

DIVERSITY

FLEXIBILITY

CORE BUSINESS

GLOBAL RELATIONS

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

WORK ENVIRONMENT

LESS HIERARCHY

TECHNOLOGY

MOBILITY



The Honourable Daryl Manzie MLA
Minister for Public Employment
GPO Box 3146
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment for the year ending 30th June 1999 in accordance with the provisions of Section 28 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*.

In doing so, I advise that in respect of my duties as an accountable officer pursuant to Section 13 of the *Financial Management Act* and to the best of my knowledge and belief, the system of internal control provides reasonable assurance that:

- Proper records of all transactions affecting the Agency are kept and that employees under my control observe the provisions of this Act, the Regulations and the Treasurer's Directions, and
- Procedures within the Agency are such as will at all times effect a proper control over expenditure, receipts and public property. The Office's Accounting and Property Manual has been updated to provide a full description of such procedures.

In accordance with Section 15 of the *Financial Management Act*, the internal audit capacity available to the Office is adequate and appropriate procedures are in place for the development and review of an audit plan. No indication of fraud, malpractice, major breach of legislation or delegation, major error in or omission from accounts and records exists.

In my opinion the financial accounts included in the Report for 1998/99 have been prepared from proper accounts and are in accordance with Part 2 Section 5, and Part 2 Section 6 of the Treasurer's Directions.

As Chief Executive Officer, I have complied with all Employment Instructions issued by me as Commissioner for Public Employment pursuant to Section 16 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Hawkes".

DJ HAWKES
Commissioner for Public Employment

30 September 1999

THE ANNUAL REPORT

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) provides the legislative and policy frameworks for the effective development and management of Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS) employees. In addition, the Office manages Government leased property, much of which is office accommodation for its employees.

This Annual Report provides information to our clients and fulfills our statutory requirements by:

- identifying the strategic role of the Commissioner's Office
- defining the key objectives of the Office and evaluating the extent to which they have been achieved
- providing an analysis of the overall performance of the public sector in terms of human resources, and
- providing comprehensive statistical information on the state of the public sector.

The Annual Report also contains details of the financial situation of the Office and is a document of accountability for the reporting period.

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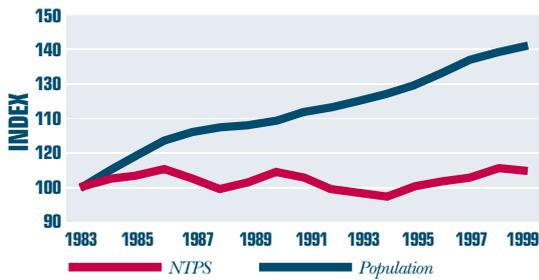
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1. OVERVIEW

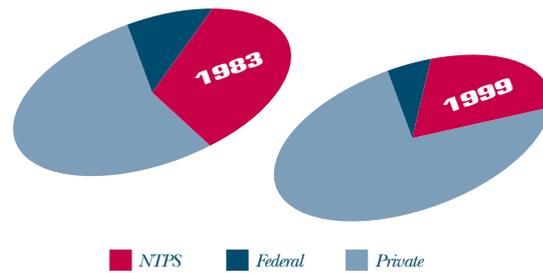
AT A GLANCE...

Efficiencies in the NT Public Sector are demonstrated by the static levels in employment compared to growth in the Territory population and labour force.

NTPS vs NT population growth

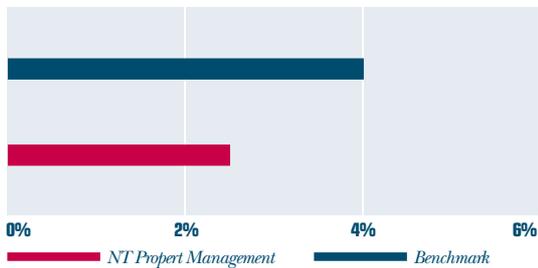


NT workforce 1983 & 1999

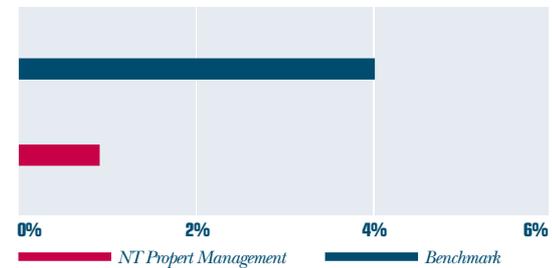


Productivity is demonstrated by the achievement of private sector benchmarks in the use of public resources.

Operating costs - proportion of budget

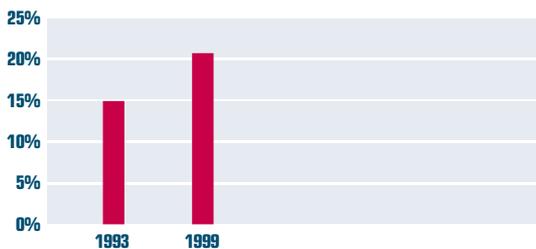


Vacancy rate of leased space



Progressive employment practices are seen in employees' access to equality of opportunity and flexible work practices.

Women in Executive positions - NTPS



Part-time employment in NTPS



COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

The past year will be seen as a watershed for the Northern Territory Public Sector. Under *Planning for Growth* the Sector began the process of major restructuring to meet the Government's economic goals and the service needs of a young and growing Territory community. In June 1999 the Chief Minister articulated the next steps for change in *Foundations for Our Future*. Change and continual improvement is now the pattern for the Sector.

I am particularly pleased to report on the success of two significant matters:

- the review of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, and
- the transfer of approximately two thousand staff under the *Planning for Growth* initiatives.

The *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* is the key legislation for the employment arrangements of all Northern Territory Public Sector employees. The review recommended sixty seven changes, all of which were implemented. None of the changes altered the basic framework established in 1993 when the Act was first proclaimed. The simplicity and flexibility of the Act has served the Territory well and there was unanimous agreement that this would continue into the next decade.

The restructuring of the Public Sector under *Planning for Growth* affected all employees to varying degrees. Fifteen percent of our total workforce was directly affected by being transferred to a new agency. The commitment shown by all employees to making a success of the Government's initiatives is highly commendable as such change can require personal as well as professional adjustments.

At the same time, the "core business" of the Office - ensuring adherence to the merit principle - required the immediate implementation of significant changes to recruitment and selection procedures. Further, the changing nature of the personal development needs of employees requires that constant attention be given to exploring and developing new programs and new methodologies for their delivery.

The performance of my Office was given major attention in the reporting period when a Strategic Plan was developed using a consultative process that involved all the staff and that sought input from our clients such as agencies and unions. This Annual Report reflects my keenness to focus our activities on the key issues identified in our planning, and use our financial resources and people to the Sector's best advantage.

In the past year, my Office has been required to achieve a balance between matters that will impact on employees in the longer term and those which require immediate attention. It would be easy and very natural to allocate all the resources to the immediate needs. It would be attractive to concentrate on the longer term. The need for balance is a constant challenge to the Office.

NTPS 21 continued as our underlying theme.

As the nature of the work environment alters and the community's attitudes to work and family relationships shifts, there is a real need for innovative policies that will maintain the public

sector's position as an attractive and efficient employer. Whether it be flexible work practices, new approaches to job and work design, new avenues for acquiring new skills or enhancements to physical accommodation, each issue requires careful thought, extensive consultation and a willingness to experiment. I plan to continue raising awareness of these issues among employees by a new series of presentations on the NTPS 21 themes in the coming year.

As I have remarked in previous years, my Office is fortunate to have staff who are in tune with the challenge and who have the ability and enthusiasm to meet it. They have many counterparts in the agencies and together they constitute a very effective team.

My colleagues, the Chief Executive Officers of other agencies, have also provided great support and encouragement. I thank them most sincerely.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Hawkes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "D".

David Hawkes

30 September 1999.

1998/99 HIGHLIGHTS

Each achievement is followed by the related Objective(s) in the OCPE Strategic Plan. These Objectives can be found on page 11 of this Report.

- Completion of the first major review of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* since its inception in 1993. All recommended amendments to the Act and subordinate legislation were passed by the Legislative Assembly in October 1998. (Objective 1).
- Completion of the transfer of over 2,000 employees to new agencies under *Planning for Growth* without major industrial disputation, and the implementation, within tight timeframes, of the office accommodation requirements arising from agency restructuring. (Objectives 1, 2 & 5).
- Implementation of the second phase of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship Program. Ten undergraduates in areas such as education, law, and nursing were accepted in the second intake. (Objectives 5 & 6).
- Publication of *Streamlining Recruitment in the Northern Territory Public Sector* (the Paech Report) and adoption of its recommendations for major change to public sector recruitment and selection practices. (Objectives 1, 3 & 5).
- Appointment as the lead agency for the implementation of the Government's new Records and Information Management System and completion on schedule of the changeover. (Objective 3 & 7).
- Publication of *Employment Opportunities in the NTPS* in March 1999. This was the first major change to public sector vacancy advertising since the creation of the Northern Territory Public Sector in 1978. (Objectives 1 & 3).
- Establishment in Darwin of the Headquarters of the United Nations delegation to East Timor within two weeks of the Northern Territory Government's commitment to assist the UN. (Objective 5).
- Completion of the revised Northern Territory Public Sector Training Plan and conclusion of the agreement regarding the implementation process with the Department of Corporate and Information Services. (Objective 4).
- Participation of two hundred and eighty middle managers from Darwin and regional centres in skills development workshops and twenty five senior managers in the Executive Development Program. (Objective 4).
- Completion of the evaluation and testing of OCPE systems and facilities to ensure Year 2000 compliance and achievement of the Chief Executive Officer self-certification 'sign off' by the Government's deadline of 30 November 1999. (Objective 2).
- Assistance in the finalisation of a unique leasing arrangement between the Nguuiu Community Government Council on Bathurst Island and the Northern Territory Police Force for a new Police Station and living quarters on the island. The Council initiated the arrangement and funded the building which has been leased to the NT Police Force for 10 years. (Objective 3).

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The key issues for the Northern Territory Public Sector in mapping its future into the 21st Century were articulated in the NTPS 21 framework - Diversity, Core Business, Technology, Global Relations, Work Environment, Less Hierarchy, Personal Responsibility, Mobility and Flexibility. In the immediate future, the focus of the Office will be on the following:

- A review of the legislative framework and the OCPE Strategic Plan to ensure the operational requirements of agencies and the needs of Government as articulated in *Foundations for Our Future* are met.
- The negotiation of new enterprise bargaining agreements for the Northern Territory Public Sector, teachers and educators in the Department of Education and employees in the Power and Water Authority in the context of federal industrial and taxation reform.
- The finalisation of variations to forty two Federal awards covering NTPS employees in accordance with the award simplification principles established under the *Workplace Relations Act*.
- The completion of the implementation of the Paech Report, and in particular the recommendations on job descriptions, qualifications for positions, recruitment procedures and the use of the Internet to disseminate information.
- A review of the effectiveness of sector-wide learning and development programs, the maintenance of the commitment to the Public Sector Management Course as the key skills building program for middle managers and the implementation of the new Career Development Strategy.
- The identification and implementation of change to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth Goods and Services Tax and Fringe Benefits Tax Reporting.
- The completion of the implementation of the OCPE Information Technology Plan to achieve compliance with the mandatory policies and standards established by Government.
- The completion of the OCPE contingency plans for Year 2000 compliance.
- A revision of sector-wide policies on the key issues identified in NTPS 21 within the context of *Foundations for Our Future*.

CHARTER

The Administrative Arrangements Order of 21 June 1996 gave the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment principal responsibility for the following areas of government administration:

- Public sector employment
- Industrial relations
- Government office accommodation

The Office is also responsible for the following Acts:

- Public Sector Employment and Management Act*
- Public Sector Employment and Management Act (Transition and Savings)*
- Public Sector Employment (Interim Arrangements) Act*
- Public Employment (Mobility) Act*
- Prisons (Arbitral Tribunal) Act*
- Police Administration Act (Part III)*
- Annual Leave Act*
- Long Service Leave Act*
- Public Holidays Act*

Under Section 12 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, the Commissioner for Public Employment is deemed to be the employer of all employees in the Northern Territory Public Sector. The core business of the Office is:

- to advise Government on all employment issues affecting the public sector
- to represent the Government's interests in industrial matters
- in partnership with Chief Executive Officers, to assist in the effective management and development of all employees, and
- to manage all Government leased property.

At the end of the 20th Century, there is an increasing need for diversity, flexibility and responsiveness in the public sector, while at the same time, many employees are searching for structure, cohesion and clarity of purpose. In addition, there is a continuing trend away from the traditional 'management by edict' to a more inclusive approach where managers and employees work together as partners. These factors substantially influenced the Strategic Plan developed by the Office in July 1998.

STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

In partnership with our clients, contribute to the development of the Northern Territory by fostering positive work and learning environments.

OBJECTIVES

1. Policies

Objective

To provide a framework within which agencies develop policies consistent with their role and with NTPS 21

Strategies

- Develop and maintain our legislative framework
- Invite, consider and act on client feedback on policy issues
- Build more teams/task forces with client representatives to assist with policy development
- Develop a communication strategy for all major policies
- Facilitate mobility between OCPE and agencies to provide assistance with policy development

2. Working Environment

Objective

To deliver a quality working environment for all NTPS employees

Strategies

- Use task forces to identify and meet clients' needs
- Instigate a proactive approach to working environment issues
- Actively encourage agencies and individuals to provide ideas and feedback on working environment issues
- Develop a sector-wide orientation program to foster a better understanding of the NTPS environment
- Promote more flexible work practices that balance the needs of individuals and agencies

3. Innovation

Objective

To acknowledge and foster innovative and exciting people management

Strategies

- Recognise and support agencies developing solutions to their own needs
- Foster creative approaches and diversity of solutions
- Support and promote risk taking
- Seek, research and evaluate best practice and innovative ideas
- Continue to foster cross-sector mobility and people development

4. Learning Environment

Objective

To identify, promote and facilitate sector-wide learning

Strategies

- Consult regularly with clients to identify learning needs and to obtain feedback
- Market and publicise learning opportunities
- Provide and promote flexible learning mediums
- Monitor global changes and trends to identify learning opportunities that meet the future needs of the NTPS
- Continue to coordinate the provision of sector-wide learning programs
- Identify OCPE staff learning requirements by conducting regular performance reviews

5. Client Service

Objective

To identify and meet the needs of our clients

Strategies

- Establish service standards for all areas of OCPE
- Clarify and communicate OCPE key roles and functions
- Continue and extend agency visits
- Streamline OCPE requests for information from agencies
- Reduce requirements for agencies to seek approval from OCPE

6. Equity

Objective

Advocate, practice and actively support diversity, equity and merit

Strategies

- Promote application of the merit principle
- Collect and publicise accurate statistics on diversity issues to drive improvements to Equal Opportunity Management Plans
- Develop a user-friendly interface for the Personnel and Integrated Payroll System to promote more accurate and useful planning information
- Develop programs that encourage recruitment, retention and career development of Aboriginal and non-english speaking employees
- Promote successes of Project Employment and facilitate greater take-up across agencies
- Promote better linkages between equity strategies and business plans

7. OCPE as an Employer

Objective

To be a model employer in the NTPS

Strategies

- Implement practices that are underpinned by diversity, equity and merit
- Develop structures that support an effective and collaborative work environment
- Clarify and communicate contact points and expertise within OCPE
- Improve the performance management system to better identify development needs of individuals and the organisation
- Practise what we preach in the areas of filling vacancies promptly, equity and diversity and performance management
- Conduct regular reviews of core business
- Outsource non-core activities

ORGANISATION PROFILE



MANAGEMENT BOARD

A Management Board meets fortnightly to make operational decisions and to review the performance and direction of the Office. Decisions of the Board are conveyed to staff at regular meetings and through broadcasts via internal email.

The Board members are the Commissioner, the Directors of Human Resource Management, Human Resource Development and NT Property Management, the Managers of Corporate Services and Information Management, and the Chairperson of the Promotions Appeals Board. The membership mirrors the functional heads of the Program areas contained in Budget Paper No.2.

