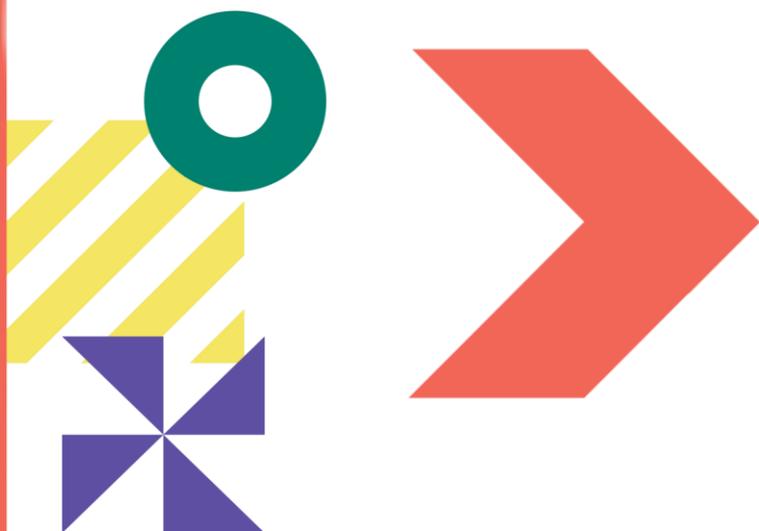
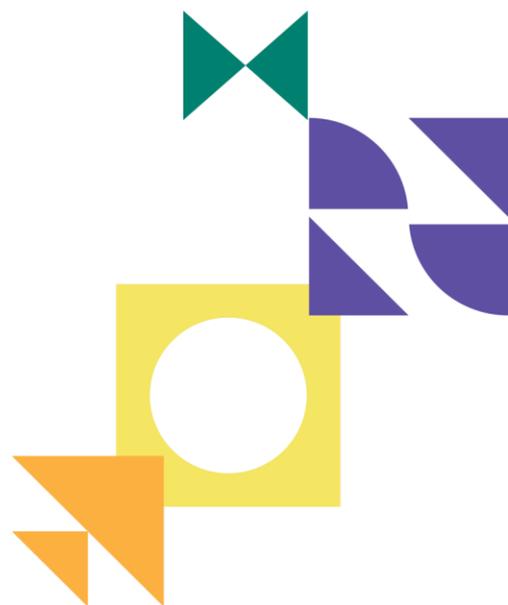




Public Sector  
Commission

*We're working for  
Western Australia.*

# State of the Western Australian Government Sector Workforce 2018/19



# Letter of transmittal

**Speaker**  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**President**  
**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

I hereby submit to the Parliament of Western Australia the State of the Western Australian Government Sector Workforce 2018/19 in accordance with Section 22D of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, Section 22 of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003* and Section 45ZD of the *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*.



SHARYN O'NEILL  
PUBLIC SECTOR COMMISSIONER

9 December 2019

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# From the Commissioner

I am pleased to present the State of the Western Australian Government Sector Workforce 2018/19.

Like similar reports in other jurisdictions, it focuses on the people who work in the many entities that make up the government sector and the many roles that service the community in Western Australia.

Following my appointment as Commissioner on 30 July 2018, I provided the [State of the Sector Report 2018](#). In that report I made some initial observations from my first few months in the position about the sector workforce – professional, responsive and agile people adapting to a ‘new normal’ following significant structural and fiscal reform; and dealing with the challenges brought about by a growing population, an ageing workforce, higher expectations of citizens and technological advances.

I described the opportunities for the sector to use its collective experiences and knowledge to find solutions; continue to reduce bureaucracy; and make better use of data to develop workforce policy and inform improvement.

Some 16 months after my appointment, I am now in a better position to assess the state of the government sector workforce. My aspiration is for a sector that is led by the best, has accomplished and innovative people, is known for its high performance and improvement culture, and is trusted by the community.

One of my observations is that a more strategic and coordinated approach in the key workforce areas of talent, leadership, integrity and profile is needed. To be one sector – a theme of the Government’s [Service Priority Review](#) – and to realise all the benefits this can deliver, it is critical to have a common frame of reference as a unifying force across different functions, different services and different employee groups.

I am pleased that my initial observations remain true in terms of the people who work for this State. As I have become more familiar with entities, the challenges they face and the opportunities they embrace, I see people working with passion and commitment. So when a very small number of people do the wrong thing, it can undermine the trust and confidence of the community in the whole sector. Integrity, therefore, is an area where we not only have to remain vigilant but we must do better.

Over the last few years, significant changes have taken place – and continue to take place across the sector. Many are driven by the Government’s reform agenda following a series of reviews in 2017. A good number of the recommendations from these reviews focuses on the work that falls to the Public Sector Commission to lead – and this has been a priority in my first full year in the position.

My assessment of the government sector workforce is currently limited by the data that is available and the analytics that have been applied. While these have evolved over time, a critical piece of work is determining the most valuable data to collect and

the most effective and efficient way of collecting it. It is then vital to turn this data into information and then intelligence for agencies and the sector as a whole to inform public policy and gain a deeper understanding of the workforce.

With 15% of the Western Australian workforce in the government sector – across all types of professions and trades; and in large entities with tens of thousands of employees through to small specialised entities – the investment is enormous. Capitalising on that investment is imperative.

Sound workforce management practices, high ethical standards of employees, strong leadership and exceptional governance – this is the way forward and which the sector needs to deliver.

I look forward to continuing to build relationships across the government sector with the aim of developing a high quality and productive workforce to deliver the very best outcomes for the people of Western Australia.

SHARYN O'NEILL  
PUBLIC SECTOR COMMISSIONER

## About this report

The State of the WA Government Sector Workforce is the Public Sector Commissioner's independent assessment of the performance, notable achievements, challenges and priorities of the WA government sector workforce.

This report draws on data from a range of sources including information:

- reported to the Commission through the quarterly Human Resource Minimum Obligatory Information Requirement (HR MOIR)
- gathered through the Commission's survey program – Public Sector Entity Survey, Equal Employment Opportunity Survey, and Integrity and Conduct Survey
- sourced through other Commission initiatives and projects
- collected by government sector entities including information such as the State Budget, serious misconduct data, expenditure on common use arrangements and public sector reform program.

More information on the data collected by the Commission from the government sector is at [Appendix A: Data](#).

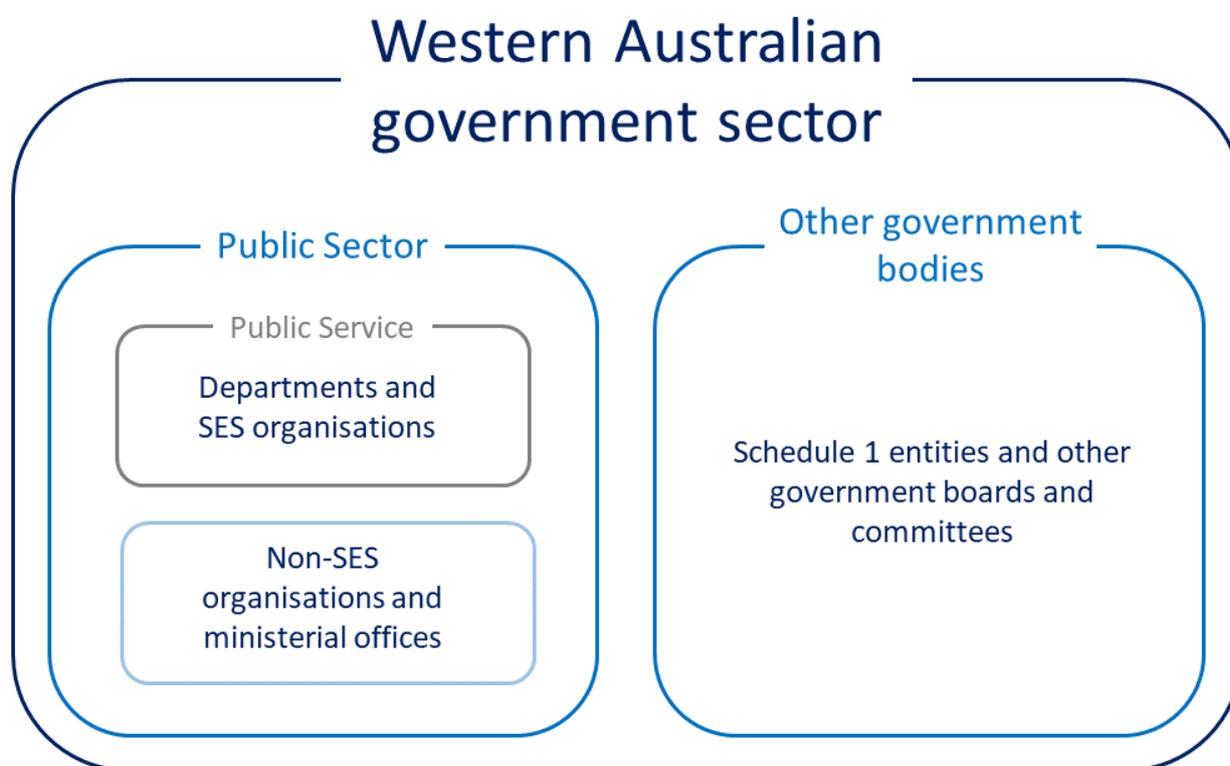
## Section 1: Structure

To better understand the information in this report, it is important to understand the different areas of government it covers.

The WA government sector is made up of entities created for public purposes. Under various pieces of legislation, these entities are defined as State trading concerns, State instrumentalities, State agencies and public statutory bodies (corporate or unincorporate) established by or under laws of the State.

This report focuses on the government sector workforce in two areas: the Public Sector and other government bodies (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Western Australian government sector



- The Public Sector includes:
  - the Public Service which is made up of government departments (such as Department of Education and Department of Transport) and Senior Executive Service (SES) organisations (such as Lotterywest, Western Australian Museum and five TAFE colleges)
  - non-SES organisations (such as seven health service providers, Environmental Protection Authority and Office of the Information Commissioner)
  - ministerial offices.

- Other government bodies include:
  - Schedule 1 entities (such as local governments, public universities, government trading enterprises, parliamentary electorate offices and WA Police Force sworn officers)
  - other boards and committees not included in the previous categories.

The Commission's remit and responsibilities differ between the Public Sector and other government bodies.

The information presented in this report in relation to the Public Sector extends across the [Public Sector Management Act 1994](#) (PSM Act), [Equal Opportunity Act 1984](#) (EO Act), [Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003](#) (CCM Act), and [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003](#) (PID Act).

For other government bodies, the information only relates to the EO Act, CCM Act and PID Act.

The workforce information in this report is based on data about the Public Sector and Schedule 1 entities as defined under the PSM Act. The integrity information in this report also includes government boards and committees recognised by Cabinet.

## Entities

The WA government sector employs approximately 15% of the Western Australian workforce across different types of entities which range in size and complexity.

At June 2019, there were:

- 25 government departments
- 43 SES organisations
- 52 non-SES organisations
- 17 ministerial offices
- 145 local governments (including regional councils)
- 4 public universities
- 20 other authorities such as government trading enterprises, parliamentary electorate offices and WA Police Force (sworn officers).

Note: Not all entities listed above have employees.

