

Chapter 4

Our people

Our people

The AIHW has a highly expert and well-qualified workforce. Supporting this workforce is one of the strategic directions in the *AIHW Corporate Plan: strategic directions 2007–2010*: ‘Our people—valued, expert and versatile’.

Under this strategic direction the AIHW aims to:

- support and develop the capabilities of existing staff in meeting the AIHW’s strategic directions as well as the continuing demands of core business
- when recruiting, do more to publicise the broad range of expertise that the AIHW needs
- devise ways of complementing the expertise of staff—for example, by exchanges with universities and government agencies

- develop individual and collective flexibility in responding to the changing demands for information
- develop policies for retaining staff.

The AIHW’s People Unit plays an important internal support role toward this strategic direction. It provides human resource services such as workforce management, recruitment, learning and development, pay and conditions, and performance management. It also provides facilities services such as managing office accommodation and supplies, and occupational health and safety.

Staff profile

Staff numbers at 30 June 2010 were 372 (comprising 345.8 full-time equivalent staff) (Table 14). This is a significant increase on the 270 staff (238.4 full-time equivalent staff)

Table 14: Category of staff employment, 30 June 2009 and 30 June 2010

	All staff 2009	All staff 2010	Male staff 2010	Female staff 2010
Number of staff				
Ongoing				
Full-time	181	252	103	149
Part-time	45	69	15	54
Long-term leave	14	18	2	16
Non-ongoing				
Full-time	14	20	3	17
Part-time	16	11	4	7
Long-term leave	0	2	0	2
Total	270	372	127	245
Number of full-time equivalent staff				
Total	238.4	345.8	n.a.	n.a.

Notes

1. ‘Ongoing staff’ refers to staff employed on an ongoing basis by the AIHW, including staff on transfer from other Australian Public Service agencies.
2. ‘Non-ongoing staff’ refers to staff employed by the AIHW on contracts for specified terms and specified tasks.
3. In previous years’ annual reports the AIHW’s Director has been excluded from equivalent tables.

who were employed on 30 June 2009. This is associated with additional funding from the Australian Government and subsequent project work arising from 2009–10 budget outcomes.

About two-thirds of the AIHW's staff are female (245). The proportion of male to female staff increased from 31% to 34% during the year.

Just over 91% of staff are ongoing employees, a proportion that has changed little over the year (89% at 30 June 2009).

The AIHW has a high level of part-time employment, with 22% of staff—69 ongoing and 11 non-ongoing—being employed part time at 30 June 2010. This percentage has changed little since 30 June 2009 (23%).

More women are employed part time at the AIHW than men (61 women compared with 19 men, or 25% of female staff compared with 15% of male

staff at 30 June 2010). Eighteen women and two men were on long-term leave at 30 June 2010.

The most common levels of staff employment at the AIHW are Executive Level 1 (EL 1) with 125 staff (34% of total staff numbers) and Australian Public Service 6 (APS 6) level with 82 staff (22%) (Table 15).

Over the year, staff numbers increased for most classification levels, particularly for the APS 6 level (from 51 to 82, or 61%).

The relatively high proportion of females at the AIHW is less prominent for the EL 2. Slightly more than half the staff employed at these levels are female.

Of the 96% of all staff who responded to the 2009 staff survey, 86% hold tertiary qualifications or more (see 'Employee survey' on page 45).

Table 15: Level of staff employment, 30 June 2009 and 30 June 2010

	All staff 2009	All staff 2010	Male staff 2010	Female staff 2010
Number of staff				
Director (CEO)	1	1	0	1
SES Band 2	1	2 ^(a)	1	1 ^(a)
SES Band 1	6	9 ^(b)	3 ^(b)	6 ^(b)
EL 2	36	43	19	24
EL 1	91	125	40	85
APS 6	51	82	31	51
APS 5	41	61	21	40
APS 4	27	31	9	22
APS 3	10	13	2	11
APS 2	6	5	1	4
Total	270	372	127	245

(a) One female officer was on long-term leave.

(b) Two officers, one male and one female, were serving in short-term acting arrangements while Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 1 officers were on annual leave.

