



Government of South Australia

Department of the Premier
and Cabinet

STATE OF THE SERVICE REPORT 2008-2009

**Report by:
THE COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT
OFFICE FOR ETHICAL STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY**

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT'S REPORT WARREN MCCANN

This is my first report since being given the privilege of serving as Commissioner for Public Employment – and I can't think of a more exciting time to come to this role. On Thursday, 16 July 2009, Parliament passed the Public Sector Act 2009. The new Act has the potential to change the way we do things. I will say more about that in a moment but first let me set it in a broader context of public sector reform.

Government leaders everywhere face the daunting challenge, imposed by the global financial crisis, of restoring public finances to a sustainable position. The public sector must be prepared to play its part in supporting the government's objective of placing the State on a path to surplus. And to play its part the public sector must be prepared to embrace far reaching reform at every level of its operations.

The restoration of the State's finances is doubly challenging because, partly as a consequence of the financial crisis and partly as a consequence of historical trends already in train, governments are being asked at the same time to enter new fields of endeavour and to provide public services at ever increasing levels of quality and timeliness.

These present big challenges for the public sector. We must bring ourselves to the peak of operational efficiency – as good as, if not better than, any other in the nation.

And this is why the Public Sector Act is so important. The opportunities to reform offered by the new Act are enormous if there is the will and the determination to do so. For example, the Act is based on a set of principles rather than prescriptive rules. It tackles the rule bound culture of the public service by replacing much of the prescription in the current Act with a set of strong overarching principles.

Through creating freedoms and ensuring maximum effectiveness, the adoption of a legislative framework based on principles allows the public sector to more readily meet the challenges I have outlined. It encourages creativity while maintaining certainty and confidence about the underlying reliability and prudent management of public resources.

For example, the first of the principles is a requirement that the public sector is to focus on the provision of services to the public. Seems self-evident doesn't it. And yet a preoccupation with bureaucratic processes and procedures has led part of the system – that part not at the front line of service delivery – to sometimes turn inwards rather than outwards to the community it serves. The new Act restores the provision of quality, efficiently produced services to centre stage for every public sector worker.

Another of the principles is collaboration. It has long been accepted wisdom that we will not solve some of the State's most pressing problems unless agencies learn to work more collaboratively – sometimes across the whole system. And yet, because it fits with established comfort zones and requires less effort, the silo mentality persists. The new Act makes it very clear that such limited horizons are not the way of the future.

The Act, for the first time provides the opportunity to work towards a common employment framework for the whole public sector. The public sector is made up of a wide variety of agencies that have been created over time to meet the diverse needs of government and the public it serves. Employees are covered by a variety of arrangements, obligations, responsibilities and entitlements depending on how, and by whom, they are employed. The lack of consistency in these arrangements poses significant costs, complicates management and makes workforce deployment more cumbersome than necessary.

Although the Act does not standardise employment arrangements across the public sector it fosters and facilitates good practice and will lead in time to much higher levels of mobility than we have experienced

in the past. The new employment framework also provides an opportunity to re-emphasise the importance of professional ethics in the performance of the everyday work of public servants. It is an opportunity to restore the trust that public servants hold on behalf of the government and the community to deliver quality services where and when they are required.

Unfortunately, negative views of the public service continue to persist in some parts of the community. And because I witness the professionalism and dedication of the vast majority of public servants every day, that old-fashioned stereotyping saddens me. After all at the heart of the values that define what it means to be a public servant is that we have obligations that transcend self interest. By lifting the place of professional ethics in our daily working lives that important message will be reinforced.

There are many more opportunities for reform offered by the new Act and some of these are discussed in the body of this report. I look forward to working towards its successful implementation.

ROLE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

The Functions of the Commissioner for Public Employment are defined in the *Public Sector Management Act 1995*. The Commissioner must, before 30 September in each year, present a report to the Minister on personnel management and industrial relations in the Public Service during the preceding financial year.

PUBLIC SECTOR ACT (Operational date to be proclaimed)

The Public Sector Act will replace the existing *Public Sector Management Act 1995* early in 2010. Under the Act, agencies and employees across the whole of the public sector will be governed by a comprehensive set of principles, with greater emphasis on one government.

The principles of the Act are as follows:

- public focus
- responsiveness
- collaboration
- excellence
- employer of choice
- ethical behaviour, and
- legal requirements

The Act provides the opportunity to do things differently and create a public sector that is high performing, has strong values and greater accountability.

ROLE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT UNDER THE PUBLIC SECTOR ACT

The role of the Commissioner for Public Employment will change fundamentally from one of direction to one of persuasion and advice. Under the new Act the functions of the Commissioner are to:

- advance the objects of the Act and to promote the observance of the public sector principles in so far as they relate to public sector employment
- issue a public sector code of ethics
- issue public sector employment determinations and guidelines
- monitor and report to the Minister and Parliament on the observance of the public sector principles and code of conduct and employment determinations
- provide advice on employment matters at the request of agencies or on the Commissioner's own initiative

- conduct reviews or investigations on the Commissioner's own initiative
- perform any other function assigned under the Act

THE OFFICE FOR ETHICAL STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

The Office for Ethical Standards and Professional Integrity was established on November 1, 2008. The Office operates within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, South Australia and is headed by the Commissioner for Public Employment, Warren McCann. The office provides oversight and leadership for the South Australian Public Sector by promoting principles and ethics which govern the operation of the public sector as well as establishing a cohesive public sector and a standardised employment framework.