A key function of the Board is to monitor the progress of the planned outcomes in the Budget Papers, and the budget allocated to the Office to meet these outcomes. A large proportion of the total budget of approximately \$40 million goes directly to the cost of leased accommodation. The remaining \$6.2 million covers the other functional responsibilities of the Office.

The extent to which the planned outcomes were met is described in detail in the Performance Report beginning on page 20. While the Performance Report is given against the Objectives of the Strategic Plan, the Objectives match the planned outcomes albeit in a different arrangement.

In relation to the assessment of whether the Office met its responsibilities as described in Budget Paper No.2, two points are noteworthy:

- The industrial and accommodation issues arising from the *Planning for Growth* initiatives were additional responsibilities for the Office and were met within the existing budget, and
- The total expenditure for the reporting period was slightly below the budget allocated for the period (2.6%).

STAFFING MATTERS

Staff by gender and classification

DESIGNATION	1998			1999		
	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
AO1	2	2	4	3	0	3
AO2	6	1	7	8	0	8
AO3	5	1	6	3	2	5
AO4	6	2	8	9	2	11
AO5	1	2	3	3	0	3
AO6	7	3	10	9	4	13
AO7	5	4	9	5	7	12
AO8	2	1	3	3	1	4
EO1	1	0	1	1	1	2
EO1C	1	2	3	1	2	3
EO6C	0	1	1	0	1	1
P2	0	1	1	0	1	1
ET6				1	0	1
Workers Comp		1	1		1	1
TOTAL	36	21	57	45	22	68

This table reflects all staff as at the 30 June 1999 and is an increase of 18% when compared to last year. Three full time staff were transferred to this Office as part of *Planning for Growth*. In addition, four part-time, one vacation, three casual employees and two graduate trainees are included in the 1999 figures.

People Development

Staff at all levels are encouraged to further their knowledge and skills through access to a variety of learning opportunities such as conferences, on-the-job training, seminars, short courses and assistance with formal studies. During 1998/99 staff participated in the following development activities:

Postgraduate study	1
Higher Education courses	6
Vocational Education Training	8
Cross Cultural courses	3
Information Technology courses	163
Management Courses	28
Organisational Development courses	13
Professional development	23

Formal study was supported in fields such as Public Administration, Law, Business, Applied Science and Accounting. Attendance at local seminars and interstate conferences assisted staff to keep abreast of current and future trends in human resource and property management issues.

Staff undertook a range of information technology courses to support the move from Macintosh equipment to an Intel based work environment. The training schedule maximized on-the-job training allowing staff to become fully operational with minimum disruption to the workplace.

Performance management

Staff in all business areas participated in performance management reviews. Training plans for the following year were placed on a central database to assist the staff development officer in Corporate Services identify training opportunities to match the individual employee development plans.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The principles of equity and diversity are enshrined in the processes and documentation of the Office such as division business plans and employee development plans. Mobility of staff within the Office and with other agencies is encouraged to develop the skills base of individuals and a better understanding of equity and diversity issues across the sector. Staff attended seminars and workshops on equity and diversity issues and cross cultural training was provided to staff and graduate trainees.

The OCEP Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan was reviewed to update the Plan and incorporate relevant findings from EEO research.

Occupational Health and Safety

The Office has an Occupational Health and Safety Committee and staff are assisted to maintain or upgrade their occupational safety qualifications.

Industrial Relations

No industrial relations matters arose within the Office in the reporting period.

Support of Graduate Training and Traineeships

The Office supports the development of NTPS employees through structured training programs and financial incentives to young Territorians. The Office provided on-the-job training and support to two Graduate Trainees, several placements in the field of Business Office Skills for NTPS Traineeships, and support to a student under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship program.

Audits

The audit report, *Use and Engagement of External Consultants by Human Resource Development Audit Outcome*, made recommendations to further improve compliance with procurement guidelines and the overall effectiveness of the process. The recommendations focus mainly on formalising the contract administration processes and enhancing the performance management process, both of which can be achieved through the use of comprehensive checklists.

A number of the recommendations are in the process of being implemented and others will be incorporated in the procedures used by the Human Resource Development unit in the near future.

Reviews

In August 1998, a business case for an office system upgrade was developed which recommended the installation of a thin client technology Microsoft Windows and Intel compliant environment using as much of the existing technology as possible. The installation was completed in February 1999.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

The OCPE provided sponsorship for two awards in recognition of academic excellence at the Northern Territory University:

- the most outstanding student in Human Resource Management units in the Bachelor of Public Administration, and
- the highest overall performance in the Diploma of Business (Administration).

The Office also assisted the Institute of Public Administration of Australia (IPAA) in promoting excellence in public administration by providing assistance with administration costs.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. POLICIES

Objective:

To provide a framework within which agencies develop policies consistent with their role and with NTPS 21.

The Commissioner establishes policy and practice frameworks for the management of public sector employees. The following table shows the number of employees in the sector and related government authorities.

AGENCIES	JUNE 1999	AGENCIES	JUNE 1999
Aboriginal Areas Protectn Auth	20	Legal Aid Commission	35
Aboriginal Development	23	Legislative Assembly	84
Anti-Discrimination Commission	8	Liquor Commission	14
Arts & Museums	115	Local Government	87
Asian Relations & Trade	20	Mines & Energy	190
Attorney-General's	100	Ombudsman	15
Auditor General	4	Parks & Wildlife Commission	385
Batchelor College	226	PAWA	711
Chief Minister	201	Police, Fire & Emergency Svces	1 204
Commis. for Public Employment	60	Primary Industry & Fisheries	372
Comms, Science & Adv Tech	13	Public Prosecutions	43
Corporate & Info Services	1 104	Racing & Gaming Authority	31
Correctional Services	459	Sport & Recreation	57
Courts Administration	127	Strehlow Research Centre	4
Darwin Port Authority	47	Territory Health Services	3 803
Education	3 747	Tourist Commission	95
Employment & Training	50	Trade Development Zone	6
Housing	111	Transport & Works	640
Industries & Business	82	Treasury	149
Lands, Planning & Environment	374	Work Health Authority	41
		TOTAL	14 847

The NTPS is unique in the range of occupational groups contained within the sector and the diverse locations in which they work. Policies are developed to cover employees ranging from teachers and nurses working in remote Aboriginal communities to strategic managers on multi-billion dollar oil and gas projects.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Develop and maintain our legislative framework

In October 1998 a comprehensive review of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* was completed. Sixty seven changes were made to the Act, Regulations and By-Laws. Six of the fourteen Employment Instructions were extensively re-written to reflect current employment law and HR practice.

A revised *Code of Conduct* booklet was published and distributed to approximately 14,500 employees in December 1998. The booklet is provided to all new employees as part of the induction process.

The first issue of *Employment Opportunities in the NTPS* was published in March 1999. This publication replaced the NTPS Gazette and provides a clearer and more succinct summary of the vacancies available in the NTPS.

Invite, consider and act on client feedback on policy issues

The review of Competency Based Assessment and Training (CBAT) was completed in consultation with NTPS agencies and unions. The report was tabled before the Joint Training Advisory Council in June 1999. The principal findings and recommendations reflect current priorities and developments within the Vocational Education Training sector, including:

- separation of the roles of assessor and supervisor
- adoption, during the next 12 months, of accredited programs from the Training Package, and
- investigation of credit transfer opportunities with Registered Training Organisations.

The implementation strategies for CBAT reflect the consultations held with agencies and union representatives.

Following feedback from agencies, a review of current lease Memorandums of Understanding for Government Business Divisions was undertaken resulting in a draft of a simplified and more relevant document. Finalisation of the Review will involve a major re-survey of tenancy areas occupied by the Divisions following the *Planning for Growth* initiative.

Agencies were invited to participate in formulating NT Government input to the Commonwealth Government's submissions on International Labour Organisation issues. During the reporting period, the Labour Ministers' Council adopted revised consultative arrangements between the Commonwealth, States and Territories on ILO matters, and input was provided into the development of *Convention 182: Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour*.

Build more teams/task forces with client representatives to assist with policy development

The Commissioner for Public Employment continued to chair quarterly meetings of the Public Sector Consultative Council (PSCC). Meetings were held in Darwin and Tennant Creek. Coordination and secretariat support was provided to PSCC joint working parties on:

- equal employment opportunity
- work and family responsibilities
- indigenous workforce issues, and
- remote locality conditions.

The Office chaired an inter-agency working group to assess the implications of new Federal Government tax reform relating to the reporting of fringe benefits and developing policies, systems and procedures to comply with the legislation.

A partnership was formed with the team managing the Government Energy Management Program to develop energy performance guidelines for buildings leased by the NT Government and to work with other stakeholders to assist NT implementation of the National Building Energy Strategy.

Reference groups and working parties with representation from agencies and unions were formed to assist in policy development on remote locality conditions, changes to the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, streamlining of NTPS recruitment, and the simplification of awards.

Develop a communication strategy for all major policies

The Office Intranet and Internet web sites were expanded giving NTPS agencies and employees timely and ready access to information on all OCPE policies, employment conditions, training and workplace relations initiatives.

Web publishing of sector-wide NTPS Bulletins and Enterprise Bargaining Bulletins was initiated in the reporting period.

Facilitate mobility between OCPE and agencies to provide assistance with policy development

The Office has continued to encourage and facilitate mobility between the OCPE and agencies. Four employees from agencies were temporarily transferred to the Office to assist in policy development on recruitment, selection, qualifications and enterprise bargaining. OCPE staff were seconded to agencies that have a strong focus on service delivery.

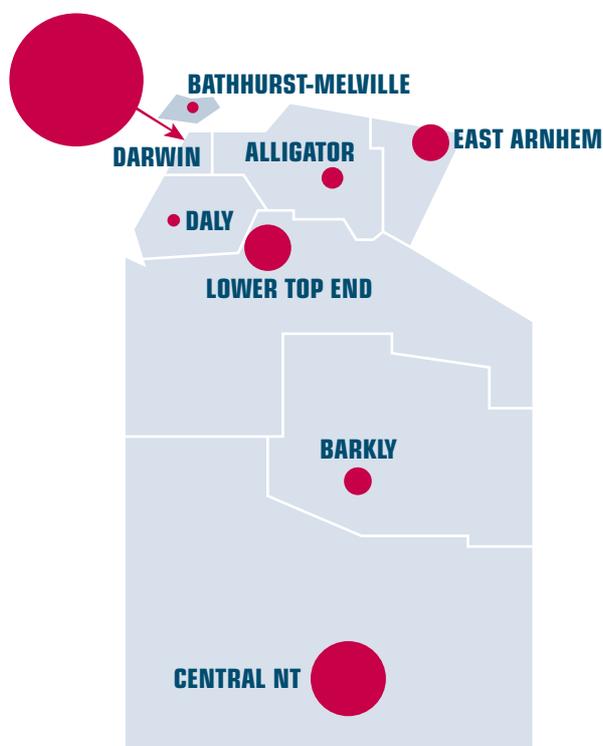
2. WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Objective:

Deliver a quality working environment for all NTPS employees

A notable feature of the NTPS is the substantial number of employees in the regions. This has implications for the OCPE in providing conditions of employment which meet their specific needs. The map illustrates the distribution of employees across the Territory, based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics statistical sub-divisions. The size of the circles is directly proportional to the number of employees in each sub-division.

Regional Distribution of NTPS Staff



SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Use task forces to identify and meet clients' needs

A standard lease document, the *Memorandum of Common Provisions* was introduced in partnership with the private sector through the Property Council of Australia (NT). The *Memorandum* sets out and standardises the responsibilities between Government and the private sector in the lease negotiation process. It simplifies business and speeds up final agreements with minimal legal costs for the parties involved. Efficiencies were realised during 1998/99 through the finalisation of 19 leases that were either renewed or taken up under the new arrangement.

The Office coordinated the Public Sector Education and Training Australia (PSETA) group which investigated the use of flexible delivery strategies to meet the learning needs of people in a variety of working environments.

Instigate a proactive approach to working environment issues

The Office negotiated two enterprise bargaining agreements in the reporting period, namely, the *Medical Officers (Northern Territory Public Sector) Certified Agreement, 1998-2000* and the *Police Arbitral Tribunal Consent Agreement*. Both agreements have provided agencies with the mechanisms to facilitate organisational change, to improve productivity, and to provide a strong platform for industrial stability.

There were no days lost due to industrial disputations in the public sector in the reporting period. This provided an indication that the dispute resolution and change management procedures which had been inserted into certified agreements were functioning successfully.

The Office took a proactive and central role in negotiations with trade unions on a range of major industrial matters including the separation of Batchelor College from the NTPS to an independent tertiary institution, separation of the Legal Aid Commission from the NTPS, and the simplification of 42 Federal awards affecting NTPS employees as required by the *Workplace Relations Act*.

The Office appeared on behalf of the NT Government at industrial tribunals such as the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC), the Prison Officers and Senior Prison Officers Arbitral Tribunal and the Police Arbitral Tribunal on 39 occasions in the reporting period.

Representation was made on behalf of the NT Government at Labour Ministers' forums on issues such as the *National Code of Conduct for the Construction Industry*.

Detailed input was provided to the Joint Conservative Government's submission to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in the following major cases: Paid Rates Review, Junior Rates Review, Safety Net Wages Review and Y2K Compliance Statement.

A comprehensive induction manual to assist new employees, and in particular school leaver trainees, was developed and distributed to all agencies.

Implementation commenced of the recommendations of a review of NT Property Management service contracts. These recommendations included simplified contract documentation, new contract management procedures and improved business practices. The latter will encourage clients to become more proactive on tenancy issues.

Forward planning approval was obtained by the Office from the Procurement Review Board to advertise a series of new cleaning and security contracts for the Darwin region.

The Office coordinated critical business enhancements to PIPS to administer changes and analyse trends in conditions of employment and to better meet clients' information needs.

During the reporting period, the Office handled approximately 2,600 enquiries regarding possible entitlements under the *NT Annual Leave Act*, *NT Long Service Leave Act* or the *Public Holidays Act*. The emphasis was to have minor disputes resolved between the parties and this approach was successful. There was 11 formal investigations conducted as a result of an employee or former employee requesting assistance to determine entitlements and/or an employer's compliance with the Acts. One investigation led to a recommendation for prosecution action against an employer.

Ministerial approval of Public Holidays for regional annual show days for the period 2000 - 2002 was arranged and gazetted in the reporting period.

NT Property Management, as the body responsible for obtaining Y2K building service (plant, lifts, air conditioning etc) compliance for all leased property, developed a contingency plan for implementation by August 1999. The plan will outline operational procedures for stakeholders in the event of any dysfunctional building services on 1 January 2000. The plan will also involve a NT Property Management taskforce to be on standby from midnight on 31 December 1999 until it is no longer required.

Actively encourage agencies and individuals to provide ideas and feedback on working environment issues

The Office is involved in a wide range of national, state and intra-agency committees, working parties and taskforces to seek ideas and feedback on HR policies and working environment issues. Further details are in the Appendices at page 70.

Develop a sector-wide orientation program to foster a better understanding of the NTPS environment

A sector-wide orientation program was developed and trialed in the reporting period. The program will be produced in hard copy and be available on the NT Government Intranet and the Internet. The program aims to provide a wide range of information for people entering, or already employed, in the NTPS.

Promote more flexible work practices that balance the needs of individuals and agencies

A remote access pilot program to test and evaluate the suitability and effectiveness of a work from home strategy commenced in the reporting period.

3. INNOVATION

Objective

Acknowledge and foster innovative and exciting people management.

Planning for Growth created an opportunity for innovative responses to a restructured public sector. The Office paid particular attention to the communication potential of technology for accessing employees to disseminate information and the choice of new learning experiences for people development.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Recognise and support agencies developing solutions to their own needs

HR Forums were held each quarter and served as a conduit for the communication of ideas and innovations in the management and development of human resources across the sector. They provided an occasion for human resource practitioners to meet with each other to compare experiences, and to raise issues directly with the Commissioner for Public Employment.

