

# CHAPTER 7

## Management and Accountability



## MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Department efficiently, effectively and ethically manages the resources entrusted to it, consistent with the Australian Public Service (APS) Values, the *Public Service Act 1999*, the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* and other relevant legislation.

This chapter describes how, in accordance with the Department's client service charter (available online, at <[www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/about/charter.aspx](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/about/charter.aspx)>), we are:

- results oriented;
- honest, professional and accountable;
- client and stakeholder focused;
- committed to improving our skills; and
- diverse, trusting and respectful of each other.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with appendices D, E and F, which respectively report on the Department's implementation of:

- the Commonwealth Disability Strategy;
- ecologically sustainable development principles as set out in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*; and
- the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

### Planning and reporting framework

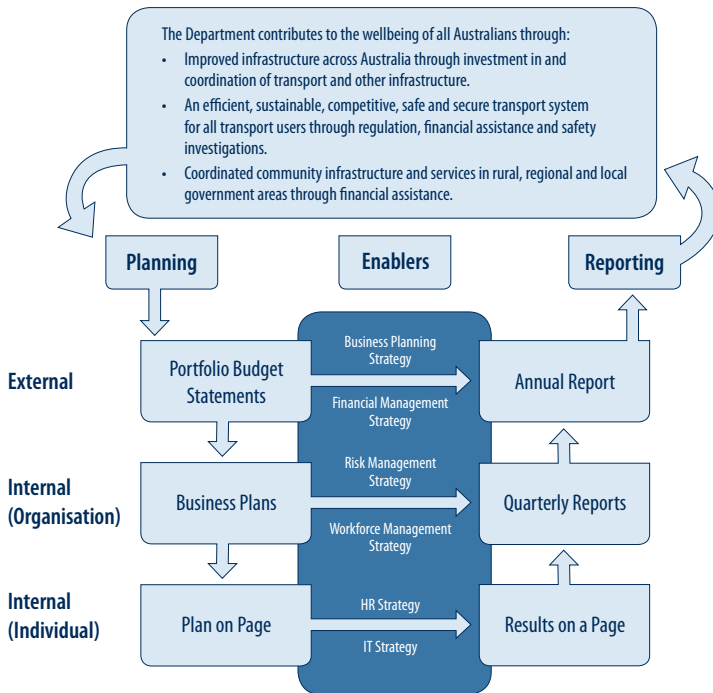
The Department publishes detailed plans in May, in its Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS), as part of the Commonwealth Budget papers. The PBS:

- describe the departmental outcomes, outputs and administered programs for which the Department will receive funding in the coming financial year;
- set the financial and other targets that will apply to each output and program;
- detail the programs and priorities that the Australian Government has asked the Department to deliver in the budget year; and
- present the Department's budgeted Financial Statements for the budget year and three out-years.

These plans are updated in the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES), which for financial year 2008–09 were published in December 2009, and in the Portfolio Supplementary Additional Estimates Statements, which for 2008–09 were published in February and March 2009.

The following diagram shows the alignment of the Department's internal planning and reporting processes with its external planning and reporting obligations.

Figure 7.1 Planning and reporting framework



Individual performance management is a key element in helping to achieve high-quality outcomes; this is reflected in the Department’s collective agreement for 2006–09. The Department’s individual performance management arrangements are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

### Leadership, decision making and consultation

The Secretary of the Department has specific responsibilities set out in legislation, including those described in the *Public Service Act 1999* and the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*. The Secretary is also responsible for ensuring the Department is able to deliver its planned outcomes.

The Department’s business divisions, the Office of the Inspector of Transport Security and the Office of the Infrastructure Coordinator, supported by a Corporate Services Division and the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, are responsible for delivering the outcomes.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the three Deputy Secretaries, the Chief Operating Officer and several senior management committees support the Secretary in determining how the Department can best achieve specified results. The leadership structure of the Department is summarised in Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 also provides an overview of the Department’s governance structure and details of the management committees and their activities in 2008–09.

