



INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE TASMANIAN STATE SERVICE

JULY 2021

FACT SHEET 4 WORKFORCE

The Tasmanian State Service Review (TSSR) Final Report made 77 recommendations across 5 domains:

- principles and values
- leadership
- capability
- workforce
- service delivery.

This fact sheet provides summary information regarding the directions and recommendations for the workforce in the Tasmanian State Service.

What should we strive for?

The TSS attracts, retains and develops the best people to work in the State Service.

Capability is built across the service, with a focus on professional communities and shared learning and development. Recruitment is through a mix of processes designed to best meet the needs of the service as a whole and each agency. Targeted recruitment to vacancies is still used where required, but increasingly individuals are recruited through individual and/ or group recruitment processes that target priority capabilities and encourage diversity.

The service is more diverse, better representing the community that it serves both in terms of demography and geography. Employment is flexible (wherever possible) with more positions being supported from a network of office hubs throughout the State, enhancing business outcomes, lifestyle choices and regional economies.

All state servants are inspired, empowered and supported to achieve great results. Roles and responsibilities are clear, but the workforce is more agile, rapidly adapting to the changing priorities of the government and the Tasmanian community.

People take on roles that are well suited to their capabilities, are supported to identify areas for development and have access to training where required. Separations are able to be used judiciously to make sure that the right people are in the right jobs at the right time.

Where are we now?

The employment framework is too heavily focused on process and procedure with many operational decisions made too close to the centre. A shift towards a more flexible, less prescriptive employment framework would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes for recruiting, supporting and, if required, separating state service employees.

Workforce planning is patchy, with very limited whole-of-service planning. This limits the ability of the service to focus on whole-of-service capability building in priority areas or taking actions to address ongoing workforce issues such as ageing and diversity.

Recruitment activity is too heavily biased towards filling specific and narrowly defined vacancies, as opposed to building capability. This reduces the efficiency of recruitment processes and limits the capacity of the service to build communities of professional practice. It also promotes competition between and within agencies for scarce resources and limits the range of tools available for driving diversification of the workforce.

There is room for improved coordination and delivery of professional development through an increased focus on a common understanding of capability. Talent management – or the management of succession in key leadership roles across the service – is a gap.

Like other State public services, employment in the State Service is concentrated in the capital city. COVID-19 has fuelled increased adoption and acceptance of tools for flexible working which could be used to drive greater regionalisation of the service.

What do we need to do?

The Review makes a number of recommendations to:

- delegate all operational employment decisions to heads of agency and increase accountability for decision-making
- rewrite employment directions to be standards-based directions with supporting guides and policies
- undertake workforce planning across all agencies and at a whole-of-service level
- develop a whole-of-service capability framework for the TSS and use it as the foundation for increased capability development and more effective performance management
- increase the efficiency of recruitment through the increased use of group recruitment
- develop and promote communities of professional practice across the TSS
- promote increased mobility in the TSS
- promote and manage flexible working arrangements, including increasing consistency and facilitating regional employment.

The recommendations

Recommendation 34

That the Department of Health continue to develop the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) to provide the foundation for a whole-of-government system, with clear whole-of-government business requirements for accurate and timely reporting to heads of agency, the Head of the State Service, the Employer and Parliament.

Recommendation 35

That operational employment-related decisions be delegated to heads of agency unless centralised decision-making can be justified in terms of high risk to the government or the service. That the Head of the State Service provide advice to the Employer on decisions that should be made centrally and the risks that this approach is seeking to manage.

That the Head of the State Service develop and implement a reporting framework to ensure that heads of agency are accountable for complying with directions and policies established by the Employer.

Recommendation 36

Complete and implement a review of the capability and role of the State Service Management Office as a priority.

Recommendation 37

That the Employer progressively revoke all superfluous employment directions with necessary material translated into TSS practice guides or other suitable instruments.

That the SSMO, in consultation with state government agencies, rewrite remaining employment directions as standards- based directions, with increased flexibility for agency decision-making and process design.

Recommendation 38

That the TSS develop a whole-of-government framework for recording, reporting and analysing workforce data to inform workforce planning.

Recommendation 39

That all state government agencies ensure they have workforce plans in place by the start of 2023, which will be refreshed every 12 months thereafter and reviewed every 3 years.

Recommendation 40 (adapted from Interim Report Recommendation 9)

Develop centrally a whole-of-TSS workforce plan by the end of 2023 that targets identified workforce challenges and supports whole-of-government priorities. Whole-of-service workforce plans should be refreshed every 12 months and renewed every 3 years.