Significant changes to the machinery of government in 2017 resulted in a 40% reduction in the number of government departments from 41 to 25. The changes also saw a number of smaller entities amalgamated into these new departments. While some of these remain separate legal entities, day-to-day operations and administration are being integrated.

## State of the structure of the government sector workforce

As the [Service Priority Review](#) identified, the WA government sector “does not appear to be arranged according to high-level organisational principles”. It observed that “addressing and improving organisational design ... can generate efficiency and effectiveness gains”.

As can be seen on the previous pages, just describing the government sector and its workforce is not easy. Various terms are used often interchangeably by the sector to describe itself or various areas. A complicating factor is that the entities captured under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (PSM Act) are not the same as those captured under the *Financial Management Act 2006* (FM Act). The purposes of the two acts are different but both need to be considered in relation to the government sector.

I am pleased that a range of work is progressing in line with the recommendations of the Service Priority Review. This includes reform of government trading enterprises and identification of key organisational principles that guide organisational design.

A further complicating factor is around the workforce data that is collected or available. This often depends on the remit and responsibilities of the Commission or the legislative and accountability requirements of specific entities. Comparisons are difficult to make across the government sector workforce, with many only able to be made within a specific category – for example, the Public Sector workforce.

This year, my focus has been on driving changes required to deliver a workforce data analytics strategy. Relevance, timeliness, accuracy, coherence, interpretability and accessibility of data are central in shaping workforce strategy, policy and practice. It is also critical to have a more complete picture of the workforce and changes over time.

With better information on performance and compliance, opportunities and gaps in workforce management can be identified proactively to deliver improvement and ensure future workforce needs and capabilities are met.

I look forward to reporting on progress next year.

## Section 2: Workforce profile

The government sector employed 204 559 people in 2019: 70% in the Public Sector (142 735 people) and 30% in other government bodies (61 824 people).

Over the past five years, the government sector workforce increased by 1.9%. Within this, the Public Sector workforce grew by 3.1% (4295 people) while the workforce of other government bodies fell by 0.9% (543 people).

Figure 2 shows the change in employee numbers over time for the Public Sector and other government bodies. Quarterly numbers are also displayed for the Public Sector, showing how the number of employees fluctuated throughout the year.

This year followed a typical trend for the Public Sector where the number of employees decreased at the December quarter data collection point. This seasonality impact is associated with the end of the calendar year, particularly in education and training where casual teachers, lecturers and education assistants are not required during the summer holiday period.

Service delivery for the health and education sectors accounted for most growth in employee numbers this year. This in part reflected Western Australia's low population density (0.9 people per square kilometre) as well as the need to cater for population growth of 3.0% since 2015.

More information on growth areas of employment is included in [Occupations](#)

Figure 2: Government sector employee headcount 2015 to 2019

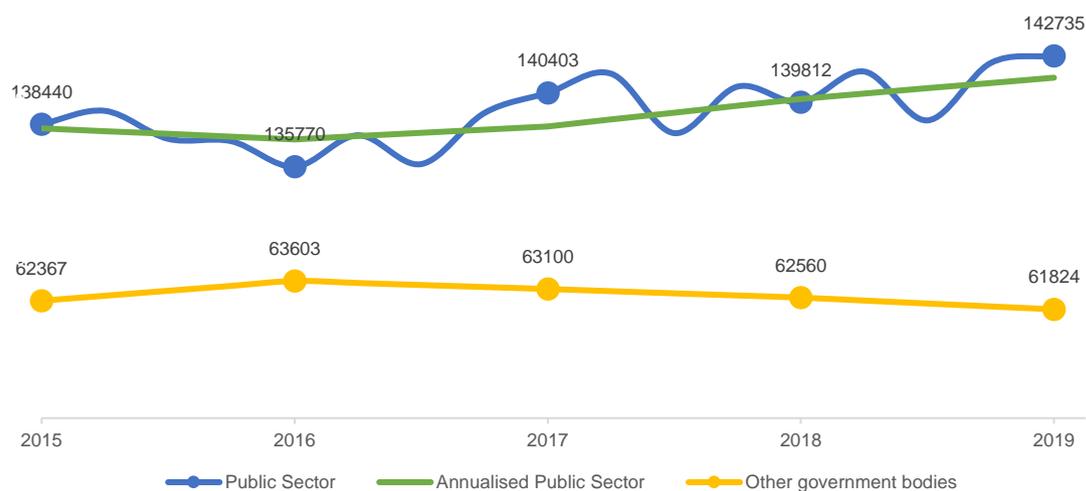


Table 1: Government sector employee headcount 2015 to 2019

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Public Sector</b>	Headcount	138 440	135 770	140 403	139 812	142 735
	Annual change	+496 (+0.4%)	-2670 (-1.9%)	+4633 (+3.4%)	-591 (-0.4%)	+2923 (+2.1%)
<b>Other government bodies</b>	Headcount	62 367	63 603	63 100	62 560	61 824
	Annual change	-1147 (-1.8%)	+1236 (+2.0%)	-503 (-0.8%)	-540 (-0.9%)	-736 (-1.2%)

The government sector employs people on full-time, part-time, casual, sessional and other bases. While 204 559 individuals were employed in 2019, this was equivalent to 154 952 full time equivalent (FTE) employees: 111 932 in the Public Sector and 43 020 in other government bodies.

Over the past five years, Public Sector FTE increased by 2.7% (2932 FTE). Since 2016, FTE for other government bodies decreased by 1.8% (784).

Figure 3: Government sector employee FTE 2015 to 2019

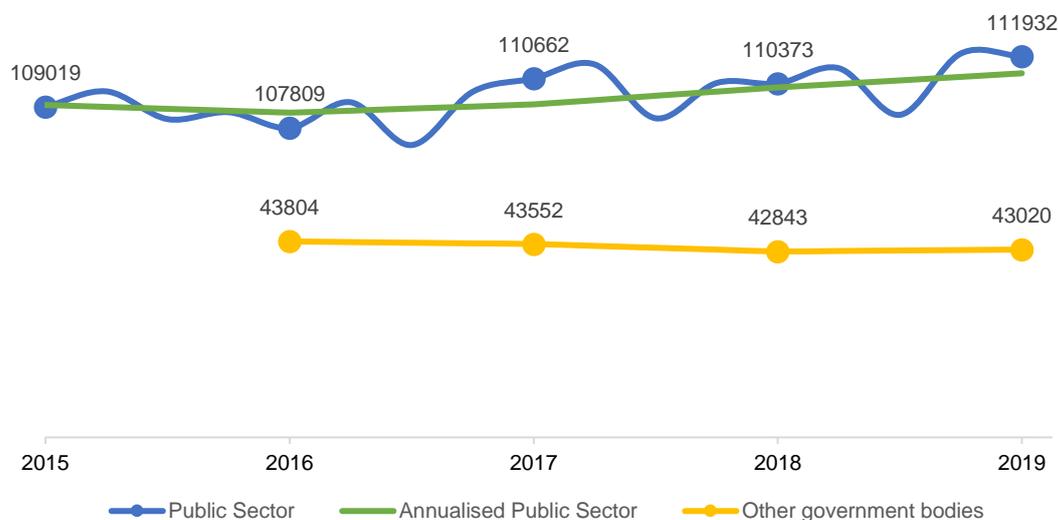


Table 2: Government sector employee FTE 2015 to 2019

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Public Sector</b>	FTE	109 019	107 809	110 662	110 373	111 932
	Annual change	+20 (+0.0%)	-1210 (-1.1%)	+2853 (+2.6%)	-290 (-0.3%)	+1559 (+1.4%)
<b>Other government bodies</b>	FTE	N/A	43 804	43 552	42 843	43 020
	Annual change	N/A	N/A	-252 (-0.6%)	-709 (-1.6%)	+177 (+0.4%)

In the Public Sector, the majority of employees (86 924 FTE) were engaged on a permanent basis while 18 319 FTE were on fixed term contracts and the remaining were on casual and other contracts.

This level of information is not collected for other government bodies.

Table 3: Appointment type for Public Sector employees 2015 to 2019

	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)
Permanent full-time	54.6	54.2	53.7	53.7	54.8
Permanent part-time	20.8	20.9	21.1	22.3	22.8
Fixed term full-time	13.5	13.5	13.5	12.8	11.4
Fixed term part-time	5.4	5.3	5.6	5.2	4.9
Casual	5.4	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.6
Other	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4

The [Annual Report on State Finances 2018-19](#) states that general government<sup>1</sup> salaries expenditure in 2018/19 grew by 0.6% in headline terms to a total \$12,269 million or 2.7% in underlying terms after adjusting for Voluntary Targeted Separation Scheme payments in 2017/18 and 2018/19. This was a low rate of growth and included increases in wage rates consistent with the Government's \$1000 a year wages policy.

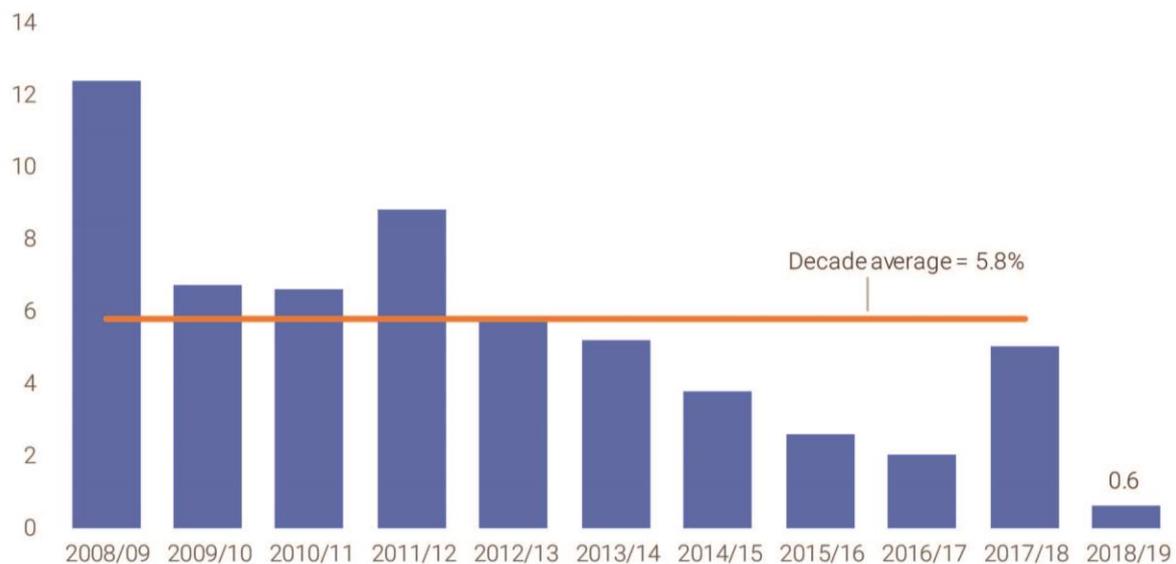
The [report](#) has full details of the State's finances for the government sector including salaries expenditure.

Salaries expenditure remained the single largest component of general government recurrent spending in 2018/19, accounting for 40% of total operating expenses for the sector.

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<sup>1</sup> 'General government' as used by the Department of Treasury refers to the institutional sector comprising all government units and non-profit institutions controlled and mainly financed by government.

