	88.5	93.2	90.2	97.0	101.0	94.9	95.4	94.4	101.1
-7	0	7	3	4	2	5	-3	8	4	-6	1	-1	7
121	121	130	134	140	143	150	145	156	163	153	154	152	163
169.7	172.3	175.0	180.5	185.3	188.2	191.4	194.3	196.3	197.7	197.4	198.7	200.8	204.5
2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	1	2
125	127	129	133	136	138	141	143	144	145	145	146	148	150

Aggregation of the data shows that from the year 1983 (which is about the time the NT public sector consolidated following self government) to 2006, the Northern Territory population grew by 50 percent while the labour force grew by 59 percent. Conversely, the NT public service is currently only 12 percent larger than it was in 1983. This needs to be put into context in that in 2002 the NTPS was one percent larger than in 1983.

There was a rapid expansion of the service over the three years to 2005, resulting in successive 12 monthly increases in size of 1.5, 4.1 and 4.4 percentage points respectively. Total staffing has been relatively static over the past 12 months, and the level for mid 2006 is almost identical to that for mid 2005.

**FIGURE 2**



# Average over May, June and July

The change in the size of the public sector from 1983 is compared directly to population growth in Figure 3. The graph shows that the population of the Territory has grown steadily during this period while NT Public Sector staffing has been subject to substantial variation, first peaking in 1986 at around 15,000.

The decrease which followed was precipitated by substantial cuts in federal funding to the NT following a review of State/Territory financing. Staffing numbers then steadily increased until the NT government's Estimates Review Committee decisions in 1991 predicated a further three-year decline of close to 1000 public servants.

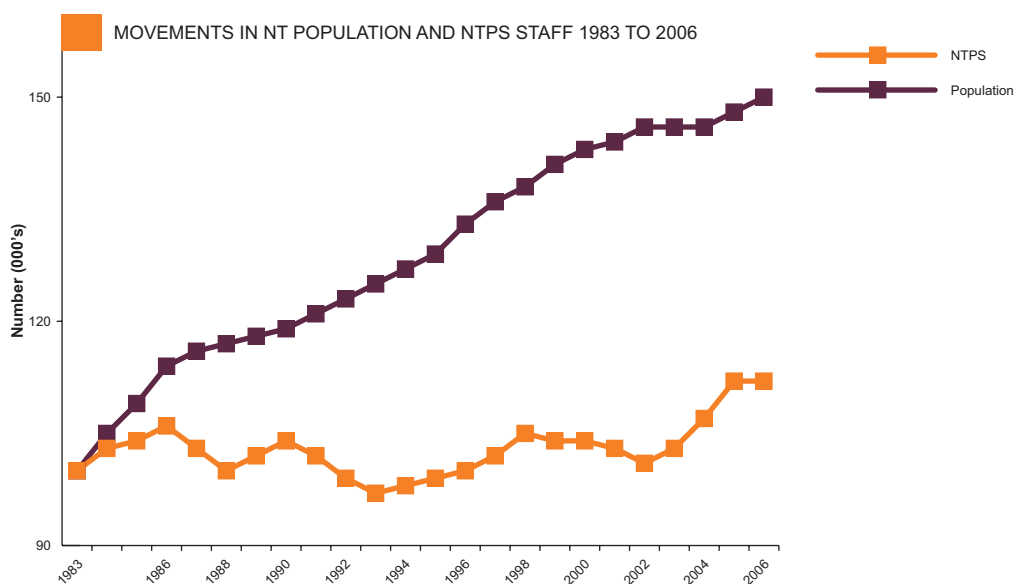
This, however, proved to be unsustainably low as there then followed another period of growth which peaked in 2000. The series subsequently again declined, with a drop in 2001/2002 of nearly 290 people following significant Budget cuts to agencies, the outsourcing of information technology (involving about 120 people), and a major restructuring of the service following a change of government.

This restructure reduced the number of individual agencies from 35 to 19 which created some uncertainty regarding staffing budgets and required staffing levels. In the 1993 Annual Report it was stated that this process of significant change appeared to have consolidated as staff numbers had increased by 235 over the 12 months to June 2003. Following a number of Government commitments regarding increasing staff resources (principally affecting Police, Education and Health) the numbers increased in the 2003/2004 year by 565 and from 2004/2005 by a further 651.

As was stated in the two previous years, there were significant increases in several Agencies other than those targeted during this period. In June 2005 the Government announced a further minor restructuring of Administrative Arrangements which has increased the number of Agencies from 19 to 21. Nevertheless, as stated above, the subsequent overall staffing level has remained relatively constant over the ensuing 12 months.

These changes are illustrated clearly in Figure 4, which shows Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) staffing numbers for each agency averaged over the June quarter for the current reporting year and for the previous three years. Also shown are the changes for each agency between years. This quarterly reporting protocol is in line with the tables published on this Agency's internet site. The reason for this protocol is that comparisons of quarterly data 12 months apart both removes seasonal effects on staffing numbers and is more sensitive than annual averages to relatively rapid changes in overall staffing as has occurred during the last three years.

**FIGURE 3**



Base of each index 1983 = 100

# Staffing Overview

The analysis in the following sections is based mainly on data extracted from the Personnel Information and Payroll System (PIPS) reports. Most figures, summaries and tables refer to individual employees, not to their full-time-equivalent (FTE) status. The basic criterion for an individual being included in the summary is that they had a positive FTE figure as defined by PIPS (i.e. they recorded a pay transaction of some description) in the final pay of the reporting period. As has been stated in previous Annual Reports, from the early 1980's until 1992/93, staffing analyses in these reports relied largely on data contained in a previous personnel database. The accuracy and scope of the analyses were limited under this system, as some agencies utilised facilities other than the default database for maintaining detailed personnel records. From the middle of 1993 the PIPS system came into mandated use, and so most time series comparisons described below start at that point in time.

*\* refer to Figure 4 on following page.*

Comparisons made using data after June 1993 (i.e. using all PIPS data) are much more accurate than previously, although care should be taken when noting small changes in some variables as profiles may have changed slightly with both changes in definitions and with developments in processing protocols. In addition, the FTE staffing calculation was fine-tuned in late 1999 to decrease the variance in the FTE figure. The revised calculation was then back-cast to 1995, which was when pay data started to be back-loaded into PIPS as part of pay processing. Consequently, caution should be exercised when making detailed comparisons of some current data with PIPS data extracted prior to 1995.

The current report encompasses all agencies except those mentioned in the first paragraph of this personnel statistics section. Darwin Port Corporation is not included in some analyses as it does not utilise the payroll facilities of the PIPS System.