## Governance framework

The governance framework is designed to ensure that the Department applies the principles of good governance and maintains high standards of performance, conformance and accountability. In 2008–09, the Department reviewed aspects of its governance arrangements to improve oversight, efficiency and effectiveness in direction setting, decision making, risk management and accountability.

Governance arrangements across the Department's program management operations were reviewed during 2008–09. As a result, the Department established a number of project boards to oversee and report on program planning and implementation. The project boards are designed to support program governance in terms of strategy and direction, to manage risks associated with decision making, and to focus on ensuring the programs achieve their goals.

The scope of a number of existing governance committees was modified in 2008–09, and two new governance committees were established.

- The former Strategic IT Committee and Security Committee were combined to create the Strategic IT and Security Committee. This committee provides a forum to discuss information and protective security policies and recommend priorities.
- The People and Management Committee became the People and Capability Committee, to place emphasis on building the strategic capability of the Department.
- The Finance and Reporting Committee was created to oversee and consider the Department's Budget and financial processes and recommend priorities.
- The Cabinet and Parliamentary Business Committee was established to oversee and coordinate the Department's parliamentary and Cabinet-related business practices and recommend priorities.

Through its governance framework the Department promotes ethics, integrity, transparency and accountability to maintain high standards of governance and instil confidence in all those who deal with the Department.

## Enterprise-wide risk management

In 2008–09, the Department developed and introduced an overarching risk management policy which provides a formal framework for managing and monitoring identified risks. This involved:

- facilitating a strategic risk assessment workshop with the Department's executive directors to ensure the currency of the Department's risks;
- conducting risk assessment workshops with all business divisions in the Department, to ensure that divisional risks are identified and mitigated; and
- developing the departmental risk profile which formed the basis of the Department's 2008–09 internal audit work plan.

## Disclosure of major risks

As required, the Department continued to disclose in the Budget papers fiscal risks and contingent liabilities with a large potential impact. The enterprise-wide fiscal risks disclosed for 2008–09 were managed without significant impacts. They related to:

- compensation for Airservices Australia in the event that it experiences any financial detriment as a result of complying with government directions about airspace control services;
- indemnities for Maritime Industry Finance Company Limited board members;

- tripartite deeds applying to 12 leased federal airports—these provide financiers with limited step-in rights when an airport lease is terminated, to enable them to correct the circumstances that triggered termination of the lease;
- an indemnity issued to Code Management Company against any loss or expense that occurred prior to the transfer of ownership from the Commonwealth relating to the correct use or application of the Code of Practice for the Defined Interstate Rail Network;
- assumed residual liabilities of the Australian National Railways Commission; and
- clean-up costs, arising from ship-sourced marine pollution incidents, that cannot be recovered.

### Protective security and fraud control

Since its 2007–08 audit of physical security risk management planning, the Department has continued to monitor risk factors in order to ensure an appropriate level of assurance for the Executive. The Department’s risk profile remains at a ‘low’ status.

The Department’s Fraud Control Plan was updated during the year, following a fraud risk assessment conducted early in 2009. The Fraud Control Plan and the Department’s processes for controlling, investigating and reporting on fraud all comply with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines, as certified by the Secretary in the letter of transmittal of this Annual Report.

### Internal audit

The 2008–09 internal audit work program applied 78 per cent of available audit resources on compliance-related activity, 11 per cent on performance aspects and 11 per cent on administration/management.

Following implementation of the enterprise-wide risk management framework, the internal audit work plan was designed to mitigate the risks identified through the risk assessment processes.

The following audits were included in the 2008–09 internal audit work program:

- Contract Management;
- SAP/AusLink Program Management System Reconciliation;
- Airports Branch Legislative Compliance;
- Grants Administration;
- Administration of Regulation;
- Better Regions Program;
- Credit Cards Usage; and
- IT Problem and Change Management.