Some of the issues covered at the Forums included:

- structural change resulting from *Planning for Growth*
- mediation techniques and their application
- recruitment and selection procedures
- traineeships in the NTPS
- review of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*
- changes to superannuation arrangements in the NTPS
- introduction of Fringe Benefits Tax reporting requirements
- people and organisation development, and
- enterprise bargaining.

Foster creative approaches and diversity of solutions

In conjunction with the Australian Institute of Management (Qld), a presentation to the Board of the Department of Communication and Advanced Technology on *Investors in People* was arranged. As a result the Department's management undertook a desktop assessment and a one day workshop was conducted for human resource practitioners.

The Office supported the development of the Strategic Public Sector Leaders Summits, a joint initiative of the Australian and New Zealand Commissioners for Public Employment with two senior NTPS officers to participate in the Summits scheduled for 1999.

The changes to the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, Regulations, By-Laws and Employment Instructions in October 1998 were published on the NT Government Intranet immediately after receiving the Administrator's assent. This gave employees instant access to details of their key employment entitlements.

An email Listserv for trained Job Evaluation System evaluators was established. The use of the Listserv enabled timely distribution of information updates and supports and encourages networking between agencies and evaluators.

All major accommodation requirements for the Department of Corporate and Information Services and the Department of Industries and Business were met within the unusually tight time-frames set following their formation.

The specialised accommodation requirements for the United Nations delegation to East Timor in the former Reserve Bank were met within two weeks of the need being identified.

The Office was appointed as the lead agency for the implementation of the Northern Territory Government's new Records and Information Management System. The changeover to the new system was completed on schedule.

NT Property Management responded to the needs of clients tenanted non leased premises by transferring service contracts to them, in many cases with budget, so that they assume direct responsibility for their own service delivery levels.

Support and promote risk taking

The large scale changes under *Planning for Growth* were strongly supported by the Office and substantial resources were given to the provision of advice and assistance to agencies and employees on managing the change process.

Seek, research and evaluate best practice and innovative ideas

Development of the OCPD Intranet and Internet web sites continued with new pages on recruitment, selection and training opportunities.

Research on web publishing of sector-wide information such as Enterprise Bargaining Bulletins continued.

As a member of the Government Real Estate Group, the national forum of State and Territory government property management units, NT Property Management participated in the Group's initiatives including providing input into the national benchmarking initiatives. These have been prioritized as electricity usage in buildings, occupational density in office accommodation, and vacancy rates in owned and leased buildings (the Government Real Estate Group is a sub group of the Australian Procurement and Construction Council).

Continue to foster cross-sector mobility and people development

In addition to the movement of staff between agencies arising from public sector restructuring, the Office has been active in encouraging greater mobility across the Sector through -

- presenting a series of workshops aimed at middle managers. *It's Your Move* was successfully trialed in Darwin and Alice Springs with forty six participants. The workshops provided information on mobility, secondments, rotations and work placements with a view to broadening and increasing participants' work skills and experience
- continuing to provide advice and assistance to agencies and individuals interested in the Mobility and Exchange Program, and
- presenting the *Essential Toolkit for Mentors* program at Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Darwin for thirty six participants. The program assists employees to gain skills in mentoring.



4. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Objective

Identify, promote and facilitate sector-wide learning.

As economic restructuring and the increasing use of technology continues, new skills, competencies and attitudes will be required. The NTPS has maintained its staff training and development programs despite suspension of the Federal Training Guarantee Legislation in 1994. The chart below demonstrates that the proportion of salary spent on training remains at a similar level to when the Guarantee was in place.

Training as percentage of salary



SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Consult regularly with clients to identify learning needs and to obtain feedback

The Human Resource Development Annual Survey was completed and included comparative trends with data produced for 1997/98. Investment in employees through education, development and training is acknowledged as the most significant contributor to productivity within organisations. This report recognises the extent and distribution of this investment by the NT Government.

The Human Resource Development Network has continued to provide a forum for human resource practitioners to meet and discuss issues of common interest. The Office chairs the Network and provides secretariat support. As a result of changes in personnel flowing from *Planning for Growth*, a new database of human resource development contacts was prepared to foster networking.

Advice was provided to agencies on a range of human resource development related topics, as well as to academic staff on distance learning issues and the potential of academic credits for the Public Sector Management Course.

Market and publicise learning opportunities

Events aimed specifically at refreshing and/or upgrading the management knowledge of alumni of the Executive Development Program, Public Sector Management Course and other seminar participants were arranged. Topics included: 'The Rise of the Corporate Nation State and Its Role in Society', 'The Adelaide River Bridge Experience' and 'Is Work Part of Life or Life Part of Work?'.

Provide and promote flexible learning mediums

The Executive Development Program is a two-year action learning management and leadership program for NTPS executives. Twenty five participants were accepted into Executive Development Program 3. In addition to the usual course modules and residential program, a range of workshops were conducted for participants, for example Scenario Planning and Executive Health.

The Public Sector Management Course is designed for middle management levels and continues to provide sector-wide accredited training. Activities of note in the reporting period were:

- the Public Sector Management Course had two intakes, the first commencing September 1998 with 24 participants and the second commencing March 1999 with 24 participants. Twenty three women and twenty five men were accepted
- in September 1998 the OCPE hosted the National Public Sector Management Coordinators' Conference in Darwin. During October, twenty five people spanning six different intakes graduated from the Public Sector Management Course. Nineteen received their certificates from the Chief Minister in a ceremony at Parliament House, and
- over two hundred and eighty middle managers participated in short workshops such as:

Leadership and the Middle Manager - Darwin and Alice Springs

Ministerial Briefings and Cabinet Submissions - Darwin

Effective Presentations - Darwin and Alice Springs

Investigation Officers training - Darwin

Advanced Investigation Officers training - Darwin

Negotiation and Influencing Skills - Alice Springs

Fraud and Ethics Seminar - Darwin.

During November 1998, and March, April and May 1999, a series of job evaluator training workshops was conducted for employees to qualify in the application of the Points Factor Work Value Methodology used to evaluate jobs across the NTPS.

Monitor global changes and trends to identify learning opportunities that meet the future needs of the NTPS

The NTPS Training Plan was revised to update agency requirements for training activities. All training providers registered with the Northern Territory Employment and Training Authority were provided with a copy. The training providers were requested to liaise with the newly established Department of Corporate and Information Services which is now responsible for centrally brokered programs.

The Office made a significant contribution to the development of a national Public Service Training Package and on behalf of the NTPS, lobbied successfully for the inclusion of competencies and qualifications at Certificate 1 and 2 levels which are needed by our employees.

Continue to coordinate the provision of sector-wide learning programs

The Office continued to offer NTPS employees with the opportunity to participate on the Executive Development Program, the Public Sector Management Course and other learning programs as previously outlined.

Identify OCPE staff learning requirements by conducting regular performance reviews

In October 1998 all staff participated in performance reviews. The learning requirements identified from the process are monitored through a central database.

Two staff members participated in the Public Sector Management Course and three staff completed the Property Council of Australia Graduate Diploma in Commercial Property Management.

5. CLIENT SERVICE

Objective

Identify and meet the needs of our clients.

The Office reviewed its relationships with two of its key clients, NTPS agencies and individual employees, as restructuring under *Planning for Growth* was implemented.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Establish service standards for all areas of OCPE

A business plan for each of the Office business units was prepared with the assistance of an outside consultant. The preparation of the business plans highlighted the issue of measuring the impact of the strategic advice provided by the Office on the overall 'well-being' of the NTPS.

In May 1999 Mercer Cullen Egan Dell conducted the annual audit of the outcomes, systems and procedures of the Job Evaluation System.

Clarify and communicate OCPE key roles and functions

The Office actively participated in a range of sector wide strategic information management forums and reference groups, including:

- the NT Government PIPS (Personnel and Integrated Payroll System) Client Group which provided advice on changes in conditions of employment and work practices that impacted on the system and monitored client initiated enhancement requests. Under *Planning for Growth*, responsibility for the system has been transferred to the Department of Corporate and Information Services. The Office continued to provide strategic advice through involvement in the Human Resource Information Systems Management Group and the Department of Corporate and Information Services Management Board
- the PIPS Review Project where the Office assisted Department of Corporate and Information Services to investigate and report on business process and implementation issues experienced by other Australian public sector jurisdictions that have recently upgraded their human resource information systems, and
- the NTG Records Management Advisory Group and Steering Committee which assisted NT Archives Services with the drafting of sector wide records management policies and standards to support implementation of the NT Government records management strategy. Assistance was also provided with the development, training and implementation of the NT Government Thesaurus and new records management system.

The Office continued to provide sponsorship for the NT Division of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) by:

- developing and maintaining an Internet site

- coordinating development and arranging the publication of Newsletters and program advertising material, and
- providing a secretariat function for the 1999 National IPAA Conference in Darwin on 8-10 September 1999.

The Office continued to maintain the Australasian Public Sector Communication Internet site. This site facilitates the sharing of information between Australian and New Zealand public sector jurisdictions.

Induction training was provided to all new staff who commenced in the Office in the reporting period and the staff development function was expanded in response to clients' needs.

Corporate Services conducted a review of its financial and staff procedures after the formation of the Department of Corporate and Information Services and, where appropriate, revised procedures to suit the new arrangements were set in place.

Continue and extend agency visits

A job evaluation consultancy was provided to various agencies to ensure there was consistency in the results of job evaluations undertaken as part of major reviews in agencies. The agencies were the Department of the Chief Minister, NT Department of Education, the Department of Sport and Recreation, the Department of Corporate and Information Services, and the NT Education and Training Authority.

A consultancy service was available to agencies contemplating organisational change. Over the reporting period this service was provided to four agencies.

The development of the Public Service Training Package was completed with input from the NTPS validation groups. The process included opportunities to identify and articulate to the consultants the specific needs of the NTPS. This necessitated working closely with indigenous groups to ensure that the competencies and qualifications within the package met their needs.

A sector wide approach to school leaver traineeships was adopted following the work of the traineeship working party established by the Human Resource Development Network. The approach included:

- sector wide recruitment processes
- an induction manual, and
- central coordination by the Department of Corporate and Information Services.

The relocation of many experienced Redeployment Case Officers to the Department of Corporate and Information Services created a shortage of trained agency case officers to assist redeployees. The Redeployment Unit provided advice to nominated Case Officers to assist them with the management and placement of their redeployees.

Regular occupational health and safety meetings were initiated with a number of key clients in leased buildings. The aim was to facilitate a proactive approach to building issues in leased premises. Where this strategy has been implemented, client feedback indicates that this is an appropriate communication mechanism to identify and resolve common property management issues in multi-tenanted buildings.

Regular visits were made to the Katherine Region HR Group to provide information on general HR issues and assistance with problems specific to the region.

The Office continued to manage Darwin Port Authority's Wharf Precinct retail leases. During the reporting period a standard lease agreement was introduced that has substantially improved and streamlined the lease negotiation process.

Streamline OCPE requests for information from agencies

The requirement to seek information from agencies was assessed on a case-by-case basis during the reporting period. The restructuring of agencies under *Planning for Growth* meant time was required for the establishment of new systems and procedures.

Reduce requirements for agencies to seek approval from OCPE

The policy of devolving human resource delegations to agency Chief Executive Officers has continued. In the event of specific one-off initiatives, such as *Planning for Growth*, special Determinations were made providing for temporary delegations and obviating the need for constant referral to the Commissioner.

6. EQUITY

Objective

Advocate, practise and actively support diversity, equity and merit in the NTPS.

To support diversity, equity and merit in the NTPS, the Office placed emphasis during the year on providing training opportunities for targeted groups, hosting the Plain English Awards and managing Project Employment for the intellectually disabled.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Promote application of the merit principle

A project plan was developed to implement Recommendation 8 - development of a best practice job description, and Recommendation 9 - adoption of a risk management approach to selection which accords with the principles of merit and natural justice, of the Paech Report.

The Equal Opportunity Network was coordinated by the Office and remained active throughout the year by promoting exchange of information and examples of best practice to ensure that equity and diversity issues continue to have a high profile. In conjunction with the Institute of Public Administration Australia, the Network again hosted the Plain English Awards.

The Office continued to provide advice and information to agencies and individual NTPS personnel on the Mobility and Exchange Program.

The Office communication strategy continued to promote the merit principle by:

- ensuring that information on sector wide policies and programs that promote diversity and merit was published
- using plain english and non-discriminatory language in information published by the OCPE, and
- using a variety of media to ensure that information was accessible by all employees.

The Office implemented training programs focused on individual development and competing in a merit based selection environment. For example:

- *the Essential Toolkit for Mentors* attracted 36 participants from Nhulunbuy, Tennant Creek and Darwin. The program provided senior employees with skills to assist young or disadvantaged employees realise their potential in the public sector
- the introduction of group projects to the *Management Skills for Women* program was very successful in providing tangible outcomes for sponsoring organisations and more challenging and satisfying project management and team skills training for participants. The use of previous participants as mentors and experienced mentors as consultant mentors added an exciting and valuable dimension to the program, and assisted in the dissemination of the learning to the wider NTPS.
- fifty two women attended the *Management Skills for Women* programs held in Darwin and Alice Springs. Recall programs designed to refresh learning and consolidate networks of past participants attracted forty nine participants.

- two programs of *New Opportunities for Women (NOW)* were conducted, attracting 30 participants. This program was focused on assisting women in supervisory and pre-supervisory positions to gain team and self management skills and a wider appreciation of organisational issues in NTPS agencies
- two programs developed for indigenous employees were presented. *Making a Difference - Mentoring for Indigenous Employees* was presented in Darwin and Alice Springs attracting 49 participants, whilst the *Taking Responsibility for Change* program was conducted twice in Darwin for forty three participants, and
- the *More Opportunities for Regional Employees (MORE)* program was conducted in Alice Springs and Katherine for forty five participants. The program assists regional employees to gain increased communication skills for working with a diverse range of people, and to provide an overview of organisational issues in the broader public sector.

Tenders were called for the design and conduct of a series of career planning workshops for delivery during 1999/2000.

Collect and publicise accurate statistics on diversity issues to drive improvements to Equal Opportunity Management Plans

This strategy was not actioned in the reporting period as the restructuring of the NTPS under *Planning for Growth*, the review of PIPS, and the freeze on PIPS enhancements have prevented any additional data collection.

Develop a user-friendly interface for PIPS to promote more accurate and useful planning information

This strategy was not actioned in the reporting period as the PIPS system is under major review by the Department of Corporate and Information Services.

Develop programs that encourage recruitment, retention and career development of Aboriginal and non-English speaking employees

The *Cross Cultural Awareness* report was completed. Its recommendations are being implemented by agencies and the monitoring of progress is being undertaken by the Indigenous Workforce Issues Working Party (IWIWP). There is a particular need for agencies to develop and maintain strategies that will increase the retention rates of Aboriginal employees and provide them with challenging and rewarding careers.

Promote successes of Project Employment and facilitate greater take-up across agencies

The Office works in partnership with Project Employment, a non-profit Commonwealth funded organisation, which identifies employment opportunities for intellectually disabled persons. At present 13 people are employed by NTPS agencies. Salaries are paid from a financial levy of all agencies, which is administered by this Office. Agencies were levied a total of \$259,000 in the reporting period.

Promote better linkages between equity strategies and business plans

This strategy was not actioned in the reporting period as the restructuring of the NTPS under *Planning for Growth* created other priorities.

7.OCPE AS AN EMPLOYER

Objective

To be a model employer in the NTPS.

The past year saw the following opportunities for all OCPE staff:

- training in new technology
- participating in the future of the Office through the Strategic Planning process, and
- experiencing alternative work environments through secondments, temporary transfers and flexible work arrangements.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Implement practices that are underpinned by diversity, equity and merit

Training programs and information sessions for staff were conducted on:

- the revised electronic communication policies and standards, and changes to NT Government policy and work practices
- the new records management system and the application of new records management policies and procedures
- the use of the new email and Office Information Technology systems. Effective training gave staff the skills to continue a service to the Office's clients with only minimal disruption, and
- the current standards relating to procurement and budget for program managers.