The Office undertakes a range of functions including:

- statutory functions of the Commissioner
- Code of Conduct and Employment Standards
- whole of government reporting and workforce planning
- Chief Executive and Statutory appointments for the Premier
- South Australian Strategic Plan Targets
- Public Sector Week and Premier's Awards
- Graduate Register and Notice of Vacancies
- ministerial staff appointments
- machinery of government
- Public Sector Management Program
- project and policy work for whole of government initiatives

Highlights for the year include:

- developed and released a major policy paper on repositioning public sector human resources
- conducted a review of the workforce data collection for the SA public sector to ensure relevant information collection and to inform reporting requirements under the new Public Sector Act 2009
- released a policy paper as background for the development of a new code of ethics for the SA Public Sector
- developed a new policy to provide potential chief executives and some statutory office holders with high level training
- commenced a workforce planning strategy to ensure efficient future management of workforce issues
- raised the profile of services delivered by the South Australian Public Sector to the community by showcasing a diverse range of services, initiatives and innovations through Public Sector Week
- built on the success of the inaugural Premier's Awards scheme with increased participation and interest in the second year
- coordinated the Public Sector Management Program enhancing future leadership and management capability
- provided an overview of the South Australian public service through the Commissioner for Public Employment's State of the Service report
- continued collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative workforce information to evaluate the management and performance of the sector

ETHICS FRAMEWORK REVIEW

It is important that the South Australian public sector has the confidence of the Government and the community, and is recognised as not only efficient and effective, but also ethical.

To assist employees to meet the standards expected of public servants, a legally binding Code of Conduct was issued in March 2005 subsequent to amendments to the *Public Sector Management Act 1995*.

As with its predecessor, the new Public Sector Act will continue to require that the Commissioner for Public Employment be responsible for issuing a Code of Conduct for the South Australian public sector. With the Government reaffirming its commitment to high ethical standards through the new legislation, there is an opportunity to consider afresh how such a code can be emphasised and enshrined within the daily operations of the public sector.

The Office for Ethical Standards and Professional Integrity has therefore commenced a review of the Code of Conduct and the underlying values that support ethical practice in the public sector. Consistent with modern trends in Australia and internationally, consideration is currently being given to broadening the concept to a Code of Ethics which will also incorporate conduct issues within it.

The development and implementation of a new ethical framework will build upon an existing foundation within the South Australian Public Sector, and will contribute to a modern public sector that reflects best practice, as well as community expectations.

REVIEW OF COMMISSIONER'S DETERMINATIONS

The passing of the Public Sector Bill through Parliament presents a number of exciting challenges and opportunities for the South Australian Public Sector. The movement towards a new management and employment regime as prescribed by the legislation affords the Government and the Public Sector an opportunity to reshape its workforce strategies to ensure an effective, efficient and high performing public sector.

The advent of the new Public Sector Act will afford chief executives greater autonomy in the recruitment and management of their staff. The challenge for the Office for Ethical Standards and Professional Integrity will be to develop and implement an employment framework that will:

- enable chief executives to manage their resources
- ensure consistent whole of public sector human resource policies
- ensure the key employment conditions of employees
- facilitate the establishment of a modern, flexible and efficient public sector

To this end, the Office for Ethical Standards and Professional Integrity is undertaking a comprehensive review of the Commissioner's Standards, which support the effective implementation of public sector workforce policies. New Commissioner's Determinations will be developed to support the operation of the legislation.

It is anticipated that the new Determinations will only be issued where there is an absolute need for a ruling established through legislation. Therefore it is expected that the number of binding Determinations will be limited, supported by a series of Guidelines to advance the objects and principles of the Act and to ensure a clear, strategic focus on human resource management.

REPOSITIONING HUMAN RESOURCES

On Tuesday 10 March, 2009 the Commissioner for Public Employment made a special presentation to public sector leaders on Re-positioning HR in government.

The presentation began with a basic proposition: If the South Australian Public Sector is to do what the government asks us to do and the community expects us to do then we have to have the right people, the right culture, the right systems and structures.

To achieve these outcomes, the Commissioner set out the case for repositioning HR in government from a predominantly service role to a predominantly strategic role. In a mature strategic HR system, the senior HR executive will have a seat at the table. No important decision will be taken without strategic HR input. No program of major change will be embarked upon without HR change management designers in the thick of it.

The Commissioner unpacked four areas where strategic HR might work in practice:

- organisational design
- culture
- productivity
- integrated government

There is a compelling conceptual case and rock hard empirical evidence that smart investment in people, culture and systems will lead to improved performance.

ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Agencies reported that as part of their induction process for all new employees, the Code of Conduct for South Australian Public Sector Employees, *Public Sector Management Act (1995)*, *Whistleblowers Act 1995 (SA)* and the *Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act* were discussed. Departmental policies pertaining to ethics, accountability and values were also examined, with agencies promoting the modelling of appropriate behaviour.

The code of conduct is made available to employees in various ways, for instance some agencies have placed the Code of Conduct on agency intranets or provided hard copies. Several agencies have reported that expected behaviours are being reinforced as part of the performance management process.