*Note: Numbers refer to the full-time equivalent of all paid staff including those on paid leave and casual employees*

**FIGURE 4**

Changes to Average Public Sector Staff Employed by Agency: June qtr. 2003 to June qtr. 2006

AGENCY	Average June quarter 2003	Average June quarter 2004	Change over 12 months	Average June quarter 2005	Change over 12 months	Average June quarter 2006	Change over 12 months
Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority	24	26	2	25	- 1	25	..
Auditor General	4	5	1	5	0	5	..
Business, Economic & Regional Development	established July 2005					137	n.a.
Business, Industry & Resource Development	624	603	- 21	620	17	dis-continued	n.a.
Chief Minister	278	301	23	300	- 1	275	- 25
Commissioner for Public Employment	48	53	5	46	- 7	55	9
Community Development, Sport & Cultural Affairs	534	614	80	649	35	dis-continued	n.a.
Corporate & Information Services	709	696	- 13	743	47	735	- 8
Darwin Port Corporation	52	52	0	62	10	64	2
Employment, Education & Training	3 806	3 780	- 26	3 803	23	3 856	53
Health & Community Services	3 875	4 084	209	4 395	311	4 449	54
Infrastructure, Planning & Environment	1 312	1 378	66	1 408	30	dis-continued	n.a.
Justice	836	866	30	926	60	939	13
Land Development Corporation	5	6	1	5	- 1	dis-continued	n.a.
Legislative Assembly	94	96	2	94	- 2	97	3
Local Government, Housing & Sport	established July 2005					439	n.a.
Natural Resources, Environment & the Arts	established July 2005					744	n.a.
NT Electoral Commission			0	12	n.a.	9	- 3
Ombudsman	18	20	2	18	- 2	20	2
Planning & Infrastructure	established July 2005					809	n.a.
Police, Fire & Emergency Services	1 330	1 457	127	1 539	82	1 602	63
Power & Water Corporation	658	680	22	706	26	719	13
Primary Industry, Fisheries & Mines	established July 2005					479	n.a.
Tourist Commission	98	129	31	134	5	150	16
Treasury	233	259	26	264	5	229	- 35
TOTAL	14 538	15 103	565	15 754	651	15 837	83

## Staffing by Employment Status

Data on the employment categories of staff from June 1996 through to June 2006 is presented in Figure 5. From 1996 through to 2003 the proportion of permanent employees was fairly steady but over the past three years it has fallen by around 2.5 percentage points. Earlier data not included in the table shows that in 1994 the percentage of permanents was 81.5%, which gives an overall drop of nearly 6 percentage points since that time. While the downward trend has not been steady, it is clearly overall in the downward direction. As has been

speculated over the last couple of years, the more recent downturn has quite possibly been a by-product of the recent rapid expansion of the service, with there being some apparent tendency to recruit initially to termed contracts to tie people being recruited into areas of skill shortages into fixed term contracts. As is discussed later under the section Staff Separation and Recruitment, this recruitment to contracts appears as no longer being a consistent trend. The advent of the Work Choices legislation may well create further complications in interpreting these trends.

**FIGURE 5**

Employment Status of NT Public Sector Staff – 1996 to 2006

STATUS	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Change 95 to '06
Permanent	78.2%	78.3%	76.6%	77.9%	76.8%	77.5%	78.1%	78.2%	76.9%	75.4%	75.6%	-2.5% pts.
Temporary	19.1%	18.8%	20.3%	19.2%	19.9%	19.4%	18.8%	18.6%	19.5%	21.2%	21.3%	2.2% pts.
Casual	2.0%	2.1%	2.4%	2.5%	2.9%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%	1.0% pts.
Misc.	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	-0.6% pts.
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

### PERMANENT PART-TIME STAFFING

Permanent part-time work has, in recent years, been utilised as an option to assist in retaining the valuable skills of employees who are striving to achieve a better work-life balance. The number of NT Public Sector employees in this employment category is, at 1000 exactly, an increase of 4.4 percent over the number last

year which increases their percentage as a proportion of the workforce from 7.5 percent to 7.8 percent. This is 642 more than were working permanent part-time in 1994, an overall increase of 179%. The incremental increases in the proportion of workers in this type of employment since 1996 is shown in Figure 6.

**FIGURE 6**

Permanent Part-Time in the NT Public Sector – 1995 to 2006

STATUS	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Change 95 to '06
Permanent part-time	3.8%	4.0%	4.4%	5.3%	5.5%	6.1%	6.8%	7.4%	7.2%	7.4%	7.8%	4.0% pts.



# Staffing by Gender

The proportion of women in the public sector as at June 1993 was 54.3 percent. Since that time that figure has risen slowly but steadily to reach 61.4 percent in June 2006 (see Figure 7). This represents an average annual increase in the proportion of women of around 0.55 percentage points, although the rate of increase has tailed off with the difference over the past 4 years being only 0.8 percentage points. This increase should be viewed in the context of Australian Bureau of Statistics national data which indicates that the labour force participation rate for women (i.e. the number of women either in work, or looking for work) has increased markedly over the last 20 years, whereas that for men has decreased.

The proportions of females to males in agencies are represented in Figure 9. While this division can be misleading for very small agencies (as the make up of these agencies staffing can vary considerably with staff changes over time), the graph shows quite clearly that there are some large agencies where one gender predominates. Given the nature or the work in most of these agencies, it is hardly reasonable to expect that this will change substantially in the short to medium term. Nevertheless, the gender by stream data in the following section suggests that some of this imbalance is slowly changing.

**FIGURE 7**



Figure 8 indicates the change in the proportion of females by vocational stream in June 1994 and June 2006. It can be taken as a positive change from the EEO perspective that the very high over-representation of women in the health professions has shown some decline (with the proportion of males increasing by over three percent, presumably due to more positive social attitudes to males choosing nursing as a profession)

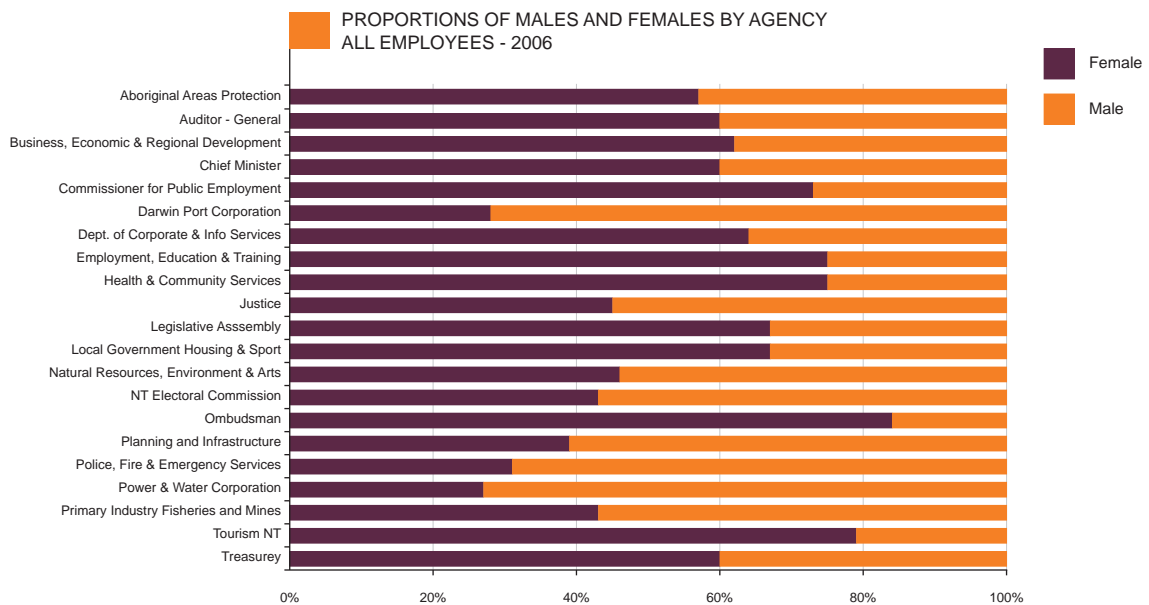
and that, conversely, the predominance of men in the uniformed, technical and professional streams has reduced markedly. Conversely, this trend against gender stereotyping has not been reflected in the education sector, where the proportion of female teachers has shown a nine percent increase to the point where three out of four educators in NT public education are women. This a source of considerable concern.