Staff were consulted during the drafting of corporate service and information policies and hard copies and electronic copies of the final policies were made available to staff.

The leader of the taskforce on the implementation of TRIM regularly attended internal staff meetings to provide updates and allow for feedback opportunities from staff on the implementation process.

Develop structures that support an effective and collaborative work environment

The Administration and Information Systems areas of Corporate Management were restructured to form:

- a Corporate Services area to provide financial, records management and personnel services, coordinate recruitment and staff development, and to administer purchasing and travel processing requirements, and
- an Information Management area to manage the information technology environment, including Year 2000 compliance, coordinate the development and maintenance of the Office publications including web sites, and to develop and monitor information and records management strategies, policies and standards.

Major recommendations of the OCPE Information Technology Plan were implemented including:

- a move from a Macintosh environment to a Windows NT Terminal Server environment. The changeover was implemented within timeframes and budget
- a replacement email product which complied with the whole-of-government standards, and
- a records management system compliant with Y2K requirements.

The Property Management database, which supports the core operations of the NT Property Management, was the subject of a major business systems improvement project aimed at achieving efficiencies and greater effectiveness of key business systems within the database. Approximately 70% of the project was completed in 1998/99 with successful outcomes in four of the seven key result areas.

Clarify and communicate contact points and expertise within OCPE

In February 1999 a publication was distributed to all agencies advising of OCPE contact officers, functions of positions and access for specialist advice.

Improve the performance management system to better identify development needs of individuals and the organisation

All staff participated in the Office Performance Management system with follow up reviews completed in 1998/99. The Staff Development Officer in Corporate Services recorded the training opportunities available for employees and notified individuals of the opportunities that would meet the identified learning needs on their personal plan.

Practise what we preach in the areas of filling vacancies promptly, equity and diversity and performance management

The standards set in the Employment Instructions and the Selection Process Handbook were met by the Office except where Government initiatives such as *Planning for Growth* required the temporary suspension of standard procedures.

Conduct regular reviews of core business

The Office records management practices were reviewed and revised standards were introduced to comply with the latest sector-wide standards.

The Office electronic communication policies and standards were reviewed and revised to ensure consistency with NT Government policy and changes in general work practices.

Service Level Agreements with the Government Printing Office and the Department of Corporate and Information Services were completed in the reporting period.

Outsource non-core activities

A private consultant was engaged to facilitate the development of the OCPE Strategic Plan and the business plans of the business units.

STATE OF THE SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Section 18(1) of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* requires the Commissioner to report annually on:

- the extent to which observance of the prescribed principles of human resource management have been achieved in the Public Sector over the period to which the report relates, and to include a reference to
 - (i) measures taken to ensure observance of the principles
 - (ii) any significant breaches or evasions of the principles
- measures taken to improve human resource management in 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 relate to the Commissioner's Office, and
- any other prescribed matters.

The section 28(2) requirements have been addressed earlier in this report under the section "The Agency". No other matters have been prescribed over the reporting period.

PRESCRIBED PRINCIPLES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The principles of:

- public administration and management
- human resource management, and
- conduct.

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

The principles are complemented by a *Code of Conduct*, issued under the authority of Employment Instruction 13, which provides more detailed guidance on the rights and obligations of employees. The *Code of Conduct* deals with matters of ethics and accountability, issues that have been receiving increasing attention across all public sector jurisdictions. The Commissioner's Office is represented on an ethics working group established by the Australian and New Zealand Public Service Commissioners.

The Principles and *Code of Conduct* are designed to create a positive, performance-based framework of standards and guidelines applicable to all agencies and employees. They seek to influence attitudes, values and behaviour and to create a working environment that emphasises the "service to the public" nature of public sector employment.

Significant Breaches or Evasions of the Principles

As has been the case in the past, I am able to report that to the best of my knowledge there were no significant breaches or evasions of the Principles. While a number of breaches of discipline occurred (details are contained in the section titled Disciplinary and Inability Procedures), they could not be considered significant in a service of some 14,500 employees.

Similarly, while the general grievance process reveals occasional examples of poor management or decisions, it does not indicate any endemic tendency towards poor management practices. To the contrary, there is a growing level of awareness of the vital links between agencies' strategic objectives, sound selection procedures, performance management systems and personal development programs.

Observance of the Merit Principle

The Principles of Human Resource Management provide that "...the selection of persons to fill vacancies in the Public Sector shall be on the basis of merit". Section 13(b) of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* lists one of the Commissioner's functions as being to "...promote, uphold and ensure adherence to the merit principle in the selection of persons as, and the promotion and transfer of, employees".

Over the reporting period there has been a concentrated effort to re-examine and enhance all aspects of the recruitment and selection process. A highlight for the Office was the publication of the Paech Report and adoption of the Report's recommendations. Further comment on the Report follows under Recruitment and Selection.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Employment Instructions, issued under section 16 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, are the principal means by which the Commissioner gives effect to "measures...to improve human resource management in the various agencies". The Instructions underpin the relationship between the Commissioner and Chief Executive Officers. As such, they are important for two reasons:

- agency reports against the Instructions allow me to report to both the Minister and the Legislative Assembly on the application of the principles of public sector employment and conduct as well as a range of human resource management measures; and equally as important
- preparation of the reports provides agencies with the opportunity for assessing the efficacy of internal measures. It has always been my intention that the reporting be achieved by incorporating a self-assessment approach using the Employment Instructions as guidelines that can inform the further development of agency specific policies and procedures.

Compliance With Employment Instructions

There can be little doubt that decisions flowing from *Planning for Growth*, as well as other major agency restructuring, have had significant impact on most human resource systems and procedures. The movement of staff between agencies and into the Department of Corporate and Information Services, has resulted in hiatus, albeit temporary, in many of the human resource programs covered by the Employment Instructions.

Some Instructions, such as those dealing with probation, natural justice, medical incapacity and employee records, are fairly prescriptive. In that sense they lend themselves more easily and, in fact, benefit from the greater consistency and concentration of resources afforded by centralisation.

Others, including those dealing with selection and appointment, performance management and equal opportunity require considerable intra agency consultation and development. Because they depend upon the level of interaction between managers and employees, the culture and unique circumstances of the agency, they are reliant upon the quality of internal mechanisms, communication channels and mutual trust for their effectiveness. Agency reports are discussed in more detail in the Compliance Report at page 62 of the Appendices.

As in the past, while all agencies report they have adequate measures in place to comply with the Employment Instructions, development of fully effective policies and procedures has not been uniform. Aside from the impact of *Planning for Growth*, a number of agencies have undergone a period of substantial change while, in others, there has been significant turnover in senior and line managers. This has hindered effective implementation of programs such as performance management.

Specific comments are provided on three Employment Instructions as they are key elements in evaluating the status of human resource management across the NTPS.

1. Recruitment and Selection

Streamlining Recruitment in the Northern Territory Public Sector, (known for its author as the Paech Report), highlighted sector-wide concerns over a range of recruitment practices and concluded that the NTPS recruitment process had become excessively long, prescriptive, bureaucratic and, to some extent, appeal driven. The Report's recommendations addressed those concerns.

In September 1998, an implementation plan to put the recommendations into effect was developed. This resulted in the streamlining of many of the procedures. There can be no doubt that implementation of many of the recommendations was facilitated by the creation of the Department of Corporate and Information Services.

Other positive outcomes have been the reduction, through legislation, of the notice period for lodgment of appeals, streamlined appeal processes, and the wide ranging use of technology to enhance the recruitment process.

As well as the immediate benefits, a number of the Report's recommendations will require a longer implementation timeframe including:

- a comprehensive review of the *Selection Process Handbook* and development of contemporary sector-wide guidelines for NTPS merit selection
- ensuring that selection panels have the necessary expertise to ensure merit selection, and
- marketing the changes and evaluating their effectiveness.

2. Performance Management

It is increasingly recognised that whilst an effective performance management system is a crucial element in aligning an organisation's human resources with its corporate goals, it is also one of the most complex to implement successfully. An effective performance management system depends upon a melding of operational and HR strategies. A further layer of complexity is added by the unique role and culture of each agency.

In my discussions with Chief Executive Officers and through agency reports, it is apparent that agencies have developed a range of different models in order to achieve a best fit for their particular circumstances. The restructuring of many agencies and decisions flowing from *Planning for Growth* has retarded the continuity and sequencing of performance management systems in the agencies affected.

3. Equal Opportunity

It is apparent from agency reports in the Appendices that agencies are placing increasing emphasis on equal opportunity issues. There is a general tendency to move beyond traditional Equal Employment Opportunity measures to a more holistic approach of valuing diversity programs as an intrinsic component of their HR strategic framework. Equal Employment Opportunities/Diversity goals and targets are increasingly tied to business directions.

Particular emphasis has been given to Aboriginal employment and career development initiatives. A review of the effectiveness of cross cultural awareness strategies was completed in 1998/99. It highlighted that cross cultural awareness and understanding is positively related to improving productivity and the ability to provide appropriate services to the NT community. A number of options for enhancing cross cultural awareness have been identified including:

- the requirement to include equal opportunity considerations in agency strategic plans, and
- treating cross cultural awareness as a competency for effective communication.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of sector-wide equity and diversity programs has been hindered by the paucity of accurate data that is currently available. (Across the sector the response rate to various Equal Employment Opportunity surveys has been no better than 40%). This is particularly true where data to evaluate the effectiveness of Aboriginal employment and career development initiatives has been sought.

To this end, I have asked agencies to report in more detail on the measures they have taken to enhance and increase Aboriginal employment and development opportunities. This data will be used as the basis for future measurement of performance in this area.

REDEPLOYMENT

During the reporting period voluntary retrenchment was accepted by one hundred and fifty one employees, ninety male and sixty one female, at a cost of 5.8 million dollars. The redeployment unit worked closely with agencies to arrange temporary and permanent placements for employees.

DISCIPLINE AND INABILITY PROCEDURES

Under section 18 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, the Commissioner for Public Employment is required to report on the extent to which discipline and inability procedures are invoked in the public sector.

The following tables provide a summary of discipline and inability matters dealt with by agencies and the appeals which flowed from these cases.

Summary of Disciplinary and Inability Cases 1996-1999

YEAR	PROVISION	CASES B/FWD	NEW CASE	CASES COMPLETED	C/FWD
1998/99	Inability	4	4	6	2
	Summary Dismissal	0	4	4	0
	* Discipline	15	23	27	11
1997/98	Inability	4	5	5	4
	Summary Dismissal	0	1	1	0
	* Discipline	12	34	31	15
1996/97	Inability	2	12	10	4
	Summary Dismissal	0	1	1	0
	* Discipline	10	36	34	12

* excluding summary dismissal

Summary of Disciplinary and Inability Appeals 1996-1999

YEAR	PROVISION	B/FWD	TOTAL APPEALS HANDLED		C/FWD
			NEW RESOLVED	APPEALS	
1998/99	Inability	0	1	1	0
	Summary Dismissal	0	0	0	0
	* Discipline	1	1	2	0
1997/98	Inability	1	0	1	0
	Summary Dismissal	1	0	1	0
	* Discipline	4	1	4	1
1996/97	Inability	0	1	0	1
	Summary Dismissal	0	1	0	1
	* Discipline	1	5	2	4

* excluding summary dismissal

OTHER MEASURES

A range of other “measures....to improve human resource management in the various agencies” is undertaken by the Office. Many of these are discussed elsewhere in the report as they relate to the strategic objectives of the Office.

The Office has a full time presence in Alice Springs and representation in Katherine which ensures that the needs of regional and remote employees are serviced promptly.

The Office has consistently followed the practice of active consultation with agencies to achieve the partnership ethos that underpins the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*. The critical nature of this partnership has been highlighted by publication of the Chief Minister’s recent *Foundations for Our Future* and the crucial need to utilise the skills and innovation of the NTPS to achieve the objectives of the six foundation areas.

PROMOTIONS APPEAL & GRIEVANCE REVIEW

Note: The Promotions Appeal Board operates as an independent body. For administrative purposes it is co-located within the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment. Section 59 Grievance Reviews are investigated at the direction of the Commissioner for Public Employment.

OUR FOCUS

To provide effective and impartial mechanisms for addressing appeals and grievances by:

- establishing procedures for, and chairing, promotion appeals within the Northern Territory Public Sector, and
- on behalf of the Commissioner, investigating and reporting on requests for grievance review lodged under section 59 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*.

LEGISLATIVE BASE

Sections 55 and 56 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* (the Act) and regulations 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Regulations* relate to the Promotions Appeal Board.

Section 59 of the Act and Employment Instruction Number 8 provide for grievance review. Reference to grievance review is also made in clause 6 of Employment Instruction (EI) Number 2, clause 10 of EI Number 5 and clause 4 of EI Number 9.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- To address all appeals and grievances within the principles of merit, equity and natural justice
- To provide impartial advice and assistance
- To address all appeals and grievances in a timely and effective manner
- To increase awareness and acceptance of the appeal and grievance processes, and
- To contribute to improved human resource management throughout the NT Public Sector.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 1998/99

- Completion of promotion appeals and grievance reviews within best practice timeframes despite increased numbers in both areas.
- Publication of the brochures Promotions Appeal Process, Grievance Review Process and Writing Job Applications.
- Evaluation of the existing promotions appeal and grievance review data base.
- Publication of information on promotions appeal and grievance review processes and procedures on the NT Government Intranet and the Internet.
- Participation of the Chairperson in the 1999 National Public Sector Appeals Conference.

ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST PLANNED OUTCOMES

Formal and informal contact with employees and agencies have demonstrated an increased awareness of promotions appeal and grievance review services and procedures. For example, responses to the feedback survey forms sent to all participants in appeal or grievance matters show that most employees, management and unions are satisfied that promotion appeals and grievance reviews are undertaken impartially and within the principles of merit, equity and fairness.

Promotions appeal and grievance review services have been provided in an effective and timely manner, and responses to appeals and grievances have meet the established best practice guidelines in most cases.

Assistance in improvements to human resource practices within the public sector has been provided by participation in consultations concerning the Paech Report, the implementation of the Streamlining Recruitment Project and the provision of advice to agency working parties on grievance and selection process issues.

STAFFING

The office has a staff of three. The Central Australia Representative of the OCPA provides assistance on appeals and grievance reviews in the southern region on an 'as needs' basis.

GENERAL

Promotion appeals may be lodged only on the grounds of superior merit. Appeals are determined by a board consisting of a Chairperson, a nominee of the agency and a nominee of the relevant professional association or union. In determining an appeal, the Board reviews statements provided by parties to the appeal, may seek further information, and may require parties to attend a Hearing on the matter.

Employees may request the Commissioner to review grievances related to treatment they have received whilst employed in the NTPS. This also includes failure to take action or make a decision. The area set benchmarks for hearing promotions appeals within two weeks of the closing of the appeal period and for finalising grievance reviews within 12 weeks of the date of lodgement. These timeframes were generally met.

STATISTICS

Both the number of appeals lodged, and the number of grievances received (s59 plus grievances referred back to Agencies for attention) increased during the year. Tables 1 & 2 show that appeals increased from 47 to 120 and new requests for grievance reviews increased from 35 to 63.

However, the raw data on appeals is misleading as in 1998/99, 89 appeals resulted from 13 employees lodging multiple appeals. Discounting the multiple appeals, there was an increase of 12 employees lodging appeals over the 1997/98 (adjusted) figures, an increase of 46.7%.

The reasons for the growth in grievances during the period is difficult to determine. Grievances cover a wide variety of issues and no consistent patterns are evident. However, ongoing change within the public sector is identifiable as a contributing factor. The impact of the 80% growth in requests for grievance review will need to be evaluated during the coming year.

PROMOTION APPEALS

Of a total of 1037 provisional promotions during 1998/99, a total of 120 appeals were received. Therefore 11.5% of appealable vacancies resulted in appeal. Including appeals carried over, the total number of appeals received was 128. Table 1 gives a breakdown of the outcomes of appeals. Of the 128 appeals, 64 (50%) were disallowed, 1 (0.8 %) was allowed, 1 (0.8%) resulted in the agency concerned being directed to cancel the provisional promotion and to readvertise the position, 46 (35.9%) were withdrawn, 15 (11.7%) lapsed and 1 (0.8 %) had not been determined. The reasons for upholding appeals or cancelling provisional promotions and directing agencies to re-advertise the position include failure to properly assess applicants against the selection criteria and poorly framed, ambiguous, or too many selection criteria.