Figure 4: General government sector salaries growth 2008/09 to 2018/19



## Demographics

The median age of employees in the Public Sector was 46, with men (47) slightly older than women (45). Since 2015, the number of employees in the Public Sector in the 29 and under, 40 to 44, and 50 to 59 age groups has decreased. The number of employees aged 60 years and older, and those in the 30 to 39 and 45 to 49 age groups, has increased.

The age profile of the Public Sector suggests that women leave the workforce earlier than men. However, there are still more women than men aged 60 and older working across the Public Sector.

For other government bodies, information is collected based on three age groups: 24 and under, 25 to 44, and 45 and older. Since 2015, representation of employees 45 and older has increased by 2.4 percentage points, with reductions in the other age groups.

Figure 5: Public Sector age groups by women and men 2019

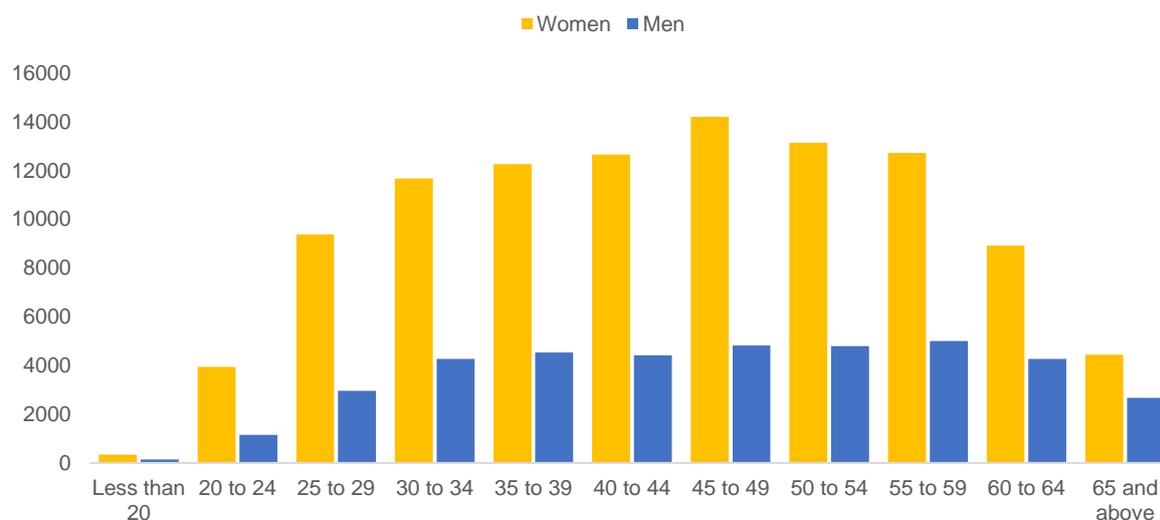


Figure 6: Other government bodies age groups by women and men

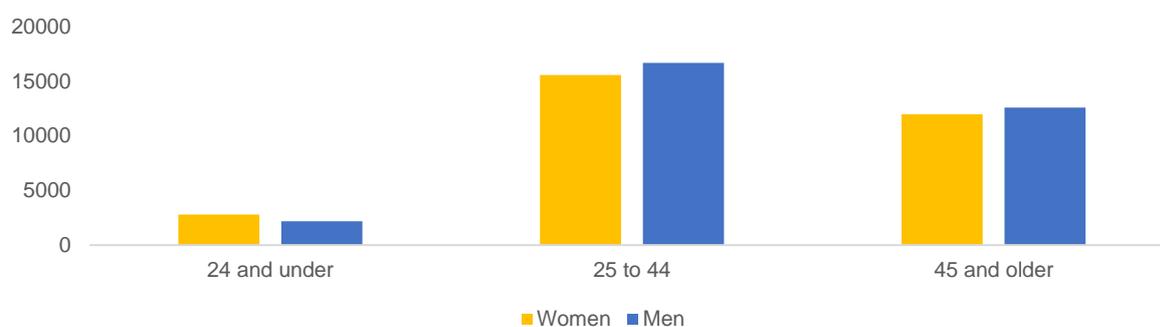
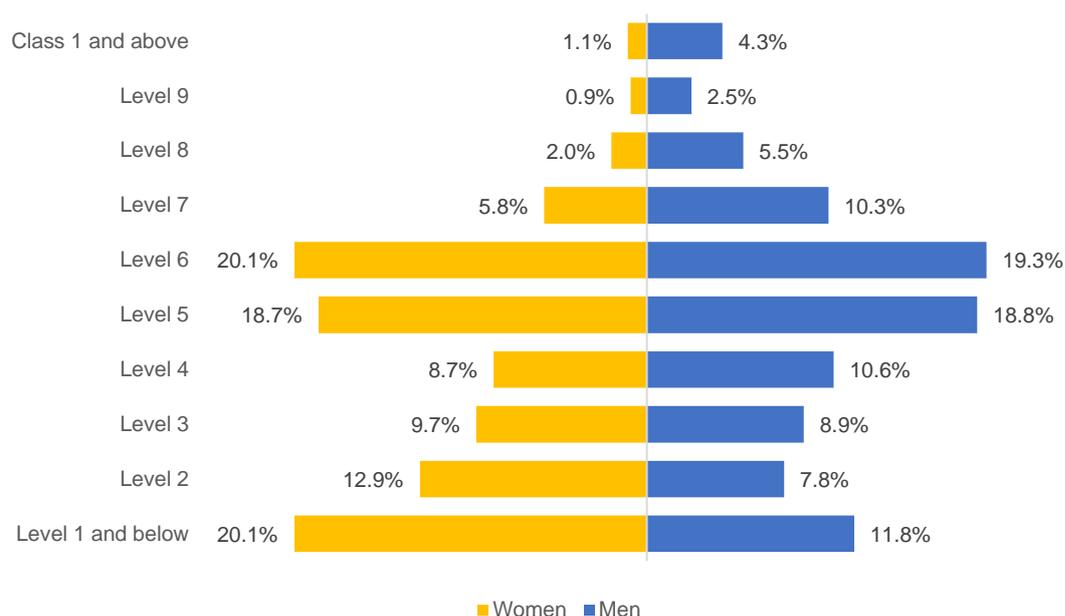


Table 4: Government sector age groups by women and men 2019

Age in years	Public Sector			Other government bodies		
	Women	Men	Other	Women	Men	Other
Less than 20	337	140	0	2809	2189	3
20 to 24	3939	1148	0			
25 to 29	9382	2966	1	15 566	16 682	2
30 to 34	11 671	4273	1			
35 to 39	12 269	4537	1			
40 to 44	12 655	4422	0			
45 to 49	14 203	4818	2	11 983	12 586	4
50 to 54	13 147	4796	1			
55 to 59	12 720	5000	0			
60 to 64	8919	4274	1			
65 and above	4436	2674	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>103 678</b>	<b>39 048</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30 358</b>	<b>31 457</b>	<b>9</b>

While women make up 72.6% of the Public Sector (no change since 2015), they continue to be under-represented at higher salary bands, with a significant drop after level 6 (and equivalent). More information is in [Women in leadership](#).

Figure 7: Public Sector classification level by women and men 2019



## Occupations

The Public Sector workforce is categorised into eight key occupational groups:

- teachers
- clerical and administrative workers
- nurses and midwives
- education aides
- prison, transit and security officers
- fire and emergency workers
- medical practitioners
- others.

For information on FTE, median age and salary, and women for each occupational group see Figure 8.

The main areas of growth continued to be in education and health. With the growth in school student numbers since 2015 (19 000 students) mostly in public schools (96.7%), more teachers and school support staff have been required.

Similarly, the rate of hospital admissions outstripped population growth between 2005 and 2015. The population and demand for services continued to increase into 2019 (see [Sustainable Health Review](#)).

Information on FTE, median age and salary, and women for sworn police officers is in Figure 9. A more limited set of information for other government bodies is in Figure 10.

Figure 8: Public Sector employees by occupation (FTE, median age, median salary and percentage of women)

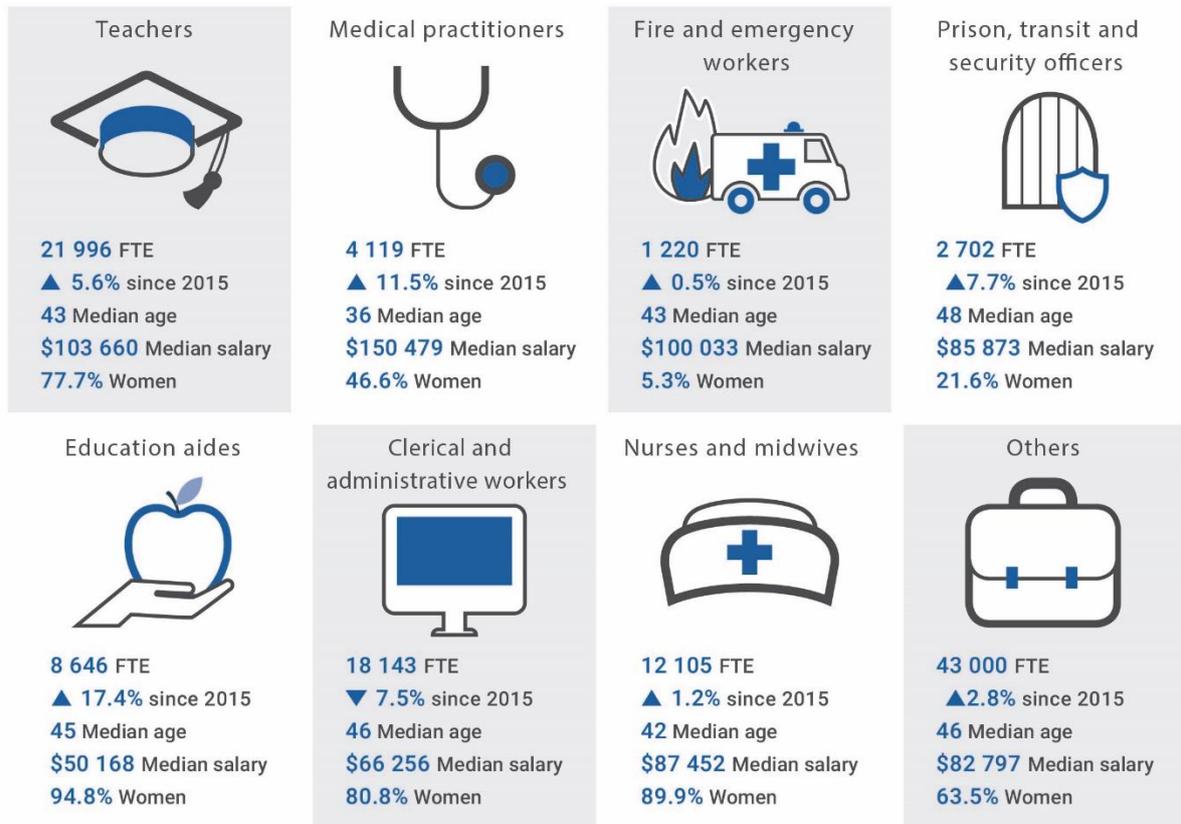


Figure 9: WA Police Force sworn officers (FTE, median age, median salary and percentage of women)

