



The summary of key opportunities for improvement in the State Service is:

The areas identified here for improvement are very similar to those identified in recent public sector surveys in other States and Territories. Nevertheless, the results suggest there are opportunities for improvement in the following areas:

- Roughly half of the employees that responded showed uncertainty or disagreement that employment decisions were based primarily on merit. While many employees believed recruitment and selection decisions were fair, a similar number of employees showed less confidence in these processes believing that favouritism was a factor in such decisions. Some employees showed a lack of confidence in the people who serve on selection panels.
- A small majority of employees showed uncertainty or disagreement regarding grievance and internal dispute resolution processes. While most employees agreed grievance and dispute resolution processes were in place, and reported feeling comfortable approaching their manager or supervisor to discuss a grievance, only a minority of employees felt confidence in these processes and that they would not suffer any negative consequences if they lodged a grievance.
- Two of the lowest scoring areas of the Survey were associated with managing performance. Employees showed their lowest level of confidence in the way their managers handle employees who are performing poorly. A similarly small number of employees showed confidence that good performance is sufficiently recognised.
- The majority of employees showed support for the quality of leadership within their workplaces. Nevertheless, a substantial number of employees expressed a lack of confidence regarding leadership quality and the way change is managed.

- While the majority of employees reported being satisfied with their workload and not being overly stressed, a large minority of employees indicated dissatisfaction with their workload and stress. On a related theme, a similarly small majority of employees reported being satisfied with the level of their work-life balance.
- While most employees reported their workplaces as being free of bullying, a significant number of employees disagreed.

Next Steps

- The first priority is to make the Survey results available to Agency Heads, senior managers, employees, unions and other stakeholders.
- The Commissioner has met with individual Agency Heads to talk over Agency specific issues.
- Agencies will be asked to involve senior managers in developing action plans to address specific issues.
- Another State Service employee survey will be conducted in approximately two years time, using this Survey as a benchmark.

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Summary of Findings Tasmanian State Service Employee Survey Report 2005



Conducted by:
The Tasmanian State Service Commissioner



Commissioner's Message

In releasing this summary of findings for my inaugural Tasmanian State Service Employee Survey 2005 (the Survey), I would like to thank employees for their participation, together with all Agency Heads, Agency Coordinators and Unions for their assistance with the survey.

The Survey was designed to give all State Service employees the opportunity to express their views about whether work culture and practices within their workplace reflect the requirements of the State Service Principles.

As Commissioner, I regard this as one facet of my statutory obligation to evaluate management practices, procedures and standards in relation to management of, and employment in the State Service. It also enables me to understand, from an employee perspective, how well the State Service Principles are being upheld. Regular evaluation of this type is after all, a standard part of good modern management practice.

I would encourage all State Service employees to look at the summary of findings contained in this brochure.

Paper copies of the full Survey report can be viewed at Agency Human Resource Branches or at the Office of the State Service Commissioner, Level 2/144 Macquarie Street, Hobart TAS 7000. An electronic copy of the full report is also available on my website at: www.osscc.tas.gov.au

Robert Watling
STATE SERVICE COMMISSIONER

Background

The *State Service Act 2000* (the Act) came into effect on 1 May 2001, giving Agencies more flexibility in organising work practices as well as encouraging modern management practices in the workplace.

Principles and a Code of Conduct were incorporated into the Act, designed to ensure the effective management of workplaces, and that opportunities provided for employees were based on equity and fairness. Their inclusion was also intended to ensure that the delivery of services were of a high standard to both Government and the community.

Since the introduction of the Act, all Agencies have initiated and introduced a significant number of policies, procedures, standards and systems. It was envisaged that employee views obtained through the Survey would assist Agencies to determine how well these initiatives have been communicated to employees and offer an insight into their effectiveness.

The Survey report results represent employee views across all Agencies and Authorities in the Tasmanian State Service.

Summary of Findings

In discussing some of the results in the report, an effort has been made to compare the results from the Survey with results from other organisations. Overall, the results in the Survey report are similar to, and in some areas better than, results from large-scale surveys of other public and private sector organisations.

Some caution is needed when interpreting these results. The primary score that is used to report employees' confidence in the application of the Principles is the percentage of the employees who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements regarding the Principles.

It must be emphasised that the results obtained through this Survey are the perceptions of employees and not findings of fact.

The summary of key positive findings for the State Service is:

- The highest scoring statements in the Survey were those associated with community service and fairness. Specifically, employees showed strong agreement that confidentiality is taken seriously in their workplace, and there was also strong belief that employees are committed to providing excellent customer service, behave ethically, professionally and fairly, and do not abuse their authority or position.
- Employees showed strong agreement that job vacancies within their workplaces are advertised publicly and that people outside of the State Service have a reasonable opportunity to apply for advertised jobs.
- A large majority of employees believed that cultural background, gender, sexual orientation and age are not barriers to success in their workplaces. Similarly, most employees believed their workplaces are free of sexual harassment.
- There was extensive support for the level of commitment to safety within the State Service. Employees believe that their managers and supervisors encourage them to report health and safety risks. There was also a high level of agreement that employees display good safety awareness.
- Finally, employees reported a good understanding of the priorities of their organisation and what their workplace needs to achieve.