**FIGURE 8**

Percentage of Females by Employment Stream - June 1994 and June 2006

Stream	Percent females		Difference
	1994	2006	
Admin Staff	67.6%	70.8%	3.2%
Prof Staff	40.8%	52.6%	11.8%
Technical Staff	19.2%	27.5%	8.3%
Physical Staff	40.2%	44.2%	4.0%
Teaching Staff	65.6%	74.6%	9.0%
Health Workers	83.5%	79.9%	-3.6%
Uniformed Staff	12.7%	22.0%	9.3%
Total	55.6%	61.4%	5.8%

**FIGURE 9**



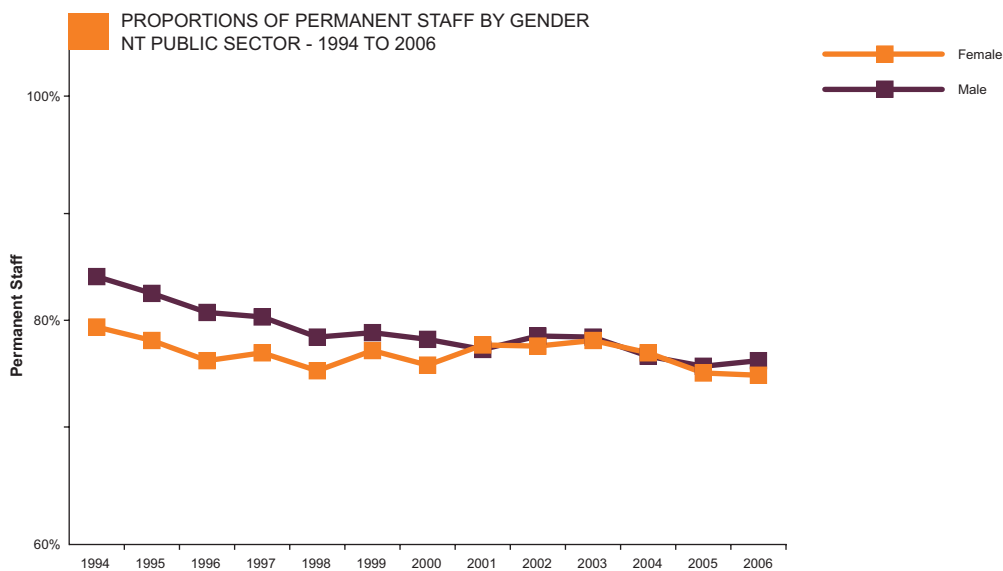
## Status by Gender

Figure 10 graphs the proportion of permanent staff by gender from 1994 through to 2006. This reveals that the drop in the proportion of permanent staff over the last ten years documented in Figure 5 above was not split evenly between men and women. While the initial drop was at a similar rate, the proportion for females levelled out from 1996 while that for men continued to decrease until a convergence in 2001. They have remained at a similar level for the last six years, with the overall drop in the proportion of permanent staff over the past three years being similar for both genders. It is too early to say whether the slightly greater drop shown in the graph for women this year is significant.

It is reasonable to suggest that this decrease of men in permanent positions could relate to the changing face of the Australian labour force as described by the Australian Bureau of Statistics data referred to above.

In this context of comparing status with gender, is also noteworthy that of the 1000 employees currently in permanent part-time work, 91 percent are female.

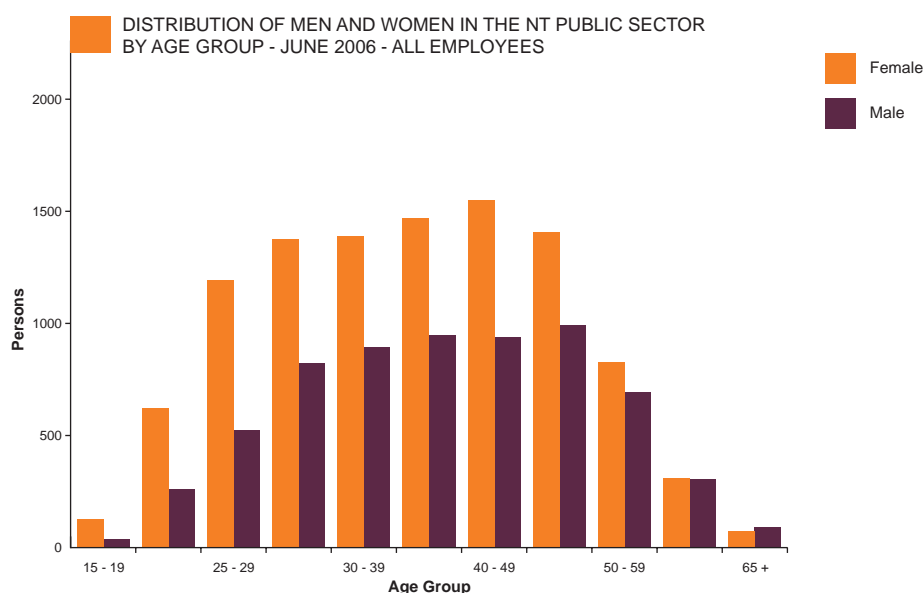
FIGURE 10



# Age by Gender

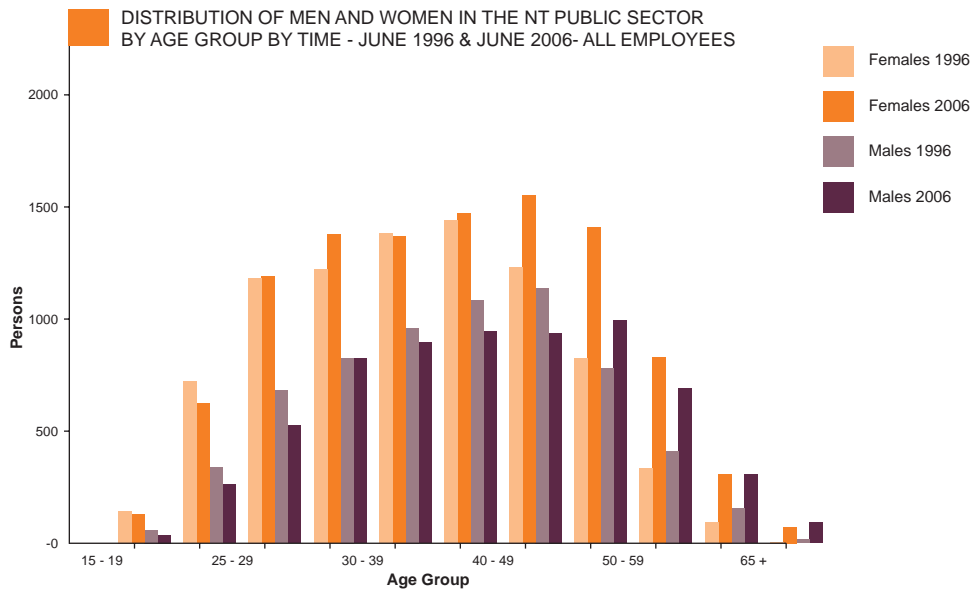
Figure 11 illustrates the division of staffing by age and gender as at June 2006. The overall characteristic of previous years remains in that while women in the NT Public Sector remain in the majority, they also remain concentrated in the lower age groups.

