



Australian Government
Productivity Commission

Workplace Diversity Program 2013 -2015

Personnel Policy

File Ref: File No 03/140

Date of Effect :27 June 2013

Workplace Diversity Program

1 Introduction

- 1.1** The Productivity Commission is committed to building and maintaining a workplace culture that values and serves people with different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.

2 Principles

- 2.1** The following principles underpin the Productivity Commission's Workplace Diversity Program:

- ensuring the Commission's independence, impartiality and integrity
- taking account of the interests of the community as a whole
- expecting, promoting and enforcing a high standard of ethical behaviour, conduct and performance by all employees
- encouraging diversity of thought and respect for the views of all who contribute to the Commission's work, both inside and outside the Commission
- supporting working cooperatively, with courtesy and reliability in our dealings with each other and with those in the community
- providing flexible working arrangements that support work / life balance and assist employees to manage their different roles in and stages of life
- striving for excellence by continuously improving every aspect of the Commission's work.

3 Elements

- 3.1** The following elements have a specific focus in the Productivity Commission's Workplace Diversity Program:

- Part One: Disability Employment Strategy
- Part Two: Indigenous Employment Strategy

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Australian legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and/or gender, marital status, pregnancy, age and disability.

4.2 The concept of an inclusive workplace culture requires all employees to behave in a way that is consistent with creating and sustaining an environment where everyone feels valued and is able to work free from discrimination and harassment. Under the *Public Service Act 1999*, the agency head must establish workplace diversity programs to assist in giving effect to the APS values. The Chairman of the Productivity Commission and the senior officers of the Commission take this responsibility very seriously and are committed to ensuring the Commission encourages and recognises diversity.

4.3 The Australian Government requires all its departments and agencies to ensure access and equity in the provision of Government services to the people of Australia.

4.4 Within the Commission, there are specifically designated employees with particular responsibilities to provide information, assistance and support to enable the Commission to meet these objectives:

- Workplace Diversity Co-ordinator: an officer in the HR unit responsible for information dissemination, education, reporting
- Director of Human Resources: responsible for facilitating sound human resource management and practice throughout the Commission
- Senior Executive Responsible for Workplace Diversity (SERWD): the Assistant Commissioner Corporate Services Branch responsible for driving the diversity agenda and issue management
- Harassment Contact Officers (HCOs): the Commission will ensure that trained HCOs are available in each office as a non-management avenue for raising issues of concern.

4.3 We will continue measures to promote diversity principles in the workplace by:

- making this document available to all employees
- maintaining and updating Australian Public Service employment data base to enable factually based reporting on the various performance measures
- promoting diversity at appropriate opportunities (such as the Chairman's staff meetings, Staff News, Carer's week, Scope's 'See the person' September, and specific training and information sessions such as provided by *Beyond Blue*)

-
- ensuring the Commission's *Enterprise Agreement* and associated policies promote diversity by providing flexible working arrangements (e.g. for mature age employees), and other employee welfare principles
 - adopting measures to enable an appropriate gender balance, including in the leadership group
 - ensuring relevant statistical data is collected on diversity as part of our workforce planning process
 - ensuring the merit principle (assessment on the basis of skill, knowledge and ability) is applied in all selection and advancement actions
 - providing all exiting employees with the opportunity to complete an anonymous exit survey and reporting to Management Committee on any diversity issues identified
 - accessing networking opportunities with other agencies and organisations on diversity matters.

5 Monitoring and Reporting

5.1 The SERWD and Workplace Diversity Coordinator will provide:

- six monthly reports on the progress of this plan to the Management Committee
- input into the Australian Public Service Commissioner's *State of the Service Report*
- material for inclusion in the Productivity Commission's Annual Report.
- all other reporting as required by the Government.

5.2 The effectiveness of this plan will be reviewed by 31 December 2015, and an updated version put in place.

6 Further Information

6.1 This document is available electronically to all employees on PCNet/Employment Conditions/Personnel Policy and Procedures/Diversity, and the Agency Multicultural Plan, and Agency Plan for Access for Citizens with Disability, are available externally www.pc.gov.au. For further information, contact the Diversity Co-ordinator in on 03 9653 2348.

Part One: Disability Employment Strategy

1 Introduction

1.1 The Productivity Commission's Disability Employment Strategy 2012-15 (DES) sets out the Commission's commitment and approach to addressing awareness and access issues to the Commission's work by people with disability, and the Commission's commitment to providing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

1.2 For the purposes of this Strategy and associated action plans, section 4 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* defines disability in relation to a person to mean:

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental [functions](#); or
- total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour.

And includes a [disability](#) that:

- presently exists; or
- previously existed but no longer exists; or
- may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that [disability](#)); or
- is imputed to a person. [ss. 4 (1c) (a)-(k)]

2 National Disability Strategy (NDS) and *As One*

2.1 The NDS was launched by the Australian Government in February 2011. The NDS sets out the expectations of the Australian Government in relation to the accessibility of all its services to all Australians, and outlines specific requirements in relation to Australians with disability.

