

# E – BRIEF



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## The NSW public sector – statistical overview 1999-2008

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### 1 Introduction

Issues of comparability invariably arise where statistical analysis is concerned. Statistical data relating to the NSW public sector is no exception, especially when the time frame for comparison is extended beyond the last decade or so. For this reason, except for a brief opening comment, this overview confines itself to the data presented in the [Public Sector Workforce Profile](#) reports, published by the Premier's Department since 1999. All these reports are available electronically.

### 2 Different statistical measures

Movements in the NSW public sector workforce can be expressed in different ways:

- the NSW public sector as a percentage of the NSW labour force;
- the headcount figure for the NSW public sector workforce; and
- the NSW full-time equivalent public sector workforce.

The term NSW 'labour force' is defined to mean:

All persons in NSW who are contributing to, or willing to contribute to, the supply of labour at a point in time. The labour force includes employed persons as well

as those looking for work (ie, those designated as unemployed).<sup>1</sup>

Basically, therefore, whereas the term 'workforce' applies to those in employment, the term 'labour force' refers to all those persons employed and unemployed and looking for work.<sup>2</sup>

### 3 Comment on the pre-2000 era

As to the earlier period, a general guide is that, after a dip in public sector workforce numbers during the Great Depression, a steady rise set in, reaching a high point in the late 1980s before declining again in an era of privatisation and structural reform.

Based on *The Official Year Book for NSW*, the following table shows the extent of NSW government employment at intervals between 1929 and 1956.<sup>3</sup>

1929	110,157
1933	89,900
1939	109,000
1947	134,800
1956	158,800

For the period between 1981 and 2000, the [2000 Workforce Profile](#) commented:

Between 1981 and 2000 the population of working age in NSW increased by 27 percent, the NSW labour force increased by 36 percent and the NSW workforce increased

by 35 percent. By contrast, the NSW public sector grew by only 5.6 percent during this period. In June 2000 the public sector workforce was estimated to be 11.7 percent of the total workforce in the state, down from 15 percent in 1981.

The same publication went on to say:

The ABS data indicate that public sector employee numbers rose steadily throughout the 1980s to a peak of 380,000 in 1988. Since 1988, there has been a decline in employee numbers. The decrease between 1988 and 2000 was 6.5 percent, which is an average of 0.5 percent per year.

#### 4 NSW public sector and NSW labour force 2001-2008

NSW public sector employees can be expressed as a percentage of the total NSW labour force, as follows.

##### NSW public sector, as a percentage of the labour force<sup>4</sup>

June 2001	10.4%
June 2002	10.2%
June 2003	10.3%
June 2004	10.6%
June 2005	10.5%
June 2006	10.7%
June 2007	10.6%
June 2008	10.6%

The Table above shows that NSW public sector employment, as a percentage of the NSW labour force, has stabilised in a range between 10.2 and 10.7 percent.

#### 5 Headcount of NSW public sector workforce

The 'headcount' figure refers to the total number of employees who were employed at any time during the financial year. Basically, headcount figures pick up all employees who have worked during the period, even if they only worked for one day. The

headcount figure, therefore, includes part-time, temporary and casual employees.

##### Total NSW Public Sector Employees (Headcount) 1999-2009<sup>5</sup>

June 1999	330, 380	
June 2000	324, 345	- 1.8%
June 2001	336, 251	+ 3.7%
June 2002	339, 372	+ 0.9%
June 2003	343, 847	+ 2.1%
June 2004	356, 598	+ 3.6%
June 2005	360, 880	+ 1.2%
June 2006	371, 632	+ 2.9%
June 2007	372, 033	+ 0.1%
June 2008	378, 645	+ 1.7%

These headcount figures for the public sector can be compared to those for the total number of NSW employed persons. The following table is extracted from the [2008 Workforce Profile](#).

##### NSW employed persons, June 2003-June 2008<sup>6</sup>

June 2003	3, 134, 606	-
June 2004	3, 185, 668	+1.6%
June 2005	3, 242, 806	+1.8%
June 2006	3, 282, 611	+1.2%
June 2007	3, 345, 100	+1.9%
June 2008	3, 420, 000	+2.2%

#### 6 NSW Full-Time Equivalent public sector workforce, 1999-2008

The following table shows the Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Workforce in the NSW public sector: Full-time employees are those who usually work 35 hours or more a week. Reference to the FTE workforce is defined in the [Glossary](#) as

A standardised way of describing the workforce based on the total number of ordinary time paid hours worked (excluding overtime and unpaid work). The FTE workforce describes the total number of full-time employees required to account for all ordinary time paid hours work.