### Ethical decision making

In 2008–09, the Department delivered the training program Working Ethically and Professionally in the APS, which is specifically aimed at building capability in ethical decision making.

The program, which is compulsory for all staff, features case studies and activities that are underpinned by the APS Values and Code of Conduct and relevant legislation.

Information regarding the APS Values and Code of Conduct was included in the induction program for all new staff, and made available to other staff and managers on request.

## Services to the Minister and Parliamentary Secretaries

The Department provides a range of support services to parliamentary offices, including four full-time departmental liaison officers: two for the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, and one each for the Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government and the Parliamentary Secretary for Western and Northern Australia.

In 2008–09, the Department:

- participated in regular meetings with other portfolio agencies, in support of the Minister's broader portfolio responsibilities;
- delivered an average of 192 items of correspondence to the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretaries each week; and
- established the Cabinet and Parliamentary Business Committee, to provide a strategic framework and develop protocols to enhance the delivery of services to the parliamentary offices.

## Communications

Communicating the Portfolio's achievements, funding decisions and policies to the community made up an important part of the Department's responsibilities in 2008–09.

This included support for the Department's major projects, including:

- the launch of the Aviation Green Paper;
- the inaugural meeting of the Australian Council of Local Government, in November 2008, and its second meeting, in June 2009;
- the launch of the Nation Building Program in December 2008;
- the announcement of the 2009–10 Budget in May 2009; and
- the rollout of the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program.

The Department delivered a range of activities to communicate the importance and the relevance of the Department's programs to the community. The trials of new screening technology in Australian airports were a good example of an important transport security message being delivered to the community, and to airline passengers in particular. The trials were supported by a carefully structured and well-targeted communication campaign.

## Client feedback

The Department is committed to providing its clients with a high level of service and welcomes feedback on its results. The Department's client service charter sets out its service standards and explains how clients can provide feedback or lodge a complaint if they are not satisfied with the service they have received. The client service charter is available on the Department's website, at <[www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/about/charter.aspx](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/about/charter.aspx)>.

A specific service charter for the motor vehicle compliance services that the Department provides to the public can also be found online, at <[www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/vehicle\\_regulation/bulletin/importing\\_vehicles/general/ServiceCharter.aspx](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/vehicle_regulation/bulletin/importing_vehicles/general/ServiceCharter.aspx)>.

## Complaints made through external bodies

Clients can make a complaint about the Department to the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Department appreciates having an opportunity to resolve clients' concerns before they contact the Ombudsman. Details about the role of the Ombudsman and how the Office can be contacted are available online, at <[www.comb.gov.au](http://www.comb.gov.au)>.

In 2008–09, the Ombudsman received 22 approaches about the Department, representing a 37 per cent decrease on the result for the previous year. The Ombudsman’s Office elected to investigate five of the matters raised.

Clients also have rights of complaint to the Privacy Commissioner and the Australian Human Rights Commission. In 2008–09, one complaint about the Department was lodged with and resolved by the Privacy Commissioner, and the Australian Human Rights Commission did not receive any complaints about the Department.

Table 7.1 gives trend information for external complaints and scrutiny.

**Table 7.1 Trends in external complaints and scrutiny, 2004–05 to 2008–09**

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
<b>Complaints recorded by the Commonwealth Ombudsman</b>					
Complaints received	35	53	41	35	22
Finding of defective administration	0	0	0	1	1
Formal reports to the Minister under the <i>Ombudsman Act 1976</i>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Complaints recorded by other external bodies</b>					
Complaints to the Australian Human Rights Commission	0	2	0	0	0
Complaints to the Privacy Commissioner	0	0	0	0	1

### Other forms of scrutiny

The Department recognises and respects the rights that other parties have to scrutinise its actions and records. Such parties include:

- people and organisations seeking to access specific documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act);
- courts and tribunals;
- the Auditor-General; and
- the Parliament of Australia.

