

Active Ageing in the Tasmanian State Service

Project Summary

WHY?

The Tasmanian State Service (TSS) workforce is ageing, similar to the Tasmanian population. Over 42 per cent of the TSS is aged 50 years or over.

We needed to obtain information to support the ongoing development of an appropriate employment framework that provides for supportive policies and practices for an age diverse workforce.

SSMO would like to thank the people who participated in this project and the agencies who provided their support for the project.

WHAT?

The Project had three stages:

1. An online survey (for employees/officers 50 years of age and over (March 2018))
2. Voluntary participation in a follow-up interview from the survey (May/June 2018)
3. An analysis of the findings from stages 1 and 2.

WHO?

- 1,433 people working across many different occupations completed the online survey.
- One-third of survey participants indicated that they would like to participate in a follow-up interview.
- 106 people participated in the telephone interview stage.

THE FINDINGS

We found out many things during the course of the Project including that people enjoyed taking part in the survey/interviews – and being able to have a voice about the matters that are important to their work and life. We found out that participants:

- are passionate about the work they do
- take great pride in their work and having work that utilises their skills and knowledge
- value serving the Tasmanian community
- enjoy working in great teams
- have a mix of planned and yet to be planned retirement intentions
- hold different perceptions about their training and development needs and are keen to continue to develop their knowledge and skills
- appreciate having the ability to work flexible hours (where applicable) and how this contributes to their work/life balance and wellbeing
- would like to have the ability to increase or decrease their hours of work to meet their individual needs
- acknowledge the value of health and wellbeing programs and would like more 'age-specific' activities to assist them
- that positive aspects such as health and wellbeing activities need to be made available across all work sites
- have/or would like to receive recognition and acknowledgement for the work they do
- would like to have information easily available to them regarding retirement options including pre and post retirement employment options, flexible work arrangements or transition information including career transition, health and wellbeing, and superannuation (in plain speak) so that they can make informed decisions
- acknowledge the positive roles of mentoring/coaching and reverse mentoring
- hold varied perceptions that they are treated differently because of their age (negative attitudes of others or perceptions e.g. that they should conform to out-dated stereotypical views about reaching an older age and being expected to leave their employment, or that they are not interested in training).

NEXT STEPS

The Project was undertaken to support the TSS Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Framework. The great information we received during the project covers across a wide range of employment/workforce policies and practices. Some information is specific to occupations where ageing needs to be considered from a supportive work health and safety perspective. Other matters such as the provision of information about flexible work arrangement, retirement planning or transition options apply across the service.

SSMO will work with agencies (involving network/groups that support Diversity and Inclusion, Workplace Relations, Learning and Development and Health Safety and Wellbeing) regarding the project findings. Having positive workplace cultures is also important and future work will also focus on this.

The information gathered is real and relevant for all age groups. We will continue to develop appropriate support and guidance for all employees and officers to help them to remain engaged and positive about their work and their health and wellbeing.