Notes

- Staff on higher duties are included at the level at which they are acting, reflecting the level of work being undertaken by employees at the time of reporting.
- In previous years' annual reports the AIHW Director has been excluded from equivalent tables.

Recruitment strategies

The AIHW continues to attract and retain talented staff by offering challenging and fulfilling work, competitive salaries, good work–life balance and a great work environment. The Working @ AIHW video available for public viewing on the AIHW’s website features staff promoting the benefits of working at the AIHW and is frequently the subject of positive feedback from applicants during selection processes. It has also been referenced in the Australian Public Service Commission’s ‘best practices’ recruitment literature in 2009, and in several press releases as an innovative strategy for recruitment, including one in Canada on employer branding in August 2009.

AIHW graduates

The AIHW continues to offer employment opportunities for graduates and postgraduates interested in health, housing and community services. Twenty-one new graduates were employed by the AIHW in the 2009–10 intake, 10 of whom relocated from interstate. All took up APS 4 positions. They have had the opportunity to participate in training organised by the Australian Public Service Commission and strategic project work in many areas of the AIHW, as well as in a variety of learning and

development opportunities specifically tailored for APS graduates.

Of the 12 graduates who were in the 2008–09 intake, 8 remain at the AIHW.

Sponsorship of overseas employees

In October 2009 the AIHW obtained approval from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to sponsor overseas employees. Under the sponsorship arrangements a French citizen has been employed on a non-ongoing contract, and the Canadian Institute for Health Information has been invited to nominate staff for temporary engagement at the AIHW. This provides an opportunity for the international sharing of expertise and best practice.

Occupational placements

In November 2009 the AIHW hosted a human resources practitioner from Papua New Guinea for 4 days. The participant was one of 12 high-level public servants selected from the Pacific Islands to come to Canberra for 2 weeks on an Australian Public Service Commission leadership program.

The AIHW also hosted a Samoan Ministry of Health staff member under an AusAID program (see the ‘snapshot’ below).

Australian Leadership Awards Fellowship

From 15 June to 9 July 2010, the AIHW hosted Mrs Sosefina Talauta-Tualaulelei from the Samoan Ministry of Health as part of the Australian Leadership Awards Fellowships program, funded by AusAID. The program is a global program designed to provide short-term opportunities for study, research and professional attachment programs in Australia delivered by Australian organisations. The program aims to develop leadership, look at regional issues, and build partnerships and linkages with developing countries.

Mrs Talauta-Tualaulelei’s 4-week program enabled her to learn about the different types of work carried out by the AIHW, as well as an in-depth understanding of the health economics aspects of the work. Visits were also arranged to the ABS and ACT Health to get a broader understanding of health information settings in Australia.



SNAPSHOT

Performance management

The AIHW's performance communication and feedback policy recognises the value to the organisation of formal assessment and constructive feedback. As well as providing ongoing feedback, all managers are required to have at least two formal communication and feedback sessions with their staff each year (in August and March). These sessions give managers the opportunity to discuss achievements, give formal feedback on performance, put work priorities in place, and identify learning and development needs. A very high level of participation was achieved during the August 2009 round, with over 96% of staff participating in formal discussions.

Employee survey

In October 2009 an employee survey was conducted by Hewitt's Best Employers in Australia and New Zealand to measure the attitudes of employees at the AIHW. Staff engagement was measured from the perspective of a range of drivers, including their intention to stay, motivation to strive, their perception of benefits and the AIHW's organisational brand. Sixty-nine per cent of all staff participated in the survey. Overall the results were positive, with two-thirds (67%) of those participating being assessed as 'engaged'. This compares with a national average in the Hewitt survey of 55%, which placed the AIHW in the 'high performance' range of Hewitt's Best Employers in Australia and New Zealand. The survey results and employee comments identified the potential for the AIHW to further increase the level of staff engagement by focusing on three key areas:

- communicating career opportunities
- improving performance management capabilities
- improving both the transparency of communication and communication about change.

All staff were invited to participate in facilitated focus groups to identify activities for improvement.

