



PART FOUR: OUR PEOPLE

Part Four provides information on the National Blood Authority's staff—the drivers of the performance of the organisation. It details the National Blood Authority's staffing profile and describes human resource programs and activities.

- 4.1 Staffing
- 4.2 Work culture and conditions
- 4.3 Personal and professional development
- 4.4 Productivity gains
- 4.5 Commonwealth Disability Strategy
- 4.6 Occupational health and safety

4.1 Staffing

The National Blood Authority is fortunate to have staff members with an immense diversity of skills, knowledge and background. This ranges across clinical and laboratory practices, commercial contract negotiation and project management, logistics and inventory management, information technology, communication and secretariat support, and business planning and risk management. The National Blood Authority staffing complement comes from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Some staff members have more than 40 years' experience in the workplace, while others have just commenced their careers.

This diversity of skill, knowledge and networks exemplifies one of the major benefits of working in a small organisation. These skills are known and are able to be effectively used in a number of facets of the National Blood Authority's operations.

Workforce planning, staff retention and turnover

Consistent with other Australian Public Service agencies, the staff turnover rate in the National Blood

Authority was higher than desirable in 2006–07. To address this turnover, the feedback from recruited staff and those staff leaving was collated, analysed and incorporated into a redesigned recruitment campaign. The redesign is intended to ensure that applicants have a better appreciation of the benefits and challenges of working in a small, specialist agency and to attract applicants who have a passion for, and interest in, working with the National Blood Authority.

At 30 June 2007, the organisation had 39 ongoing staff and 10 non-ongoing staff, with a full-time equivalent of 46. This year the National Blood Authority engaged 25 new staff members, either to fill ongoing vacancies or to provide non-ongoing support in the delivery of time-limited, specialist projects.

The details of the staffing profile are provided in Tables 9 and 10.

TABLE 9: STAFF CLASSIFICATION AND FULL-TIME/PART-TIME STATUS AT 30 JUNE 2007

Classification	Female		Male		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Statutory Office Holder	1				1
Senior Executive Service	1		3		4
Executive Level 2	3	1	2		6
Executive Level 1	9		10		19
Legal 1	1				1
APS Level 6	6		4		10
APS Level 5	2	2			4
APS Level 4	1				1
APS Level 3	2	1			3
Total	26	4	19	0	49

4: Our people

TABLE 10: STAFF CLASSIFICATION AND NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT AT 30 JUNE 2007

Classification	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Total
Statutory Office Holder	1		1
Senior Executive Service	3	1	4
Executive Level 2	5	1	6
Executive Level 1	17	2	19
Legal 1	1		1
APS Level 6	7	3	10
APS Level 5	3	1	4
APS Level 4	1		1
APS Level 3	1	2	3
Total	39	10	49

Senior executive service remuneration

The total remuneration for senior executive service employees includes salaries plus superannuation, performance bonuses, the cost of accrued annual and long service leave, and motor vehicle and fringe benefits allowances. Bonuses are paid to senior executive service employees based on performance against agreed criteria in line with operational and corporate goals.

4.2 Work culture and conditions

In November 2006, the National Blood Authority conducted an extensive staff survey covering issues such as work culture, leadership, communication, learning and development opportunities, and focus on stakeholders. The results of the survey demonstrated that the National Blood Authority has strengths in the quality of its business acumen and subject matter expertise and offers an environment that is sensitive to the needs of those with family responsibilities. In addition, the survey acknowledged strength in:

- providing active learning and development opportunities
- aligning individuals' daily work to the overall objectives of the National Blood Authority
- staff autonomy.

Senior managers have agreed to sponsor issues raised in the survey and work with staff in implementing strategies to address these matters,

which include strengthening internal communications, building stakeholder relations and improving the interaction between teams.

The National Blood Authority's Staff Participation Forum is an avenue for staff and management to raise and discuss issues in an open environment and provides opportunities for increased dialogue among all levels of staff. Input from the Staff Participation Forum played a key role in the development of the organisation's new Collective Agreement. Throughout the negotiations, the National Blood Authority focused on issues including productivity, staff retention, training, workplace flexibility, professional development and salaries. The Collective Agreement is on schedule to take effect from the expiry date of the current agreement on 16 October 2007. Current salary levels are set out in Table 11.