A number of agencies reported that expected values and standards are embedded in job and person specifications and integrated as part of the recruitment and selection process. The use of psychological testing was also evident with some agencies reporting that testing assists in determining whether prospective employees have the values and ethics needed to undertake a particular occupation.

Training programs were developed for senior managers and supervisors, highlighting their responsibilities with respect to the modelling of appropriate behaviour. Managers were also provided with tools to support them in managing inappropriate behaviours including bullying and harassment.

Policies and procedures have been developed in agencies providing details to employees on their rights and obligations with respect to the Grievance and Dispute Resolution process, Whistleblowers Protection Act, Workplace Bullying and the Managing of Poor Performance. Any changes to existing departmental policies and procedures with respect to the above are conveyed to all employees either by email or hard copy.

Agency Focus - PIRSA

- Public sector ethics are emphasised through training and development activities, including an internally run public sector ethics program, employee induction program and awareness communications from the CE to all employees. The Public Sector Code of Conduct is also explicitly stated in PIRSA position descriptions for all roles across the agency.
- The development of all new policies routinely take as their starting point, Part 2 of the Public Sector Management Act 1995 (SA) and the Code of Conduct for Public Sector Employees.
- Whistleblowers are explicitly protected in the recently approved Whistleblower's Protection Policy and Grievance Resolution Policy.
- The PIRSA/Public Service Association (PSA) Consultative Forum ensures early intervention of any issues around ethics. A Gift Policy has been drafted.

A number of agencies have advised that trained officers have been appointed as initial contact officers, for employees who may have concerns or issues regarding inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. Guidance is provided to employees with respect to the formal complaint process. Statistics are compiled and utilised to identify the nature of the inappropriate behaviour and potential areas of concern within the agency.

Remuneration Reviews

A total of 12 applications were received, representing 54 employees. These included one application from SA Police, one from the Department of Health, one from the Department for Correctional Services, one from the Environment Protection Authority. Two applications were received from the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology and six from the Department for Families and Communities. The six applications from the Department for Families and Communities represented a total of 48 employees. Of these, six were dismissed, one was withdrawn, one was successfully conciliated, one fell outside the jurisdiction of the Remuneration Review Panel and three matters are awaiting hearing.

Promotion Appeals

A total of 12 appeals were received. The agencies and their number of appeals were as follows: one from the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, seven from the Department for Families and Communities, two from the Attorney General's Department, one from the Department for Correctional Services and one from SA Police.

Of these, three were dismissed and nine fell outside the jurisdiction of the Appeals Tribunal.

Grievance Appeals

There were a total of 27 Grievance Appeals received. The following agencies were represented including one from the Attorney General's Department, eight from the Department for Correctional Services, two from the Department for Environment and Heritage, three from the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, four from the Department for Families and Communities, one from the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, two from the Department of Health, two from the Department of Trade and Economic Development, two from the Department of Planning and Local Government and two from the Courts Administration Authority.

Of these, three were withdrawn, five were successfully conciliated, nine were dismissed, two were upheld, and eight fell outside the jurisdiction of the Appeals Tribunal.

The management of grievances and complaints are key indicators for the monitoring of fair and equitable treatment of employees by agencies. Grievances formally raised between July 2008 to June 2009

included: 44 regarding bullying and harassment, 4 in relation to promotion and advancement, 1 grievance in relation to requests that breach the code of conduct, and 2 in relation to selection process.

Investigation of breaches

Agency chief executives have the delegation to investigate matters in connection with conduct or discipline under section 25 of the PSM Act. It was reported by agencies that a total of 167 preliminary investigations were initiated between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009.

Agency chief executives also have the delegation under section 25 of the PSM act to conduct disciplinary inquiries under Division 8, Part 8 of the PSM Act. Agencies reported that a total of 24 disciplinary inquiries were invoked between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009.

There were 2 disciplinary inquiries and appeals in relation to PSM Act employees that remained unresolved as at the end of the previous reporting period, but were subsequently resolved during the reporting period. There were no formal disciplinary appeals reported over the 08/09 financial year.

WORKFORCE

Agencies were requested to identify their top three issues with regard to addressing maintenance and renewal of their workforce, to ensure business needs are met. The three key issues raised by thirteen of the seventeen agencies were on their ability to attract and retain employees, workforce planning process and an ageing workforce. Agencies have implemented a number of strategies to deal with these issues, including the development and availability of more family friendly working conditions encompassing the ability to work part time, compressed weeks, and additional purchased leave.

Recruitment and selection processes have been streamlined to attract applicants who in the past may have been discouraged from applying due to the lengthy and sometimes overly rigorous selection process. Agencies have formed strategic partnerships with professional bodies/associations and educational institutions to advance graduate recruitment.

In forming these professional partnerships, agencies have been able to focus on both the needs of industry and the Public Sector. Pathways have been developed which encourage public sector employees to return to industry for further enhanced skill development and for employees of the private sector to consider a career within the public sector.

Agencies have advised that in order to ensure the attraction and retention of high value employees, an efficient and effective workforce planning strategy must exist. The profile of the public sector is changing and agencies have indicated that an ageing workforce and the potential loss of corporate knowledge will affect their ability to meet business needs.

Strategies to ensure business needs are met and corporate knowledge passed on have included the identification of employees who may wish to access the option of transition to retirement, voluntary flexible working arrangements and the development of mentoring and coaching programs.