Workplace diversity

The AIHW continues to recognise and celebrate the diverse talents and experiences brought by its staff to the workplace. It does this by providing opportunities for flexible working arrangements, education and training in how to maintain a positive discrimination-free environment, and activities that increase awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Workplace behaviour

The AIHW launched its workplace behaviour policy in July 2009. The policy is based on the recognition that a positive work environment encourages innovation and creativity, helps reduce absenteeism and employee turnover, and makes the AIHW a great place to work. All new employees are provided with training and information on positive behaviour in the workplace, and existing staff have been given the opportunity to attend courses on maintaining a positive work environment, free of bullying and harassment.

Three additional workplace harassment contact officers were selected and trained during the year, bringing to five the number of harassment contact officers at the AIHW. They are from varying classification levels and AIHW locations, and represent both genders. They are available to provide confidential support to managers and staff on bullying and harassment issues.

Reconciliation Action Plan

The AIHW's Reconciliation Action Plan was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and launched in June 2009 to:

- enhance awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures at the AIHW
- shape policy and community debate by highlighting issues affecting Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander people through statistics and relevant advice

- develop and build capacity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in data and statistical areas.

The AIHW Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group met regularly during 2009–10 to ensure the implementation across the AIHW of actions outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan.

Three Indigenous cultural appreciation sessions were held for staff during 2009–10.

The AIHW continually explores ways to increase the number of Indigenous staff. One initiative during the year was the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander temporary employment register.

Over the last financial year, the AIHW's self-identified Indigenous staff rose from three to five (1.1% of the AIHW workforce). Of these, all of whom were women, two were recruited through the Australian Public Service Commission's Indigenous Cadetship Program. This program provides financial assistance to cadets while they are completing their tertiary studies and offers them a 12-week paid work placement during each academic year. At the end of their degree the cadets are guaranteed ongoing employment with the AIHW.

Commonwealth Disability Strategy

The AIHW recognises the importance of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy, and makes every effort to ensure that all its policies and procedures comply with the principles of the strategy. The AIHW is both an 'employer' and a 'service provider' under the Commonwealth Disability Strategy Performance Reporting Framework. The AIHW is not a 'policy advisor', 'regulator' or 'purchaser' under the framework.

As a service provider

The major focus of the AIHW is to provide information to other government departments and statutory agencies to help them in their development of policies and programs.

Information is also available to the community on the AIHW website and in printed publications.

During 2009–10 all the AIHW's publications since July 2008 were produced in accessible alternative versions in RTF. All new publications are now released simultaneously on the website in both PDF and RTF. The AIHW invites website visitors who have difficulty accessing information to seek individual assistance. Facilities and conferences managed by the AIHW comply with accessibility standards for people with disability, including those for wheelchair access, toilets and disabled parking.

Staff awards

Long service awards

During 2009–10 the AIHW recognised six staff for their long service with the AIHW (Table 16). This brings to 38 the number of existing staff members who, as at 30 June 2010, have celebrated 10 years or more service with the AIHW—just over 10% of the AIHW's total workforce.

Table 16: Staff long service awards, 2009–10

10 years' service	
Fadwa Al-Yaman	Peter Braun
Geoff Davis	Stirling Lewis
Gabriele Norman	Kristy Raitchel

Director's awards

During 2009–10 Director's awards were presented to nine staff members in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the AIHW (Table 17).

Table 17: Director's awards, 2009–10

Name	Unit
Kevin Bell	People Unit
Gail Brien	Ageing and Aged Care Unit
Charlie Drummond	Information Technology Services Unit
Michelle Gourley	Indigenous Data Gaps Unit
Moira Hewitt	Housing and Homelessness Integration Unit
Michael Paxton	Information and Communications Technology Operations Unit
Nicole Schroder	Mental Health Services Unit
Chris Stevenson	Information Services and Publishing Unit
Kun Zhao	Cancer and Screening Unit

Learning and development

The AIHW's Learning and Development Strategy 2008–2010, developed in consultation with the Learning and Development Advisory Committee, focuses on continually building staff's capabilities in:

- statistics, analytical and data management skills
- communications (with a focus on writing capability)
- project management and team work
- leadership and management.

In 2009–10 the AIHW continued to focus on leadership skills and the development of middle managers and supervisors by providing access to several of the in-house courses linked to the Australian Public Service Commission's Integrated Leadership System.

