



**SENATE
FINANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO
RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING IN THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC
SERVICE**

Submission No. 48 (Supplementary Submission)

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The Secretary
Senate Finance and Public
Administration References Committee
APS Recruitment and Training
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



26 August 2002

Dear Secretary

I am writing to take the opportunity to provide further information to the Finance and Public Administration References Committee inquiry, into recruitment and training the Australian Public Service.

Centrelink made a submission to the Committee entitled "Becoming a provider and employer of choice" in May 2002. Centrelink was subsequently given the opportunity to present to the Committee on Wednesday, 14 August 2002.

Attachment A provides further information in response to issues raised during the Committee hearing with Centrelink under the following topics:

- The retention of indigenous cadets and scholarships;
- Retention of young Centrelink employees;
- Proportion of Centrelink part-time employees who are women; and
- Recruitment of Centrelink employees from the local area.

I have also take the liberty to enclose copies of the Centrelink Indigenous Employees Action Plan and Indigenous Servicing Goals and Strategies for the Committee's consideration.

Yours Sincerely

Carmel McGregor
National Manager
People Management

Centrelink Submission to Finance and Public Administration References Committee inquiry into recruitment and training the Australian Public Service

Retention of Indigenous cadets and scholarships

In 2002, the organisation successfully recruited ten Indigenous cadets and provided ten indigenous people with a scholarship. These programs are overseen by the Centrelink Virtual College which will be assessing their effectiveness and focussing on improving retention of these groups.

Centrelink is implementing an *Indigenous Employees' Action Plan* (Attachment B) which is concerned with the recruitment, development and retention of Indigenous employees. Centrelink's *Indigenous Servicing Strategy 2001-04* (Attachment C) also recognises the importance of retention and talent management of Indigenous employees in enabling the organisation to deliver an effective service.

Retention of young Centrelink employees

An assessment of employee-initiated separations for 2001/02 shows that Centrelink's overall rate was 5.7%. This was in line with the Public Industry rate of 5.5% for calendar year 2001 and slightly above the All Industry rate of 4.7%.

In the case of Centrelink employees aged under 30 the employee-initiated separation rate was higher:

- 10.6% for those aged under 25; and
- 7% for those aged 25-29.

Resignations comprise the largest component of employee-initiated separations. A comparison between the Centrelink ongoing resignation rate¹ for 2001/02 and that of the APS for 2000/01² for employees aged under 30 shows the following:

	<25	25-29
Centrelink Resignation Rate 2001/02	8.2%	5.7%
APS Resignation Rate 2000/01	9.0%	7.7%

The APS data suggests that Centrelink's higher rate of resignations for these two age groups is in keeping with service-wide trends.

¹ The resignation rate is calculated by dividing the number of employees in an age group who have resigned in a period (eg. 2001/02) by the average number of employees in that age group during that period.

² This data was taken from the *Australian Public Service Statistical Bulletin 2000-01*. APS data for 2001/02 is not yet available but an assessment of resignations since 1995/96 shows that the resignations for both age groups has increased slightly each year - from 5.6% to 9% for those aged under 25 and from 5.8% to 7.7% for those aged 25-29. Therefore, it is likely that the APS figures for 2001/02 will be at least as high if not higher than those shown in the table.

Proportion of Centrelink part-time employees who are women

Many employees take up part-time work to enable them to balance their work and family responsibilities. In 2001/02, 89% of Centrelink part-time employees (both ongoing and non-ongoing) were female. APS data for 2000/01 shows that 84% of all part-time employees were women.

Recruitment of Centrelink employees from the local area

An assessment of the major recruitment exercise for *Australians Working Together* shows that 308 (68%) out of 456 Personal Advisors were recruited into positions in regional areas³. Centrelink Areas have advised that only 21 recruits were relocated in order to take up the job offer. Therefore, the majority (>95%) of recruits in both metropolitan and regional sites were either from the local area or within commuting distance of the Customer Service Centre.

³ Note: regional sites include metropolitan sites in regional areas.

**Centrelink
Indigenous Employees
Action Plan**