

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Australian Public Service Commission

Additional Estimates Hearings 2002-2003, 10-11 February 2003

Question: PM 67

Topic: Australian Public Service Commission's Certified Agreement 2000 - 2003

Hansard Page: 234

Senator Forshaw asked: What productivity improvement measures were adopted as a result of the certified agreement?

Answer:

The 2000-2003 Certified agreement encompassed via four major productivity improvement measures:

- structural changes within the Commission;
- resource savings from implementing a 3 year agreement process;
- abolition of the team recognition and reward scheme; and
- increased productivity commitment to revised work practices and a more productive, client focused culture appropriate to the Commission's contemporary role.

Examples of gains achieved from commitment to the revised work practices and culture are:

- higher participant numbers in development activities have been managed without the need for a corresponding increase in staff resources. This has been achieved via the implementation of more efficient work practices following the Commission's restructure and a more adaptive culture, which formed the major platform of the agreement's efficiencies;
- implementation of the new gazette systems and the move to annual subscription for notices rather than weekly invoicing;
- implementation of the on-line course registration system (E-sched) resulting in the cessation of the use of outsourced registration providers;
- interfacing of E-sched with the Commission's Financial Information Management System (SAP) for the automatic production of invoices, and with the Commission's banking services provider (Westpac) for immediate processing of credit card payments, removing the need for temporary processing staff in peak periods;
- greater use of Commission premises for training and selection processes;
- implementation of bulk stationary purchasing to achieve economies of scale;

- use of video conferencing facilities for selection committees and regular meetings to reduce travel costs and improve the use of staff time (less time in transit);
- implementation of electronic procurement, allowing on-line purchasing and payment;
- Gazette on-line service through reduction in costs and better service to clients; and
- greater adoption of electronic publications, increased use of online service delivery and revised intranet.

**Contextual comments for Senate Estimates Committee Questions on Notice
PM65-PM68**

The PSMPC Certified Agreement 2000-2003 was certified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) in May 2000.

Implementation was reported on in the Commission's 2000/01 Annual Report. This indicated that implementation was progressing smoothly and listed factors contributing to the funding of the Agreement.

The Agreement included the possibility of an additional salary increase from July 2002 if further productivity gains could be identified during the life of the Agreement subject to certain conditions. An annual evaluation of the performance of the Agreement conducted in July 2001 indicated that these gains had been achieved and that further gains were being realised. On that basis the Commission sought to vary the Agreement to provide an additional 1% salary increase. This variation was certified by the AIRC on 8 November 2002.

The evaluation and variation were reported in the Commission's 2001/02 Annual Report.

The Agreement expires in May 2003 and discussions commenced through the Commission's Workplace Relations Committee during 2002 on a successor agreement.