TABLE 11: SALARY LEVELS

Classification	Minimum (\$)	Maximum (\$)
Executive Level 2	83,711	99,486
Executive Level 1	73,982	81,037
Legal 1	48,757	89,571
APS Level 6	60,202	67,916
APS Level 5	54,572	57,598
APS Level 4	50,174	53,014
APS Level 3	44,284	49,087

Performance-based pay totalling \$65,424.47 was awarded to five staff members following assessment against their agreed work outcomes.

At 30 June 2007, 38 staff members were employed under the Certified Agreement. Eleven staff members were engaged under Australian Workplace Agreements, of which four were senior executive service staff.

During the year, the introduction of new workplace legislation led the National Blood Authority to refine and adjust a range of human resource policies and practices, including those on occupational health and safety, the Certified Agreement, Australian Workplace Agreements, leave and superannuation.

4.3 Personal and professional development



During the year the National Blood Authority built upon its work culture and conditions by providing personal and professional development. In addition to core skills training, the National Blood Authority focused on addressing priorities identified in the staff survey, capability assessment, and the Corporate and Operational Plans. Training also covered presentation and communication skills, procurement procedures, project management and risk management. A major education program was undertaken to raise staff awareness of the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct, as many new staff members have come from outside the Australian Public Service. Such training helped to ensure that both new and existing staff members were aware of their obligations to adhere to the highest ethical standards.



Training designed to benefit the organisation as a whole was also a priority. A corporate-wide program on working effectively within teams was implemented in 2006–07. In addition to this, the National Blood Authority conducted knowledge management sessions on a variety of relevant clinical and business issues. These sessions were presented either by National Blood Authority staff members with specialist knowledge on a particular topic or by external consultants. They broadened staff members' knowledge on a range of topics including the use of recombinant Factor VIIa in the military, the development of management skills and team productivity, and the Australian Red Cross Blood Service donor recruitment and retention strategies.



The National Blood Authority invested a total of \$188,542 in personal and professional development. This training was determined through individual staff members' Professional Development Scheme agreements, which are put in place at the beginning of each financial year. However, the use of in-house staff and visitors to the National Blood Authority meant that much training was provided at no cost.

The National Blood Authority thanks key stakeholders—specifically the Australian Red Cross Blood Service and CSL Limited—for providing new employees with access to their sites and information about their roles in the blood sector.

The effectiveness of the training provided is evaluated in the professional development reviews conducted between managers and individuals.

4.4 Productivity gains

Two key drivers of productivity gains have been team management profiling and the staff survey. Both initiatives were beneficial in allocating staff and resources to meet operational objectives and to harvest the knowledge of staff members. Additionally, they facilitated inter-team cooperation and improved communication with internal and external stakeholders.

The National Blood Authority also strengthened capability and productivity by:

- developing and refining key business processes and management instructions
- implementing the new information technology and communications environment
- participating in knowledge management sessions
- developing the Integrated Data Management System.

The National Blood Authority is committed to reviewing how work is performed and identifying and implementing improvements through its performance improvement and proposal process. A number of performance improvement proposals were initiated, including:

- modification to procurement strategy documentation
- development of a key business process for non-blood procurement
- development of protocols for bilateral and multilateral consultation between jurisdictions and the National Blood Authority
- review of data handling processes.

4.5 Commonwealth Disability Strategy

The National Blood Authority implemented the principles of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy. Internal staff member training incorporated education and information about the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace. The National Blood Authority continues to make the organisation accessible for people with disabilities by:

- ensuring employment policies and procedures comply with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- ensuring managers and recruitment officers apply 'reasonable adjustment' principles
- conducting training and staff development programs considerate of the needs of people with disabilities, including information on disability issues
- using complaint and grievance mechanisms to address any potential issue raised by staff or the public.

4.6 Occupational health and safety

The National Blood Authority is committed to the health, safety and welfare of its staff members and visitors while inside the National Blood Authority's premises. To ensure this, the National Blood Authority developed and implemented an occupational health and safety policy in 2006.

Key to this commitment to staff members were regular workstation assessments and the immediate implementation of corrective measures such as personally designed ergonomic equipment. A range of initiatives to improve the work environment were introduced during the year and included:

- new computing facilities
- influenza vaccinations
- improved lighting.

The National Blood Authority's workplace injury rate was 1.25 percent, and the organisation continued to look for ways to reduce risk to its staff members. The National Blood Authority managed two compensation claims in the period, and the issues are being resolved with assistance from Comcare.