**FIGURE 11**



Nevertheless a visual comparison with a similar graph from an Annual Report from 10 years ago suggests that there is now a somewhat flatter age distribution for both females and males i.e. there appears to be a more even distribution of employees across the age categories. Figure 12 compares the percentage distributions of both females and males both currently and in 1996. It is fairly clear from this that the distribution has changed, with the proportion within both genders decreasing at the lower age categories and increasing at the higher. The only exception to this is in the 45 to 49 year category where the females increased slightly but the males dropped quite significantly. This overall distribution change leads into the next section.

**FIGURE 12**



The average age of NTPS personnel from June 1993 to June 2006 is shown in Figure 13. This shows that over this 13 year period the overall average has risen by 3.2 years with the overall average 0.2 years higher than that for last year. The overall rate of ageing for men and women has historically been similar, but appears to have diverged somewhat over the past three or four years with the increase for women over the entire period now being about 30% higher (2.9yrs for men, 3.8yrs for women).

There was concern expressed last decade about continued public sector staffing restraint leading to an ageing public sector and a shortage of suitably trained younger personnel to take over senior positions. In contrast, the current focus revolves around the overall ageing of the Australian population, a phenomenon which implies the potential for a similar result. Earlier data suggesting an ageing profile of the NT public sector was inconclusive, but now we can say that no matter what the cause, the effect has been shown to be real. What is interesting, given the more recent data, is that the effect appears to have moderated somewhat as the average has risen only marginally over the last four years, despite the relaxation and then repeal of compulsory retirement during 2002/2003.

That the average age of employees rose by 3.2 years between 1993 and 2005/2006 should also be viewed in light of the fact that ABS data indicates that between 1993 and 2003 the median age of the Australian population grew by 3.1 years. At 30.9 years, the median age of Northern Territorians is nearly six years lower than the national average (36.6 years).

Nevertheless the Territory figure increased by 3.6 years over the same period. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that the cause of the slowly ageing NT public sector can be at least partially be attributed to the changing demographics of the population at large.

**FIGURE 13**

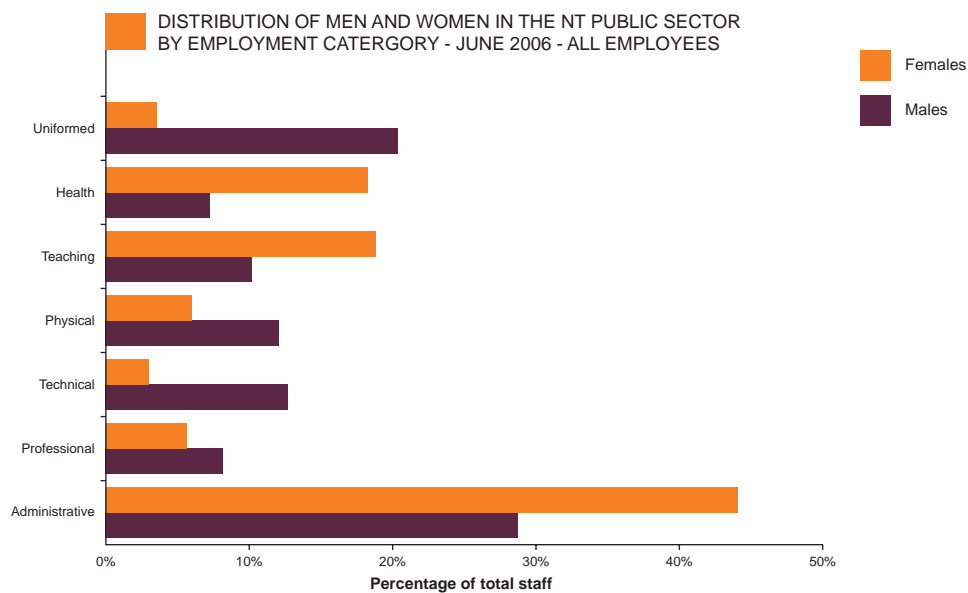
Average Age by Gender - NT Public Sector Staff - 1993 to 2006

AGE	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Females	37.9	38.2	38.3	38.6	39.1	39.2	39.5	39.7	40.4	40.6	41.3	41.5	41.4	41.7
Males	41	41	41.2	41.7	42.1	42.1	42.5	42.5	42.7	43.4	43.9	43.6	43.6	43.9
<b>Overall</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>42.5</b>

### Classification Stream by Gender

While the gender balance within streams has varied as described in the discussion of Figure 8 above, there has been little change in the balance between streams over time. The largest employment category in the Northern Territory Public Sector remains as the administrative stream, which accounts for 38.7 percent of the sector. Women remain as being overwhelmingly concentrated in Administration, Teaching and Health.

**FIGURE 14**

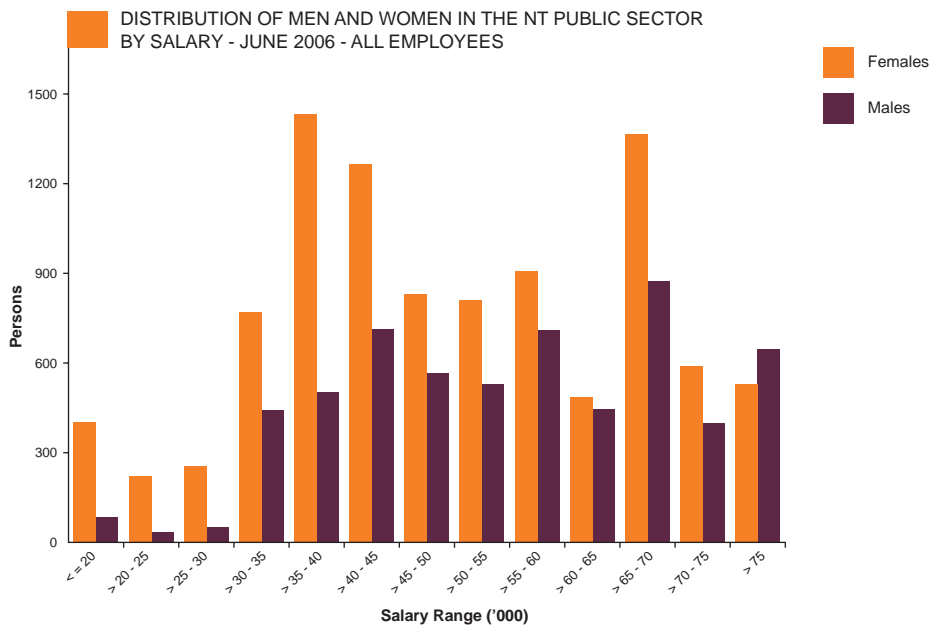


## Salary by Gender

As noted above, there has been a substantial increase in the participation rate of women in the traditionally male dominated professional, technical and uniformed streams. There has also been a concurrent marked increase in the numbers of women in middle and senior management. In June 1993 the proportion of women in executive classifications was 15 percent, whereas the figure currently stands at 34 percent. More striking is that over the same period the proportion of women in the AO6 to AO8 middle management group has increased from 37 percent to 58 percent.