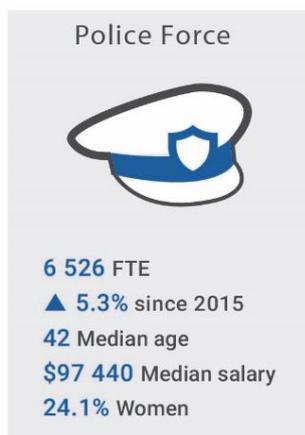
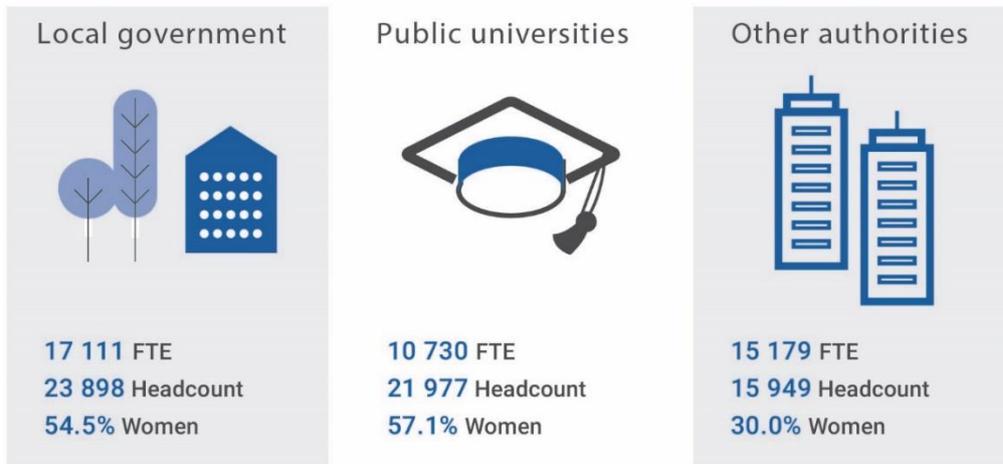


Figure 10: Other government bodies employees by occupation (FTE, median age, median salary and percentage of women)

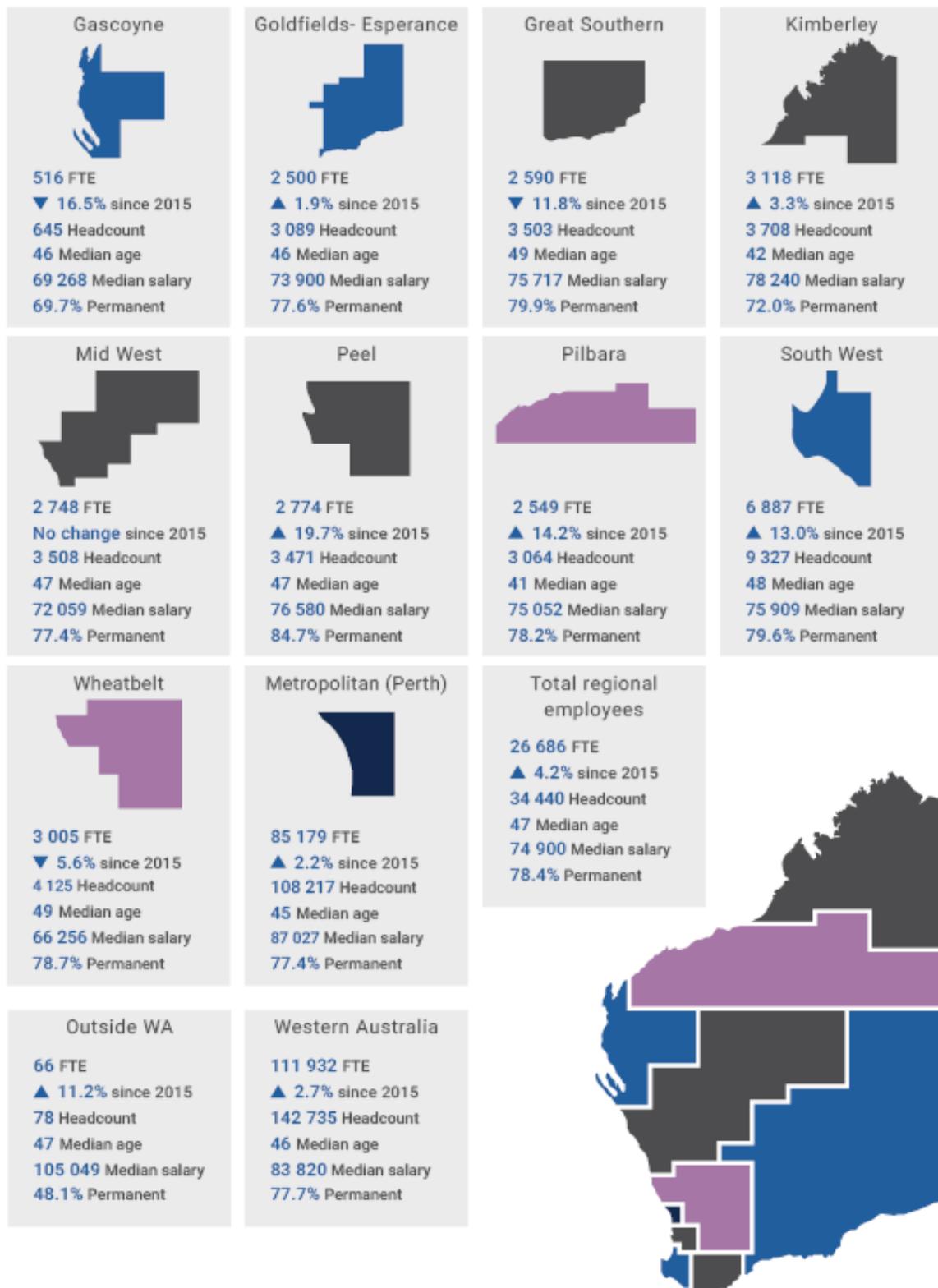


## Locations

The majority of Public Sector employees (76%) were employed in the Perth metropolitan area (about 108 217 people) while the remainder were employed in regional areas, interstate and overseas.

Over the past five years, Public Sector employment in regional areas has increased by 4.2% (1087 FTE). Significant employment growth has occurred in the Peel, Pilbara and Southwest, while employment has declined in the Gascoyne and Great Southern.

Figure 11: Public Sector employees by region (FTE, headcount, median age, median salary and percentage permanent)



Note: In July 2015, the Department of Health undertook a data cleansing project which resulted in changes to the number of employees in the regions. This affected the majority of the change since 2015 in Gascoyne and Great Southern.

## Recruitment in the Public Sector

Public Sector recruitment requiring external advertising continued to be facilitated through the [JobsWA website](#). An average of 1325 vacancies were posted each month with a total of 15 895 vacancies listed in 2018/19. Almost one fifth (18.5%) were to fill recruitment pools.

During the year, the Commission began reviewing [Commissioner's Instruction No. 2: Filling a Public Sector Vacancy](#) to allow more flexibility in recruitment practices to attract talent and acquire a more diverse workforce.

Table 5: Public Sector vacancies on JobsWA by employment type 2018/19

Employment type	Number of vacancies
Permanent full-time	4783
Permanent part-time	1542
Fixed term full-time	4802
Fixed term part-time	891
Casual	414
Sessional	74
Multiple work type	3373
Other	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 895</b>

Table 6: Public Sector vacancies on JobsWA by recruitment type 2018/19

Recruitment type	Number of vacancies
Permanent appointment	6781
Fixed term appointment	6114
Casual recruitment	67
Pool recruitment	2933
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 895</b>

## Converting contract and casual staff to permanency

A WA Government policy is to provide more Public Sector employees with stable employment to deliver more effective and efficient services to the Western Australian community.

In 2018/19, a total of 2691 people gained job security through the following:

- 1343 fixed term Public Sector employees permanently appointed under [Commissioner's Instruction No. 2: Filling a Public Sector Vacancy](#)
- 274 fixed term contract TAFE lecturers permanently appointed under [Commissioner's Instruction No. 22: Interim Arrangements for Colleges Constituted under the Vocational Education and Training Act 1996](#)

- 914 fixed term employees (615 women and 299 men) and 160 casual employees (99 women and 61 men) permanently appointed under [Commissioner's Instruction No. 23: Conversion and Appointment of Fixed Term Contract and Casual Employees to Permanency](#).

Commissioner's Instruction No. 23 commenced on 10 August 2018 and at 30 June 2019 a total of 22 855 fixed term contractors and casual employee contracts had been reviewed by agencies. Agencies continue to progress reviewing fixed term and casual employees with some 9981 contracts still to be reviewed. It is expected that the level of permanent employment will further increase as many employees meet the two-year continuous service requirement.

Conversion rates of 8.4% for fixed term employees and 1.3% for casual employees were achieved of those reviewed to the end of 2018/19.

The instruction can be seen as a corrective measure with work underway to provide a simple and lasting mechanism for transitioning employees to more secure employment.

## Managing temporary personnel in the Public Sector

Ensuring the Public Sector manages the use of temporary personnel aligns with the Government's commitment for greater workforce stability and also protects against the decline of capability.

In 2018/19, the Commission and Department of Finance continued to lead reform in this area stemming from recommendations of the [Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects](#). The recommendations aimed to ensure temporary personnel were engaged and deployed appropriately and effectively to achieve better value for money. This reform also addresses the Government's election commitment to review the use of contracts for services (including temporary personnel) arrangements to support direct employment where appropriate.

Quarterly reporting through the Department of Finance indicated that total expenditure on temporary personnel for 2018/19 was \$88.5 million compared to \$98.1 million in 2017/18 and \$116 million in 2016/17. This represented a 24% reduction in expenditure in two years.

In terms of the duration of engagements of temporary personnel, there have only been five quarters of data. While it is difficult to analyse trends, to date the duration has not changed significantly.

During 2018/19, the Commission provided advice to agencies on filling new positions appropriately and commenced reviewing the existing policy framework in this areas. The Commission worked with agencies to develop strategies to reduce their usage of long term temporary personnel.

Agencies have reported to the Department of Finance that, up to June 2019, a total of 757 employees have been employed in the Public Sector as a result of reducing their use of labour hire arrangements under the Temporary Personnel Common Use Arrangement, with approximately 21% of these employed on a permanent basis.

Forty Public Sector agencies had policies/procedures on engagement of temporary personnel, with 85% of these policies/procedures including workforce planning considerations.

