

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON JOB SECURITY
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Public Hearing – 27 August 2021

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Australian Public Service Commission
Outcome/Program Group: Public Hearing – Senate Select Committee
Topic: Job Security

Senator: Matt Canavan
Question reference number: Expert 1
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 September 2021

Number of pages: 1

Question:

What was the proportion of employees who are involuntarily terminated for the last two to three years?

Answer:

The proportion of APS employees involuntarily terminated has been decreasing over the last three financial years. The proportion was 2.3 per cent in 2018-19, 1.2 per cent in 2019-20 and 1.1 per cent in 2020-21.

Under section 29(3) of the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act) an ongoing employee can be terminated for the following reasons:

- the employee is excess to the requirements of the Agency, normally covered by retrenchments (e.g., voluntary and involuntary redundancies)
- the employee lacks, or has lost an essential qualification for performing their duties
- non-performance, or unsatisfactory performance of duties
- inability to perform duties because of physical or mental incapacity
- failure to satisfactorily complete an entry level training course
- failure to meet a condition imposed under subsection 22(6) of the PS Act, such as probation, citizenship, formal qualifications, security and character clearances or health clearance
- breach of the APS Code of Conduct
- any other ground prescribed by the regulations.

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Question reference number: Excerpt 2

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 September 2021

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Do you have data on average pay increases in the public sector compared to the private sector for the last five years?

Answer:

Data on average wage growth is available in the Wage Price Index (WPI) series published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Over the period June 2016 to June 2021, the average annual changes in wages has been 2.2 per cent in the public sector and 1.9 per cent in the private sector.

The public sector WPI is an aggregate figure for the entire Australian public sector and is not limited to Commonwealth public sector employment. Data on the Australian Public Service in particular is published in the annual APS Remuneration Report. However, this data measures movement in aggregate mean and median remuneration which can be influenced by a range of factors in addition to wage increases, such as promotions, engagements, transfers and incremental advancement through a salary scale.

During the period 2015 – 2020 successive Commonwealth public sector wages policies featured a wage increase policy capped at 2.0 per cent per annum. The Commission's records indicate that the majority of Commonwealth workplace arrangements made during this period paid average annual wage increases of the full 2.0 per cent available under the cap.

Both the WPI and the pay increases scheduled in workplace arrangements are aggregate figures measuring changes in the remuneration of particular roles and do not necessarily reflect the changing remuneration of occupants of those roles. When individual promotions and job changes are considered, it is likely that individual remuneration increases exceed the headline figures.

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Senator: Mehreen Faruqi
Question reference number: Exerpt 3
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 September 2021

Number of pages: 1

Question:

What is the highest employer for women within the APS? Is there a gendered trend in casualisation reflected in departments that employ more women?

Answer:

The APS agencies that employ the highest number of women (at 30 June 2021) were:

- Services Australia
- Australian Taxation Office
- Department of Defence
- Home Affairs
- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

Almost 40 per cent of women in the APS work in either Services Australia or the Australian Taxation Office. The number and proportion of women within each of these agencies are in the table below.

In general, the large service delivery agencies that employ many women also have a high number of casual employees. Almost 65 per cent of casuals in the APS work at Services Australia or the Australian Taxation Office. Most casuals in Services Australia (71.5 per cent) and the Australian Taxation Office (66.1 per cent) are women.

Agency	Number of women	Proportion of women in the agency (%)	Proportion of women in the APS (%)	Number of casuals	Proportion of casuals that are women (%)	Proportion of casuals in the APS (%)
Services Australia	23,881	70.1	25.8	3,221	71.5	37.8
Australian Taxation Office	12,176	57.5	13.1	2,287	66.1	26.8
Defence	7,787	45.7	8.4	49	34.7	0.6
Home Affairs	7,336	53.2	7.9	344	57.6	4.0
Agriculture, Water and the Environment	3,808	53.9	4.1	363	46.6	4.3

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Senator: Mehreen Faruqi
Question reference number: Exerpt 4
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 September 2021

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Is the gender pay gap measured including bonuses and overtime, as well as ordinary time wages?

Answer:

No. The gender pay gap for the APS as reported in the annual APS Remuneration Report is calculated on base salary alone.

The APS calculation is based on the methodology used by both the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

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Senator: Mehreen Faruqi
Question reference number: Exerpt 5
Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 10 September 2021

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Question:

How many of the 60 per cent of women might be from diverse groups such as migrant women, women of colour, Indigenous women or non-English-speaking women? Do you have a breakdown within that group of women?

Answer:

Of the 92,623 (60.2 per cent) female APS employees at 30 June 2021:

- 3,718 (4.0 per cent) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders
- 3,856 (4.2 per cent) identified as living with disability, and
- 13,557 (14.6 per cent) identified as being from a non-English speaking background.

More than two-thirds (68.4 per cent) of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS are women. Women also comprise 60.8 per cent of employees with a disability and 59.9 per cent of employees from a non-English speaking background, both of which closely reflect the proportion of women in the APS as a whole (60.2 per cent).