A number of agencies indicated that as part of the individual performance planning cycle, employees had been identified as potential future leaders. The identification of these individuals has resulted in the facilitation by some agencies of employee development and mentoring programs.

Agency Focus - DWLBC

- DWLBC partnered with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in 2009 to develop and implement a Graduate program to attract new talent to the organisation. Participant and management feedback to date indicates that this is a very successful program, providing strong development and career support to graduates.
- Partnering enabled both Departments to have sufficient critical mass to run such a program and is a good example of two smaller departments partnering to achieve an outcome.
- DWLBC anticipate running a similar program in 2010 under the continued Department of the Premier and Cabinet partnerships and expanding the program to the Natural Resources Management Boards.
- DWLBC have recently developed 'Success Through People', the Department's Organisational Capability Plan 2009-2011 which articulates actions and projects across 4 strategic priority areas: Developing a Sustainable Workforce, Supporting, Developing and Recognising Our Employees, Building Leadership and Management Capability Now and for the Future and Getting it Right Internally.
- This will drive the Human Resources team's work over the next 2 years and focuses our efforts in positioning strategic HR to drive organisational outcomes.

SA Public Sector Management Program

Now in its seventeenth (17th) year, the SA Public Sector Management (PSM) Program continues to offer high quality leadership development for mid-level managers across Local, State and Commonwealth Government departments and agencies in South Australia. Three intakes were offered in the 2008-2009 financial year with a total of sixty-five (65) new participants commencing the Program. To date, over one thousand (1,000) public sector employees have enrolled in the SA PSM Program.

Highlights for the year included the new accreditation arrangements with Flinders University, which took effect from July 1 2008. All graduates of the Program are now eligible to receive a Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Management. The SA Graduation Ceremony for the PSM Program, which was held in the Adelaide Town Hall, saw fifty-seven (57) participants eligible to graduate with over one hundred and fifty (150) guests in attendance to celebrate their achievement.

Nationally, the PSM Program welcomed Michael D'Ascenzo, Commissioner of Taxation, Australian Taxation Office as the new Chair of the PSM Program National Board following the retirement of Jeff Whalan, Chief Executive Officer, Centrelink from this role in late 2008. A strong Secretariat to the Board advanced the progress of many projects, some of which involved the staff in South Australia. These included a refresh of our curriculum, about to be released later in 2009, work on a new look National website, and updated marketing materials and branding for use in promoting the Program nationally in all States and Territories

SA Government Graduate Register

During 2008, a number of improvements were made to the SA Government Graduate Register www.graduate.sa.gov.au.

A new marketing campaign was established to refresh the Register's image. The campaign includes a new look website and both online and hard copy marketing materials, which were launched in March 2009.

To help streamline graduate searches conducted by departments, all candidates were asked to indicate if they still wished to be considered for positions through the Graduate Register. The details of those who indicated they were no longer interested were removed from the Graduate Register. This process was first run in December 2008, was repeated in June 2009 and is planned to be repeated on a regular basis

to ensure the database of candidates remains up to date. At the end of 2008, there were 2252 candidates listed on the SA Government Graduate Register.

CareerStart SA

The Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology manages the recruitment of all youth trainees, apprentices and cadets into the public sector and local government through the CareerStart SA Program, administered by the Industry Skills Development Directorate.

The strategy supports the Government's commitment to providing entry-level training opportunities for young people and people from groups recognised as disadvantaged in the labour market. The Program has a strong focus on providing opportunities in targeted industry sectors and regional areas, ensuring greater potential for sustainable career paths for South Australians while assisting growth industries with long term workforce planning.

It is the only approved public sector program that allows all state public sector agencies to recruit trainees, cadets and apprentices into government. As such any state public sector agency seeking to recruit a new trainee, cadet or apprentice must do so through the program.

Through the CareerStart SA Program, public sector agencies can specifically request participants with a declared disability. This enables an agency to strategically target the employment of people from this group and meet their obligations under the Strategy for the Employment of People with Disabilities in the South Australian public sector.

This strategy aligns with *South Australia Works* which states that public sector agencies will actively engage with stakeholders and local communities to deliver an expanded range of opportunities for those disadvantaged in the labour market. Therefore, the long-term objective of the CareerStart SA Program is to continue to increase employment prospects for young people with a disability through current or any future programs.

Excess employees

Agencies reported that a total of 404 employees remained excess to requirements as at 30 June 2009 compared with 387 as at 30 June 2008. 215 employees were newly identified as excess during 2008-09. Of the 404 excess employees as at 30 June 2009, 122 were classified as 'active', which meant that agencies were actively seeking placements for them. 163 were on long-term placements; the majority of those on long-term placements (111) were on funded placements.

Executive employees – SA Executive Service

In late 2008, the Public Sector Performance Commission (PSPC) established a pilot program of five Action Teams to work on projects covering leadership development, improved performance, fostering innovation, citizen-centric government and strengthening families. The Action Team model aims to do three things: help develop future leaders through participation in key projects; address key issues, and promote and develop whole of government collaboration; and collaboration between government, business and the community.

During 2009, Action Teams worked on projects concerning some of the most important issues confronting the public sector now, and into the future. The Teams are piloting projects and making recommendations on:

- **Executive Service and Leadership Development:** investigating approaches to high potential talent identification and development, and recommending models for strong leadership pathways.

