

Information management and business services

The Information Management and Business Services Division supports the AIHW by providing a range of technical and administrative services fundamental to the Institute's program activities. The Division also provides a range of professional services for the management of the Institute's information technology, data and metadata resources.

Information technology

Internet e-mail

A decision was taken last financial year to proceed with desktop Internet e-mail provided it could be made to operate securely. This has now been implemented in close consultation with the Defence Signals Directorate (in order to ensure its security), with a high level of security being achieved.

Internet e-mail at the desktop has significantly enhanced the Institute's communication capability, and has proven to be beneficial and effective as both a data acquisition and a data and information dissemination mechanism. It brings the Institute more into line with its clients.

The Institute has successfully outsourced its computer help desk function, employing contractors to provide this service to staff. This strategy ensures that the skills of those providing the service are as current as possible. Similarly, the change to leasing desktop hardware has improved the Institute's ability to deal with technological change as well as providing the necessary capacity for incremental upgrading and expansion.

Information Technology Strategic Plan

The Institute is currently reviewing its Information Technology Strategic Plan and expects to have a new plan in place in the second half of 1999.

Corporate data management

The Data Management Unit provides a centralised resource of technical expertise for the management of large databases, and represents an important support service for the data collection and analysis areas of the AIHW. The Unit provides specialist support for the acquisition of data as well as its receipt, loading and validation, and ensures optimal availability of data for use in a structured analytical environment.

Unit staff make a major contribution to the analysis, design and development of an improved system to support the Institute's role as the national data collection agency for the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

To meet the requirements of the Board's information privacy and data security review and to ensure effective and efficient access to (and application of) information resources by both clients and staff, the Unit has planned and implemented an innovative data management and documentation system which establishes a comprehensive central corporate register of Institute data holdings. The system adds value to existing data resources by encouraging the efficient linkage of information on: data custodians; managers and users of data; the location, structure and form of data holdings; and details of data management and access rights.

Unit staff support the Institute's Internet site and Intranet, including the installation and management of the web server and the development of a range of applications that enable staff to access the Institute's information and technology resources more effectively.

National information development

The National Information Development Unit provides secretariat and technical support for the National Health Data Committee and the National Community Services Data Committee. The Unit, in conjunction with the National Health Data Committee, produced Version 8.0 of the *National Health Data Dictionary* encompassing 245 data definitions. Under the National Health Information Agreement, the *Dictionary* is the authoritative source of health data definitions where national consistency is required. While it continues to be issued as a printed publication, it is also available electronically—on the Knowledgebase, in downloadable form on the AIHW web site, and on compact disk.

Following the publication of Version 1 of the *National Community Services Data Dictionary* in June 1998, the National Community Services Information Management Group identified the ongoing development of the *Dictionary* as an essential task in the development of the National Community Services Information Agreement infrastructure. The Standing Committee of Community Service and Income Security Administrators (SCCSISA) awarded a contract to the AIHW to produce the second edition of the *National Community Services Data Dictionary*.

The Unit provides guidance on the use of the National Health Information Model and the National Community Services Information Model as a reference framework for health and community services data standards. It also maintains the content of the Institute's Knowledgebase, which provides integrated access to the health and community services data dictionaries and data models, as well as a significant register of Australian data collections in the health and welfare fields.

In July 1998, the National Information Development Unit's Head, Mr Joe Christensen, was appointed as editor of ISO/

IEC Standard 11179-3, Basic Attributes of Data Elements. This is a significant honour which recognises the Institute's leadership in data standards, and which will enable it to have a continuing influence in this arena.

Corporate communication

The AIHW's corporate communication activities comprise public affairs, marketing, and publishing. Editorial, desktop publishing and graphic design functions are largely outsourced.

Thirty-six public releases and special events were conducted during 1998–99, slightly more than in the previous year.

Sixty-seven publications were produced during the year, at an average page content of 105 pages. Publication sales through the Institute's major distribution channels—AusInfo's Government Info Shops and mail order service, and the ABS—increased by 25% compared with sales for the previous year. These publications are also available on the Institute's web site.

The Unit prepared an updated style guide for authors, and introduced a new project planning approach to publishing in the Institute to further enhance timeliness and efficiency in this area.

The Institute's redesigned Internet web site was launched during the year to accommodate the increasing sophistication of information services and facilities being made available on the Internet by the Institute, and to make the AIHW web site a more visible 'target' for Internet search engines. Development of the web site is continuing in line with the Institute's corporate communication strategy.

Library and document management

The Library holds a small but specialised collection of journals and monographs that support the work and mission of the AIHW. It maintains active relationships with other libraries and belongs to a national free inter-library-loan network, Gratisnet. In the past financial year, document delivery transactions have grown by 88% over those for the previous year. Desktop access to major bibliographic databases was implemented during the year, complemented by access to a wide range of other databases on demand via the Library. Reciprocal arrangements are in place with several other Canberra libraries, and exchanges of publications occur with a number of similar organisations overseas.

During 1998–99, the Librarian continued to manage the Institute's Intranet, which provides easy access to the organisation's corporate documents and policies.