Figure 12: Public Sector annual expenditure on temporary personnel 2015/16 to 2018/19

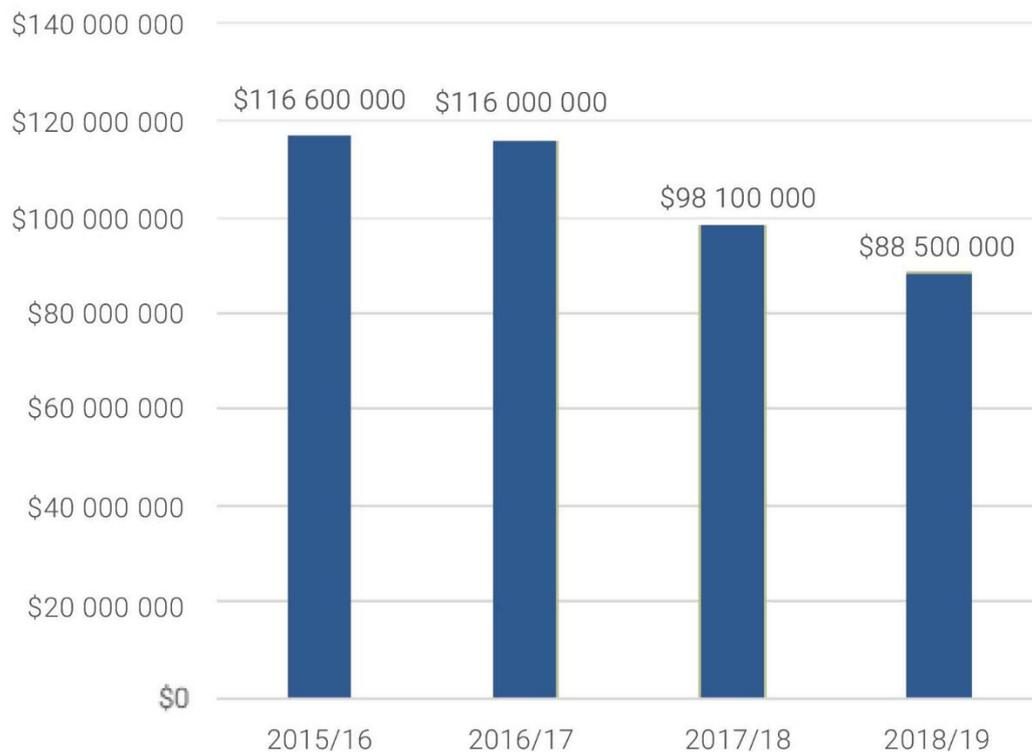


Figure 13: Public Sector temporary personnel usage by length of time 2018/19

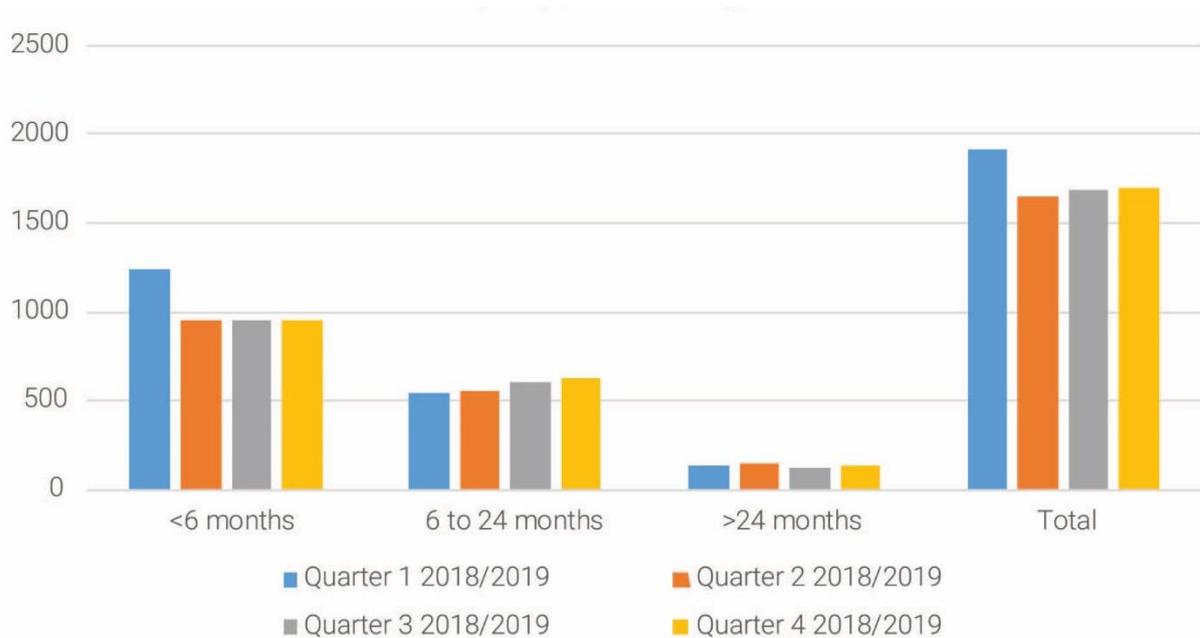


Table 7: Number of Public Sector temporary personnel engagements by length of time 2018/19

Length of time	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
< 6 months	1244	954	955	948
6 to 24 months	543	550	602	624
> 24 months	129	141	126	129
<b>Total</b>	<b>1916</b>	<b>1645</b>	<b>1683</b>	<b>1701</b>

## State of the government sector workforce profile

As one of the State's greatest assets, it is vital that the government sector workforce is shaped and supported to deliver now and into the future.

For the Public Sector, the Government has a clear commitment to achieve a more stable and efficient workforce through a number of policies including conversion to permanency and management of temporary personnel. It is also committed to a more diverse workforce (see next section).

There was also a commitment to reduce the number of people in the SES. I instigated a review of the overall management of numbers during the year and this work is continuing.

A further Government commitment is for legislation to remove the right of return for Senior Executive Service roles and limit compensation payouts for executives on early termination of their contracts. These changes are still in the Parliamentary process.

Given the many reforms in the workforce space, I am driving the development of a strategy and narrative to describe the intended outcomes and approach for the Public Sector workforce, as well as current and potential initiatives.

To support this, review and consolidation of Commission-issued compliance instruments are being progressed to ensure they remain contemporary and to strip out any unnecessary compliance and reporting obligations. This complements work by other entities to rationalise compliance instruments.

Various legislative reviews related to workforce (including redeployment, redundancy and recruitment) are also being undertaken.

Together this work will provide clear direction for the workforce profile into the future.

## Section 3: Workforce diversity

Notes:

1. For consistency with the [Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment Annual Report](#), information in this section is based on March 2019 data. That report also contains more detailed information.
2. Diversity information is collected by government sector entities via questionnaires to their employees which rely on employee self-identification. Response rates vary across entities and by diversity group. In the government sector as a whole, response rates for each diversity group range between 70% and 75%. The information in this report on diversity representation is based on the number of valid responses, not total headcount.

### Women

In 2019, women represented nearly two thirds of the government sector workforce (133 890 people).

In the Public Sector, women accounted for 72.8% (103 532) of the workforce while in other government bodies women accounted for 49.1% (30 358) of the workforce.

Over the past five years, women in the government sector workforce increased by 2.2%, with the Public Sector up 3.7% (3728 people) and other government bodies down 2.7% (856 people).

Figure 14: Public Sector and other government bodies percentage of women and men



### Gender pay gap

The [gender pay gap](#) is the difference between the full time equivalent earnings of women and men expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. It is a measure of women's overall position in the paid workforce and does not compare like roles.

In 2019, the Public Sector pay gap was 11.5%. Since 2015 this gap has reduced by approximately \$2026 a year, bringing it down to approximately \$10 751 a year.

While pay gap is an internationally established measure of the position of women in the economy, direct comparisons from different sources is problematic due to varying calculation methodologies.

However, in general terms, the Public Sector’s pay gap is lower than that of the Australian full-time workforce (14.0%) and lower than that of the Western Australian full-time workforce (21.8%).

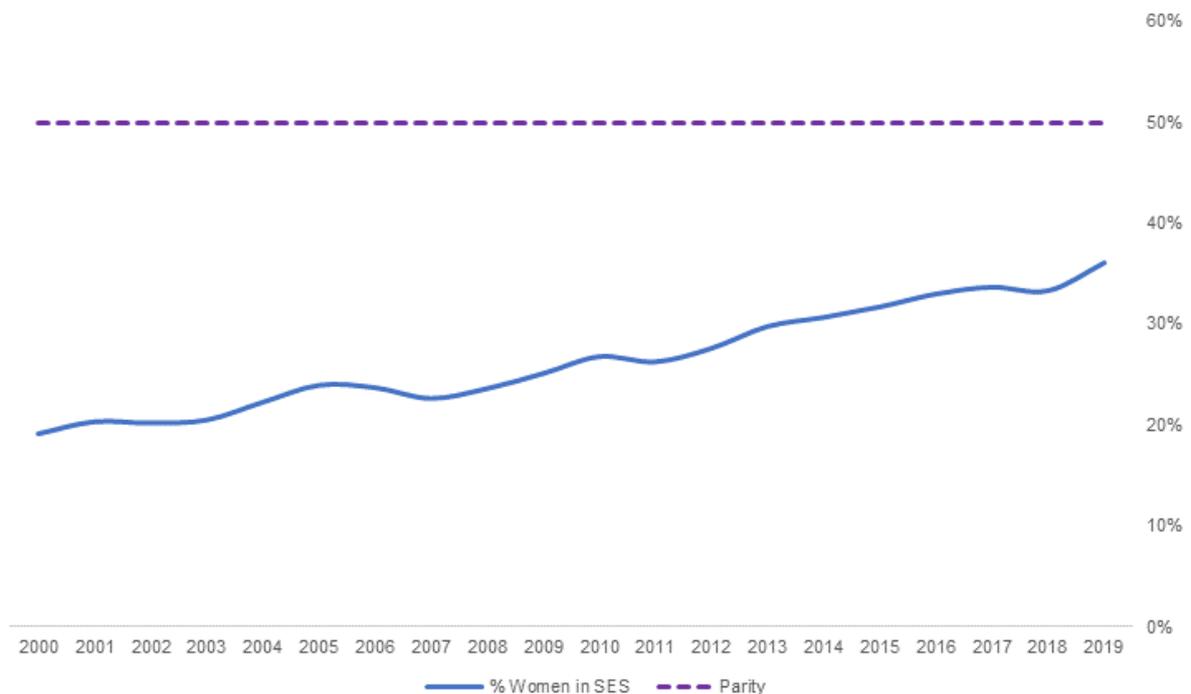
Table 8: Public Sector median salaries

	<b>Median salary (\$)</b>
All employees	87 175
Women	82 797
Men	93 548

### Women in leadership

While women remained under-represented in senior leadership positions in the Public Service, there was an increase in the proportion of women in the Senior Executive Service. The proportion of women in the SES has risen by 4.3 percentage points to 36.0% since 2015. At this rate, however, parity for women in the SES would not be achieved until 2035.

Figure 15: Women in the Senior Executive Service (Public Service) 2000 to 2019



Women in management tiers 1 to 3 in other government bodies have increased since 2015: tier 1 up 8.3 percentage points to 20.2%, tier 2 up 5.9 percentage points to 32.5%, and tier 3 up 4.0 percentage points to 39.1%.

Table 9: Women in management in other government bodies 2015 to 2019

	2015 (%)	2016 (%)	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)
<b>Tier 1</b>	11.9	9.5	12.1	13.3	20.2
<b>Tier 2</b>	26.6	29.7	31.7	31.7	32.5
<b>Tier 3</b>	35.1	35.5	35.7	36.5	39.1

[The Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment 2019 annual report](#) includes more details on women in management across local government, public universities and other government bodies.