### Freedom of information requests

The FOI Act gives members of the Australian community a general right of access to documents held by the Department. The majority of departmental activities and records relate to business rather than personal matters. Details on the records the Department holds, how to make an FOI request, the functions and decision-making powers of the Department and its arrangements for outside participation are provided at Appendix F.

In summary, 45 FOI requests were received in 2008–09, representing a 30 per cent increase in number compared to the previous year. Requests continued to be for access to documents concerning business rather than personal information.

Details regarding the operation of the FOI Act are reported in detail in a whole-of-government annual report published by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, which is available online, at <[www.pmc.gov.au/foi/annual\\_reports.cfm](http://www.pmc.gov.au/foi/annual_reports.cfm)>.

## Decisions of courts and tribunals

A significant matter which concluded during the year was the matter of The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government v Jetstar Airways Pty Ltd in which Jetstar was successfully prosecuted under the *Sydney Airport Curfew Act 1995* for a breach of the curfew at Sydney Airport. Jetstar pleaded guilty and was fined the sum of \$148,500.

## Audit office and parliamentary scrutiny

Each year the Department's Financial Statements are required to be audited by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), which reports the results of the audit to Parliament and thereby provides independent assurance on financial reporting, administration and accountability. The auditor's report and Financial Statements for 2008–09 are published after the appendices in this annual report.

Other reports on matters relating to the Department are released by the ANAO, parliamentary committees or other public bodies from time to time. Reports of that kind released in 2008–09 are listed in Appendix L.

Senior Executive Service (SES) level employees of the Department, in addition to attending specific parliamentary inquiries, also attend Senate estimates committee hearings to respond to questions about the Department's activities. In 2008–09, a total of 877 Senate estimates questions on notice were received, a significant increase compared to 366 in 2007–08. Most of these questions, more than 540, were taken during the Budget estimates hearings held in May 2009.

The Department tabled 78 parliamentary questions on notice in 2008–09, 43 from the Senate and 35 from the House of Representatives. Table 7.2 provides a summary of trends in parliamentary questions on notice.

**Table 7.2 Trends in parliamentary questions on notice, 2004–05 to 2008–09**

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
Questions tabled in the House of Representatives or the Senate	252	222	532	71	78
Questions from the Senate estimates committee hearings	591	1,032	573	366	877
<b>Total questions received</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>955</b>

## Records management

In 2008–09, the management of departmental records continued to be undertaken through contracted services. All records management operations were conducted on the Department's premises rather than off-site.

## Human resource strategy

The Department places a high priority on its people, and remains focused on people management to ensure that it has the necessary capacity to deliver outcomes for the government.

The Department seeks to be regarded as a public sector employer that is professional, has integrity and offers a rewarding place to work. The Human Resource Strategy for 2007 to 2010 acknowledges that people are critical to helping the organisation to achieve its goals. It also outlines strategies to underpin the development of a program of people management initiatives around four elements: recruit; retain; manage; and develop.

During 2008–09, human resource reporting was reviewed to ensure that human resource metrics were available to managers to assist in the achievement of both business outcomes and human resource objectives. These reports enable evidence-based discussion on emerging and identified human resource issues and assist in holding managers accountable for their human resource management responsibilities.

The Department pursues retention strategies that focus on the ongoing development of individual capabilities, including through the Department's leadership program, as well as appropriate rewards and recognition initiatives. The leadership program includes opportunities to participate in 360-degree feedback, peer workshops and executive coaching programs to increase leadership capability and grow talent within the organisation.

The Department has been accredited as an Investor in People (IiP) since April 1999, and is currently accredited until the end of 2009. The IiP accreditation confirms the Department's commitment to achieving excellence in business outcomes through employee development and engagement.

## Learning and development

The Department's learning and development program includes a range of staff development activities shaped by the Department's business priorities, the broader public service direction and employees' individual development plans.

The Department delivers a set of corporate learning and development activities that build individual and organisational capability, and are aligned with the Department's capability framework.