Appeals Against Promotions - Table 1

	TEMPORARY	1997/98 PROVISIONAL	TOTAL	TEMPORARY	1998/99 PROVISIONAL	TOTAL
Appeals Carried Over	0	1	1	0	8	8
Appeals Received	1	46	47	1	119	120
Finalised						
Allowed	0	1	1	0	1	1(0.8%)
Disallowed	1	30	31	0	64	64(50%)
Readvertised	0	3	3	0	1	1(0.8%)
Cancelled/ lapsed	0	1	1	0	15	15(11.7%)
Withdrawn	0	4	4	1	45	46(35.9%)
On hand at end of period						
Appeals	0	8	8	0	1	1(0.8%)

GRIEVANCE REVIEWS

The most common reason for lodging a grievance is alleged unfair treatment (eg: termination of employment, the handling of disputes). Other reasons include the way selection processes are handled, the application of conditions of service, and retirement on the grounds of invalidity. Table 2 provides details of the total grievances and the breakdown of finalised matters. Of the 44 s59 grievances finalised during the year, the action/decision was confirmed in 30 (68.2 %), unfair treatment was confirmed in 5 (11.4%), 3 (6.8 %) resulted in the agency being directed to take or to refrain from taking specific action and 6 (13.6 %) were withdrawn or lapsed. 17 new grievances were referred to agencies for attempted resolution prior to formal action, bringing the total of this group handled to 19. Of these 6 (31.5%) have been resolved, 4 (21.1 %) became section 59 reviews, 2 (10.5%) were withdrawn, 1 (5.3%) lapsed, and 6 (31.6%) are outstanding.

Grievance Reviews - Table 2

	1997/98	1998/99
S59 Grievances		
Carried over	16	9
<i>Received</i>	29	46
Formalised after referral to Agency	4	4
Total s59	49	59
Finalised	40	44
Action Confirmed	15	30
Agency directed to take/refrain from Action	7	3
Unfair treatment confirmed		5
Withdrawn	18	3
Lapsed		3
On Hand at end of Period	9	15
Grievances Referred to Agencies for Attempted Resolution		
Carried Over	2	2
<i>Received</i>	6	17
Resolved Within Agency	2	6
Withdrawn	0	2
Lapsed		1
Became S59 Grievance	4	4
On Hand At End Of Period	2	6
TOTAL S59 AND REFERRED TO AGENCY	57	78

FINANCIAL REPORT

NARRATIVE

EXPENDITURE

The following financial statements reflect a good performance by the Office during the year with expenditure 2.55% below the allocated budget. The overall expenditure rose by \$1.979 million (5.21%) when compared to the previous year. Expenditure details are set out in Statements 1 and 2.

Increases in expenditure were primarily due to:

- Personnel costs increasing by \$104,000 (2.91%) due to three industrial relations positions transferred to the Office as part of *Planning for Growth*.
- Operational costs increasing by \$1.161 million (3.77%) due to the negotiation of new building leases during the reporting period.
- Capital costs increasing by \$271,000 (16.74%). This item relates to an amortisation payment.

REVENUE

When compared to 1997/98, revenue decreased in the reporting period by \$804,000. This decrease primarily relates to Government Business Divisions reducing their office space resulting in reduced rental receipts to this Office. In addition outstanding debts of \$177,216 contributed to the decrease. The details are set out in page 54.

VARIATIONS AT PROGRAM LEVEL - ACTUAL EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEAR'S EXPENDITURE.

The noteworthy items in the reporting period were:

- The Human Resource Development Program increased by \$187,000 (19.33%). The increase primarily relates to an Executive Development Program commencing in 1998/99.
- The Information Systems Program increased by \$317,000 (185.38%). The upgrade of the office computer operating system was funded by transfers from other programs.
- The Accommodation Program increased by \$1,433,000 (4.43%) to fund new leases and rent reviews.
- The Human Resource Management Program increased by \$234,000 (16.23%). This relates to the three positions referred to above with the funding transferred from other agencies.

CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements and notes have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act* and Treasurer's Directions and give a true and fair view of the results of the agency's operations for the financial year ended 30 June 1999.

The receipt and expenditure of moneys and the acquisition and disposal of property by the Office during the year have been in accordance with the *Financial Management Act* and Treasurer's Directions.



DJ HAWKES
Accountable Officer



FIONA ROCHE
Corporate Services Manager

Financial Statements

Statement 1	Expenditure by Standard Classification
Statement 2	Expenditure by Activity
Statement 3	Receipts by Account
Statement 4	Creditors
Statement 5	Debtors
Statement 6	Employee Entitlements Outstanding
Statement 7	Accountable Officer's Trust Account
Statement 8	Write-offs and Waivers

EXPENDITURE BY STANDARD CLASSIFICATION - STATEMENT 1

CATEGORY OF COST STANDARD CLASSIFICATION	NOTES	ACTUAL 1997/1998 \$000	ACTUAL 1998/1999 \$000
PERSONNEL COSTS		3576	3680
Salaries		2776	3039
Payroll Tax		227	230
FBT		33	26
Higher Duties		43	63
Leave loading		26	24
NT allowance		14	12
Other Allowances		4	6
Other benefits paid by employer		95	103
Overtime		0	2
Recreation Leave Fares		63	39
Salary Advances		7	17
Termination Payments		263	94
Workers's Compensation		23	25
Allowance in lieu of Fares		2	0
OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE		30770	31931
Property Maintenance		2401	2334
General Property Management		28180	29352
Power		94	133
Water and Sewerage		95	112
OTHER OPERATIONAL COSTS		2020	2380
Advertising		24	25
Agent Service Arrangement		0	6
Audit Fees		0	0
Clothing		0	0
Communications		90	102
Consultants Fees		453	520
Consumable/General		25	30
Document Production		455	442
Entertainment		4	4
Freight		3	4
Furniture and Fittings		28	52
Information Technology Services	(b)	328	586
Insurance		1	2
Legal Expenses		25	38
Library Services		27	9
Marketing and Promotion		9	12
Membership and Subscription		4	19
Transport & Vehicles		66	72
Office Reqs and Stationery		52	36
Official Duty Fares		59	86
Other plant and equipment		41	59
Recruitment Expenses		0	1
Regulatory Advisory Boards & Committee		56	22
Relocation Expenses		1	
Training and Study	(a)	245	226
Travelling Allowance		24	27
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE		1618	1889
Purchase of Capital Assets		1618	1889
GRANTS			83
Current Grants		0	83

Notes: (a) \$169,164 is attributed to the administrative costs associated with public sector wide training courses.
 (b) The information technology expenditure increased this year due to the operating system upgrade.

EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITY - STATEMENT 2

ACTIVITY/PROGRAM	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE 1997/98 \$000	FINAL BUDGET ALLOCATION \$000	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE 1998/99 \$000
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	2141	2387	2304
Executive	802	697	662
Administration	1168	1192	1154
Information Systems	171	498	488
ADVISORY SERVICES	2633	3196	3023
Human Resource Development	967	1203	1154
Human Resource Management	1441	1803	1675
Promotions Appeal Board	226	190	194
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	33210	35424	34636
Accommodation	32316	34521	33749
Support Services	892	903	887
Disaster Relief	2		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	37984	41007	39963

RECEIPTS BY ACCOUNT - STATEMENT 3

CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT	ESTIMATED RECEIPTS \$000	ACTUAL RECEIPTS \$000
Transfers from Consolidated Revenue Account	32994	32994

OPERATING ACCOUNT	ESTIMATED RECEIPTS	ACTUAL RECEIPTS
Charges	5822	4975
Miscellaneous Receipts	86	87
Sale of Assets	0	0
Intra-sector Receipts	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING ACCOUNT	5908	5062

Notes: Major receipts were:

Charges for Goods and Services:-

Human Resource Development - \$602,947 was received from participants attending the sector wide training programs.

Human Resource Management - \$259,094 - a levy is charged to all NT Agencies to fund Project Employment.

Property Management - \$4,108,852 - General Business Divisions are charged for their accommodation and associated costs.

Miscellaneous receipts:-

Represents money recouped in this financial year for expenditure made in last financial year.

CREDITORS - STATEMENT 4

ACTIVITY/PROGRAM	EXTERNAL		INTRASECTOR		TOTAL
	CREDITORS \$000	ACCRUALS \$000	CREDITORS \$000	ACCRUALS \$000	\$000
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	59	23	29	12	122
Executive		13		3	16
Administration	13	5	29	6	53
Information Systems	46	5		3	53
ADVISORY SERVICES	2	35	0	12	49
Human Resource Development		9		2	11
Human Resource Mgt	2	22		8	33
Promotions Appeal Board		4		1	5
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	141	31	0	35	207
Accommodation	141	18		31	190
Support Services		13		4	17
TOTAL	203	89	29	59	378
Classified as:					
Current	203	89	29	59	378
Non Current	0	0	0	0	0

Notes:

Creditors:

Goods and services received and invoice dated June.

Accruals:

Goods and services received in June but invoice dated July.

DEBTORS - STATEMENT 5

ACTIVITY/PROGRAM	EXTERNAL CHARGES \$000	INTRASECTOR CHARGES \$000	TOTAL \$000
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	0	0	0
Executive			
Administration			
Information Systems			
ADVISORY SERVICES	0	55	55
Human Resource Development		55	55
Human Resource Management			
Promotions Appeal Board			
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	3	233	236
Accommodation	3	233	236
Support Services			
Totals	3	288	291
Less Provision for Doubtful Debts	0	0	0
NET DEBTORS	3	288	291
Classified as:			
Current	3	288	291
Non Current	0	0	0

EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS OUTSTANDING - STATEMENT 6

ENTITLEMENT	1997/98 \$000	1998/99 \$000
Current		
Recreation Leave	422	473
Leave Loading		60
Long Service Leave	542	748
Non Current		
Long Service Leave	73	59
TOTAL	1037	1340

Methodology*Recreation Leave*

The value of recreation leave entitlements is calculated by PIPS based on employees' actual salaries and entitlements at 30 June 1999.

Leave Loading

The value of leave loading entitlements is calculated by PIPS based on employees' actual salaries and entitlements at 30 June 1999.

Long Service Leave

Long Service Leave entitlement is calculated in accordance with Australian Accounting Standard AAS30. The calculation takes into account the probability of employees reaching ten years of service, the future increases in salary costs and discount rates to achieve the net present value of the future liability.

ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER'S TRUST ACCOUNT - STATEMENT 7

ACTIVITY/TRUST ACCOUNT	BALANCE AT 1/7/98 \$000	RECEIPTS \$000	PAYMENTS \$000	BALANCE AT 30/6/99 \$000
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT				
Security Deposits	0	10	-5	5

WRITE-OFFS AND WAIVERS - STATEMENT 8

CATEGORY	\$
WRITE-OFFS, POSTPONEMENTS AND WAIVERS UNDER THE ACT	
Amounts written-off or waived by Delegated Officer	nil
Amounts written-off, postponed or waived by the Treasurer	nil
WRITE-OFFS, POSTPONEMENTS AND WAIVERS AUTHORISED UNDER OTHER LEGISLATION	
Losses or deficiencies of money written-off	nil

EXPLANATORY NOTES

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS AT 30 JUNE 1999.

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

a) *Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment as an Accounting Entity.*

The Office is a unit of administration of the Northern Territory Government. All receipts and payments are made on behalf of the Government which is responsible for liabilities incurred by the Office.

b) *Basis of Accounting*

As required under the *Financial Management Act*, the accounting records have been kept on a cash basis and reflect monies paid or received during the financial year. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part 2, Section 5 of the Treasurer's Directions. The Northern Territory Government Accounting System is used for the recording of financial transactions.

c) *Accounting for Assets and Liabilities*

Office assets are recorded in the Asset Register at cost. Although the Office accounts on a cash basis and depreciation has not previously been charged against assets, it was a new requirement this year to depreciate assets using the straight-line method. This change was brought in to meet the reporting requirements of the Treasury and will be published as part of the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statement.

Under section 9 of the *Financial Management Act*, a statement of material, liabilities and contingent liabilities of the Territory and Agencies is required to be published as part of the Treasurer's Annual Financial Statement. The Office maintains a register of contingent liabilities and reports these to the Treasury.

Note 2: Authority for Transaction

a) Receipts

Receipts of public monies are required to be credited to either the Consolidated Revenue Account or an Agency Operating Account as appropriate. The receipts of the Office were received to the Agency Operating Account.

b) Payments

The Accountable Officer or his delegate shall not commit money for expenditure unless satisfied that, when payment is made in respect of that commitment, there will be sufficient allocation to meet the payment.

Allocations are authorised by the annual *Appropriation Act* and include any variations authorised in accordance with the *Financial Management Act*, or any other Act. The balance of an annual allocation unexpended at the end of the financial year shall lapse unless approval has been granted in accordance with the *Financial Management Act* for the unexpended funds to be carried forward into the next financial year

COMPLIANCE WITH EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

In previous reports the percentage of agencies complying with the various employment instructions has been reported. Given the nature and extent of restructuring and amalgamation that has occurred, it should be noted there is now no direct correlation between previous statistical data and that provided for the reporting period.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 1 ADVERTISING, SELECTION, APPOINTMENT, TRANSFER AND PROMOTION

Objectives

Develop procedures for the selection, appointment, transfer and promotion of employees that are consistent with the Public Sector Employment and Management Act, Regulations, By-Laws, Employment Instructions and the relevant Awards.

Ensure selection is made in accordance with merit and equal opportunity principles and that candidates are assessed by a panel competent for the purpose.

Outcomes

- Two major Government decisions have had a significant influence on NTPS recruitment and selection processes over the reporting period. These were the creation of the Department of Corporate and Information Services and approval of the recommendations of the Paech Report. In fact implementation of many of the recommendations of the review was facilitated by the greater consistency and attention to process offered by the Department of Corporate and Information Services.
- Essentially agencies retain responsibility for the strategic management of recruiting, nominating and training of selection of panels, interview reports, etc whilst all of the necessary advertising and processing functions are carried out by the Department of Corporate and Information Services.
- Replacement of the old NTPS vacancy gazette with a new publication *Employment Opportunities in the NTPS* provided simpler, more functional job advertisements.
- Whilst all agencies report continued use of the handbook *The Selection Process - Principles and Guidelines for the Filling of Vacancies in the Northern Territory Public Sector*, as a result of the Paech Report, this publication will be extensively reviewed to reflect a more streamlined approach to the entire recruitment process.
- With a view to enhancing sector-wide recruitment and retention, agencies have been encouraged to take a more holistic view of their current practices to ensure that recruitment and selection, merit, induction and probation considerations are considered as one inter-related package.
- Agencies are now working towards an informal recruitment/selection performance standard of 4-6 weeks from advertisement to selection panel recommendation.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 2 PROBATION

Objective

Develop procedures so that probationary employees are aware of the details of the probationary process within one week of reporting for duty.

Outcomes

- All agencies have a probationary process in place. Many agencies are exploring the development of a service level agreement with Department of Corporate and Information Services to allow for the department to administer the process, including generation of report forms, follow up of reports, etc.
- Most agencies require probation reports on the completion of three and six months of service. As with many other human resource practices, the effectiveness of probationary procedures is dependent upon the manager/supervisor and the quality and timeliness of the probationary report.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO 3 NATURAL JUSTICE

Objective

Ensure natural justice is observed in all dealings with employees under the Act, other than those referred to in Section 50 (summary dismissal).

Outcomes

- No specific agency reporting required. There is service-wide acknowledgement of the fundamental need to comply with the rules of natural justice.
- The Chairperson of the Promotions Appeal Board and staff of the OCPE stress the importance of natural justice in all dealings with employees during their regular visits to agencies.
- There have been no reported breaches of natural justice over the reporting period.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 4 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Objective

Develop and implement performance management systems.