Despite these gains at management level, there remain large numbers of women at the lower salary levels. Figure 14 illustrates the significant difference in the profiles of male and female earnings (executive contract officers are not included in this graph but are treated separately in a later section). Note that while there is a seemingly inconsistent predominance of women in the 65 to 70 thousand a year bracket, over 70 percent of these are either teachers or nurses.

**FIGURE 15**



\* Note that officers on executive contracts are not included in this graph.

# Staffing by Classification Stream

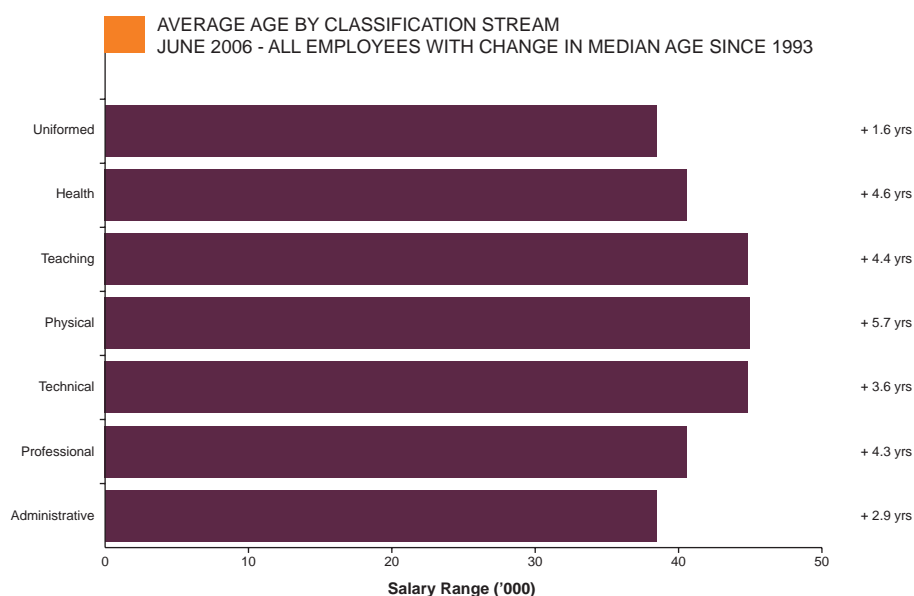
## Age by Classification Stream

A plot of average age against classification stream, together with the change in median age for each stream between 1993 and 2006, is shown in Figure 16. This shows that uniformed staff and the health stream are, on average, the youngest in the NT public sector. Conversely, teaching and physical staff are the oldest. It is of note that while the average age of the NTPS has risen by 3.2 years since 1993 as described above, the average age increases of the individual streams differ markedly. The lowest change is that of uniformed staff (i.e. police, fire officers and prison officers) with an increase of 1.6 years. At the other end of the spectrum is that for physical classifications which rose by 5.7 years.

Two years ago the highest increase since 1993 was for professionals at 5.4 years. Last year, however the average age of professionals dropped by an unprecedented 1.9 years to 3.5 years. This year it has gone back up to 4.3 years. The reason for this is not known, but could have something to do with slightly higher recruitment rates to the professional stream in the last couple of years.

Of concern is the consistent significant increases for teachers and the health professions (mainly nurses), both of which are in short supply in the labour market both nationally and internationally.

**FIGURE 16**



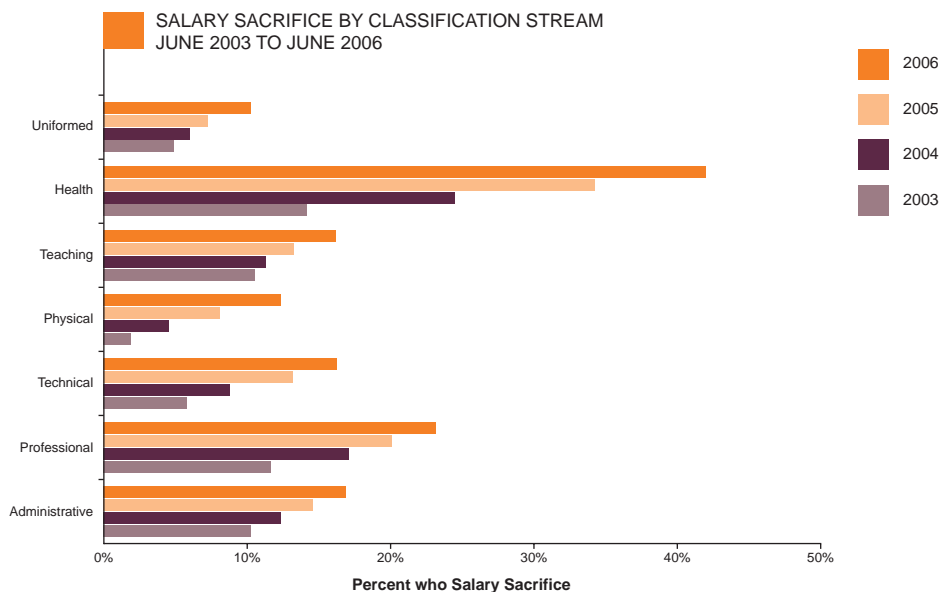


## Salary Sacrifice by Classification Stream

One outcome of enterprise bargaining agreements negotiated in the year 2000 was the enabling of employees to enter salary sacrifice to superannuation arrangements. As at June 2003 just under 9.5 percent of the service had taken up this option, with the rate of take up by stream being very broadly aligned with the average salary as charted in the previous section. As of 1 April 2004 the NT Government broadened the scope of salary sacrificing to include payments for other debts, as described under Federal legislation. Such arrangements are now referred to as salary packaging, and are particularly attractive to employees working in hospitals owing to the salary sacrifice legislation being intertwined with Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) legislation, and hospitals are FBT free. As a result the take up has expanded by nearly 600 people to June 2004 a further 700 to June 2005 and close to another 600 this year. The overall participation rate in these arrangements now stands at 19.8 percent. The benefits of these arrangements to hospital employees are made clear in Figure 16 with 2003's broad nexus between salary sacrifice and income breaking down significantly; in particular with the rate of take up in the physical stream having now increased by a factor of six.

This is not surprising given that these arrangements were formerly of more significance to those on higher marginal tax rates, but taking FBT out of the equation for hospitals means that there are tangible advantages irrespective of tax thresholds.

**FIGURE 17**



# Executive Contracts

A table outlining those on executive contracts by classification, gender and salary range is presented earlier in this report. This shows, amongst other things, that the overall proportion of 32% females on contract is not evenly distributed over the different streams. The administrative stream is in line with the average but the relatively high proportion of females in education is counteracted by the low levels amongst Medical Specialists, Police and Power & Water managers.

This table outlining contracts does not, of course, show the additional 96 Executive Officer 1 employees who are not on contract. The reason this group is mentioned here is because amongst these non-contract EO1s, 51 percent are female. This is another, quite striking, example of the ratio of women decreasing markedly with increasing levels of remuneration.

Figure 18 shows the changes in executive contracts numbers from June 2005 to June 2006 by classification and gender. The total number on contract grew by 25 (over 5%) during this period, mainly in the administrative stream but also quite markedly amongst executive principals. Of note is that these 25 new positions comprised 17 females and eight males.