Learning and development achieved the highest satisfaction score in the 2009 staff survey, with 86% of staff responding positively to the learning and development opportunities available to them (see 'Employee survey' on page 45).

Part of the July 2010 pay rise was conditional on 90% of the staff who had worked at the AIHW from 1 June 2009 to 31 May 2010 participating in five learning and development activities (pro rata for part-time staff). This target, which was set by the Consultative Committee, was achieved, with 95% of eligible staff completing the required number of activities.

In-house courses

In-house courses were offered to staff during the year in the areas of communication, management and leadership, computing and other technical skills, and in a formal induction program for new staff (Table 18).

Table 18: In-house learning and development courses for staff, 2009–10

Course type	Occasions course offered	Occasions staff attended
Corporate induction (for new staff)	5	105
Communication	22	303
Management and leadership	26	343
Computing and other technical	24	404

Note: Some staff attended more than one course.

Examples of the courses offered included strategic thinking, stakeholder engagement, essentials for new team leaders, assessing leadership capability, medical terminology and coding, giving and receiving feedback, media and presentations, minute taking, project management, occupational health and safety, bullying and harassment awareness, and cultural awareness. Statistical and IT training—in SAS, Deltagraph, METeOR and Microsoft Excel—and writing workshops continued (see 'Building writing capacity' on page 32). SAS training is now being provided by an internal employee who is a SAS specialist with facilitation skills.

Induction courses were held to help new staff understand the AIHW's culture and business and, ultimately, to increase retention. These courses were held five times during the year, and were extended to 4 half-days. They now incorporate greater detail on APS practices as a whole (for example, code of conduct, values and ethics).

External study

The AIHW continues to provide assistance for staff members who wish to undertake external study to further develop their knowledge and skills through the AIHW's Studybank Program.

Seminars

Internal seminars for staff about statistical, research and other issues are held on a regular basis (see the 'snapshot' below).

Statistical consultancy panel

The AIHW's staff continue to use the expertise of the statistical consultancy panel established to help them with developing statistical methodology, working as part of a multidisciplinary team and participating in the development of new research projects.

One member of the panel, Professor Bruce Bacon, of the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling at the University of Canberra, was available at the AIHW on a regular part-time basis to help staff with statistical queries.

A statistical manual written for staff helps to support and improve the statistical skills available to the AIHW. The manual is updated by the Statistical and Analytical Methods Advisory Committee.

Ecologically sustainable development

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* identifies the following principles of ecologically sustainable development.

- Decision-making processes should effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations.
- If there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.

Privacy Awareness Week

Privacy is of the utmost importance to the AIHW. This was highlighted during Privacy Awareness Week, 2–8 May 2010.

An initiative of the Asia Pacific Privacy Authorities, this annual event is an opportunity for public and private sector organisations to promote awareness of privacy rules and practices among their staff and stakeholders.

The AIHW hosted a staff seminar titled 'Perspectives on privacy' during Privacy Awareness Week. Presented by the Information Governance Unit, this seminar focused on privacy laws of particular relevance to the AIHW, including proposals for reform.

The AIHW is committed to ensuring a balance between its confidentiality obligations and effective, accessible information sharing. Achieving these objectives is central to the *AIHW Corporate Plan: strategic directions 2007–2010*.



- The principle of inter-generational equity: the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.
- The conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision making.

- Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms should be promoted.

Section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* requires the AIHW to report on the following issues.

Ecologically sustainable development reporting

Legislation administered by the AIHW during 2009–10 accords with the principles of ecologically sustainable development

The AIHW does not administer legislation.

Outcome contribution to ecologically sustainable development

The functions of the AIHW are such that none of its activities contributing to its single outcome under Portfolio Budget Statements (see **Chapter 2 Our performance** on page 15) address the principles of, or had direct relevance to, ecologically sustainable development as described above.

The effect of the AIHW's activities on the environment

The AIHW's key environmental impacts relate to the consumption of energy and goods, and waste generated by staff in the course of business activities.