Outcomes

- The development and/or continuity of the performance management process has been significantly impacted in those agencies affected by restructuring, either as part of *Planning for Growth* or as a result of other decisions eg. education and health reviews.
- Fifteen agencies indicated that they:
 - have no systems currently in place
 - have temporarily suspended formal reporting pending finalisation of current restructuring
 - are developing composite systems as a consequence of agency amalgamation, or
 - have partially implemented systems eg. some business units have a performance management system whilst other business units in the same agency have no system in place.
- The agencies that have systems in place have adopted a range of different performance management models, although the emphasis on aligning individual performance to corporate objectives is a common theme.
- Agency systems emphasise the identification of personal training needs linking directly to agency objectives. This provides agencies with the opportunity to develop training and development strategies that are directly aligned to business/corporate plans.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 5 MEDICAL INCAPACITY

Objective

To identify necessary procedures when a Chief Executive Officer is of the opinion that an employee may be medically incapacitated.

Outcome

No specific agency reporting required.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 6 INABILITY TO DISCHARGE DUTIES

Objective

Identify the issues that might 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 inability process under the Act.

Outcomes

- All agencies report that they have appropriate measures in place and that these have proven satisfactory over the reporting period.
- Many agencies are exploring the development of inability procedures with the Department of Corporate and Information Services as part of service level agreements, including case management, investigation assistance, etc.
- Best practice continues to be demonstrated by the Department of Education's 'Nipping in the Bud' program. The Program links such aspects as discipline, inability, grievance, managing poor performance and occupational health and safety into a consolidated package.
- Statistical data on inability cases and appeals is reported separately on pages 44 and 45.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 7 DISCIPLINE

Objective

Establish procedures regarding breaches of discipline within agencies consistent with the Public Sector Employment and Management Act, Regulations, By-Laws and Employment Instructions.

Outcomes

- All agencies report that appropriate procedures are in place or that the Act and this Employment Instruction would be sufficient should a disciplinary matter arise.
- As reported in previous years, the workload and ongoing availability of discipline appeal board members, especially chairpersons, has continued to cause some delays in the resolution of cases.
- A number of agencies have included procedures on their Intranet site to provide information and guidance to managers and employees.
- Statistical data on discipline cases and appeals is reported separately on pages 44 and 45.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 8 REVIEW OF GRIEVANCES

Objective

Establish grievance settling procedures within individual agencies.

Outcomes

- All agencies report that procedures are in place appropriate to their circumstances. In most cases guidelines on harassment are incorporated within their grievance review guidelines.
- In all cases, the intention of agency guidelines is to retain and settle a grievance as close to the point of dispute as possible. This ensures that most grievances are settled within the agency without recourse to the Commissioner.
- Many agencies are exploring the administration of grievance procedures with the Department of Corporate and Information Services as part of the agency's service level agreement.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 9 TRANSFERS

Now incorporated into Employment Instruction No. 1

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 10 EMPLOYEE RECORDS

Objectives

Ensure recording of required details for every employee and guarantee access to records by individual employees while ensuring overall confidentiality.

Established procedures should restrict access to official purposes on a 'as need to know' basis only.

Outcomes

- All agencies report effective procedures are in place for the secure keeping of their employees' records. In most cases the Department of Corporate and Information Services manages agency employee records under service level agreements.
- Agencies report ongoing expansion of remote electronic input access to enhance integrity of records and permit access to individual PIPS data as appropriate.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 11 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Objectives

Implement programs that ensure employees have equal employment opportunities in accordance with the merit principle.

Implement programs for the employment and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders within the framework of the Public Sector Employment and Management Act, the Employment Instruction and the NTPS Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy.

Outcomes

- All agencies, apart from those created as a result of *Planning for Growth* (who are in the process of developing plans), report they have Equal Opportunity Management Plans in place. In the majority of cases plans have progressed beyond basic equal opportunity considerations to a wider focus on the need for diversity in the workforce.
- As part of this wider focus, agencies report that the following considerations inform their Plans:
 - equity and diversity
 - Aboriginal employment and career development
 - cross cultural awareness
 - family-friendly workplaces, including flexible work practices, and
 - harassment guidelines.

- In seeking advice from agencies this year, more data was requested on agency action in relation to the Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy. The information obtained will be used in the coming year to inform and focus strategies developed by the Office.
- Agencies report ongoing concerns with the difficulties involved in obtaining comprehensive, accurate data on equal employment opportunity issues. It is reported that survey response rates have been no better than 40%.
- One means of mitigating the shortage of information is through the Equal Employment Opportunity Network. Most agencies are represented on the Network and agency representatives are able to provide accurate profiles of the composition of their agency and the effectiveness of their equity and diversity measures.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 12 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

Objective

Consultation with employees and their representatives for the purpose of developing and implementing agency occupational health and safety programs.

Outcomes

- As an outcome of *Planning for Growth*, agencies that had dedicated occupational health and safety program staff eg. Transport & Works, Territory Health Services, NT Department of Education and Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries have transferred those staff to a centralised resource in the Department of Corporate and Information Services. Whilst arrangements have yet to be finalised, it is proposed that agencies will negotiate with the latter to arrive at service level agreements that define the services required. The service level agreement will also specify the performance criteria to be met and the evaluation measures.
- Each Chief Executive Officer will retain responsibility for effective occupational health and safety measures in their agency including accident prevention and maintenance of a healthy work environment.
- All of the larger agencies have established occupational health and safety reference groups or committees that act as a conduit between the agency executive, the Department of Corporate and Information Services occupational health and safety branch, and individual employees on health and safety issues.
- A number of agencies report that workplace stress is a significant problem.

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 13 CODE OF CONDUCT

Objective

Chief Executive Officers may issue agency specific codes of conduct consistent with the Public Sector Employment and Management Act, Regulations, By-laws and Employment Instructions.

Chief Executive Officers may issue guidelines regarding acceptance of gifts and benefits by employees.

Outcomes

- The NTPS *Code of Conduct* booklet has been reviewed and amended.
- 12 agencies have developed a code or policy statement that reflects the key principles and ethical issues peculiar to that agency. For example the Department of Education has developed a draft 'Duties of a Teacher' that provides performance benchmarks for teachers. Following negotiation with the Australian Education Union the document will be distributed to all teachers and will supplement the provisions of the *Code of Conduct*.
- The most common code of conduct issues reported by agencies include:
 - declaration of pecuniary interest/conflict of interest,
 - outside employment
 - acceptance of gifts and benefits
 - use of agency facilities and equipment
 - confidentiality of information/intellectual property, and
 - conduct of VIP drivers

EMPLOYMENT INSTRUCTION NO. 14 PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Objective

Enhance employment flexibility through effective part-time employment provisions.

Outcomes

No routine agency reporting is required. The incidence of part-time employment in the NTPS is reported at page 79.

LIST OF OCPE CONTACT OFFICERS

Executive

David J Hawkes Commissioner for Public Employment Ph: 8999 4104

Central Australia Representative

Ann Jacobs Ph: 8951 5785

Corporate Services

Fiona Roche Manager Ph: 8999 4183

Information Management

Tanya Murphy Manager Ph: 8999 4113

NT Property Management

Glyn Rhys-Jones Director Ph: 8999 4203

Human Resource Management

Theo Tsikouris Director Ph: 8999 4175

Human Resource Development

Naida Tattersall Director Ph: 8999 4124

Promotions Appeal Board & Grievance Review (PAB & GR)

Lee Berryman Chairperson, PAB Ph: 8999 4128

Sue Freeman Manager, GR Ph: 8999 4127

BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND PUBLICATIONS

The OCPE has representation on a range of national and local committees and working parties.

NATIONAL

Australasian Public Service Commissioners' Conference

a forum of Commissioners from all Australian States and New Zealand public sector organisations which meets regularly to discuss issues of common interest The Conference has four working groups:

- Communications
- Ethics
- EEO
- Human Resource Directors Forum

Departments of Workplace Relations' Standing Committee

a national forum of Chief Executive Officers of State and Territory labour/industrial relations agencies servicing the Workplace Relations Ministers' Council.

Government Real Estate Group (GREG)

a national working forum of Government Property Groups representing all states and territories which operates under the umbrella of the Australian Procurement and Construction Council, a national and international organisation.

Management Development Group (MDG)

a national forum which focuses on development issues, including executive development, middle management and public sector vocational education and training (VET) in the Australian and New Zealand public sectors.

Property Council of Australia

a national body of State and Territory Councils of which NT Property Management is an Associate Member.

Public Service Education and Training Australia Inc. (PSETA)

a national group established by the Commissioners' Conference to develop Public Service competencies and identify appropriate training avenues to gain these competencies, and to review existing public administration training and development activities.

LOCAL

Public Sector Consultative Council (PSCC)

Established under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*, the PSCC has representation from Chief Executive Officers of NTPS agencies and the NT Trades and Labor Council. The Council is chaired by the Commissioner for Public Employment. It plays an essential leadership role outside the formal enterprise bargaining arena in identifying and resolving topical or contentious human resource issues.

The PSCC has four working parties -

- EEO
- Indigenous workforce issues
- Remote locality conditions
- Work and family responsibilities.

Joint Training Advisory Council (JTAC)

a forum for the Commissioner for Public Employment to consult with unions and agencies on more general training and development issues within the NTPS

Award Simplification Joint Working Party

Corporate Systems Management Group

Darwin Port Authority - Darwin Port Efficiency Task Force

Department of Corporate and Information Services HRD Reference Group

Department of Corporate and Information Services Management Board

EBA Joint Working Parties on Study Assistance for NTPS employees & Restrictive Duty

Employee Assistance Service NT Inc

Equal Employment Opportunities Representative Group

Government Energy Management Program (GEMP) Steering Committee

Human Resource Development (HRD) Network

Human Resource Forum (Chair)

HR/Industrial Relations Reference Group for the Private Management of Hospitals (Chair)

Human Resource Management/Human Resource Development Committee (Alice Springs)

Human Resources Systems Information Management Group (HRSIMG)

Indigenous Workforce Issues Working Party

Information Technology Management Reference Group (ITMRG)

Inter agency working party private insurance options for NTPS workers' compensation claims

Interdepartmental Committee on Youth Affairs

National Coordinators Conference for Public Sector Management Course
Northern Territory Industrial Relations Forum
NTPS Superannuation Working Party
Records Management Advisory Group (RMAG)
Records Management Advisory Steering Group
Reportable Fringe Benefits Working Party (Chair)
Southern Regional Coordination Committee
Streamlining Recruitment Consultative Committee
Working Party on the administration of workers compensation
Year 2000 Coordinators Group

OCPE PUBLICATIONS

Publications are available on the following topics:

Code of Conduct
Competency Standards
Corporate Publications
Counselling
Enterprise Bargaining
Flexible Work Practices
HRM and HRD Information Series
Indigenous Employment
Investigations
Job Evaluation System (JES)
Leased NT Government Office Accommodation
Managing Stress in the Workplace
Mentoring
NTPS 21
NTPS Bulletins
Occasional Papers by the Commissioner
Performance Management
Promotions Appeal Board and Grievance Review
Recruitment and Selection

For further details contact the Publications Officer on 8999 4179 or check the OCPE website.

STATISTICAL SUPPLEMENT - NORTHERN TERRITORY PUBLIC SECTOR PERSONNEL STATISTICS

For the purpose of this statistical supplement, reference to the ‘Northern Territory Public Sector’ includes those agencies listed in Table 2 on page 77. This list excludes the Northern Territory University, the Totalisator Administration Board, the Territory Insurance Office and the Menzies School of Health Research. However it includes a substantial number of persons employed under Acts other than the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*.

STAFFING LEVELS

Movements in total staffing in the Northern Territory Public Sector are compared to changes in the Northern Territory population and employment numbers from 1983 to 1999 in Table 1 and Figure 1. There has been an overall increase in public sector employment from around 14,200 to 14,850 persons over this period. Note that Public Sector data from the 1980s and early 1990s was calculated with a somewhat different counting methodology to that now in use. Nevertheless the basic assumptions are similar enough to make broad comparisons valid.

Figure 1. Growth in the NTPS, Labour Force and Population - June 1983 to 1999

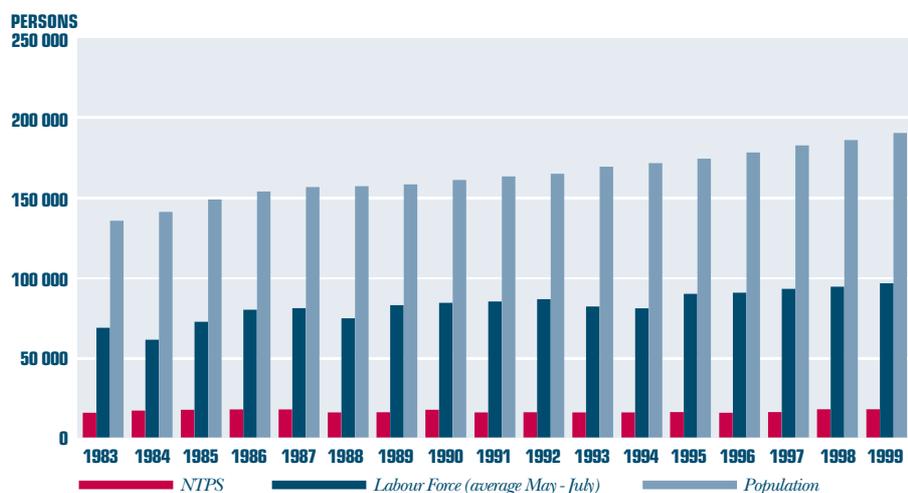


Figure 1 shows that during the years 1983 (which is about when the NTPS settled into its present form post self government) to 1999 the Northern Territory population grew by 41 percent, and employment grew by 43 percent. Over the same period the NT public sector has grown by only five percent.

Table 1. Growth in the NTPS Compared to Employment and Population Movements - 1983 to 1999

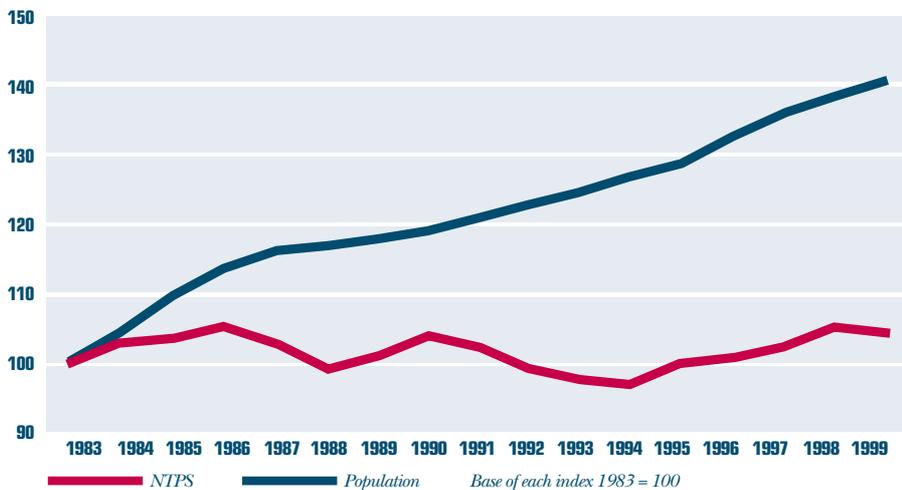
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
NTPS	14.2	14.6	14.7	15.0	14.6	14.2	14.5	14.8	14.5	14.1	13.7	13.9	14.2	14.3	14.5	15.0	14.8
%Growth/Yr	3	1	2	-2	-3	2	2	-2	-3	-2	1	2	1	1	3	-1	
Growth Index	100	103	104	106	103	100	102	104	102	99	97	98	100	101	102	105	105
Labour Force # ('000)	66.9	59.6	71.1	78.3	79.5	72.8	82.0	83.7	85.4	86.8	81.4	80.5	87.0	88.4	91.5	92.6	97.5
%Growth/Yr		-11	19	10	2	-8	13	2	2	2	-6	-1	8	2	4	1	5
Growth Index	100	89	106	117	119	109	123	125	128	130	122	120	130	132	137	138	145
Employment # ('000)	62.1	55.1	66.1	72.9	75.1	67.3	77.6	78.5	78.3	80.7	75.4	75.4	81.0	83.4	86.7	88.5	93.2
%Growth/Yr		-11	20	10	3	-10	15	1	0	3	-7	0	7	3	4	2	5
Growth Index	100	89	106	117	121	108	125	126	126	130	121	121	130	134	140	143	150
Population Δ ('000)	135.9	142.2	148.5	154.4	157.9	159.0	160.5	162.1	165.0	167.0	169.7	172.3	175.0	180.5	185.3	188.2	191.4
%Growth/Yr		5	4	4	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	2
Growth Index	100	105	109	114	116	117	118	119	121	123	125	127	129	133	136	138	141

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

Average over May, June and July

Δ December population figures

Figure 2. Movements in NT Population and NTPS Staff - 1983 to 1999



The change in the size of the public sector from 1983 is compared directly to population growth in Figure 2. The graph shows that the population of the Territory has grown fairly steadily during this period. Conversely, NTPS staffing has been subject to substantial variation, first peaking in 1986 at a level comparable with current staffing. The decrease which followed was precipitated by substantial cuts in federal funding to the NT, with the numbers then steadily increasing again until the Estimates Review Committee decisions in 1991 forced a further three year decline. Growth since 1994 has been limited primarily to the front-line service agencies eg. Health (up 390), Education (including colleges - up 330) and Police, Fire, & Emergency Services (up 140). It should be noted that these figures are down on those of last year owing to transfer of a range of functions from some agencies to DCIS.