A new records management system (TRIM) was implemented during the year, permitting enhanced networked access to the Institute's records. This is a first

step towards improved policies and standards for records management in line with government best practice procedures currently under development at the National Archives of Australia.

Human resources management

The AIHW's staffing levels increased quite significantly during the year, particularly in the contract employment category. Contributing to this increase was an exciting initiative to recruit seven highly skilled graduate analysts to enhance the Institute's reputation as a source of quality health and welfare information and statistics. At 30 June 1999, 164 people were employed at the Institute. During the course of the year, 229 people were employed for varying periods of time. Employment arrangements at 30 June were as follows:

- the Director was employed under the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*;
- 156 staff were employed under the *Public Service Act 1922*; and
- 7 were engaged through an employment agency or consultancy arrangements.

A breakdown of staff characteristics at 30 June 1999 is provided in Tables 1–3 and in Figure 1. 'Permanent staff' refers to staff employed permanently by the Institute, including inoperative staff. 'Temporary staff' refers to staff employed by the Institute either on transfer from another Australian Public Service employer, on either short or fixed term contracts under the *Public Service Act 1922*, or under a contract of service or on secondment from another organisation. For the purposes of Table 2, persons in the latter two categories above have been allocated an equivalent APS classification.

Table 1: Staff at 30 June 1999

Status	Female	Male	Total
Full-time permanent	46 (40)	44 (43)	90 (83)
Full-time temporary	24 (27)	20 (11)	44 (38)
Part-time permanent	15 (10)	1 (1)	16 (11)
Part-time temporary	13 (12)	1 (4)	14 (16)
Total	98 (89)	66 (59)	164 (148)

Note: Figures in brackets are at 30 June 1998.

Table 2: Institute staffing profile at 30 June 1999

Status	Female	Male	Total
Director	0 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)
Senior Executive Service Band 1	0 (0)	3 (3)	3 (3)
Executive Level 2	7 (7)	16 (15)	23 (22)
Executive Level 1	25 (24)	23 (24)	48 (48)
APS Level 6	25 (22)	6 (4)	31 (26)
APS Level 5	14 (14)	9 (7)	23 (21)
APS Level 4	9 (8)	6 (4)	15 (12)
APS Level 3	5 (7)	2 (1)	7 (8)
APS Level 2	13 (7)	0 (0)	13 (7)
Total	98 (89)	66 (59)	164 (148)

Note: Figures in brackets are for 1997–98.

Table 3: Staff movements during 1998–99

Status	In	Out	Total
1 July 1998	148		148
Appointments	9		9
Promotions/transfers	10	(4)	6
Contracts (incl. temporary transfer)	62	(58)	4
Retirements		0	0
Resignations		(3)	(3)
30 June 1999	229	(65)	164

Note: Figures in brackets are negative numbers.

AIHW Certified Agreement 1998–2000

The AIHW's inaugural enterprise bargaining agreement under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* was certified by Commissioner Deegan on 21 October 1998. The Agreement was the culmination of a significant period of relatively harmonious and cooperative consultation and negotiation between the Institute, its employees and the Community and Public Sector Union.

The Agreement, covering the period 1 July 1998 to 30 June 2000, delivers two 3% pay increases phased over two years. All Institute employees, other than the SES, are covered by the Agreement. The Agreement has been designed to enhance flexibility in work practices and cooperation in the workplace, with an emphasis on initiatives designed to assist employees with family responsibilities. It also contains strategies which will build on, and effectively utilise, employees' skills and expertise, and delivers continuous improvement initiatives and savings through the streamlining of allowances (particularly travel allowances), and leave arrangements. Implementation of

the Agreement was continuing at the end of the reporting period.

During the reporting period, each of the Institute's SES officers signed Australian Workplace Agreements, which were subsequently approved by the Employment Advocate.

Workplace Diversity Program

During 1998-99, the Institute implemented its inaugural Workplace Diversity Program, 'Enhancing Workplace Diversity – The AIHW's Workplace Diversity Program 1998-2000'. The program contains strategies which aim to enhance the Institute's existing workplace diversity and to promote a flexible working environment which allows staff to balance responsibilities both within and outside of the workplace.

Throughout the reporting period, the Institute delivered on a number of key strategies. All staff were provided with training in diversity principles by way of an internal half-day seminar. Diversity was also incorporated into other training initiatives conducted during the year, namely 'People Management and Negotiation' (for senior officers) and 'Giving and Receiving Feedback' (participation of all staff). Certified Agreement initiatives aimed at enhancing flexibility for employees with family responsibilities were implemented, and the Institute's recruitment processes were reviewed and improved. More effective Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) recording mechanisms were developed, and a review of the Institute's EEO profile was undertaken in April.

The Institute is continuing to attract a diverse range of staff from EEO groups. A breakdown of the various equal employment opportunity groups within the Institute, is shown at Appendix 7 (page 116).

