

# Part Four

## Our people



Part Four provides information on the NBA's staff. It details the NBA's staffing profile and describes human resource programs and activities.

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

## 4.1 Staffing

The National Blood Authority (NBA) is fortunate to have staff members with an immense diversity of skills, knowledge and background. This covers clinical practice research and laboratory practices; commercial contract negotiation and project management; logistics and inventory management; information technology (IT); communication and secretariat support; and business planning and risk management. The NBA 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 begun their careers.

In 2007–08, the NBA was successful in attracting staff with international experience in blood management, the pharmaceutical industry, clinical practice and communications and publication design.



### Workforce planning, staff retention and turnover

Staffing levels in the NBA fluctuated in 2007–08, as it has in previous years. The peak period of staff turnover took place during the second quarter.

Through the capability strategy developed during the year, we applied intense focus to maximising our retention rates through supporting the development and implementation of a number of innovative recruitment initiatives and reforming our induction process (see 'Capability strategy' in Part Three: Our performance).

Part of this project has been to review and re-emphasise our culture of encouraging staff development and learning, and to further build on our supportive and flexible work environment.

The average length of service for NBA staff is approximately two years. We are fortunate that 58% of our ongoing staff have been with the NBA for more than two years, and of those, 48% have been here for more than four years. This strengthens the NBA's knowledge base and professional expertise.

Our overall staffing numbers as at 30 June 2008 are 52 employees, of which 44 are ongoing staff members and eight are non-ongoing staff members.

Current salary levels under the Collective Agreement are set out in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.1** NBA staff numbers, as of 30 June 2008

Substantive role classification	Female full time	Female part time	Male full time	Male part time	Total
Statutory office holder	1				
Senior executive service	1		3		
Health economist		1			
EL 2	4		3		
EL Legal		1			
APS 6 Legal	1				
EL 1	8	1	9		
APS 6	7	1	2		
APS 5	3	2			
APS 4	3				
APS 3	1				
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>52</b>

APS = Australian Public Service; EL = executive level.

**Table 4.2** Salary levels

Classification	CA Minimum	CA Maximum	AWA Maximum
Executive Level 2	\$91 972	\$103 664	\$124 000
Executive Level 1	\$77 089	\$87 935	\$95 864
Legal 1	\$77 089	\$93 333	
APS Level 6	\$62 730	\$70 768	
APS Level 5	\$56 864	\$60 017	
APS Level 4	\$52 281	\$55 241	
APS Level 3	\$46 144	\$51 149	

APS = Australian Public Service; AWA = Australian workplace agreement; CA = collective agreement.

Performance-based pay totalling \$63,479.35 was awarded to four senior executive or equivalent staff members following assessment against their agreed work outcomes.

At 30 June 2008, 36 staff members were employed under the Collective Agreement. Fifteen 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 Collective Agreement, Australian workplace agreements, leave and superannuation.

A mix of non-salary benefits are available to nominated officers including leased vehicle, airline membership, superannuation, and home-based IT equipment.

## 4.2 Work culture and conditions

The NBA has an active staff participation forum, which is made up of representatives from all teams within the NBA and is chaired by a representative from the executive group. One of the staff participation forum's major achievements in 2007–08 was the successful negotiation of the NBA 2007–10 Collective Agreement, with 97% of staff members voting affirmative to the new agreement.

Since the changes to the employment bargaining framework introduced in February 2008, new staff are employed under the NBA Collective Agreement or, where appropriate, through a common law contract or Section 24(1) Determination of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

2007–08 also saw the launch of the NBA's Wellbeing Program, which gives staff the opportunity to participate in weekly lunch time activities such as organised walks, stress buster comic relief and other wellbeing activities. Over 26% of the NBA's staff participated in the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) lunch time fun run in May 2008, many of whom completed the 7 km course in under an hour. This resulted in an overall fifth-place victory for the NBA team.

An NBA values statement was drafted in April to demonstrate the behaviours, ethics and overall approach that are important to staff and management. Clear commitment has been given to keep the statement alive by regular celebrations recognising excellent examples of the demonstration of values.