To meet the government's call for greater policy development capability across the APS, the Department supported 28 middle managers to undertake a graduate unit in Policy, Process and Analysis as part of the Australian National University's Graduate Studies Select program.

An internal policy skills development team was established. A policy resource site was developed for the Department's intranet, including definitions, key articles, a skills register, skills development programs and links to key public policy sites.

To improve understanding of the legislative process, two new training programs—Know your Legislation, and Legislative and Parliamentary training—were introduced. The first program covers the processes that turn policy into law, and the second program covers the sources of law, including common law, the Constitution and legislation.

## Graduate development program

In January 2009, 29 new graduates commenced working for the Department, in a range of positions across all business divisions.

As in previous years, graduates were drawn from a variety of academic disciplines, reflecting the Department's need for specialist skills and qualifications in, for example, engineering and public policy, as well as general analytical skills and a capacity for critical thinking.

In 2009, the 10-month formal learning and development program, which previously consisted of a combination of internal and external training programs, was replaced with the Diploma of Government course conducted by the Australian Public Service Commission. This formal program is supplemented with on-the-job experience facilitated by rotations through three different business divisions.

## Performance management

The Department's performance management framework provides an effective means for managers and employees to share and develop a common understanding of, and agree on, the deliverables and performance levels required of each employee.

With their manager, each employee develops a personal 'Plan on a Page' then assesses their performance against that plan at least twice a year through their 'Results on a Page'. The assessment focuses on recognising what has been achieved and what lessons have been learned, and is complemented by the personal 'Development on a Page', which identifies individual capability needs and how capabilities will be developed.

The Department also implements a framework for rewarding and recognising the contributions made by individuals and teams, across the Department and within each division.

The two formal departmental awards, the Australia Day Achievement Awards and the Awards for Excellence, highlight and celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams that contribute to meeting the Department's business objectives.

- The Awards for Excellence announced in August 2008 recognised the contributions of four teams and four individuals.
- The Australia Day Achievement Awards 2009 recognised the contributions of eight teams and 12 individuals.

### Flexible working arrangements

The Department values the contribution of its employees, and recognises its responsibility to provide a safe and supportive work environment that enables employees to balance work and personal commitments.

The Department provides generous leave entitlements and flexible working arrangements. These include access to adoption leave, consistent with paid maternity leave arrangements in the APS, as well as an additional two weeks of parental leave for new parents (including those who are not the primary care provider). The Department also supports its employees through provisions for employees to work from home or to work on a part-time basis.

In 2008–09, the Department offered determinations under section 24 of the *Public Service Act 1999*, and a flexible remuneration clause in the collective agreement for 2006–09, to attract or retain staff with particular skills.

### Remuneration policies

The Department's remuneration policies encourage and reward high performance.

SES remuneration included performance pay for exceptional performance for part of 2008–09. In 2008–09, performance payments totalling \$269,184 were made to 38 SES staff. In January 2009 access to SES performance bonuses was withdrawn.

In 2008–09, one non-SES staff member on an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA) received a total of \$4,041 in performance pay.

Non-SES staff who are covered by the collective agreement progress to the next salary point that applies to their substantive position until they reach the top salary point payable, provided they have performed at a satisfactory level for 12 months. More than 53 per cent of all staff were at the top salary point at 30 June 2009.

The nature and amount of remuneration for SES staff are determined through a process of negotiation with successful candidates for vacancies, subject to approval by the Secretary. When applying the Department's SES Remuneration Policy, each case is determined on its merits, taking into account the demands of the position and the skills and experience of the candidate.

### Employment agreements

In line with government policy, the Department has provided for conditions of employment for non-SES employees to be determined through its collective agreement for 2006–09. Negotiation of the next collective agreement began in March 2009 and was ongoing at 30 June 2009.

Table 7.3 gives statistics for types of employment agreements active in 2008–09 and previous reporting periods.