The two major agencies in the public sector are Territory Health Services and the Department of Education with around 3800 and 3600 employees respectively. Combined they employ about 50 percent of staff. The medium size agencies, which employ a further 25 percent of total staff, are the Department of Corporate & Information Services, Transport & Works, the Power & Water Authority and Police, Fire & Emergency Services; all with between 600 and 1200 staff. All of the remaining agencies employ less than 500 staff; most with substantially fewer.

Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) staffing numbers for each agency are shown in Table 2. Normally this table shows the staffing averaged over the 26 pay periods for both the current reporting year and the previous year, together with the change in number over this time. Unfortunately the 1998/99 year is not suited to this type of analysis as the Department of Corporate & Information Services (DCIS) was formed part way through the year and, as mentioned above, absorbed a large number of personnel/payroll/IT/accounts staff from the other agencies. Thus a substantial number of agencies appear to have had a significant reduction in staff without there necessarily having been a reduction in the numbers associated with performing core business. In addition, this year saw the division of Asian Relations, Trade & Industry into the separate agencies of Asian Relations & Trade, and Industries and Business; also Lands & Housing became separate Agencies in their own right and a new Office of Communications, Science & Advanced Technology was formed.

There were two main results of these changes with respect to the reporting of staffing numbers. One, the average staffing figure over the 26 pays for newly formed Agencies became practically meaningless. Two, even for a lot of those Agencies which were extant for the entire period the figure can be spurious as some lost significant numbers to DCIS part way through the period. As a result the staff numbers for the reporting period in this year's report are based on the last two pays of the year (the only two pays for which Lands and Housing data is available separately). This represents the structure at the end of the period and is the structure which is expected to continue into the future. Comparisons with last year's Agency data are made where available, but the above caveats should be borne in mind when attempting interpretation of these comparisons.

STAFFING OVERVIEW

The analysis in the following sections is based mainly on data extracted from the Personnel and Integrated Payroll System (PIPS) reports. Most figures, summaries and tables refer to individual employees, with no reference 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 at the end of the reporting period.

It has been stated in recent previous reports that from the early 1980's until 1992/93, Annual Reports from this Office relied largely on Interpers data (Interpers being the name of the previous computerised personnel system). The generality of the analyses was limited under Interpers, as some agencies utilised facilities other than Interpers for maintaining detailed personnel records. From about the middle of 1993 the PIPS system came into general use, and so most time series comparisons described below stem from that time.

Comparisons made using data after June 1993 (ie. using all PIPS data) are generally accurate, although care should be taken when noting small changes in some variables as profiles may have changed slightly with both changes in definitions and developments in processing protocols.

The current report encompasses all agencies except those mentioned in the first paragraph of this Appendix. The Port Authority could not be included in some analyses as it does not utilise the payroll facilities of the PIPS System.

Table 2. Indicative Changes in Average Public Sector Staff Employed by Agency - 1997/98 to 1998/99

AGENCY	AVERAGE 1997/98	AVERAGE JUNE 1999	DIFFERENCE
Aboriginal Areas Protectn Auth	20	20	..
Aboriginal Development	23	23	..
Anti-Discrimination Commission	11	8	-3
Arts & Museums	108	115	7
Asian Relations, Trade & Industry	n.a.	20	n.a.
Attorney-General's Department	170	100	-70
Auditor General	5	4	-1
Batchelor College	213	226	13
Chief Minister	235	201	-34
Commis. for Public Employment	54	60	6
Comms, Science & Adv Tech	n.a.	13	n.a.
Corporate & Info Services	n.a.	1104	n.a.
Correctional Services	478	459	-19
Courts Administration	123	127	4
Darwin Port Authority	47	47	..
Education	3622	3747	125
Employment & Training Authority	76	50	-26
Housing	n.a.	111	n.a.
Industries & Business	n.a.	82	n.a.
Lands, Planning & Environment	410	374	-36
Legal Aid Commission	32	35	3
Legislative Assembly	92	84	-8
Liquor Commission	22	14	-8
Local Government	n.a.	87	n.a.
Mines & Energy	179	190	11
Ombudsman	15	15	..
Parks & Wildlife Commission	393	385	-8
PAWA	786	711	-75
Police, Fire & Emergency Svces	1222	1204	-18
Primary Industry & Fisheries	443	372	-71
Public Prosecutions	43	43	..
Racing & Gaming Authority	37	31	-6
Sport & Recreation	53	57	4
Strehlow Research Centre	7	4	-3
Territory Health Services	3879	3803	-76
Tourist Commission	91	95	4
Trade Development Zone	10	6	-4
Transport & Works	895	640	-255
Treasury	195	149	-46
Work Health Authority	50	41	-9
TOTAL	*(14 684)	14 847 *(14 751)	*(67)

Note: numbers refer to the full-time equivalent of all paid staff including those on paid leave,

STAFFING BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Data on the employment category of staff as at June 1994 through to June 1999 is presented in Table 3 (June 1993 data is not directly comparable). It can be seen quite clearly that the profile has changed significantly over the five year period, with the proportion of permanent employees dropping by 3.5 percentage points during that time. This has been countered by the more common usage of temporary/contract employees. Note that while there had been a steady decrease up until last year, 1998/99 saw a resurgence in the numbers of permanents reflected by an increase of 1.3 percentage points. Further perspective on the overall trend is given by noting that the actual number of permanent employees has increased over the five years, but non-permanent employment has increased at a significantly faster rate.

Table 3. Employment Status of NT Public Sector Staff - 1993/94 to 1998/99

STATUS	JUNE '94	JUNE '95	JUNE '96	JUNE '97	JUNE '98	JUNE '99	CHANGE '94 TO '99
Permanent	81.5%	80.0%	78.2%	78.4%	76.7%	78.0%	-3.5%pts
Temporary	15.6%	17.0%	19.1%	18.9%	20.3%	19.3%	3.7%pts
Casual	2.1%	2.2%	2.0%	2.1%	2.4%	2.5%	0.4%pts
Misc.	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%	0.2%	-0.5%pts
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

PERMANENT PART-TIME STAFFING

The concept of permanent part-time work has received considerable attention in recent years, and is commonly viewed as a means of retaining the valuable skills of employees who are trying to find a balance between work and family responsibilities. The number of NTPS employees in this employment category is currently around 650, which represents 5.3 percent of the permanent workforce. PIPS data illustrates that there has been a slow but steady increase in this type of employment over the past 5 years (see Table 4). The increase of 2.2 percentage points in Table 1 represents an actual increase of 291 employees since 1994, and an increase of 120 since last year. This means that the number of employees in permanent part time employment is over 80 percent more than it was 5 years ago.

Table 4 . Permanent Part -Time in the NT Public Sector - 1994 to 1999

STATUS	JUNE '94	JUNE '95	JUNE '96	JUNE '97	JUNE '98	JUNE '99	CHANGE '94 TO '99
Permanent Part time	3.1%	3.8%	3.8%	4.0%	4.4%	5.3%	2.2%pts

STAFFING BY GENDER

The proportion of women in the public sector as at June 1993 was 54.3 percent. Since that time the proportion has risen slowly but steadily to reach the 1999 figure of 59.6 percent (see Figure 3). This rise is similar to the rise in part-time employment. While there is little doubt that there is some cause and effect in this relationship (the majority of permanent part-timers being women), the increase in the proportion of women overall represents a greater number than that contributed by the number retained by permanent part-time work. There are other flexible workplace arrangements now in place that will have encouraged women into the service, but the total profile of this increase has yet to be defined.

Figure 3. Proportion of Women in NTPS - June 1993 to 1999



The proportions of females and males in agencies are represented in Figure 4. While the proportions for very small agencies can be misleading (as they can vary substantially over time), the graph shows clearly that there are some large agencies where one gender predominates. However there are signs that in some agencies this is changing.

Figure 4. Proportions of Males and Females by Agency - all employees

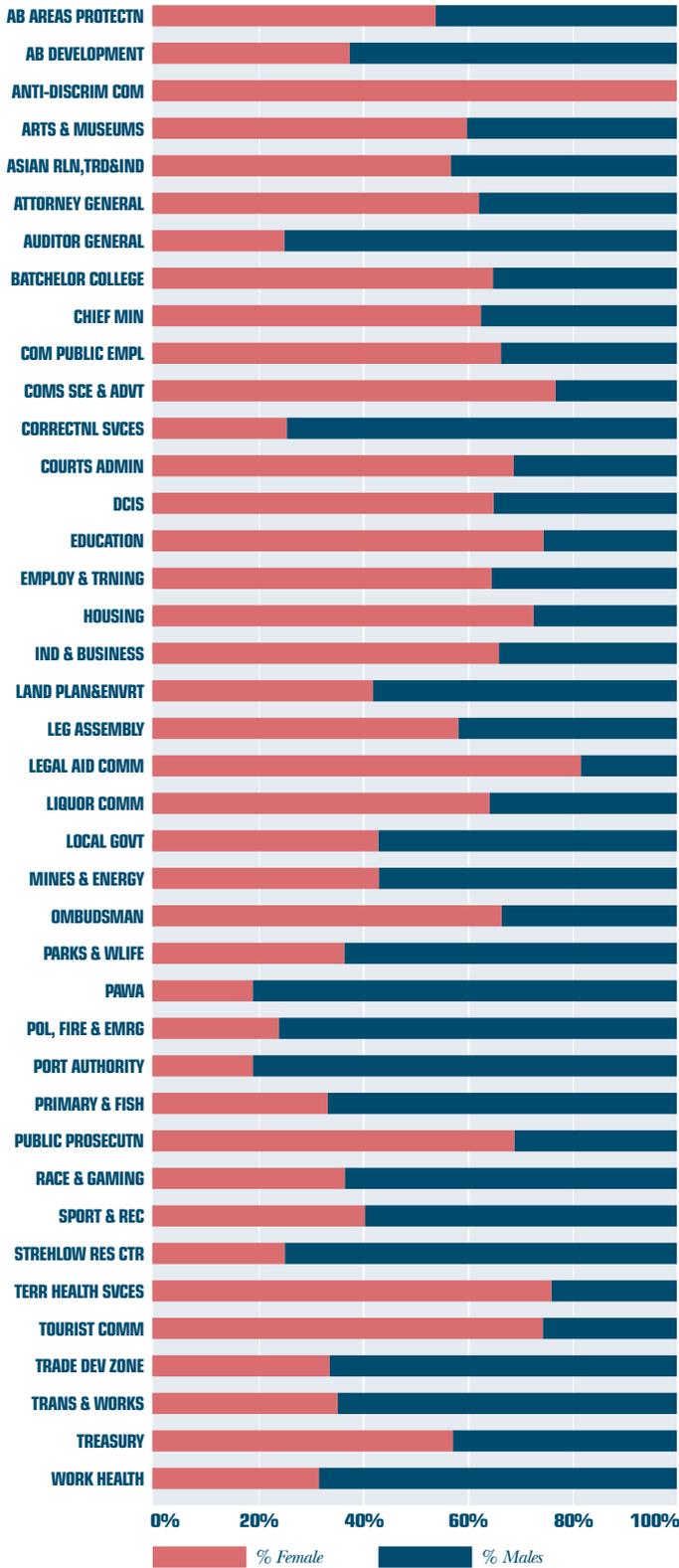


Table 5 indicates the change in the percentage of females by stream from June 1994 to June 1999. This shows that by far the greatest change has been in the professional stream with the proportion of females increasing 6.7 percentage points. Conversely the proportion in the health stream has decreased by 1.0 percentage point, admittedly from an initial over-representation of about 83 percent. This comparison between streams both highlights the significant difference between streams, and challenges the suggestion that the increase in the proportion of women has been due principally to the more prevalent use of casuals and temporaries in short term administrative vacancies.

Table 5. Percentage of Females by Employment Stream - June '94 and June '99

STREAM	1994	1999	DIFFERENCE
Admin Staff	67.6%	70.4%	2.8
Prof Staff	40.8%	47.5%	6.7
Technical Staff	19.2%	25.4%	6.2
Physical Staff	40.2%	42.7%	2.5
Teaching Staff	65.6%	71.5%	5.9
Health Workers	83.5%	82.5%	-1.0
Uniformed Staff	12.7%	17.3%	4.6
TOTAL	55.6%	59.6%	4.0

Status by Gender

Table 6 details employment status by gender. This shows that women are more likely to be employed in temporary and casual positions, although not by a large amount.

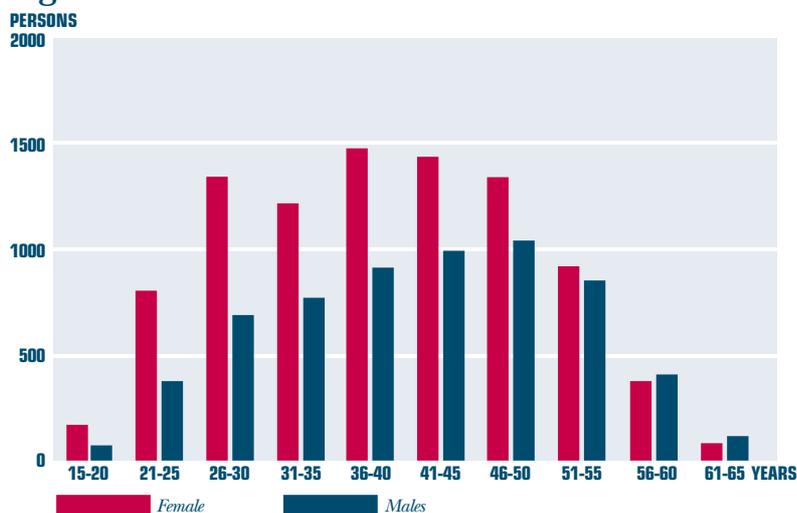
Table 6. Employment Status by Gender - NT Public Sector Staff - 1999

STATUS	FEMALES	PERCENT	MALES	PERCENT
Permanent	7184	77.3%	4977	78.9%
Temporary	1865	20.1%	1151	18.3%
Casual	236	2.5%	147	2.3%
Misc.	9	0.1%	29	0.5%
TOTAL	9294	100.0%	6304	100.0%

Age by Gender

Figure 5 illustrates the division of staffing by age and gender as at June 1999. The overall characteristic of previous years remains in that while women in the NT Public Sector are in the majority, they are significantly concentrated in the lower age groups.