## Aboriginal Australians

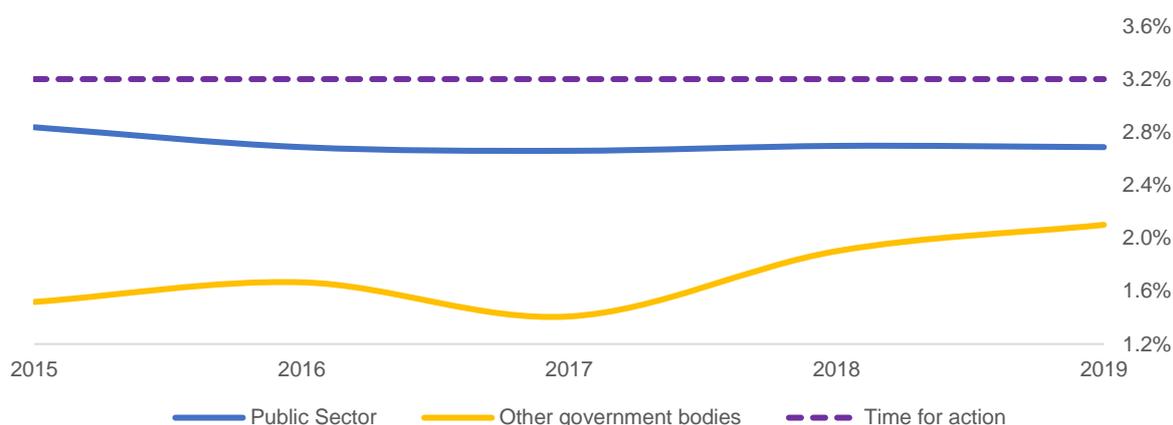
The government sector employed 3826 Aboriginal Australians in 2019 or 2.5% of questionnaire respondents.

In the Public Sector, Aboriginal Australians accounted for 2.7% of the workforce. Over the past five years, this representation has remained relatively stable. However, the previous goal to achieve 3.2% representation by 2019, as outlined in the [Time for Action](#) strategy, has not been met.

Aboriginal Australians representation in the Senior Executive Service of the Public Service remained below the Public Sector average at 1.4% but higher than in 2015 when it was 1.3%.

In other government bodies, Aboriginal Australians account for 2.1%. Over the past five years, this representation has been increasing.

Figure 16: Representation of Aboriginal Australians in the government sector 2015 to 2019



## People with disability

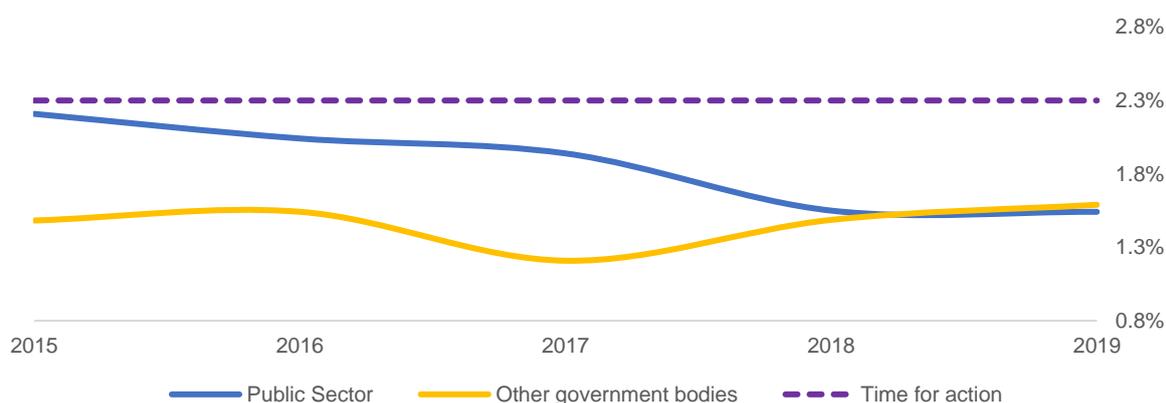
The government sector employed 2368 people with disability in 2019 or 1.6% of questionnaire respondents.

In the Public Sector, people with disability accounted for 1.5% of survey respondents. Over the past five years, this representation has been declining, down from 2.2% in 2015. The previous goal to achieve 2.3% representation by 2019, as outlined in [Time for Action](#), has not been met.

Representation of people with disability in the Senior Executive Service of the Public Service remained above the Public Sector average at 3.0%, up from 1.5% in 2015.

In other government bodies, people with disability account for 1.6%. Over the past five years, this representation has remained relatively stable.

Figure 17: Representation of people with disability in the government sector 2015 to 2019



Note: In 2017, the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment reported the Public Sector employed 1890 people with disability. Of those, 194 employees were subsequently found to have been incorrectly reported by their agency as having disability.

## Culturally and linguistically diverse people

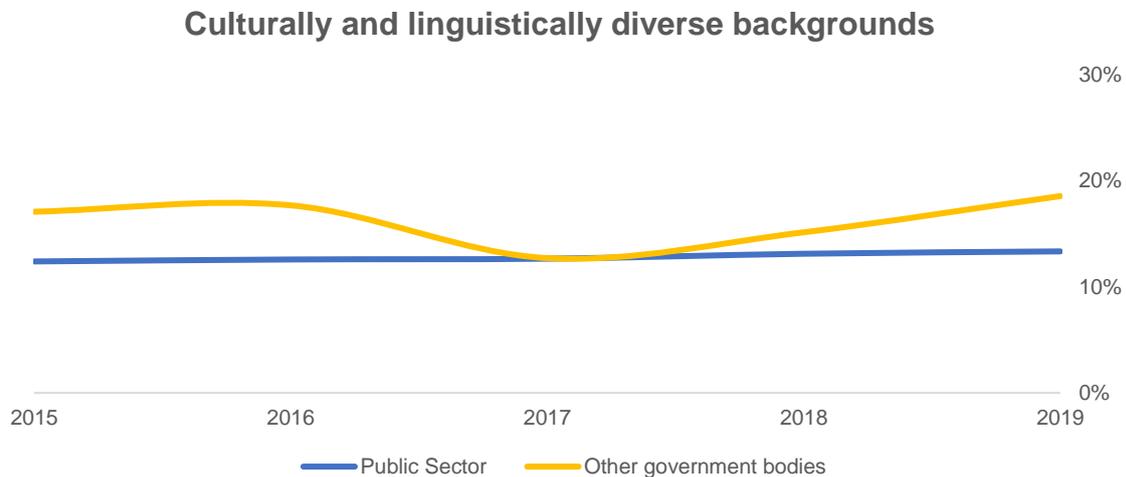
The government sector employed approximately 21 722 people identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse in 2019 or 15% of questionnaire respondents.

In the Public Sector, people identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse accounted for 13.3%. Over the past five years, this representation has slowly increased, up from 12.4% in 2015.

Representation of people identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse in the Senior Executive Service of the Public Service remained below the Public Sector average at 8.5% but higher than in 2015 when it was 7.8%.

In other government bodies, people identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse accounted for 18.6%. Over the past five years, this representation has fluctuated due to varying response rates.

Figure 18: Representation of culturally and linguistically diverse people in the government sector 2015 to 2019



Note: In 2017, our data collection method changed for other government bodies.

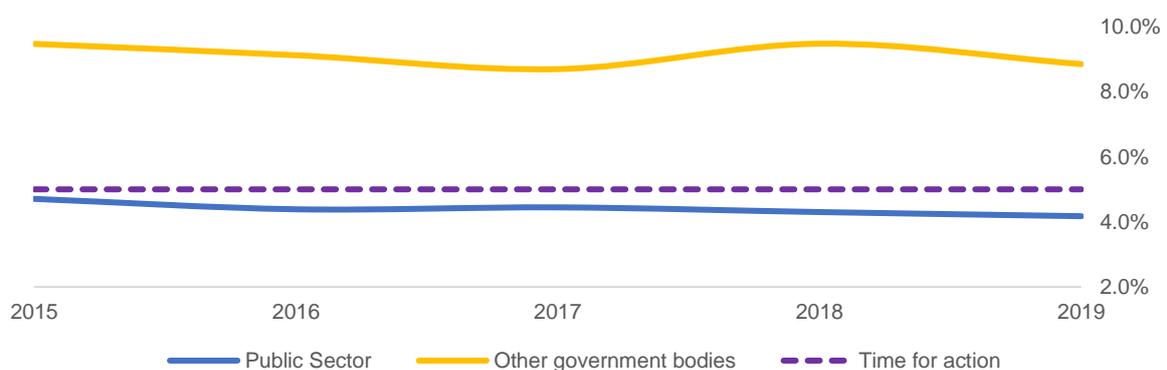
## Youth

The government sector employed 11 412 young people (aged 24 years and under) in 2019 which accounted for 5.6% of the workforce.

Young people accounted for 4.2% of the Public Sector workforce. Over the past five years this representation has decreased. The previous goal to achieve 5.0% representation by 2019, as outlined in [Time for Action](#), has not been met.

In other government bodies, young people account for 8.9% of the workforce. Over the past five years, this representation has also decreased.

Figure 19: Representation of youth in the government sector 2015 to 2019



## People of diverse sexualities and genders

Diverse sexualities and genders is the inclusive term reflecting the range of genders and sexualities that exist (previous term was Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex [LGBTI]).

The Commission does not currently collect information specifically on the representation of people with diverse sexualities and genders in the workforce. In 2020, the Commission will, for the first time, confidentially seek information on Public Sector employees identifying as diverse sexualities and genders through a pilot census.

### State of diversity in the government sector workforce

A diverse and inclusive government sector continues to be a priority for the State and a key reform initiative. This reflects the large body of research showing that diverse workplaces are more innovative, productive and responsive than those that are not diverse.

Despite significant investment and focus over many years, representation of diverse groups in public employment continues to be low compared to the wider community, particularly at senior levels. The Western Australian government sector is also lagging behind equivalent sectors in some other jurisdictions.

My view is that, for too long, diversity has been treated as a 'bolt on' to workforce strategy and development. We need to shift gears to take diversity from compliance to workforce imperative. We must move from a singular focus on awareness raising to deliberate action and intervention – and we must see this move as both a personal and collective responsibility.

In 2018/19, work began on a workforce diversification strategy for Public Sector employment supported by action plans and targets for identified diversity groups including women in leadership, Aboriginal Australians, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people, youth, and people of diverse sexualities and genders.

The strategy will provide a roadmap to achieve twin goals of increasing the representation of people from different backgrounds at all levels and ensuring they experience an inclusive work environment.

It is being informed by consultations with employees and leaders, experts, key stakeholders and others committed to diversity.

Over time, my expectation is for the strategy to deliver associated benefits of better attraction and retention of talented people; a sector culture that is viewed positively; and more satisfied customers, clients and stakeholders.

A key component of the strategy is the consideration of data. It is only through high quality and accurate data that we can understand trends and identify opportunities for action. To obtain high quality diversity data we need to increase the rates of self-identification – and that means ensuring we have a culture where identification of diversity is encouraged, supportive and positive.

The data presented in this section for each of those diversity groups where data is collected is most likely to be under-reported. Numbers could be higher than those reported. In 2020, a new collection method through a census will gain additional data on the representation of diversity groups in the Public Sector.

The strategy and action plans are for five years from 2020 to 2025, with challenging targets to achieve over this time. They will be published later in 2019 and into 2020.