**FIGURE 18**

Change in Executive Contract Numbers by Classification and Gender from 2005 to 2006

	Females			Males			Total		
	2005	2006	Diffce	2005	2006	Diffce	2005	2006	Diffce
<b>Administration</b>									
Executive Officer 1	54	57	3	124	137	13	178	194	16
Executive Officer 2	29	33	4	58	58	0	87	91	4
Executive Officer 3	3	4	1	25	24	-1	28	28	0
Executive Officer 4	5	4	-1	15	13	-2	20	17	-3
Executive Officer 5	1	1	0	5	5	0	6	6	0
Executive Officer 6	3	4	1	8	8	0	11	12	1
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Education</b>									
Executive Principal 1A	9	17	8	15	11	-4	24	28	4
Executive Principal 1	8	8	0	4	7	3	12	15	3
Executive Principal 2	10	12	2	16	15	-1	26	27	1
Executive Principal 3	5	5	0	6	6	0	11	11	0
Executive Teacher 9	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Medical Specialists</b>									
Medical Contract	3	2	-1	14	13	-1	17	15	-2
<b>Police</b>									
Commissioner	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
Police Contract Officer	1	1	0	10	11	1	11	12	1
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Power &amp; Water</b>									
Executive Manager 1	3	2	-1	8	7	-1	11	9	-2
Executive Manager 2	1	1	0	6	6	0	7	7	0
Executive Manager 3	0	1	1	2	2	0	2	3	1
Executive Manager 4	1	1	0	2	3	1	3	4	1
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>25</b>

# Staff Separation and Recruitment

Staff separation and recruitment data are presented below beginning at the 2000/2001 reporting period.

Although this analysis is limited to relatively recent data, a little background knowledge is helpful in interpreting the turnover statistics. A few years prior to the introduction of PIPS, a decision was made to revise the reporting of turnover data by producing two sets of tables. One contained both permanent and temporary employees (as had been the custom) and the other included permanent employees only. The practice of using both sets of data has continued, as both have their uses in tracking turnover profiles.

Nevertheless, and as noted in previous year's reports, there is an additional complication with the interpretation of the PIPS turnover data. While the separations count is reasonably straightforward, the commencements data is a little more complex. A simple count of all commencements is simple enough, but becomes confusing when we attempt to separate permanent from temporary appointments.

**FIGURE 19**

NT Public Sector Separation and Recruitment Rates by Employment Category – 2000/2001 to 2005/2006 - PERMANENT STAFF\*

	2000/2001		2001/2002		2002/2003		2003/2004		2004/2005		2005/2006	
	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %
Administrative	10	4	10	3	9	4	8	5	8	4	9	3
Professional	11	6	10	6	11	5	11	7	10	8	15	8
Technical	7	5	9	3	8	6	11	6	9	7	10	7
Physical	12	8	12	6	10	6	11	7	12	7	13	10
Teaching	10	2	11	3	13	9	12	9	14	3	10	1
Health Workers	18	10	17	9	13	8	14	9	11	3	15	8
Uniformed	7	9	8	4	8	8	7	12	7	10	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>



\* for comment regarding low recruitment rates see text

Close analysis of the data shows that it is quite common for individuals to be hired as temporary employees and then, after gaining relevant experience, to win permanent positions. Their status is simply transferred across to 'permanent' on the main database, but this is (quite reasonably) not reflected in the commencement report. The commencements data thus shows them as being recruited to temporary, rather than to permanent positions. The net result is that the figures for recruitment of permanent staff fall far below those for separation of permanent staff without this actually being the case.

Also noted previously has been the significant fall in the proportion of permanent staff over the past ten years (-2.6%). This is obviously far less than would be predicted by taking the difference between the commencement and separation rates for permanent staff in Figure 18 at face value. Logic tells us that, given the slight downward trend in the proportion of permanent employees as described, the fact is that the sum of employees either recruited as permanent or who subsequently become permanent, is similar to their rate of separation.

In singling out those actually recruited as permanent, the Annual Report for 2001-02 noted as significant that these had, for every stream, 'decreased significantly over the six year period outlined', dropping steadily from seven percent during 1996-97 to four percent during 2001-02. During 2002-03 the figure jumped back to six percent, during 2003-4 to seven percent, in 2004-05 back to six percent. This year it has dropped back further to five percent. The most notable component of the decrease is in the education stream where the recruitment to permanent positions has dropped to one percent

In earlier reports it was hypothesised in that the then increases in permanent appointments were most likely tied in with management strategies to improve staff retention. However the changes have not been consistent across streams and with particular reference to the large gaps between overall recruitment numbers and recruitment to permanency in education and health it appears that their current strategies are more likely driven by the usage of termed contracts in order to tie recruits in for a fixed period of time into areas of skills shortage.

**FIGURE 20**

**NT Public Sector Separation and Recruitment Rates by Employment Category - 2000/2001 to 2005/2006 - PERMANENT & TEMPORARY STAFF**

	2000/2001		2001/2002		2002/2003		2003/2004		2004/2005		2005/2006	
	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %	Separation rate %	recruitment rate %
Administrative	28	27	28	26	27	28	25	32	27	32	27	26
Professional	31	27	25	23	27	24	26	28	26	26	29	28
Technical	21	17	17	13	14	15	18	19	18	20	19	19
Physical	29	31	31	30	29	29	27	29	30	33	29	34
Teaching	23	20	22	23	22	24	20	25	26	23	23	24
Health Workers	59	57	54	56	58	58	53	58	48	59	49	48
Uniformed	7	12	8	7	9	11	8	14	7	13	8	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>

**FIGURE 21**

Separation Statistics for the period 01/07/2005 to 30/06/2006  
PERMANENT & TEMPORARY STAFF\*

	Admin	Teaching	Health	Profesnl.	Technical	Uniformed	Physical	Total
Cessation - Temporary	697	258	467	107	60	2	129	1720
Deceased	9	1	0	0	1	0	3	14
Dismissal	13	13	1	0	2	2	10	41
Resignation	971	313	627	208	140	131	205	2595
Retire Invalid	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	14
Retire Min Age	7	3	1	1	0	0	2	14
Retire Other	13	7	1	1	2	0	4	28
Retrenchment	14	0	0	2	5	0	1	22
Other	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1732</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>4456</b>



\* Does not include casual staff or those on long term workers compensation

The breakdown of separations by type (eg. resignation, retirement) is listed by stream in Figure 21. Of some note is that the proportion of resignations to total separations was 58% last year whereas ten years ago, in the 1994/95 report it was 69%. This probably just reflects the increased usage of temporary contract employment.