Recommendation 41 (Interim Report Recommendation 10)

Increase the number of placements available in the graduate, cadet and traineeship programs to create more employment opportunities for young people in the TSS.

Recommendation 42

That the SSMO work with agencies to develop and facilitate a consistent approach to group recruitment, allowing for the appointment of suitable candidates over time to positions in the TSS.

Recommendation 43

Amend the State Service Act 2000 to include the power to make, in regulations, the timeframe for an employee to notify their intention to apply for a review under section 50(1) of the Act.

Make a regulation prescribing a timeframe for lodging a notice of intention to seek a selection review.

Recommendation 44

Split the current Statement of Duties for TSS employees into a Statement of Classification and a Statement of Duties.

Recommendation 45

That the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Treasury and Finance develop options for reducing the impact of establishment controls on the efficient recruitment to positions in the TSS.

Recommendation 46

That the Head of the State Service and heads of agency develop a standard approach to the management of fixed-term transfers across the TSS.

Recommendation 47

That the SSMO work with human resource directors or equivalents from all agencies to develop communities of professional practice across the TSS.

Recommendation 48

Amend the State Service Act 2000 and any associated employment directions, policies, practices and standards to allow for the appointment of an employee into the TSS for a limited period where a head of agency considers that:

- it is necessary to respond to an emergency
- the required task must be completed in a timeframe that precludes the appointment through the usual recruitment process or
- it supports the agency to partner with an external organisation.

Recommendation 49

That the SSMO continue to explore options for the creation of an internal mobility register with relevant unions.

Recommendation 50

That the SSMO lead the development and implementation of a whole-of-service TSS employee capability framework.

Recommendation 51

That the TSS develop tools, including an employee self-assessment tool, to support the embedding of the employee capability framework (see Recommendation 46) into capability development across the TSS.

That the TSS reorganise existing training and professional development programs where appropriate to align with the employee capability framework.

Recommendation 52

Remove the term 'Performance Management Plan' from the State Service Act 2000 and rewrite Employment Direction 26 to include essential elements of agency-based performance management systems.

Recommendation 53

That the SSMO work with agencies to create an ongoing whole-of-service community of practice to support the implementation of performance management systems across government.

That the embedding of performance management systems in agencies be included in the performance assessment of heads of agencies and this be required in performance management assessments for all relevant managers.

That the Head of the State Service audit the implementation of agency performance management systems 2 years after the introduction of the new employment direction on performance management.

Recommendation 54 (Interim Report Recommendation 11)

That all agencies, in collaboration as appropriate, implement the Auditor-General's recommendations on the management of underperformance concurrent with a centrally led review of Employment Direction 26 and related processes.

Recommendation 55

Amend Employment Direction 5 to be standards based, allowing the relevant head of agency to tailor an investigative process based on the circumstances surrounding an alleged breach.

Recommendation 56

Rewrite Employment Direction 5 to allow for a simple, local process to be used where the facts are clear and not disputed and the agency seeks to impose a low-level sanction (i.e. reprimand or that the employee engages in counselling for their behaviour).

Recommendation 57

Amend regulation 29 of the State Service Regulations to include dismissal of an employee for reasons of serious misconduct as specified in the Fair Work regulations.

Recommendation 58

That the government create a shared capability for the investigation of Code of Conduct breaches.

Recommendation 59

Rewrite Employment Direction 6 to:

- separate the processes for managing employees who have lost essential qualifications or accreditation from the process for assessing employees who are unable to perform the duties of their position for other reasons

- create a relatively simple process for the loss of qualification/accreditation
- prescribe the minimum standards to be met by agencies when otherwise assessing the ability of an employee to perform their duties.

Recommendation 60

Amend the State Service Act 2000 and/or the Industrial Relations Act 1984 to prevent the use of review powers under both Acts to consider the same employment-related decision.

Recommendation 61 (adapted from Interim Report Recommendation 12)

That the SSMO develop a short set of principles for TSS employees to work away from the office, drawing extensively on existing arrangements and resources and taking into consideration benefits and cautions to provide a consistent, underlying basis for individual agency policies.

Recommendation 62 (Interim Report Recommendation 13)

That the Department of Premier and Cabinet prepare a business case for developing regional office hubs in consultation with the Department of Treasury and Finance as a priority, including consideration of potential regional locations.

Recommendation 63

Heads of agency provide advice on possible targets for the number of added appointments to be made to the TSS outside Hobart.