This is not a 'headcount' of the total number of employees who are employed at any time. For example, two employees, both working half the standard number of full-time hours for their position, will be counted as one FTE employee. Thus, FTE translates the headcount figures into a proportion of the hours worked by an equivalent full-time staff member.

It is explained that:

Since the same method of counting can be applied to each agency, FTE staffing figures provide the most accurate indication of resource levels within the NSW Public Sector.

#### NSW FTE public sector workforce<sup>7</sup>

Year average (excluding 1999 and 2000)	FTE public sector workforce
June 1999	272, 863
June 2000	270, 688
2001	283, 099
2002	284, 610
2003	283, 689
2004	288, 393
2005	292, 573
2006	297, 598
2007	303, 438
2008	310, 527

The above table shows a steady if unspectacular rise in the FTE public sector workforce in NSW, a total of 27, 428 between 2001 and 2008. This represents an increase of 9.7 percent.

#### 7 NSW Public sector employees by budget sector

The public sector workforce profile can be broken down further in a number of ways, including by budget sector.

#### FTE Size of the NSW Public Sector Workforce by Budget Sector, 1999 and 2008<sup>8</sup>

Principal Agency Budget Sector	FTE public sector workforce, June 1999	FTE public sector workforce, Year Average 2008	% difference between 1999 and 2008
General government budget department	222, 979	264, 725	+18.7%
Government trading enterprise	23, 979	8, 019	-66.5%
State owned corporation	24, 236	34, 733	+43.3%
General Government Non-budget dependent	1, 669	3, 050	+82.7%
Total	272, 863	310, 527	+13.8%

The decrease in the number of government trading enterprise employees is probably the result of a combination of factors, including privatisation (Freightcorp, for example), restructuring and contracting out. The 1999 figure of 23, 979 represented a decrease of 6.3% over the previous year, the result among other things of the privatisation of NSW TAB in 1998.

#### 8 NSW public sector employees by major policy sectors

Another way of breaking down the public sector workforce profile is by reference to policy sectors, such as health and education. In 1999 it was stated that, in terms of the headcount figures, in combination health and education accounted for around 60 percent of all NSW public sector employees. The same two policy sectors employed 60 percent in 2003 of FTE employees and 61 percent of as at June 2008.

Again, issues of comparison arise across the last decade. A note to the relevant table in the [2008 Workforce Profile](#) commented in this respect:

The policy sectors in the present report differ from previous Workforce Profile publications, from 1999-2003, and any comparison should be made with care.

For this reason the next table is restricted to the years 2004 to 2008.

**FTE public sector workforce by selected policy sectors<sup>9</sup>**

	FTE 2004	FTE 2008	%
Public order safety	36,391	37,712	+3.6
Education	85,957	92,284	+7.4
Health	84,089	94,091	+11.9
Social security & welfare	11,792	13,749	+16.6
Fuel & energy	12,586	15,276	+21.4
Transport & communications	27,633	26,987	-2.3
Housing & Community Amenities	10,282	9,000	-12.5
Recreation & culture	6,368	7,966	+25.1

In its commentary on changes in the various policy sectors, the *2008 Snapshot* stated:

In 2008 the 'Social Security and Welfare' sector grew by 6.7 % FTE employees, the highest out of any sector.

It was further noted that major changes occurred across policy sectors due to restructuring rather than actual growth. For example, the Housing and Community Amenities sector decreased by 13%, while the Recreation and Culture sector and the Fuel and Energy sector increased by 17% and 10% respectively.<sup>10</sup>

## 9 Major policy sectors by gender

Table 4 of the [2008 Workforce Profile](#) breaks the figures down further by gender for each of the policy sectors.

**FTE employees at June 2008 – selected policy sector by gender<sup>11</sup>**

	Male	Female
Public order safety	65%	35%
Education	30%	70%
Health	27%	72%
Social security & welfare	23%	77%
Fuel & energy	81%	18%
Transport & communications	79%	20%
Housing & Community Amenities	61%	38%
Recreation & culture	55%	44%

The position does not seem to have altered markedly since 2000, when it stated:

Women in the public sector tend to be concentrated in particular areas of the sector, with rates of representation in agencies like the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Community Services, the Home Care Service, and NSW Health around or exceeding 70 percent for 1999/00. These agencies, which have a major role in traditionally female dominated occupations, employ 80.1 percent of the public sector's females, but only 43.9 percent of the sector's males.<sup>12</sup>

## 10 Gender

In terms of the overall headcount figure for the NSW public sector, the broad gender mix has remained stable over the past decade or so. The following table is based on the [2000 Workforce Profile](#) and Table 2b of the [2008 Workforce Profile](#).