Measures taken to minimise the impact of activities on the environment

In accordance with the AIHW's commitment to protecting the environment, the AIHW has adopted a number of practices aimed at reducing the environmental impact of its day-to-day operations:

- a Green Group that meets on a quarterly basis to examine and advise on options to further reduce the AIHW's environmental impact
- environmentally friendly tips and information on the AIHW intranet
- provision of amenities for staff who ride bicycles to work
- use of energy-efficient lighting
- encouraging all staff to turn off computers when they go home
- participating in Earth Hour 2010
- water-saving devices in all showers (4) and toilets (37)
- recycling of toner cartridges, paper, ring binders and other relevant waste
- recycling bins in kitchens for co-mingled waste, and for organic waste (food scraps, bread and paper towels). The latter is fed to composting works and recycled into an organic fertiliser. During 2009–10, about 1,800 kilograms of organic kitchen waste were collected, compared with about 1,100 kilograms in 2008–09.

Mechanisms for reviewing and improving measures to minimise the impact of the AIHW on the environment

The AIHW strives to continually improve its environmental performance through the activities of its Green Group.

Occupational health and safety

The AIHW is committed to creating and maintaining an environment where all levels of management and staff cooperate to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. The Health and Safety Management Arrangements, developed in consultation with staff and agreed to by them, is the primary vehicle for developing and implementing strategies to achieve this aim. The AIHW Director is also helped in occupational health and safety matters by the Health and Safety Committee, comprising management and staff representatives.

Health and Safety Management Arrangements

The AIHW's Health and Safety Management Arrangements were launched in October 2008 after being developed in consultation with all levels of management and employees. The arrangements provide the framework within which the AIHW meets legislative requirements and integrates occupational health and safety systems into business activities. The arrangements also specify the responsibilities of the employer (the Director), senior managers, supervisors, other key roles (for example, health and safety representatives) and staff.

The arrangements are due for review in October 2010 (2 years from their start), although they are subject to ongoing review to reflect any changes to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991* or as may be required by other circumstances by agreement between the Director and employees. Resolution of a dispute during a consultation period for the variance of the arrangements will be in accordance with the AIHW's Collective Agreement 2008–2012.

The AIHW's Health and Safety Management Arrangements outlines the functions of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee. This committee met three times during 2009–10,

with its main focus being on ensuring that additional accommodation met occupational health and safety standards (see 'Accommodation management' on page 51) and that various issues were dealt with effectively and efficiently as they came to notice.

Occupational health and safety initiatives

Management systems

Improvements to internal occupational health and safety management systems were made during 2009–10. This included the adoption of workstation assessments for all new starters, which not only aimed to ensure employee comfort but also to identify any individual needs and maintain the low incidence of body-stressing injuries in the AIHW.

Workplace safety inspections

Four workplace safety inspections were undertaken by the People Unit during 2009–10 in all AIHW locations (see 'Accommodation management' on page 51). The AIHW's occupational health and safety practices and procedures were also formally covered in corporate induction sessions. Targeted training sessions were held throughout the year (two sessions for managers and two sessions for staff during 2009–10) as part of an ongoing program to reinforce the importance of occupational health and safety for new and existing staff, and contractors.

Employee assistance program

The AIHW continued to use Davidson Trahaire Corpsych to provide its Employee Assistance Program. The purpose of the program is to help managers, staff and their immediate families whose lives and work may be adversely affected by personal or work-related problems.

Occupational health and safety performance outcomes

There were no incidents requiring notice to be given under s. 68 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991*. The AIHW was not subject to any investigations during the year, and no directions were given under s. 45 or notices provided under ss. 29, 46 or 47 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991*.

Accommodation management

The number of staff increased significantly during the year, resulting in the leasing and fit out of 22 Thynne Street (Southlake building).

The AIHW operated from four locations in Canberra in 2009–10:

- 26 Thynne Street, Fern Hill Park, Bruce (main building)
- 28 Thynne Street, Fern Hill Park, Bruce (Trevor Pearcey House, Block A)
- 28 Thynne Street, Fern Hill Park, Bruce (Trevor Pearcey House, Block D)
- 22 Thynne Street, Fern Hill Park, Bruce (Southlake).