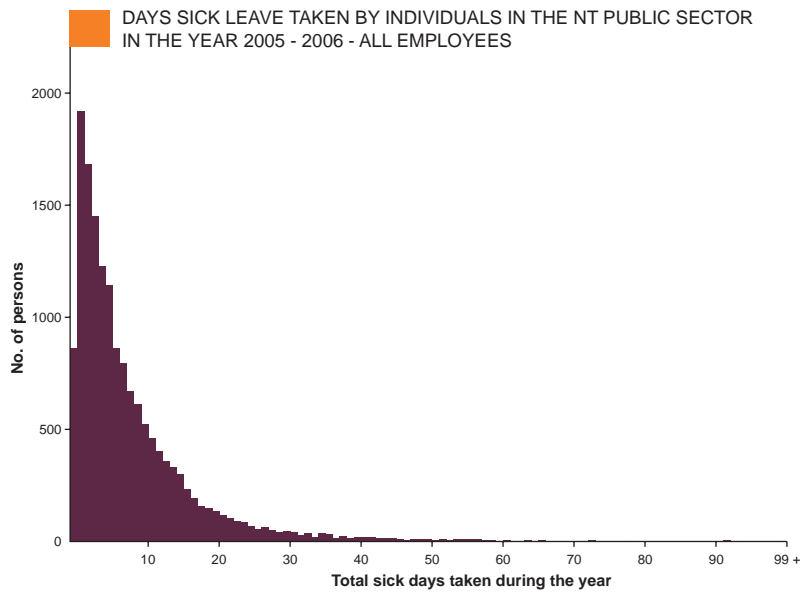
It is of interest to look further at the profile of those permanent employees who resign from the service. It might be expected that having permanency in the public sector would commonly lead to a reasonable period of stable employment. But of the 1523 permanent employees who elected to leave during 2005-2006 (up from 1401 last year), 48 percent had two years or less service (up from 43 percent last year) and 66 percent had five years or less service.(up from 64 last year). In the light of this, it has been hypothesised in earlier reports that these 'early' retirees may have comprised a substantial number of generations X and Y. This much debated subset of society, descendants of the baby boomers, are reputed to, on average, value permanence less than those born earlier. In fact the median age of those leaving during 2005-2006 with two years or less service was 34 (the same as last year) whereas the overall average age of this group was 41 (again a year higher than the previous year). This difference in average ages has been consistent over the last six years and so the hypothesis of a disparity between generations as described is, for the NTPS, beyond doubt.

As was stated in last year's report, the implication is that, while there is contemporary concern about the probability of a future labour market shortage due to population ageing, this could be compounded by the apparent higher turnover rates of the younger generations. When combined, these have the potential to produce even greater problems with respect to the long standing issues of continued re-training of replacement staff and erosion of valuable corporate knowledge than formerly envisaged. The corporate knowledge aspect is arguably even more important in the public sector than the private, given the practical necessity of maintaining a reasonable overall consistency in public sector administration and service delivery across successive governments.

# Sick Leave

Figure 22 shows the distribution of the number of days sick leave with pay taken by individual employees during 2005-2006. The graph shows that the most frequent occurrence was one sick day taken. From this high starting point the curve then drops off steeply, and then starts to flatten out. The average (median) number of sick days taken last year was 4.7.

**FIGURE 22**

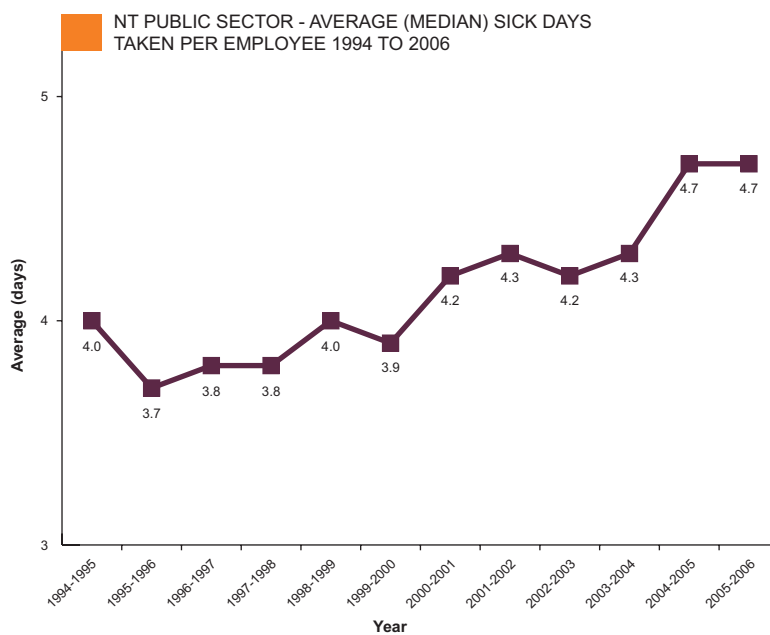


The median amount of sick leave taken for each employee for the last ten financial years is shown in Figure 23. The data suggests that there has been some variation from year to year, but overall a significant increase in the average days taken over that time. At 4.7 the figure for this year is the same as that for last year.

These changes need to be viewed in the context of the provision of family leave. This was first provided for in the NT as part of the 1994 Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) which allowed up to 5 days to be taken when caring for sick family members. This maximum was extended to 10 days in the 1997 EBA. While family leave was, in theory, immediately available to the whole sector, there remains anecdotal evidence that knowledge and consequent utilisation of this facility may have been lower in some sectors of the service than others.

As an element of the strategy to retain employees by offering a favourable work-life environment, this Office promotes the principle of taking advantage of the family leave provisions rather than to diminish credits in other forms of leave. This has been given greater emphasis service wide over the last couple of years. This could explain the increase over the last few years, but in the absence of a detailed analysis of all types of leave, it cannot be stated whether this represents a net increase in the amount of leave taken or just a redistribution towards the sick leave category. ■

**FIGURE 23**









# Appendices



# How to contact us

## The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment:

### Top End

Ground & 4<sup>th</sup> Floors, Harbour View Plaza

8 McMinn Street (cnr Bennett and McMinn Streets)

Darwin NT 0800

GPO Box 4371

Darwin NT 0801

Telephone: 8999 4282

Facsimile: 8999 4358

Email: [ocpe@nt.gov.au](mailto:ocpe@nt.gov.au)

Web: [www.nt.gov.au/ocpe](http://www.nt.gov.au/ocpe)

### Central Australia

1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Belvedere House

cnr Bath and Parsons Streets

Alice Springs NT 0870

PO Box 8574

Alice Springs NT 0871

Telephone: 8951 5785

Facsimile: 8951 5788

Email: [ocpe@nt.gov.au](mailto:ocpe@nt.gov.au)

Web: [www.nt.gov.au/ocpe](http://www.nt.gov.au/ocpe)



Office of the Commissioner  
for Public Employment

Agency Reporting Requirements  
in accordance with  
Sections 18 & 28 of the

*Public Sector Employment and  
Management Act*  
&  
Agency Employee Development  
Activities

2005/2006

## AGENCY ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### GENERAL

This document is provided to Chief Executive Officers to assist them to meet the annual reporting requirements detailed in sections 18 and 28 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993 (the Act)* and in relation to their employee development activities.

### CONTENTS

There are four parts to the information required:

#### 1. Summary Statement

Chief Executive Officers are required to provide key statements for the reported year relating to the extent to which observance of the prescribed principles of human resource management has been achieved in their agencies. This allows Chief Executive Officers to record their conclusions based on the more detailed information provided in Part 2.

#### 2. Key Indicators

To provide support for the summary statement, Chief Executive Officers are also required to submit information regarding the extent to which application of the principles is being actively managed within the agency. This takes the form of a brief assessment of the extent to which a range of key process indicators has been met in relation to the core aspects of people management described in the Public Sector Employment Instructions.

Explanatory notes are provided to assist in completing this section.

#### 3. Section 28 Reports and Priority Employment Issues

This part is designed to facilitate:

A – Agency reports against section 28 of the Act, and

B – an opportunity for Chief Executive Officers to describe in greater detail best practice people management and development initiatives e.g. flexible work practices, equity and diversity, recruitment and retention, etc.