- **Productivity and Performance Improvement:** responding to the need to do more from within a constrained envelope of resources, this Action Team will report on instances of successful productivity improvement and the most useful tools for improvement.
- **Innovation:** recommending practices that will sustain high levels of innovation, considering improvements to risk and reward structures for supporting innovation, and recommending actions to remove impediments to innovation.
- **Citizen Centric Government:** defining the competencies, practices and values needed for the citizen and community to experience positive interactions with the public sector and sponsoring pilot projects on public engagement.
- **Strengthening Families:** helping remove unnecessary barriers to effective communication between service agencies and identifying actions to reduce the use of State 'care of children' provisions.

The teams will complete their projects during 2009-10.

Since July 2008, membership of the SA Executive Service has increased by over 50 percent to 455, representing over 80% percent of the total eligible cohort. By joining the SAES, executives gain access to a range of benefits including ongoing professional development, targeted performance management, attractive remuneration packages, mobility opportunities and rights to flexible working arrangements.

FAIRNESS AND EQUITY

Women in Executive Roles

The South Australian State Strategic Plan Target 6.23: Have women comprising half of the public sector employees in the executive levels (including chief executives) by 2014.

The South Australian Public Sector is performing well, in comparison to other jurisdictions, with women comprising 36.4% of the senior leadership group, and only the Australian Public Service slightly ahead at 37%. We are however a very long way from achieving equity in the proportion of female to male chief executives; currently there is only one female chief executive of an administrative unit. We have taken another small step over the 2008-09 toward achieving the target of 50% of executive positions being filled by women by 2014. Overall the percentage increased by .8 percentage points from 35.6% in 2007 to 36.4% in 2008. While this is positive it is a long way from the annual increase that is required to achieve the target and there is therefore no room for complacency. In fact the annual percentage increase of women in executive positions across the sector has been very low over the past three years and this has indicated to this office the need for a concerted effort to turn the attention of agencies once again to this issue.

To this end the Commissioner for Public Employment, in November 2008, convened, Women in Leadership South Australia (WILSA). This group is made up of a number of Chief Executives and senior executives from across the sector, and has been established to provide high level leadership and to engage Chief Executives, in achievement of not only T6.23 but also SASP Targets 5.1 and 5.2; to gain 50% female representation on all state government boards and committees in both membership and chairs. WILSA is a forum for sharing information and best practice models for women in leadership, and enhancing communication across the public sector. The group identifies successful strategies in the implementation of the targets for potential replication across the public sector. It has identified gaps and barriers to progressing women in leadership and developed high level strategies to address these issues. The across government implementation plan has been revised in consultation with WILSA.

WILSA established two high level strategies to advance T6.23. The first strategy is to raise awareness and champion cultural change. Actions associated with this strategy included a presentation by the Commissioner for Public Employment on the business case for advancing women to the Senior Management Council and individual presentations on this topic to the senior management group of each

government department. A group of agency representatives, nominated by agency Chief Executives, has been established to champion the target at the agency level and to drive the implementation of the across government plan. The second strategy is to improve legislation and employment determinations to support women in executive positions. The Commissioner for Public Employment has issued a guideline specifying actions that are required to be undertaken by Chief Executives and their agencies in order to meet target 6.23. Work is being undertaken to establish the viability of statutory positions be held on a part-time basis.

Women in leadership – agency report

The majority of agencies have developed strategies that actively encourage and support women into leadership and senior management positions.

One of these strategies has been the development of women in leadership based programs. These programs focus on future women leaders and provide opportunities for women participants to share their experiences and further assist with the breaking down of barriers including organisational silos, whilst fostering continuous growth and creating an additional option for learning and support for employee development.

A number of agencies have reported that the number of women being appointed to Executive positions has increased. The introduction of support based mentoring programs in many agencies has resulted in women coming forward where in the past this has not been as well supported.

Women at all levels of government are actively encouraged to participate in support programs irrespective of their classification level or current work status. Agencies have developed policies and procedures that clearly support the SA Public Sector as an employer committed to achieving work life balance for its employees.

Agency Focus - DPC

- DPC issue 5 scholarships for women to participate in the Locher Women in Leadership (WIL) Program.
- DPC is a strong supporter of the Governor's Leadership Program (GLP) aimed at targeting both employees with potential SAES Executive capability and existing SAES Executives as participants.

Aboriginal employment

The Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division (AARD), within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet is the lead agency for Strategic Plan Target 6.24. This target aims to increase the participation of Aboriginal people in the SA Public Sector, spread across all classifications and agencies, to 2% by 2010 and maintain or better those levels through to 2014.

Since the establishment of the target in 2004, to June 2008, there has been an increase of over 700 Aboriginal State public sector employees.

State public sector agencies continue to develop and / or strengthen existing Aboriginal employment strategies with the aim being to increase the number of Aboriginal employees in their agencies. Strategies include strengthening career development initiatives to increase the number of Aboriginal employees in the higher classification levels in addition to supporting Aboriginal employees within the workplace

A number of agencies utilise the Aboriginal Employment Register to assist in recruiting Aboriginal employees, in addition to targeted advertising through Aboriginal networks, forums and media.