### NBA values statement

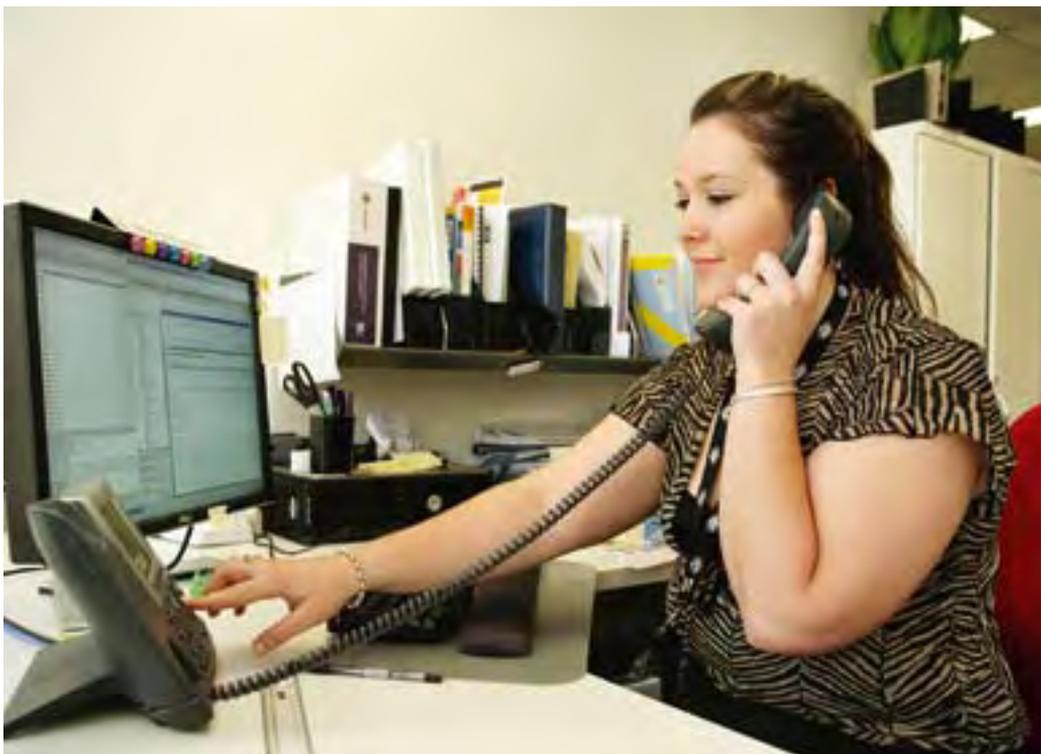
#### The Golden Rules of the NBA

1. Actively listen, think and encourage engagement.
2. Criticise sparingly, praise generously.
3. Be part of the team.
4. Take responsibility for quality outcomes.



### What our values mean for how we work

We take responsibility for our outcomes	All staff proactively analyse issues and create solutions. We clarify expectations, set clear goals and maintain a commitment to work-life balance
We praise and support each other	We celebrate achievements; We ask – ‘What can I do to help?’
We encourage ongoing personal development	We take pride in learning and sharing this learning with our teams and do things smarter and better
We seek to always understand	We listen to and value all points of view. We never interrupt and we are patient
We are respectful	We appreciate the workloads of all staff. We walk away from criticism of individuals or activities. We offer positive views.
We are courteous	We are on time, we are polite, we accept and give feedback on performance and behaviour
We act on things that make a difference	We strive for personal leadership in our assigned tasks. We ensure we understand the links of today's tasks to the future of the sector



## 4.3 Professional and personal development

The majority of NBA staff members participate in a Professional Development Scheme. A wide range of training programs is available to staff to extend their knowledge and skills.

We take pride in ensuring our people are given opportunities in various arenas to develop and enhance skills through either:

- internal training and our knowledge management forums
- external training through conferences and seminars or accredited training organisations and learning institutions.

Over the past year, one focus has been providing those new to the public service with an understanding of how it works and how different the Australian Public Service (APS) is to private industry. For this we use the programs of the Australian Public Service Commission, as well as internal induction processes and sourced training on APS Code of Conduct and Values. The SES team has focussed on leadership, communication and networking. Compliance and governance training is ongoing as is the development of processes necessary for high performing organisations.

It is with pride that in 2007–08, 88% of staff undertook at least the target of seven days training. This commitment not only illustrates the passion NBA staff have to perform at a consistently high level but also our culture of valuing constant learning and growth in our skills and knowledge base.

This commitment is providing strong benefit for other Canberra based stakeholders as evidenced in the attendance of representatives

from the TGA, DoHA and ACT Health at a number of our knowledge management forums. Our appreciation is extended to our fellows, suppliers and colleagues who have given generously of their time in presenting a range of sessions.

The skills and capabilities survey conducted in 2006 provides an excellent base for delivering learning outcomes, and supports our business needs. This survey will be redone in the first quarter of 2008–09 to ensure our staffing capabilities match our operational needs.



## 4.4 Productivity gains

The NBA has made considerable savings from the reduction of staff turnover in the second half of the financial year. The annual staff turnover rate was reduced to 26% (annualised) six monthly in the second. This has had a

positive impact on improving corporate knowledge, skills, expertise, and reducing recruitment costs. Turnover tends to be at more junior levels with the loss of only two members of our senior leadership team of 12.

## 4.5 Commonwealth Disability Strategy

The NBA has implemented the principles of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy (CDS). Internal staff member training incorporated education and information about the needs of people with disabilities in the workplace. The NBA continues to make the organisation accessible for people with disabilities through the following measures:

- ensuring employment policies and procedures comply with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- ensuring managers and recruitment officers apply reasonable adjustment policies
- 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

A change in occupational health and safety (OH&S) legislation means that the NBA must achieve a new compliance in a number of health and safety management requirements. We have appointed a new health and safety representative, and have scheduled appropriate training for staff members.

Our OH&S assessments are conducted by an external OH&S expert and all employees regularly have their workstation assessed. All OH&S issues are addressed within 24 hours, as articulated in the NBA's OH&S policy. This year, the NBA also organised influenza vaccinations for interested staff as a core element of our Business Continuity Plan (BCP) preparation.