**Table 7.3 Trends in nature of employment agreements with staff at 30 June, 2004–05 to 2008–09**

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
<b>Australian Workplace Agreements</b>					
SES (all)	35	40	44	39	0
Non-SES	97	104	102	87	23
<b>Section 24(1) Determinations under the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i></b>					
SES	0	0	0	1	49
Non-SES	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Collective agreement</b>					
SES	0	0	0	0	0
Non-SES	1,022	1,141	1,143	1,120	1,172
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>1,154</b>	<b>1,285</b>	<b>1,289</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>1,244</b>

SES = Senior Executive Service

### Staffing statistics

At 30 June 2009:

- the Department employed 1,244 staff, a decrease of 0.2 per cent since 30 June 2008;
- the Office of Transport Security continued to be the single largest business division of the Department, with 309 staff (a decrease from 339 in June 2008); and
- the Department's graduate intake had decreased to 29 (from 30 in 2008).

Table 7.4 shows trends in staffing statistics. For more information about the Department's staff profile, including the number of staff by location and by hours of work, see Appendix H.

**Table 7.4 Trends in staff recruitment and retention at 30 June, 2004–05 to 2008–09**

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
<b>Recruitment<sup>a</sup></b>					
Graduates recruited externally	31	37	31	30	29
Other external recruits	427	369	309	311	243
Total external recruits	458	406	340	341	272
<b>Retention<sup>b</sup></b>					
Retention rate (%)	85.8	83.6	81.0	78.0	77.4
<b>Separations of ongoing staff</b>					
Transfers/promotions to another APS agency	58	91	127	164 <sup>c</sup>	74
Resignations and retirements	61	71	106	157	94
Retrenchments <sup>d</sup>	4	9	10	3	55
Other <sup>e</sup>	0	4	6	4	2
<b>Total separations</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>225</b>

APS = Australian Public Service

- a Non-ongoing staff are included in recruitment numbers but excluded from retention and separations data.
- b Retention statistics refer to ongoing operative staff only. Separations of inoperative staff, who have been on leave without pay for more than three months, are not included in this calculation.
- c This figure included 65 staff transferred to Attorney-General's Department as part of a machinery-of-government change.
- d Retrenchments include not only redundancies but also dismissals. Reasons for dismissal may include unsatisfactory conduct, unsatisfactory performance and non-compliance with conditions of employment.
- e Other reasons for separation may include invalidity, death and termination.

## Workplace diversity

The Department respects and values the diversity of its workforce. In 2008–09, the Department:

- focused on activities to increase the numbers of Indigenous employees and harness the capabilities and perspectives of Indigenous employees;
- offered flexible working conditions to help attract and retain employees;
- celebrated the National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week;
- launched its Disability Support Strategy, in conjunction with the celebration of the International Day of People with Disability on 3 December 2008; and
- continued to support the internal Diversity and Equity Network and activities to promote awareness of diversity and equity issues across the Department.

A report on the Department's implementation of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy in 2008–09 is at Appendix D.

The Department's commitment to recruiting and retaining Indigenous employees is outlined in its Indigenous Employment Strategy and Indigenous Workforce Action Plan. The Indigenous Employment Strategy aims to offer more employment opportunities for Indigenous people and to retain Indigenous employees who have been recruited. Both the Employment Strategy and the Workforce Action Plan will be reviewed in 2009–10.

In 2008–09, the Department continued to recruit entry-level Indigenous employees through initiatives of the Australian Public Service Commission and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, recruiting one trainee, two cadets and one graduate.

The Department supported, for the fourth year, the Indigenous Professional Development Network, which provides a forum for the Department's Indigenous employees to contribute to agency directions, particularly in relation to the Indigenous Employment Strategy, and to support Indigenous employees in achieving personal and organisational goals.

Table 7.5 summarises trends in the diversity profile of the Department's workforce.