Agencies have developed Aboriginal employment strategies that are aimed at increasing the number of Aboriginal employees in their agencies. Strategies utilised included: the sourcing of candidates from the

Aboriginal Employment Register; the development of inclusive recruitment branding material; participation in Indigenous career fairs and gatherings. A number of agencies have also utilised National Indigenous Scholarship and Cadetship programs.

Agency Corporate HR units are promoting and encouraging managers to consider the recruitment of indigenous employees, job and person specifications are being written in a more descriptive form, thus encouraging Aboriginal candidates to apply.

Aboriginal cultural awareness was provided as part of recruitment and selection training conducted by agencies. Agencies advised that selection panels were more attuned to the cultural needs of Indigenous candidates.

Agency Focus - AGD

- AGD has an Indigenous Retention and Recruitment Strategy (for Justice Portfolio agencies), which encompasses:
 - Attendance at various Aboriginal expos to promote careers in the Justice Portfolio agencies (eg Crocfest, Reconciliation Week Events, NAIDOC Week Events).
 - Selection Panel training emphasises the value of a diverse workforce and the importance of an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach to recruitment and selection.

Disability

The Office for Disability and Client Services within the Department for Families and Communities has the lead role for the development of the whole of government strategy whose target is to “Double the number of people with disabilities employed in the Public Sector by 2014”. The Office for Disability and Client Services undertakes this work in collaboration with the cross-Government reference Group “Promoting Independence”.

Most agencies reported accessing the Disability Register as part of their recruitment process and have subsequently worked towards improving their policies and procedures to reflect the diverse nature of public sector employees. Additionally, in some agencies, training is provided to those serving on selection panels to ensure that there is no discrimination in the selection process, particularly in relation to people with a disability. Training is also provided more generally to staff in relation to disability awareness and discrimination. It is important that the public sector workforce reflects the diversity of the population that it aims to serve. The South Australian Government is facing the same challenges as the rest of the Australian workforce, an ageing population coupled with skill shortages and a sustained period of tightening labour supply. Evidence suggests that people with a disability have the capacity to be employed within a wide variety of jobs and many have the qualifications and skills to meet the demands of the workforce. With increasing competition among employers for qualified workers, people with a disability are a potential talent pool that the SA Public Sector could readily access. Furthermore, the employment of people with disabilities not only recognises the innate human rights provided for under national and international law but also provides the opportunity for the South Australian Public Sector to have a diverse, skilled and vigorous workforce that is representative of the South Australian community.

In order to achieve the target outcomes a range of innovative employment strategies need to be developed enabling existing perceptions regarding disability to be explored and false assumptions and negative attitudes to be dispelled. Debunking the myths and promoting the benefits of employing people with a disability will be a prime feature of the methodology and will be supplemented with comprehensive information relating to the subsidies and support schemes available.

In the past there has been an under representation of public sector employees with a disability. This has been partly due to a genuine lack of recognition of the skills and abilities that many individuals with

disabilities have. There is now a growing awareness that matching the skills and abilities of individuals (including individuals with disabilities) to the inherent requirements of the job supports the recruitment of effective and valuable employees.

The CareerStart SA Program works closely with Disability Works Australia (DWA) on the promotion of the employment of people with a disability through the following projects:

- in 2009 DFEEST provided funding towards the placement by DWA of 61 people with a disability into traineeships by 30 June 2009. This objective was achieved.
- DFEEST is providing funding over a three year period concluding June 2010 to DWA to provide specialised services to assist jobseekers with a disability into employment within the South Australian State Government. The agreement facilitated the placement of 140 job seekers with a disability in the public sector over a three year period.

These projects contributed to South Australia's Strategic Plan (objective 1: Growing Prosperity) by assisting industry sectors to develop and implement workforce development strategies which improve productivity and economic growth.

Agencies have reported that they use the Disability Register and referrals through Disability Works, as part of their recruitment process. Training programs have been developed by agencies for those employees serving on selection panels, to ensure that there is no discrimination throughout the selection process.

In the recruitment and retention of employees with a disability, agencies have provided support by way of workplace accommodation changes, flexible working hours and assistance in regard to career development.

Disability Action Plans have been developed, with a view to increasing the number of employees with a disability employed in their agencies. Plans have included projected targets and strategies designed to complement rather than impede existing recruitment frameworks.

Agency Focus - DTEI

- DTEI's recruitment policy ("Filling Vacancies"), supporting information and processes provide information on equal opportunity programs and reflect the need to check registers early in recruitment processes. The Disability Employment Register is promoted to all managers.
- The Department has mandated an on-line disability awareness-training program for all employees, and disability awareness has been incorporated in DTEI's leadership and management development programs. The training program also provides information on the Disability Recruitment Act.
- DTEI's principles of Access, Equity, Communication, Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Accountability reflect the Code of Conduct and the Federal Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society.

Cultural Inclusion Framework for SA

The Cultural Inclusion Framework is a guide to assist State public sector agencies deliver culturally inclusive programs to Aboriginal people in South Australia. The Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has lead responsibility for reporting on agency progress on their implementation of the Framework.

A number of agencies have commenced implementation of the Framework, with all agencies being required to report on their implementation and achievements by early 2010.

Chief Executives' use of delegated powers – Appointments made under section 22(1)(d) of the PSM Act

Agencies were required to provide data to the CPE on the use of Section 22(1)(d) of the PSM Act, namely where the Chief Executive or appropriate delegate has determined that merit based selection processes are not required for appointment to executive positions, non-executive ongoing or 1-5 year contract positions, under the PSM Act.