### Headcount of Female NSW Public Sector Employees, 2000 and 2008

	Females in NSW Public Sector	NSW Employed Persons (Females)
June 2000	58.4%	43.5%
June 2008	60.8%	44.9%

## 11 Employment category by gender

Table 5 of the [2008 Workforce Profile](#) breaks down employment category by gender. It shows that, in respect to FTE public sector employees, as at June 2008 **females** comprised:

- 55 percent of permanent employees,
- 72 percent of temporary employees, and
- 71 percent of casual employees.

In terms of **all female FTE employees only**, as at June 2008:

- 77 percent were permanent employees,
- 13 percent temporary and
- 9 percent casual.

The comparable figures for **males** were:

- 84 percent were permanent employees,
- 7 percent temporary; and
- 5 percent casual.

These figures have not changed significantly over the past five years or so. As at June 2004, of **all female FTE employees**:

- 78.5 percent were permanent employees;
- 11 per cent were temporary; and
- 9.6 percent were casual.

For **males**, the comparable figures were:

- 86.6 percent permanent employees;
- 5.6 percent temporary; and
- 4.5 percent casual.

Many issues arise, including the distribution of male and female employees between budget dependent and non-budget dependent agencies. The [2000 Workforce Profile](#) commented in this respect:

Budget dependent agencies, because of their relative overall size, have a large influence on the whole of sector gender distribution. Non-budget dependent agencies show variation in that:

- women hold the majority of permanent positions in the budget dependent sector, but the minority of permanent positions in the non-budget sectors;
- men hold the majority of temporary positions in GTEs and SOCs.<sup>13</sup>

## 12 Part-time employees

Permanent employees can be further classified as either full or part-time. The number of part-time employees can be calculated as a proportion of what are called 'non-casual employees'.<sup>14</sup> By way of a guideline, as at June 2003, 87.9 percent of of the headcount figure of NSW public sector employees was defined as 'non-casual employees'. For June 2008, the comparable figure was 88.7 percent.<sup>15</sup>

Of these non-casual employees, part-time employees comprised:

- 15.8 percent at June 2002;<sup>16</sup>
- 16.5 percent at June 2003;<sup>17</sup>
- 25.4 percent at June 2006;<sup>18</sup>
- 23.2. percent at June 2007;<sup>19</sup>
- 25.7 percent at June 2008.<sup>20</sup>

A general increase in part-time employment is apparent from these figures. A constant is the high

participation rate of females in part-time employment. As at June 2007, 86 percent of all part-time employees were women, compared to 85 percent as at June 2008.

In June 2007 the education and health sectors employed 41 percent each of the total number of part-time employees. In June 2008 the figures were 43 percent in education and 40 percent in the health sector.

### 13 Remuneration and gender

Average remuneration rates are calculated on a different basis across the Workforce Profile series, making strict comparison difficult. The following table needs to be read with care therefore and in conjunction with the relevant explanatory notes.

**Average remuneration rates, 1999-2008**

At June	Average	Male	Female
1999 <sup>21</sup>	\$44,316	\$46,619	\$42,613
2000	\$46,216	-	-
2001 <sup>22</sup>	\$47,781	\$51,372	\$45,008
2002	\$48,181	\$51,963	\$45,379
2003 <sup>23</sup>	\$51,387	\$54,978	\$48,727
2004	\$54,491	\$58,119	\$51,848
2005	\$57,085	\$60,819	\$54,459
2006	\$59,567	\$63,940	\$56,610
2007 <sup>24</sup>	\$61,222	\$62,197	\$59,158
2008	\$63,447	\$64,315	\$61,686

### 14 EEO Groups

Since 2005 data has been available on the employment of EEO groups in the NSW public sector. In terms of the headcount figures, the percentage of **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders** is:

- 2005, 1.9 percent;
- 2006, 1.9 percent;
- 2007, 2 percent;
- 2008, 2.1 percent.

In terms of the headcount figures, the percentage of **people from racial,**

**ethnic, ethno-religious minority groups** is:

- 2005, 14.1 percent;
- 2006, 13.8 percent;
- 2007, 13.6 percent;
- 2008, 13.4 percent.

This slight decline can be read against the figures for **people from a non-English speaking background**, remaining steady at 14.5 percent in 2007 and 14.6 percent in 2008.

In terms of the headcount figures, the percentage of **people with a disability** is:

- 2005, 4.6 percent;
- 2006, 4.8 percent;
- 2007, 4.5 percent;
- 2008, 3.9 percent.

In terms of the headcount figures, the percentage of **people with a disability requiring work-related adjustment** is:

- 2005, 1.4 percent
- 2006, 1.3 percent;
- 2007, 1.6 percent;
- 2008, 1.15 percent.<sup>25</sup>

### 15 Age

The median age in the NSW public sector in 1999 was 43 years (males 44 years, females 42 years). The [1999 Workforce Profile](#) commented:

The public sector workforce tends to be older than the total labour force, with considerably fewer workers in the under 25 year of age group and more in the older age groups, particularly in the range 35 to 54 years.

In 1999 the under 25 age-bracket comprised only 5.6 percent of the public sector workforce, but 18 percent of the NSW labour force.

The same broad picture remained in place in 2008 when the median age of a NSW public sector employee was 44 years (males 45 years, females 44 years). This was 5 years older than the median age for all NSW employed persons.

The largest age group was the 45-54 age-bracket that made up 31 percent of the sector. The 35-44 age-bracket comprised 26 percent of the sector.

The under 25 age-bracket, on the other hand, was only 5 percent of the sector, compared to 18 percent of NSW employed persons.

## 16 Regions

A feature of the Workforce Profiles from 2001 to 2007 was a break down of NSW public sector employees by region.

The [2001 Workforce Profile](#) noted in this respect:

At June 2001, 36.9 percent of public sector employees worked outside the Sydney metropolitan region. This compares to 33.8 percent of all employed persons in New South Wales.

The same report continued:

Public sector employees constituted an estimated 10.4 percent of all employed persons in the Sydney metropolitan region. In non-metropolitan regions, the percentage of employed persons who were public sector employees ranged from 14.2 in the north and north-western regions of the state to 10.4 in the southern regions.

### Headcount size of public sector workforce by region, June 2001

	Public sector employees %	NSW employed persons %	NSW labour force %
Hunter	8.9	8.2	8.6
Illawarra and South Eastern	8.2	8.4	8.4
Murray-Murrumbidgee	4.2	4.4	4.4
Northern, Far West and North-Western	9.0	6.9	6.9
Richmond-Tweed and Mid-North Coast	6.7	5.9	6.1
Sydney	63.1	66.2	65.6

The above is based on Table 8 of the [2001 Workforce Profile](#). The table below is based on Table 10 of the [2007 Workforce Profile](#).

### Headcount size of public sector workforce by region, June 2007

	Public sector employees %	NSW employed persons %	NSW labour force %
Hunter	9	8	8
Illawarra and South Eastern	8	8	8
Murray-Murrumbidgee	4	4	4
Northern, Far West and North-Western	9	7	8
Richmond-Tweed and Mid-North Coast	8	7	7
Sydney	62	65	65

These are 'headcount' figures and therefore include all persons working in the public sector, be it for a day or on a permanent full-time basis. They do not provide a picture of the FTE

public sector workforce across the regions.

The [2008 Workforce Profile](#) does not update this data.

### 17 NSW Public health sector

Table 6 of the [2008 NSW Workforce Profile Snapshot Report](#) breaks the figures for each policy sector down further by employment category. For example, the 94,652.91 FTE employees in Health as at June 2008 comprised the following employment categories:

Permanent	77, 167.56
Temporary	12, 031, 90
Casual	4, 059, 10
Contract	180, 52
Other	1, 213.82

Further details on the Health sector workforce are set out in the Department's annual reports. The following table is based on the [Annual Report 2007/08](#) (page 238). Note that some variations are found between Department of Health and the Premier's Department data sets.

**FTE Staff Employed by NSW Department of Health, 2003-2008**

Year	Staffing level
June 2003	83, 270
June 2004	84, 727
June 2005	87, 787
June 2006	89, 549
June 2007	92, 192
June 2008	94, 157

The same report shows the 'clinical staff' as a proportion of total staff from June 2003 to June 2008, as follows:

Year	Clinical staff
June 2003	69.6%
June 2004	70.1%
June 2005	70.7%
June 2006	71.9%

June 2007	72.3%
June 2008	72.6%

### 18 NSW education sector

Based on table 6 of the [2008 NSW Workforce Profile Snapshot Report](#), the 96,661.53 FTE employees in the Education sector as at June 2008 comprised the following employment categories:

Permanent	66,682.51
Temporary	14,127.70
Casual	15,606.25
Contract	99.20
Other	145.87

According to the [Department of Education and Training](#) website, as at June 2007 it had 95,767 FTE staff. Of this number, around:

- 50,000 were permanent school teachers
- 10,500 were TAFE teachers
- 16,500 were support staff in schools
- 4,000 were support staff in TAFE.