**Table 7.5 Trends in workforce diversity, 2004–05 to 2008–09**

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
Women	527	584	582	555	566
People from non-English speaking backgrounds	119	156	168	175	172
People with a disability	21	23	30	21	22
Indigenous people <sup>a</sup>	4	11	12	11	15
All employees	1,154	1,285	1,289	1,247	1,244
Proportion of staff volunteering diversity information (%)	95	96	99	98	98

<sup>a</sup> During their trainee year, the Department's Indigenous trainees are Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations employees who have been placed with the Department and, therefore, they are not included in these figures.

## Resolution of workplace problems

The Department has a network of trained workplace harassment contact officers, located in Canberra and regional offices, who provide support to employees in regard to harassment and bullying. The network meets every three months and is supported by a senior executive sponsor.

Incidents of alleged harassment and bullying can be reported using the intranet-based reporting tool iReport. The Department also has appropriate mechanisms in place to address breaches of the APS Code of Conduct.

## Occupational health and safety

The Department is committed to promoting strategies that improve the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees, particularly through effective and timely incident investigation and injury management.

A range of health and wellbeing initiatives were implemented or continued in 2008–09, including:

- Health Week, held in September and May, which involved employees participating in health assessments and/or receiving influenza vaccinations;
- Weight Watchers at Work, which involved 32 employees;
- 10,000 Steps, which involved 242 employees, based in offices around Australia and in Manila, Philippines, participating in a virtual walking challenge;
- support to quit smoking, provided to four employees;
- lunchtime fitness classes, which involved 24 employees completing user-pays classes in the workplace; and
- health and wellbeing seminars, which were held monthly and provided information on a variety of subjects, including sleep, happiness and understanding depression.

To ensure ongoing compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991* (OH&S Act) and the *Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRC Act), the Department's Health and Safety Management Arrangements were introduced in September. Three new policies were also developed, covering safe use of vehicles; drugs and alcohol; and fitness for duty.

During 2008–09, a total of 13 reports were submitted by staff who reported workplace hazards (anything with the potential to cause injury) and 57 reports were submitted following workplace health and safety incidents. Four notifiable incidents were reported to Comcare. A total of eight reported incidents eventuated in accepted workers' compensation claims. An additional three reported incidents were denied liability by Comcare. Although the number of accepted claims reduced this year, the total time lost from new claims increased by 29.46 weeks (primarily due to one claim which required a significant amount of time off work).

The Department's Comcare premium reduced to 0.87 per cent, well below the APS average of 1.36 per cent.

OH&S information and advice are available to all employees through the Department's intranet. Additionally, Protecting Your Best Asset: OH&S for Managers and Supervisors training has been introduced to provide managers and supervisors with the information they need to ensure the health and safety of their staff.

Table 7.6 summarises trends in OH&S measures, indicators and incidents in the Department.

**Table 7.6 Workplace health and safety trends, 2004–05 to 2008–09**

	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
<b>Proactive measures</b>					
Workplace assessments	> 150	> 250	>150	133	127
Staff health assessments	200	329	201	264	304
Staff influenza vaccinations	341	331	298	345	512
<b>Wellbeing indicators</b>					
Staff using employee assistance (%)	8.2	7.34	8.33	5.51	9.04
Days of unscheduled absence per full-time equivalent employee <sup>a</sup>	8.95	9.74	10.51	10.72	10.11
<b>Incident management<sup>b</sup></b>					
New claims accepted by Comcare	18	20	23	14	8
Total weeks lost from new claims through incapacity	22.65	46.13	49.34	8.04	35.35
Average time off work per injury (weeks)	1.25	2.31	2.15	0.73	5.89
Special or serious incident requiring Comcare investigation	0	0	0	0	4
Directions or notices issued to the Department under the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991</i>	0	0	0	0	0

a Unscheduled absence includes sick leave, carers' leave and bereavement leave. Workers' compensation leave is not included in unscheduled absence.

b These figures are as advised by Comcare.