The most frequent use of Section 22(1)(d) is when an employee on a temporary contract has had their contract converted to either an ongoing or 1-5 year contract, which was used in 401 instances. Previously this involved a merit-based selection process.

Other uses of Section 22(1)(d), specified by agencies, indicate that the delegation is being used in line with its intended purpose, and no instances of abuse have been identified.

PERFORMANCE

Agencies have reported the revision and/or development of policies and procedures pertaining to Performance Management and Development, which encompasses the need to facilitate an annual performance management and development review for each employee.

The annual performance and development review conducted by managers reinforces the achievements and effectiveness of the previous year's agreed objectives and strategies. It also enables employees and their managers to link not only the employee's goals and expectations but also those of the agency.

The performance management and development process is being used by agencies as a tool to identify future leadership talent. It provides agencies the ability to highlight areas of strength and any potential shortcomings that the employee may have.

Efficient and effective Performance Management and Development enhances agencies ability to strategically focus on its workforce planning strategies. Agencies have reported an increase in the participation rate of employees in the performance management and development process.

There has also been a greater understanding by both managers and employees of their role and responsibilities in this process. Training has been provided by agencies, which has included capacity building, expectations including role clarification, effective feedback and the management of poor performance.

Agency Focus - DFEEST

- A whole of agency survey is completed every 2 years where specific questions are asked about performance management.
- The human resource management system has a new function to record performance management meetings. This will now be used to report quarterly on Performance Management activities.
- DFEEST has a performance management policy that requires all employees to participate in the process.
- Managers and employees sign a record sheet which records that Performance Management has occurred and reports are provided regularly to all managers.

Public Sector Week

In 2008 Public Sector Week was held between Saturday 15 November and Friday 21 November. The coordination was managed initially by the Public Sector Workforce Division and then the Office for

Ethical Standards and Professional Integrity. IPAA was contracted to provide administrative and event management services.

The objectives of Public Sector Week are to:

- provide an opportunity for the Premier and Ministers to acknowledge the value of public sector contributions.
- raise the profile of public services within the community by publically showcasing a diverse range of services, initiatives and innovations.
- use the focus on interesting public sector jobs to promote the public sector as an employer of choice.
- build pride and morale amongst public sector employees by recognising and rewarding excellence and innovation.

The four key strategies used to form the core of Public Sector Week activities in 2008 were:

- tours and displays
- building stronger cultures
- connecting with the community
- service innovation trials

Premier's Awards

The 2008 Premier's Awards held in November 2008 were closely aligned to the six objectives of South Australia's Strategic Plan, and recognised those who have provided innovation, improved the quality of services to customers, brought about lasting improvements, and built partnerships with people and groups in the wider community.

Since their inception in 2007, the Awards have continued to grow in status and popularity. Stage one of the 2009 Awards attracted a total of 77 Expressions of Interest from across the sector. The 2009 Premier's Awards – Showcasing Excellence in the Public Sector are again closely aligned to the six objectives of South Australia's Strategic Plan.

Customer Service

SASP Target 1.7 – Performance in the Public Sector – Customer and Client Satisfaction with Government Services

This target reinforces the drive by the government and its individual agencies to improve the experience of citizens in their dealings with government services. The specific aim of the target is to increase South Australian's satisfaction with government services by 10% by 2010.

The Office for Ethical Standards and Professional Integrity has lead responsibility for achieving this target, however, it is the collective efforts of all agencies that will ultimately lead to an improvement in South Australian's satisfaction with government services.

To measure the progress of the target, the SA public sector has adopted the 8 core questions of the Canadian Common Measurement Tool. These 8 core questions have been shown to be the key drivers of customer satisfaction. A follow up Household Survey, which also includes these core questions, was conducted by Cabinet Office in May 2009. The survey shows that South Australians continue to be highly satisfied with the services provided by the SA public sector, with 86.1% of South Australians expressing satisfaction with government services; this is an increase from the May 2008 result where 85.9% of South Australians expressed satisfaction with government services.

Public Sector Performance Commission

Since it commenced effective operations in July 2008, the Public Sector Performance Commission (PSPC) has led the development and implementation of key projects aimed at enhancing public sector performance.

The PSPC's purpose is to provide government with the building blocks of a high performing public sector through time-bound projects with clear objectives, aims and performance measures. It is guided and overseen by a Board, which is comprised of experts from the public and private sectors and higher education institutions. The PSPC reports to the Minister Assisting the Premier in Cabinet Business and Public Sector Management.

The PSPC's objectives align to the priorities enunciated by the Economic Development Board in its recent *Economic Statement: South Australia's Prospects for Growth*. The report anticipates South Australia will recover from the economic downturn faster than the rest of Australia. To take full advantage the public sector will need to perform to very high standards, rolling out infrastructure and building skills in a cost-effective and timely manner, negotiating effectively with the Commonwealth, and meeting the community's demands for quality services from within a constrained envelope of resources.

In late 2008 an Organisational Performance Survey of the State's public sector was undertaken by the PSPC. Results from the survey have informed the development of whole of government approaches to sustaining high performance and aligning resources with targets.

The survey found that there were many areas of good practice in the public sector that could be promoted and adopted, particularly if agencies had a common set of tools they could use to better align their efforts to their goals. To meet this need, the PSPC has commenced work to deliver important reforms, such as a cross-government High Performance Framework, for use by agencies as continuous improvement tool.

HEALTHY AND SAFE

Most agencies have developed a variety of measures to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of their employees and their families, these include free flu vaccinations, subsidies and sponsorship for employees to participate in the Corporate Cup, City to Bay, Global Corporate Challenge, Foxtel Lap, on site massage by a qualified masseuse and lunch-time Yoga sessions.

Employee Assistance Programs have been developed and promoted by Agencies. Employees have been encouraged to access the program if they are having work and or personal difficulties. Access to the program in most cases is by direct referral. The employee will contact the agreed provider and facilitate a mutually agreeable time to meet.

Work life balance has been actively promoted by agencies through the development and promotion of policies and procedures. Agencies have focused on creating a culture that actively encourages employees to balance their working and home life.

Agencies have reported that employees are utilising flexible working conditions as a means of achieving their work life balance. This initiative has presented some agencies with concerns regarding management acceptance. Management concerns have been over come by ensuring support and guidance is provided, whilst instilling the benefits to both the agency and the employee in having achieved a work life balance.

Agencies have established Departmental Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Committees (OHS&W) who have responsibility for the establishment and communication of policies and procedures pertaining to the safety and well being of all employees.

Local OHS&W committees have also been established in many individual work groups, their tasks have included the facilitation of ergonomic assessments, manual handling courses, first aid training and the identification and tagging of hazardous substances.

Many agencies have provided training/coaching to managers regarding the early identification of potential workplace stress and conflict management. The training is aimed at equipping managers with tools that provide a solid base for early intervention and resolution to employee work place concerns.

Agency Focus - DECS

- DECS online Psychological Health Training for Managers.
- Induction program for Leaders through SACLE and the Health and Safety Services Unit.
- Collaboration with key areas, staffing, leadership development, School Care, risk management, performance management, staffing, Student wellbeing.
- Strong psychological Health Sub-Committee of State Level 3 OHS committee

SA Public Sector Workplace Wellbeing Framework

The SA Public Sector Workplace Wellbeing Framework has been developed to promote public sector workforce practices that support workplace health and wellbeing and achieve improved workforce and business outcomes.

The Framework is intended to be a practical tool that will enable public sector agencies to determine their specific areas of focus and possible interventions within the context of their strategic human resource and operational frameworks.

Three key principles underpin the Wellbeing Framework and are essential to the achievement of workplace health and wellbeing. These are

- Mutual obligations of the employer and employee.
- Consultative and cooperative mechanisms
- Supportive workplaces offering practical support.

A key measure of accountability will be return to work outcomes and the reduction of psychological and physical injury claims and associated costs.

Agency Focus SAPOL

- Early Intervention Program has been implemented to provide immediate psychological services to all SAPOL employees in times of need. Most of the issues involve matters external to the policing environment however impact on their work environment. The program has resulted in a significant reduction in Workcover claims for psychological illness.
- Peer Support Pilot Program has commenced within the South Coast LSA to provide support amongst staff including PSM Act employees within that LSA. Results are being reported on to the Manager, Employee Assistance Section.
- Health & Well Being Project has just been completed and focuses on the general strategic direction of the provision of proactive health and well being service for all SAPOL staff. The next phase of implementation is about to commence.

Flexible Work Practices

South Australia has Australia's oldest and most rapidly ageing workforce and the South Australian public sector has an average age of 47 years, with some sectors averaging over 50 years. In addition, the South Australian labour market will experience a contraction of available staff over the next ten years due to the steady decline in the working age population. This will expose the public sector to significant competition for labour and a significant exit of experienced public servants over the next ten years.

Flexible work arrangements offer public sector managers an opportunity to utilise current arrangements to attract and retain staff. Despite a range of very attractive provisions available to employees and management, the take up of flexible work arrangements in the public sector remains low, concentrated on the utilisation of flexitime.

The revised South Australia Strategic Plan target released in January 2007 includes a new target T2.12 "Improve the quality of life of all South Australians through the maintenance of a healthy work life balance". SafeWork SA is the lead agency for the target and while the Work Life Balance Strategy (WLB Strategy) is targeted at the private sector, the Strategy has nevertheless established a Public Sector WLB Interest Group.

An onus exists for State Government employment practices to demonstrate best practice in the availability of flexible working arrangements and the trial and evaluation of work life balance initiatives. Initiatives introduced in the last twelve months have included long service leave provision to enable leave to be taken in single days and changes to superannuation, enabling older workers aged over 55 years to draw down on their superannuation under a transition to retirement contract, thereby reducing their working hours without a loss of income. There is a strong interest from public sector staff in further initiatives and while individual departments have announced some progressive initiatives their usage and evaluation remains patchy.

A number of individual government departments have been working with the WLB Strategy and the Centre for Work + Life at the University of South Australia, to survey staff needs with the use of the Australian Work and Life Index survey tool.

An examination of the reasons employees leave the public sector reveals that lack of flexible work arrangements and issues balancing work and family remain one of the top four reasons staff are leaving the public sector. Management training to implement flexible work arrangements and support for the reorganisation of work to facilitate their acceptance and utilisation remains an ongoing challenge for the public sector.