It was stated that 95 percent of staff provide frontline services.

### 19 NSW Public order safety sector

Based on table 6 of the [2008 NSW Workforce Profile Snapshot Report](#), the 37,908.89 FTE employees in the Public Order Safety sector as at June 2008 comprised the following employment categories:

Permanent	35,028.64
Temporary	1,560.49
Casual	178.72
Contract	312.29
Other	828.74

Based on its annual report for 2007-08, NSW Police employed a total of 19,319 staff – comprising 15,324



police officers, 3,837 administrative officers and 158 Ministerial officers.<sup>26</sup>

Based on its annual report for 2007-08, the NSW Department of Corrective Services employed a total of 6,762.41 FTE staff. These are divided into two categories: (a) Custody of Inmates and Detainees, with 4,668.37 staff and 1,269.23 administrative, management and other staff; and (b) Community Supervision with 666.6 operational staff and 158.2 administrative, management and other staff.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [2006 Workforce Profile](#), p 28.

<sup>2</sup> These are persons over 15 years of age.

<sup>3</sup> *The Official Year Book of NSW 1931-32*, p 732; *The Official Year Book of NSW 1959*, p 211. Note that comparable figures do not appear in later editions.

<sup>4</sup> Source: *2001-07 Workforce Profiles*; and the *2008 Snapshot - NSW Premier's Department*

<sup>5</sup> Even within this one data set problems of direct comparison arise. For example, the [2001 Workforce Profile](#) reported that the increase of 11, 906 in total employee numbers (a rise of 3.7 percent) in that year was 'due to a revised and more accurate method of counting casuals'.

<sup>6</sup> Figure 1, [2008 Workforce Profile](#).

<sup>7</sup> *1999-2007 Workforce Profiles*; [2008 Snapshot - NSW Premier's Department](#)

<sup>8</sup> [1999 Workforce Profile](#), p 2; Table 1 [2008 Workforce Profile](#).

<sup>9</sup> Table 2 [2004 Workforce Profile](#); Table 2

[2008 Workforce Profile](#).

<sup>10</sup> These changes are a result of the Department of Natural Resources (Housing and Community Amenities) being disbanded and its divisions being merged predominately into the Department of Environment and Climate Change (Recreation and Culture) and Department of Water and Energy (Fuel and Energy).

<sup>11</sup> Table 4 [2008 Workforce Profile](#).

<sup>12</sup> [2000 Workforce Profile](#), p 12.

<sup>13</sup> [2000 Workforce Profile](#), p 12.

<sup>14</sup> 'Non-casual employees' is defined to mean 'All persons engaged to work and paid through a NSW government agency payroll system, excluding employees working for an hourly rate (casual), sessional, seasonal and retained staff.

<sup>15</sup> [2008 Workforce Profile](#), Table 20.

<sup>16</sup> [2003 Workforce Profile](#), p 8.

<sup>17</sup> [2003 Workforce Profile](#), p 8.

<sup>18</sup> [2006 Workforce Profile](#), p 3.

<sup>19</sup> [2007 Snapshot](#).

<sup>20</sup> [2008 Snapshot](#).

<sup>21</sup> For 1999 and 2000, calculated on the basis of 'the average full-time equivalent remuneration rate', or 'the average remuneration rate for the full-time worker',.

<sup>22</sup> For 2001 and 2002, calculated on the basis of the 'average remuneration rate for non-casual employees'.

<sup>23</sup> For 2003, 04, 05 and 06, calculated on the basis of the 'average [annualised in 2006] full-time remuneration rate for non-casual employees'.

<sup>24</sup> For 2007 and 2008, calculated on the basis of the 'median annualised remuneration rate for NSW non-casual public sector employees'.

<sup>25</sup> For 2007 and 2008, the EEO Groups data is based on Table 11 of the *Workforce Profiles* for those years.

<sup>26</sup> NSW Police Force, [Annual Report 2007-08](#), p 129. The report does not say whether these are FTE staff. For a commentary see – B Robins, 'Police force headcount a deception, says union', [SMH](#), 27 July 2009.

<sup>27</sup> NSW Department of Correct, [Annual Report 2007-08](#), p 120.

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