The strategy and action plans are specifically for Public Sector employment, as per my remit as Commissioner. However, other government bodies will be able to use and adapt them to deliver greater diversity and inclusion for them and the government sector as a whole.

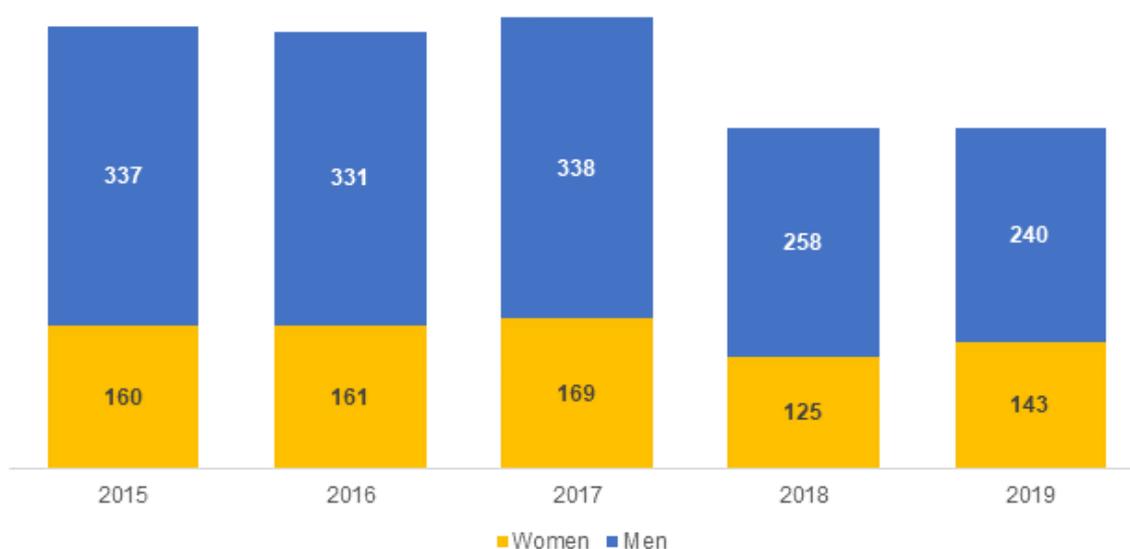
I understand that achieving greater diversity is not easy. But we must do more to take full advantage of the benefits and opportunities that diversity and inclusion bring to our teams, our entities and our service to the community and the State.

## Section 4: Leadership

Very limited data is currently collected in relation to leadership across the government sector.

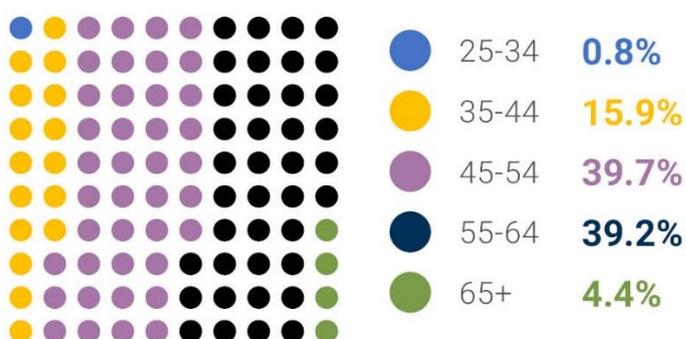
In the Public Service, in 2017 the Government committed to a 20% reduction in SES employees. SES employee numbers dropped to 364 in September 2018, the lowest in over a decade and well below the 20% target. At June 2019, there were 383 SES employees.

Figure 20: Public Service SES employees 2015 to 2019



In 2019, people aged 45 to 64 continued to make up a significant proportion of the SES (78.9%). However, since 2015 there has been a decrease in this age group while there has been a 4.1 percentage point increase in the 35 to 44 age group. The median age has decreased from 54 to 53 over the same period.

Figure 21: Public Service SES employees by age group 2019



For details of the diversity of the SES, see [Section 3: Workforce diversity](#).

## State of leadership in the government sector workforce

My general observation is that there are good leaders in the government sector.

However, there is little deliberate planning around leadership in relation to expectations of leaders, requirements for leadership success, identification of emerging leaders, planning for succession and development of talent. The paucity of data in all these areas does not help.

Given the centrality of leadership to reform and improvement, this is a particular focus of my work and that of the Commission in collaboration with the government sector, particularly the Public Sector where the Commissioner has a specific remit.

During the year, work on a comprehensive and dedicated approach to leadership strategy started with an initial focus on researching contemporary leadership capabilities required for strong Public Sector leadership in this State.

From this research came a set of mindsets, characteristics and behaviours expected for success. Initial discussions with the Public Sector Leadership Council (comprised of directors general of government departments) were positive and work will progress into the new financial year.

A contemporary delivery and performance framework for chief executive officers was devised. This was one of the recommendations of the [Service Priority Review](#). The framework incorporates agency specific deliverables, whole of government priorities, measures to determine performance as well as ongoing development and support to enhance leadership capabilities and achieve deliverables. The framework aims to strengthen the relationship between me and CEOs. The framework will be trialled in 2019/20 and 2020/21 with the directors general on the Public Sector Leadership Council.

Scoping began on a talent strategy to identify, develop and monitor talent. The strategy will build on good practice and draw on successful models in Australia and internationally. The need to build a talented and agile workforce was identified in the Service Priority Review.

To support work across this area, leadership programs run by the Commission are being put under the spotlight to ensure they reflect contemporary leadership thinking and are aligned with defined leadership development outcomes.

Having a focused direction for leadership and talent, and collecting more detailed data into the future, will help the government sector better track its performance.

## Section 5: Conduct

### Codes of conduct and integrity training

Codes of conduct set the standards of conduct and integrity to be complied with by employees. Close to 68% of government sector entities reported that they had reviewed their codes in the past two years. Additionally, entities used a range of mechanisms to monitor compliance with their codes including internal and external reviews and audits, exit interview/survey feedback, analysis of complaints and reports of integrity issues.

The majority of government sector entities ensured new employees were familiar with conduct requirements on appointment or at induction. However, results indicated room for improvement at later stages of the employment lifecycle. A smaller number of entities reported that they delivered regular information sessions to employees, included information in staff newsletters, promoted information on their intranets and gave information to managers and leaders about their role in upholding the code of conduct.

[Commissioner's Instruction No. 8: Codes of Conduct and Integrity Training requires Public Sector entities to provide](#) Accountable and Ethical Decision Making (AEDM) training for its employees. Two thirds of Public Sector employees have received this training in the past five years.

### Integrity culture

The majority (70%) of government sector entities reported assessing the alignment of the personal values of a candidate for a job with their corporate values during recruitment to strengthen their integrity culture.

The majority (71%) of government sector entities reported that they included the role of leaders in creating and promoting a high integrity culture in formal performance management discussions between the chief executive and executives.

### Integrity risk management

This year, surveys included questions about identifying integrity risks in the government sector. The results showed there were opportunities for improvement to document identified risks, with 63% of government sector entities reporting they had fully or partially formally documented their approach to identifying organisational integrity risks. Around a fifth (18%) reported that a formal documented approach was being developed. Of those that had fully or partially documented risks, 56% reported using the formality of a risk management committee to regularly consider integrity risks.

Entities were asked in the survey to identify the functional areas in which they specifically address integrity risks. Procurement was identified most, followed by recruitment and employment-related activities. The majority of government sector entities (84%) advised that their procurement policy or procedures cover key integrity risks such as conflicts of interest, and offer and acceptance of gifts, benefits and hospitality. To further address risks, other controls such as rotating staff in key procurement roles over time, delivering specific training to procurement staff and maintaining a central contract register could be considered.

## Reporting conduct

Government sector entities continued to publish ways to report unethical behaviour, including how to make public interest disclosures. More active promotion could be undertaken through newsletters and emails as well as chief executive officers publishing their commitment to a ‘speak up’ culture.

Given the important role managers play in encouraging and supporting employee reporting, authorities may wish to also consider providing training on how to handle reports of unethical conduct. This year’s survey reported that only 31% of government sector entities provided this training to managers.

## Workforce management

There was an increase in the number of breach of standard claims handled by both the Commission and Public Sector agencies. The majority of these claims related to the [Employment Standard](#). Despite the increase, the number of claims was still relatively low considering the large number of workforce management processes undertaken each year. Three breach claims were upheld by the Commission in 2018/19, the same number as last year.

Table 10: Breach of standards claims dealt with by Public Sector agencies and Public Sector Commission 2019

Type of breach of standard claim	Public Sector agencies	Public Sector Commission	Total
Employment	122	106	228
Grievance resolution	18	28	46
Performance management	6	2	8
Redeployment	4	0	4
Termination	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>286</b>

The number of grievances completed by government sector entities decreased by 13.5% this year. This was a significant reduction and builds on the decrease of 3% last year.

Table 11: Grievances completed by government sector entities by area of government 2019

<b>Area of government</b>	<b>Number of grievances</b>
Public Sector	598
Other government bodies	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>831</b>

## Public interest disclosures

The PID Act provides an avenue for disclosure of public interest information and protects those who make disclosures. There is still work to be done by government sector entities to ensure they publish their procedures as required under the PID Act, and raise awareness of the public interest disclosure process more regularly. The majority (92.5%) of entities surveyed identified having at least one PID officer assigned to receive disclosures, while only 68.5% indicated they had published internal procedures in relation to the PID Act.

There was an increase in the number of disclosures received, up from 54 to 60 in 2018/19. The number assessed as appropriate disclosures was also up from 24 to 32.

Table 12: Public interest disclosures in the government sector by type of information 2019

<b>Types of public interest information contained in appropriate public interest disclosures*</b>	<b>Number of times raised</b>
Improper conduct	28
Offence under written (State) law	7
Substantial irregular or unauthorised use of public resources	9
Substantial mismanagement of public resources	7
Act or omission that involves a substantial and specific risk of injury to public health	1
Act or omission that involves a substantial and specific risk of prejudice to public safety	2
Act or omission that involves a substantial and specific risk of harm to environment	0
Matters covered by Ombudsman	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

\* One appropriate public interest disclosure may contain more than one type of public interest information.

Two government sector entities reported allegations of non-compliance with the PID Act and one reported an allegation of non-compliance with the PID officer's code of conduct and integrity. The Commission is considering its role in relation to these reports.

## Misconduct reporting

While the majority of government sector entities were aware of their notification obligations under the CCM Act, almost 25% indicated they did not notify the Public Sector Commission or Corruption and Crime Commission (CCC) of suspected minor or serious misconduct (respectively) before starting their own investigations.

### Serious misconduct

Information about serious misconduct is provided by the CCC.

Table 13: Source of allegations of serious misconduct in the government sector 2018/19

Allegation source	2018/19	
	Number	Percentage
Allegations of serious misconduct notified by public authorities	2930	58.2
Allegations of serious misconduct reported by the public	2043	40.6
Allegations of serious misconduct referred from the Public Sector Commission	61	1.2
Corruption and Crime Commission's propositions of alleged serious misconduct	2	<0.1
Notifications of reviewable police action	-	-
Other information received	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>5036</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 14: Action taken in relation to allegations of serious misconduct in the government sector 2018/19

Action taken in relation to allegations	2018/19	
	Number	Percentage
No further action taken - s33(1)(d)	3429	68.1
No further action taken by the Corruption and Crime Commission	2569	51.0
No further action taken by the Corruption and Crime Commission (record public authority outcome)	659	13.1
Disclose to the Public Sector Commission	142	2.8
Disclose to other agency	59	1.2
Allegations referred to an appropriate authority or independent agency for action - s33(1)(d)	1554	30.9
Referred to appropriate authority - monitor for outcome	1484	29.5
Referred to appropriate authority - monitor for review (active monitoring and review)	70	1.4
Referred to independent agency	-	-
Corruption and Crime Commission to investigate - s33(1)(d)	21	0.4
Independently - s33(1)(d)	17	0.3
In cooperation with appropriate authority or independent agency - s33(1)(d)	4	0.1
Allegations pending the outcome of a preliminary investigation by the Corruption and Crime Commission - s33(1)(d)	29	0.6
Refer to Operations Committee - pending a decision	3	<0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5036</b>	<b>100</b>

For more information on serious misconduct, see the [Corruption and Crime Commission Annual Report 2018/19](#).

## Minor misconduct

Table 15: Number of minor misconduct notifications and reports in the government sector 2018/19

	Notifications	Reports	Total
Public Sector	201	104	305
Other government bodies	106	63	169
Out of jurisdiction	0	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>478</b>

Table 16: Number and type of actions taken by Public Sector Commission in relation to minor misconduct allegations 2018/19

Action	Matter
Did not meet definition of minor misconduct or had otherwise been dealt with appropriately at time of receipt	211
Referred to appropriate authority with no obligation to provide any further information to Commission	82
Referred to appropriate authority with request to advise Commission of outcome	77
Referred to appropriate third party (45 to CCC and one to another appropriate third party)	46
Referred to appropriate authority with request to provide report on action taken to be reviewed by Commission	36
Ongoing pending assessment or further preliminary inquiry.	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>478</b>

Table 17: Number and type of allegations of minor misconduct received by the Commission in 2018/19

Allegation type	Allegation
Related to personal behaviour of public officers	502
Defined as not consistent with CCM Act	92
Related to fraudulent or corrupt behaviour	68
Related to use of public resources	36
Related to conflict of interest	35
Related to use of information/recordkeeping	26
Pending assessment at 30 June	11
Related to inappropriate provision of gifts or hospitality	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>777</b>

## Discipline

Discipline processes may be undertaken by agencies when allegations of unethical conduct are made about employees. They cover a broad range of unethical conduct which may include conduct that could also constitute either minor or serious misconduct under the CCM Act.

There was a decrease in the number of completed discipline processes (down 14.3%) and substantiated allegations (down 7.3%) in government sector entities in 2018/19.

Where discipline processes were undertaken, 63% were completed within three months and more than 90% within six months. The number of discipline processes that resulted in termination of employment also decreased.

Table 18: Unethical conduct by type and number identified through the Public Sector Entity Survey, and Integrity and Conduct Survey 2019

<b>Type of unethical conduct</b>	<b>Number of allegations</b>	<b>Number of substantiated allegations</b>
Offensive or inappropriate personal behaviour (e.g. threatening or abusive language/conduct)	489	267
Repeated unreasonable or inappropriate behaviour directed towards a worker, or group of workers, that creates a risk to health and safety (e.g. bullying)	269	181
Failure to manage conflict of interest (public role vs personal interests)	91	26
Inappropriate acceptance/provision of gift/benefit	17	11
Corrupt behaviour (e.g. misusing position for benefit for self/detriment to others)	87	46
Misuse of computer/internet/email (e.g. illegal content)	75	33
Discrimination, harassment, sexual assault or other discriminatory/indecent behaviour	127	75
Illicit drug use/alcohol intoxication	136	109
Inappropriate physical behaviour (e.g. assault)	125	50
Inappropriate access/use/disclosure of information	228	122
Workplace bribes/theft (e.g. cash/workplace equipment)	33	19
Misuse of public resources (e.g. vehicles, credit card)	150	133
Fraudulent behaviour/falsification of information/records	188	152
Neglect of duty (e.g. careless or negligent behaviour in performance of duties)	442	183
Criminal behaviour outside work	30	17
Unauthorised secondary employment outside work	19	10
Disobeying or disregarding a direction or lawful order	171	142
Failing to act with integrity (e.g. intentionally failing to perform or acting in a dishonest way)	573	158
Other	131	83
<b>Total</b>	<b>3381</b>	<b>1817</b>

Table 19: Number of completed discipline processes and type of outcome 2018/19

<b>Type of outcome</b>	<b>Number of completed discipline processes resulting in outcomes</b>
No sanction (e.g. decision not to sanction)	72
Termination	250
Training, counselling or improvement action	427
Warning/reprimand	602
Other (e.g. transfer, reduction in classification, financial penalty)	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>1415</b>

## State of integrity in the government sector

With a total workforce of nearly 205 000 people across the length and breadth of this vast State and working in entities of all sizes and shapes and with a huge array of responsibilities, operating with integrity is a non-negotiable.

It is vital to assure Western Australians that the government sector acts in the public interest each and every day through the decisions we make and the actions we take.

Earning and maintaining the trust of the people and the communities we serve is essential. Any breach of that trust has an impact on our work and our reputation so we must always strive for improvement. Two things are critical if we want to see improvement. First, integrity does not happen by chance. Second, we are all responsible for protecting the integrity of the government sector.

While the data shows that breaches of trust are not common, in 2018/19 there were a couple of very significant instances of corruption by senior staff. After these were exposed by the Corruption and Crime Commission, I conducted independent reviews of the governance and administrative arrangements in the entities where the staff were employed. Since the end of this reporting period, a further significant corruption case has been identified.

Such behaviour by anyone in the government sector is appalling. This is why a clear and focused approach to integrity must be at the core of all our work. When integrity is a common frame of reference, it becomes a unifying force across the government sector.

Driving this approach is a strategy for the government sector. The strategy positions the Commission as the functional area leader for integrity and recognises the role that all leaders and staff play in building and sustaining integrity. Data from this year's surveys has informed the development of this strategy and key activities for the Commission, government sector and individuals.

This strategy was well developed by the end of the 2018/19 financial year and will be launched by the end of 2019.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Data

### Human Resource Minimum Obligatory Information Requirement (HR MOIR)

The Commission collects and reports workforce data from Public Sector entities quarterly. The data includes demographic information about employees such as age, gender, diversity status, and occupation.

Information reported on the diversity status for Aboriginal Australians, people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, are based on self-disclosure questionnaires generally provided to employees as part of their engagement or induction package, or as updated throughout their tenure in their entity. It is not compulsory for employees to disclose their diversity status. As such, the total number (i.e. the population) is based on the headcount of valid responses, and those who disclose diversity status are represented as a proportion of this population, or nominal value.

HR MOIR data was used to derive Public Sector full time equivalent levels to support evidence based policy formation and for other sector workforce related matters.

Point in time Public Sector FTE levels are published in the respective Quarterly Workforce Report. The State of the WA Government Sector Workforce report and statistical bulletin includes key HR MOIR workforce statistics at entity and sector levels as at June 2019.

Aggregated data by entity is in the State of the WA Government Sector Workforce statistical bulletin.

### Public Sector Entity Survey

This survey was sent out in July 2019 to collect information on conduct, integrity, workforce and diversity matters across the Public Sector for the 2018/19 financial year. Responses included data on breaches of ethical codes and public interest disclosures, as well as entities' prevention and education activities.

Aggregated data by entity is in the State of the WA Government Sector Workforce statistical bulletin.

### Equal Employment Opportunity Survey

This survey was sent out in June 2019 and collected workforce information from Schedule 1 entities. The first part of the survey was about understanding barriers entities face in taking real action on diversity and inclusion, and what structural and cultural barriers may still be present. More information was sought on inclusive practices to retain and maximise diversity. The second part of the survey was on

employees in the workforce, similar to HR MOIR. The survey captured information from March 2018 to March 2019.

## Integrity and Conduct Survey

This survey was sent out in July 2019 to Schedule 1 entities and government boards and committees for information about policies and processes on public interest disclosures, conduct, and prevention and education related activities. The survey captured data for the 2018/19 financial year.

Aggregated data by entity is in the State of the WA Government Sector Workforce statistical bulletin.

### Summary of data by collection tool and entity

<b>Collection tool</b>	<b>Public Sector</b>	<b>Schedule 1</b>	<b>Boards and committees</b>
Human Resources Minimum Obligatory Information Requirement (HR MOIR)	X		
Public Sector Entity Survey	X		
Equal Employment Opportunity Survey		X	
Integrity and Conduct Survey		X	X

#### Notes:

- In this report, unsworn officers of the Western Australia Police Force are included under the Public Sector while sworn officers are included under other government bodies.
- Total numbers and percentages are consistent with published information. Some tables may not add up to the total due to rounding.

## Appendix B: Compliance statements

In accordance with Section 31(2) of the PSM Act, organisations not listed in Schedule 1 of the *Financial Management Act 2006* are required to provide a statement to the Commissioner each year on the extent to which they have complied with public sector standards, codes of ethics and any relevant code of conduct.

Architects Board of Western Australia	No compliance issues concerning the Public Sector Standards, the Public Sector Commission's Code of Ethics or the Board's Code of Conduct arose during the reporting period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.
Commissioner for Children and Young People	The Commissioner for Children and Young People and his staff comply with the Public Sector Standards, codes of ethics and other relative codes of conduct compiled for CCYP.
Conservation and Parks Commission	The Conservation and Parks Commission has fully complied with relevant Public Sector Standards, codes of ethics and its code of conduct for the 2018-19 financial year.
Equal Opportunity Commission	In accordance with section 31(2) of the <i>Public Sector Management Act 1994</i> , the Commission has fully complied with regard to the Public Sector Standards, Commissioner's Instructions, WA Government Code of Ethics and Commission's Code of Conduct.
Legal Practice Board	The Legal Practice Board of WA had no compliance issues concerning the public sector standards, the Public Sector Commission's Code of Ethics or the Board's Code of Conduct that arose during the reporting period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.
Office of the Information Commissioner	The OIC has a Code of Conduct (updated April 2019) which has been distributed to all staff and is permanently available on our intranet and knowledge management system. New staff members are provided a copy as part of their induction. Among other things, the Code outlines the requirement to: refer to the WA Public Sector Code of Ethics to guide decision-making; not divulge any information received under the FOI Act for any purpose except in accordance with the FOI Act; adhere to the principles of natural justice when dealing with matters before the Information Commissioner; report conflicts of interest; treat stakeholders without discrimination; and report any gift or hospitality offers. The OIC's gift decision register and all purchasing card transactions are published on our website. The OIC is guided by the Public Sector Standards in our employment processes. During 2018-19, the OIC managed four recruitment processes. No staff were redeployed or disciplined, and no grievances lodged.

Ombudsman Western Australia	In the administration of the office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, I have complied with the Public Sector standards in human resource management, the Code of Ethics and the office's code of conduct. I have put in place procedures designed to ensure such compliance, and conducted appropriate internal assessments to satisfy myself that the above statement is correct.
Veterinary Surgeons Board	The Public Sector Standards and ethical codes have been complied with.

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ISSN 1839-7891

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PSC1952578