Figure 5. Distribution of Men and Women in the NTPS by age - June 1999



The average age of NTPS personnel from June 1993 to June 1999 is shown in Table 7. This shows that over the six years the overall average age has risen by only 1.4 years. The rate of ageing is similar for both men and women. This similar rate of ageing does not imply a similar employment profile; another example of the difference is that the average length of service (regardless of employment category) of females is 4.4 years whereas that for males is 6.4 years.

Several years ago there was concern expressed that continued public sector staffing restraint combined with a tight labour market could lead to an ageing public sector and a shortage of suitably trained younger personnel to take over future senior positions. With data from seven points in time (Table 7) we can now say that any such effect is currently minor.

Table 7. Average Age by Gender - NT Public Sector Staff - 1993 to 1997

AGE	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Females	37.9	38.2	38.3	38.6	39.1	39.2	39.5
Males	41.0	41.0	41.2	41.7	42.1	42.1	42.5
OVERALL	39.3	39.4	39.6	40.0	40.4	40.4	40.7

Classification Stream by Gender

While the gender balance within streams has varied as described in the discussion of Table 5 above, there has been little change in the balance between streams over the last several years. The largest employment category in the Northern Territory Public Sector remains as the administrative stream at 36 percent. Women remain as being concentrated in the Administrative, Teaching and Health streams.

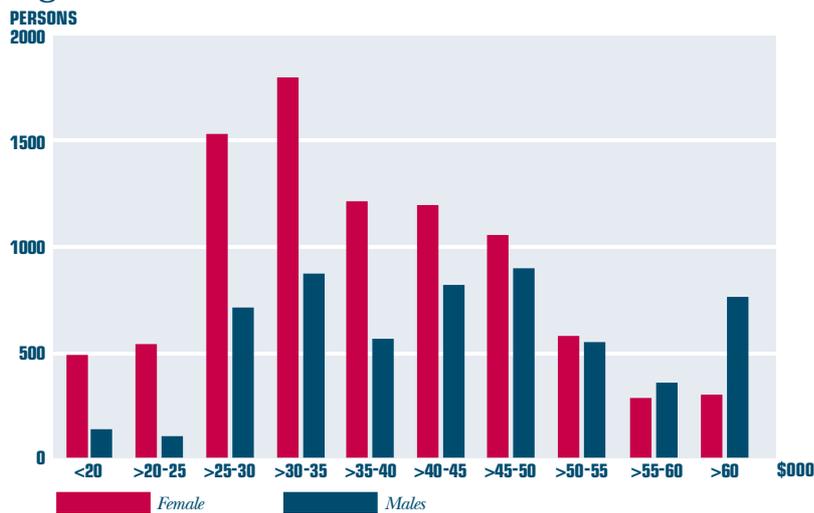
Figure 6. Distribution of Men and Women in the NTPS by Stream - June 1999



Salary by Gender

In addition to there having been an increase of participation by women both in the professional stream, as discussed above, there has also been an increase in the numbers of women in middle and senior management. In June 1993 the proportion of women in executive classifications was 14.7 percent, whereas the figure currently stands at 20.7 percent. Nevertheless, women remain predominantly at the lower salary levels, with Figure 7 illustrating the significant difference in the profiles of male and female earnings. Programs such as Management Skills for Women and agency Equal Opportunity Management Plans are important strategies in redressing this imbalance.

Figure 7. Distribution of Men and Women in the NTPS by Salary Level - June 1999



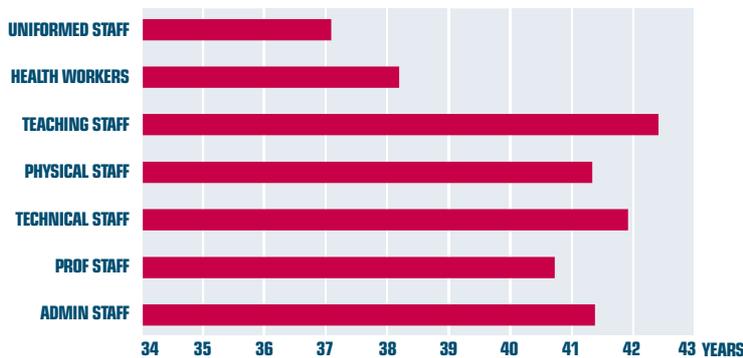
Note: Those on Executive Contracts have had their salaries adjusted to the approximate equivalent non-contract level in order to normalise the data.

STAFFING BY CLASSIFICATION STREAM

Age by Classification Stream

The result of plotting age against classification stream is shown in Figure 8. The graph shows that health workers and uniformed staff are on average the youngest in the NT public sector. Conversely technical and teaching staff are the oldest.

Figure 8. NTPS Staff Average Age by Classification Stream - June 1999

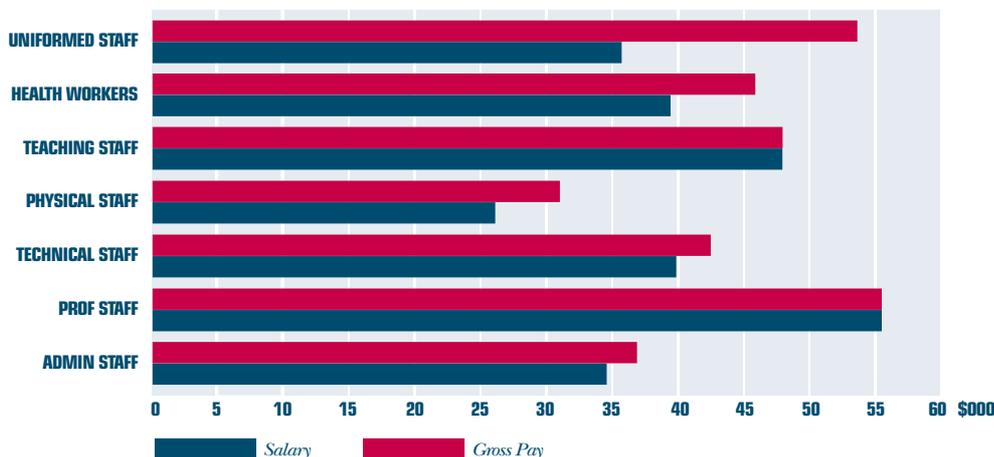


Income by Classification Stream

As described in previous reports, when looking into an accurate representation of income by classification stream a quandary arises as to how to best represent income. The analyses in earlier sections have used an employee's salary at their nominal classification and increment, plus any higher duties being paid. Income analysis is complicated by the fact that actual average gross income (after reimbursements, penalties and overtime) can be significantly higher than this figure.

In order to quantify this, both measures of income have been presented in Figure 9. This makes clear the observation that most staff receive more than their base entitlement (if only their annual leave loading), but that how much more they receive depends to a substantial degree on the vocational area in which they work.

Figure 9. NTPS Staff Income by Classification Stream - June 1999



STAFF SEPARATION AND RECRUITMENT 1994/95 TO 1998/99

Staff separation and recruitment data are presented below from the 1994/95 reporting period onward as comparisons with data prior to that can be a little tenuous.

Even with limiting this analysis to recent data, a little background knowledge is helpful with 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 with both permanent and temporary employees (as had been the custom) and one with permanent employees only. This was in order to address a former problem which need not concern us here. 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 years' 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 out permanent appointments.

Table 8. NT Public Sector Separation and Recruitment Rates by Employment Category - 1994/95 to 1998/99 - PERMANENT STAFF

	1994/95 SEPAR- ATION RATE %	RECRUIT- MENT RATE %	1995/96 SEPAR- ATION RATE %	RECRUIT- MENT RATE %	1996/97 SEPAR- ATION RATE %	RECRUIT- MENT RATE %	1997/98 SEPAR- ATION RATE %	RECRUIT- MENT RATE %	1998/99 SEPAR- ATION RATE %	RECRUIT- MENT RATE %
Admin Staff	11	4	12	4	11	5	12	4	13	3
Professionals	12	11	15	9	12	9	14	7	13	5
Technical Staff	9	5	11	5	8	5	11	5	12	6
Physical Staff	14	6	16	6	14	6	15	6	12	7
Teaching Staff	9	4	12	5	14	4	14	3	12	3
Health Workers	21	15	25	12	24	19	27	19	23	20
Uniformed Staff	8	6	7	10	8	7	8	12	9	6
TOTAL	12	7	13	6	13	7	14	7	13	6

What the data shows is that it is not uncommon for individuals to be hired as temporary employees, and then, after gaining relevant experience, winning permanent positions. Their status is simply transferred across to 'permanent' on the main database, but this is not reflected in the commencement report.

Table 9. NT Public Sector Separation and Recruitment Rates by Employment Category - 1994/95 to 1998/99 - PERMANENT & TEMPORARY STAFF

	1994/95		1995/96		1996/97		1997/98		1998/99	
	SEPARATION RATE %	RECRUITMENT RATE %								
Admin Staff	24	26	25	26	25	26	24	25	27	25
Professionals	24	31	28	30	28	30	28	28	27	27
Technical Staff	15	15	18	15	17	16	23	24	20	18
Physical Staff	35	38	35	38	36	37	35	36	31	32
Teaching Staff	18	21	21	21	23	24	21	24	21	25
Health Workers	42	47	48	52	55	60	58	58	52	56
Uniformed Staff	8	9	8	12	8	11	9	15	9	9
TOTAL	24	27	26	28	27	29	27	29	27	28

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.

Table 10. Separation Statistics for the period 01/07/98 to 30/06/99 PERMANENT & TEMPORARY STAFF*

	ADMIN	TEACHING	HEALTH	PROFESNL.	TECHNICAL	UNIFORMED	PHYSICAL	TOTAL
Temporary	628	255	508	128	76	0	150	1745
Deceased	10	2	2	1	2	1	2	20
Dismissal	12	7	6	0	1	5	10	41
Resignation	703	263	464	143	115	89	249	2026
Retire Early Age	16	12	2	2	3	6	2	43
Retire Invalid	9	5	2	0	3	7	3	29
Retire Max Age	16	3	4	2	5	5	4	39
Retire Other	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	8
Retrenchment	87	23	4	7	35	0	12	168
Other	11	9	3	1	0	0	4	28
TOTAL	1495	581	996	285	240	114	436	4147

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

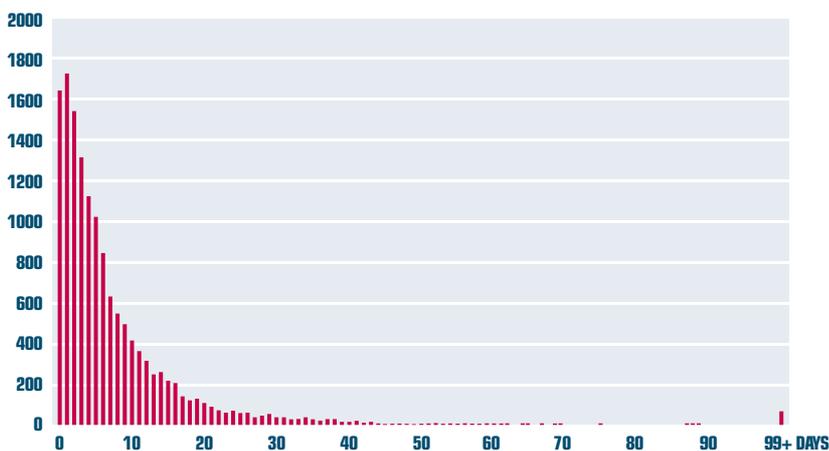
As noted previously in Table 3 the truth of the matter is that there has indeed been a fall in the proportion of permanent staff, from 81.5 percent in June 1994 to 78.0 percent in June 1999. This is obviously far less than would be predicted by taking the difference between commencement and separation rates for permanent staff at face value; in fact it is 1.3 percent higher than last year's figure. It is tempting to drop the item of permanent commencements entirely, but so doing could create the impression of incomplete data. It is hence thought best to leave it in but with this accompanying rider. In any case logic tells us that, given the slight downward trend in the proportion of permanent employees described earlier, the truth is that the actual recruitment rate of permanent employees is just slightly less than their rate of separation.

The breakdown of separations by type (eg. resignation, retirement) is recorded on PIPS and is listed by stream in Table 10. While the total number of recorded commencements is known, their breakdown is not detailed on the database.

SICK LEAVE 1998/99

Figure 10 shows the distribution of the number of days sick leave with pay taken by individual employees during 1998/99. The graph shows that the most frequent occurrence was one sick day taken (as opposed to zero days taken being the most frequent occurrence in recent previous years). From this high starting point the curve then drops off steeply up to about six days leave per year, and then starts to flatten out. The average (median) number of sick days taken was just under four.

Figure 10. Days Sick Leave taken by individuals in NTPS - 1998/1999



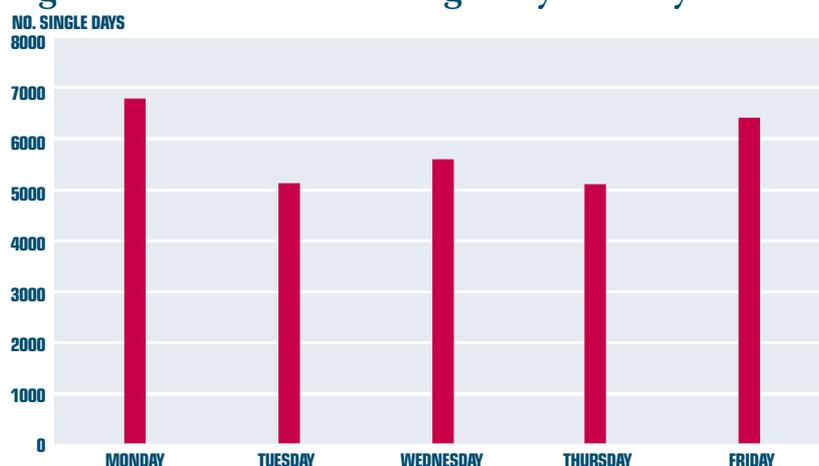
When the first analysis was done using 1994/95 data concern was expressed over the large number of people who were recorded as taking large amounts of sick leave eg. over 50 days (10 weeks). The figure dropped slightly in 1995/96 and then dropped dramatically to 1996/7. This year the number is almost exactly the same as the last two years with 293 people recorded as taking over 50 days leave. As explained in last year's report this number is on the high side of the true value. It is common for cases which are eventually classified as worker's compensation to be initially entered as sick leave on the PIPS database. When the sick leave is re-credited this is done on the worker's personal record but does not correct the original entry in the data table from which PIPS reports. Thus a significant, but unknown, proportion of the leave reported here is actually worker's compensation.

Nevertheless this flaw in the data is consistent over time and so does not explain the reason for the 45 percent drop in the number claiming over 50 days since 1994/95. It has been suggested that increased familiarity of HR operatives with the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* and the associated development of Employment Instructions has enabled greater focus on the area of misuse of sick leave. Additionally the introduction of budget based staffing in 1995/96 could reasonably be expected to have focused managers on optimising usage of their salary budgets, which in turn could have prompted a review of employees with, for example, pre-retirement illnesses.

Another aspect of sick leave which has received attention in recent years is the distribution of single day absences over the days of the week. This data is presented in Figure 11. As explained in previous reports there is a common perception that single day absences are predominantly a Monday and Friday phenomenon, and that they are much less frequent in the middle of the week. While the data supports this to some extent, the effect is not strikingly significant. A more interesting statistic is gained by looking at the pattern over time. Since the 1994/5 reporting year the number of single day absences has increased by 25 percent while FTE public sector staffing has increased by less than five percent. It has been suggested that this increase may have been due to the freeing up of sick leave provisions (officially allowing for care of family members) under the last two Enterprise Bargaining Agreements. While it is difficult to obtain concrete evidence to demonstrate this, anecdotal evidence certainly provides the explanation with some credence.

It is noteworthy that while this increase in single days counters the number of paid sick days saved in the substantial reduction in long term sick leave described above, it comprises only a fraction of that saving (estimated at about 25% for single days). In fact the overall absence rate contributed by paid sick leave fell from 4.8 percent in 1994/95 to 3.9 percent for the three succeeding years from 1996/97 to 1998/99.

Figure 11. Distribution of Single Day Sick Days in NTPS - 1998/1999



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