2.2 The Commission's commitment to ensuring Australians with disability have equitable access to its processes and its work is set out in its *Agency Access Disability Plan*.

2.3 A key policy objective of the NDS is to improve the workforce participation of people with a disability across Australia. In 2012, the Australian Public Service Commission

responded to the NDS with *As One*, the APS-wide disability employment strategy that aims to ensure a consistent approach to improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities is adopted in APS agencies.

2.4 *As One* sets out the following broad principles which agencies are to address:

- improve the accountability and commitment of APS leaders to improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- increase agency demand for candidates with disability
- improve recruitment practices to enable more candidates with a disability to enter the APS
- foster inclusive cultures that support and encourage employees with a disability

3 Governance

3.1 The Commission's progress with its employment actions under the DES shall be reviewed and discussed by Management Committee on a six monthly basis.

3.2 The First Assistant Commissioner of each office will monitor the processes of selection panels to ensure panel chairs are aware of and progressing the DES principles.

3.3 When diversity information and training sessions are held, management will set an example to staff by prioritising their own attendance and the attendance of the staff they supervise.

4 Increasing recruitment of staff with disability

4.1 Managers will examine the potential for positions to be filled by people with disability when considering advertising a position. Where appropriate, a disability employment provider will be engaged to assist with obtaining suitable applicants with disability for an identified position.

4.2 Employment opportunities within the Commission will be advertised in accessible formats (i.e. selection documentation is available in a range of formats as required).

4.3 Where applicants with a disability apply and have been assessed as meeting the minimum requirements for selection, they will be considered for interview.

4.4 HR advice to selection panels will include advice on reasonable adjustment for people with disability.

4.5 The physical arrangements for effective interview for people with disability will be facilitated as much as possible.

4.6 Funding will be provided from the central HR budget for reasonable adjustment to work areas and equipment to enable employees with disability to perform their duties.

5 Retention of staff with disability

- 5.1** Equipment and a suitable working environment will be provided for employees with disabilities.
- 5.2** Appropriate procedures will be in place for mobility, hearing or sight impaired staff requiring consideration in emergency situations.
- 5.3** Health and Safety Management Arrangements and guidelines will reflect the needs of people having disabilities.
- 5.4** The Commission will adopt appropriate procurement procedures and guidelines that reflect the needs of people having disabilities.

Part Two: Indigenous Employment Strategy

1 Introduction

- 1.2 The Productivity Commission's Indigenous Employment Strategy 2010-15 (IES) sets out the Commission's commitment and approach to providing employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

Productivity Commission Indigenous Employment Strategy 2010 - 2015			
<i>All actions to be monitored through six-monthly progress reports to Management Committee.</i>			
Focus area: Attraction and Recruitment			
Action	Target date	Responsibility	Rationale
Recruitment panels and Managers to be made aware of APS target relating to number of Indigenous employees (2.7% of total staffing).	Ongoing	Senior Executives and HR Unit	To increase the number of Indigenous staff in the Commission.
Commission to participate annually in central APS programs for Indigenous graduate recruitment and cadetships.	Ongoing	HR Unit & Senior Executive Social Infrastructure Branch	To increase the number of Indigenous staff in the Commission.
The tag "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply" to appear in relevant job advertisements. Relevant positions to be advertised in Indigenous media e.g. Koori Times. Selection documentation to include advice to applicants on how to address selection criteria.	Ongoing	HR Unit	To make recruitment practices in relation to Indigenous employees more effective.

Productivity Commission Indigenous Employment Strategy 2010 - 2015

Focus area: Retention

Action	Target date	Responsibility	Rationale
<p>Enterprise agreement to provide for flexible work practices and participation in cultural activities.</p> <p>Managers responsible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be made aware of possible cultural needs in utilisation of such provisions.</p>	Ongoing	HR Unit	To ensure Indigenous employees receive adequate support.
<p>Ensure Indigenous staff receive an induction.</p> <p>Ensure Indigenous staff participate in performance appraisal and have a learning plan.</p> <p>Provide for mentoring of new Indigenous employees.</p>	Ongoing	HR Unit	To improve employee engagement for Indigenous employees.
<p>Facilitate development opportunities for Indigenous APS staff through both providing opportunities for Commission Indigenous staff to have secondments / temporary transfers to other agencies and organisations, and to accept indigenous staff from other agencies and organisations seeking a short-term placement at the Commission.</p>	Ongoing	HR unit and all managers	To improve career prospects for Indigenous employees.
<p>Encourage Indigenous employees to participate in staff networks such as IAPSEN meetings. Information to be made available on PCNet (intranet).</p>	Ongoing	All managers.	To encourage Indigenous staff to support each other.

Focus Area: Workplace Environment

Action	Target date	Responsibility	Rationale
<p>Consider Indigenous themes in fitout design for office meeting areas.</p>	Complete	Corporate Services	Recognition and awareness of Indigenous culture.