Participative management arrangements

The AIHW has a consultative and collaborative management style. The staff Board member provides direct input to, and feedback from, Board meetings. Regular and ad hoc staff consultative meetings are held with senior management on matters of importance. Such meetings are held on an Institute-wide basis, as well as at division and unit levels.

Formal staff consultation throughout 1998-99 focused mainly on the Certified Agreement and its implementation. Staff meetings were held periodically throughout the negotiation phase of the Agreement to update staff on progress and gain feedback on proposed initiatives. During the implementation of the Agreement, employees were advised of changes and developments through seminars and written instructions. Staff have also been consulted on, and have participated in, the

development of policy initiatives arising out of the Agreement's implementation.

The Institute's Joint Consultative Council (JCC) met in February. At the meeting management tabled a proposal to establish a tripartite consultative committee for the Institute. The Institute was still negotiating this proposal with the CPSU at the end of the reporting period.

Learning and development

The AIHW implemented the second phase of a management training program for its senior officers during the reporting year. Phase 2 involved a three-day 'People Management and Negotiation Skills' workshop and a series of internally delivered seminars on Institute processes and practices. Executive Level 1 and 2 officers attended, with evaluations indicating the programs were highly successful.

The Institute also arranged for all its staff to attend a one-day workshop on giving and receiving feedback. This workshop focused on providing attendees with practical skills and knowledge that they could apply in the workplace to facilitate regular ongoing informal feedback, and improve formal performance feedback and assessment sessions.

During the reporting year, the Training Coordination Committee facilitated a training needs analysis conducted at unit level. Unit Heads and their employees completed a questionnaire designed by the Committee to assess any skills gaps on a range of generic indicators. These analyses were then used to develop Unit Plans for training and development and were being used by the Committee at the time of reporting to recommend corporate training priorities.

Occupational health and safety

The AIHW maintained its good health and safety record throughout the reporting year.

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee met on three occasions throughout the reporting period to consider and assess policy initiatives and proposals related to health and safety. Members of the committee also undertook regular health and safety inspections of the building with the Institute's Site Services Officer.

The services of occupational health and safety officers from the Department of Health and Aged Care were sought to assess the workstations of new and existing employees who were experiencing discomfort with their workstation set-up. Regular presentations on ergonomics were also delivered to all staff.

Fire wardens also received periodic training throughout the reporting period. Improved arrangements were

instituted for building evacuation after hours (when regular fire wardens may not be present).

The Institute extended its contract with EASACT Davidson and Trahaire (EASACT) for the delivery of an Employee Assistance Program.

Financial and asset management

Internal audit services

The AIHW engaged the services of Bird Cameron Partners to provide internal audit services. The Internal Audit Plan flows from an Internal Audit Strategic Plan which identified activities of the Institute and prioritised these in accordance with the overall risk to the Institute. The internal audit activity undertaken for the financial year ending 30 June 1999 has been the Review of Costing Methodology in relation to external projects.

Fraud control policy

The AIHW's Fraud Control Plan and Guidelines were implemented during the year.

Financial resource management

The AIHW's audited 1998-99 Financial Statement is at Appendix 1 (page 53). The Institute is funded to undertake its activities from a number of sources. A funding summary for the financial year is shown at Table 4.

Core funding is appropriated through the Federal Budget and minor revenue is received for Institute activities. Other revenue is external funding received to fund activities on projects carried out either jointly or on behalf of Commonwealth or State Governments, or other organisations. Contract revenue totalled \$8.550 million in 1998-99. Charging levels reflect actual Institute costs.

Funding from government appropriation decreased by \$45,000. The 1998-99 budget appropriation for core activities is shown at Table 5.

Table 4: Funding summary, 1998-99

Revenue	1998-99	1997-98
	\$'000	
Core funding		
Appropriation	7,703	7,748
Interest and other	358	400
Resources received free of charge	162	160
<i>Subtotal</i>	8,223	8,308
External funding		
Contract income and research grants	8,550	6,556
Total funds	16,773	14,864

Table 5: Budget supplementation for core activities 1998–99

Core funding	Amounts	
	\$'000	
Appropriation 1997–98		7,748
Less		
Savings whole of government telecommunications	3	
Efficiency dividend	77	
Adjustment for superannuation supplementation	62	
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>142</i>
Plus		
Superannuation guarantee supplementation	7	
Rebasing adjustments	90	
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>97</i>
Appropriation 1998–99		7,703

Performance assessment against portfolio budget indicators and targets

Priority outcomes

1. Improved information on health and community services available to the community and for decision making at all levels.
2. National approach to the development and production of national health and community services information.
3. A nationally cooperative approach to identification of community services information development needs and priorities.

Indicator	Target	Outcome	Notes
Publication of the <i>National Health Data Dictionary</i> , Version 8 (Priority outcomes 1 and 2)	March 1999	Version 8 of the <i>National Health Data Dictionary</i> was published in May 1999	
Publication of the <i>National Community Services Data Dictionary</i> , Version 2 (Priority outcomes 1, 2 and 3)	March 1999	Development delayed by funding arrangements. Version 2 due to be published in April 2000.	