#### 4. Employee Development Activities

Chief Executive Officers are required to provide information regarding expenditure, training priorities and highlights of learning successes for the year.

### INSTRUCTIONS

In order to meet annual reporting requirements, Chief Executive Officers must complete Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4. In completing the information please note the following points:

The SUMMARY STATEMENT includes a separate statement regarding meeting the minimum standards contained in Employment Instructions. In completing Section 2, the reporting guidelines contained in the Employment Instructions should be used as a guide. All respondents should consider the evidence available to them in completing this part. Additional information/supporting documentation may be required for future reviews/program evaluations.

Part 2 - KEY INDICATORS requires either a simple "Y" or "N" response, or the insertion of either "a", "b", "c", or "d" to match the statement in the accompanying key. Chief Executive Officers are encouraged to provide additional comments where necessary. This should be done by inserting a reference number (1, 2, 3, etc) in the relevant box(s) and providing comments on a separate sheet.

## PART 1

### AGENCY REPORTING - SUMMARY STATEMENT

#### SECTION 1

As Chief Executive Officer of \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
Name of agency

with regard to the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993*, I am aware of my responsibilities regarding application of the principles of human resource management. Having regard to those responsibilities, the following statement applies as at 30 June 2006. (Please tick the box that applies to your agency and sign below. Refer to explanatory notes)

- 1A  This Agency has established processes that ensure application of the principles of human resource management and is moving towards better practice in people management.
- 1B  This Agency has established processes that ensure application of the principles of human resource management.
- 1C  This Agency will complete the development of processes to ensure application of the principles of human resource management by 31 December 2006
- 1D  This Agency will not complete the development of processes to ensure application of the principles of human resource management by 31 December 2006

This statement is made having regard to my assessment of the Agency policies and processes described in Part 2.

#### SECTION 2

With regard to the Employment Instructions issued by the Commissioner for Public Employment, my Agency is in compliance with the minimum standards prescribed in those Instructions.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Do not sign if Agency has not met the requirements of one or more Employment Instructions. Please provide details regarding non compliance on a separate sheet.**



**PART 2  
KEY INDICATORS – TABLE A**

AGENCY:

<b>PLEASE INDICATE A YES (Y) OR NO (N) IN EACH BOX</b>					
	2A Policy and processes explicitly approved by senior management (i)	2B Policy and processes issued and made known to all staff	2C Policy and processes documented and readily accessible	2D Processes are fair	2E Policies and processes applied consistently
Employment Instruction No. 1					
Employment Instruction No. 2					
Employment Instruction No. 3					
Employment Instruction No. 4					
Employment Instruction No. 6					
Employment Instruction No. 7					
Employment Instruction No. 8					
Employment Instruction No. 10					
Employment Instruction No. 11					
Employment Instruction No. 12					
Employment Instruction No. 13					
Employment Instruction No. 14					

**Foot Notes:**

(i) Senior management = CEO and direct reports

**NOTE:**

If you wish to add a comment to any segment, place a foot note reference in the appropriate box and attach your comments on a separate sheet.

**PART 2  
KEY INDICATORS – TABLE B**

**AGENCY:**

**Please place the appropriate letter that corresponds to the statements below.**  
**a = always**  
**b = usually**  
**c = sometimes**  
**d = usually not**

	<b>2F</b> Managers observe policy and processes (i)	<b>2G</b> Other staff observe policy and processes (i)	<b>2H</b> Policy and processes support their desired outcomes (i)	<b>2I</b> Policy and processes included as part of broader business process review/development activities	<b>2J</b> Development and review of policy and processes informed by staff views/needs	<b>2K</b> Staff awareness of, and confidence in, policy and processes is monitored	<b>2L</b> Policy and processes have been modified/updated in last 12 months. (ii)
EI 1			(iii) (iv)				
EI 2							
EI 3							
EI 4							
EI 6					(viii)		
EI 7					(viii)		
EI 8				(v)			
EI 10							
EI 11				(vi)	(vii)		
EI 12							
EI 13							
EI 14							

**Foot Notes:**

- i) Where no recent information against specific measures is available, consider any relevant information (e.g. incidence of individual concerns or complaints, incidence and findings of discipline, grievance reviews, etc)
- ii) This does not imply reviews of policy and procedures should occur every year. The purpose is to gauge the extent to which an agency has identified improvements to its HR policies and procedures
- iii) With regard to selection, desired outcomes will include avoidance of unlawful discrimination.
- iv) The principle of selection on merit is a means of avoiding patronage and nepotism. The Merit Selection Guide should be used as a reference.
- v) Ensuring that grievance review processes are linked to other processes within the agency supports continuous improvement. Where necessary, policies and practices should be reviewed if found to be deficient.
- vi) It is important that EOMP and, in particular Indigenous Employment and Career Development Plans, form an intrinsic part of agency strategic planning processes.
- vii) The impact of workplace change on employees should be assessed prior to implementation
- viii) Where agencies have taken action regarding discipline, summary dismissal and/or inability, please complete attachment A for each case.

**NOTE:**

If you wish to add a comment to any segment, place a foot note reference in the appropriate box and attach your comments on a separate sheet.



## **PART 3**

### **SECTION 28 REPORTS AND BEST PRACTICE PEOPLE MANAGEMENT**

#### **SECTION A. Section 28 Reports**

Draft reports on agency equal opportunity, management training and staff development, and occupational health and safety (OH&S) programs in the agency are/are not attached. This year, in their OH&S reports, Chief Executive Officers are requested to provide information on any additional measures taken to improve employee safety and physical security within the agency. (Where reports are not included please provide brief explanation)

#### **SECTION B.**

Nomination of agency people management policies and procedures as exemplar(s) of best practice e.g. flexible work practices, equity and diversity, recruitment and retention, etc.

Please include a brief summary here and attach copies of nominated policies/practices.

## **PART 4**

### **EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

The format for this year's reporting is the same as the previous year.

- 1 Total Agency expenditure on formal training activities in 2005-2006 (this should only include cost of activity, duty travel and accommodation costs incurred).
- 2 Total hours spent in training activities for all employees in 2005-2006.
- 3 Agency's direct expenditure on formal training activities for remote area employees,\* including travel and accommodation (broken down into Indigenous and non Indigenous employees). (Any activity which was funded through the RWDS should be excluded).
- 4 Total hours spent in training for remote employees.
- 5 Number of graduates, cadets and apprentices currently employed in the Agency.
- 6 Employee development initiatives implemented in the agency (eg work life balance, women in management and leadership, indigenous development, staff exchange, mentoring programs).
- 7 Three key areas of focus for training activities (eg leadership, teams, technical skills) in your Agency.
- 8 Highlights of your Agency's learning successes for the year? For example anecdotal stories or case studies of innovative learning programs.
- 9 Future challenges for training and development in your Agency.

\* Determination 2/2003 defines a remote locality as "town, place, community or locality, outside the environs of Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs, where access to health, education, social, financial emergency, communication and professional support services are limited".

## CONTACTS

**T:** 08 8999 4282

**F:** 08 8999 4148

**E:** [ocpe@nt.gov.au](mailto:ocpe@nt.gov.au)

GPO Box 4371 Darwin NT 0801

4th Floor Harbour View Plaza,  
8 McMinn Street Darwin NT 0800



**Northern Territory Government**  
Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment