



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

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February 2005

Jonathan Curtis
Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on the
Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Curtis

Please find attached answers to questions on notice which I undertook to provide to the Committee on Tuesday 8 February 2005 (**Attachments A and C**).

In addition, (and as agreed with the Secretariat) my department has undertaken to provide a consolidated response to a question concerning attendees (including the position held and Department represented) for each meeting of the Secretaries' Group on Indigenous Affairs held since July 2004. This answer can be found at **Attachment B**.

Yours sincerely

(Dr Peter Shergold)

ATTACHMENT A

Senator Carr - How many Indigenous SES officers are there? (page 31 Hansard)

At 30 June 2004, there were 24 ongoing Indigenous senior executive service (SES) employees (source: APS Employment Database). These are the latest available accurate and verified data on Indigenous employment in the Australian Public Service (APS). This compares to 13 Indigenous ongoing SES employees at 30 June 1995.

I would also like to take this opportunity to expand on some of the responses that I gave to the Committee.

Firstly, in my response to questions relating to Indigenous employment within the APS (page 13 Hansard), I indicated that figures related to 1996 when in fact they related to 1995. In all other respects they are correct. The examples that I gave related to the increased proportion of Indigenous staff at the executive and SES levels between 1996 and 2004 (4.0 per cent to 9.2 per cent, and 0.4 to 0.8 per cent respectively). These comparisons were in fact for the years 1995 and 2004. These data relate to the number of ongoing Indigenous employees as a proportion of all ongoing Indigenous employees within the APS, as set out in Table 1 below.

In addition, Table 1 shows the number of ongoing Indigenous employees according to their classification as a percentage of total ongoing APS employees at those classifications for the years 1995 and 2004.

Table 1

Classification	1995			2004		
	No.	% of total ongoing Indigenous employees	% of total ongoing APS employees for each classification group	No.	% of total ongoing Indigenous employees	% of total ongoing APS employees for each classification group
APS 1-2	1122	34.7	3.7	291	10.3	3.7
APS 3-4	1283	39.7	3.2	1390	49.0	3.1
APS 5-6	597	18.5	1.7	834	29.4	2.0
Executive	128	4.0	0.6	260	9.2	1.0
SES	13	0.4	0.7	24	0.8	1.3
Trainee	34	1.1	16.2	30	1.1	8.8
Graduate Trainee	26	0.8	2.9	10	0.4	2.7
Other	31	1.0	1.7	0	-	-
TOTAL	3234	100.0	2.5	2839	100.0	2.3

Source: Australian Public Service Commission

This table demonstrates that Indigenous representation as a percentage of total ongoing APS employees at the executive and SES levels has increased between 1995 and 2004. It also indicates clearly that Indigenous public servants are now proportionately more senior than a decade ago.

Secondly, the Committee expressed an interest in the longer term change in Indigenous employment in the APS, namely over the last ten years. In response to this, I noted that the proportion of public servants who are Indigenous has remained fairly stable over the last ten years. Table 2 below shows the proportion of ongoing Indigenous Australians employed in the APS as a percentage of total ongoing staff numbers.

Table 2 - Number of ongoing Indigenous Australians employed in the APS as a percentage of total ongoing staffing numbers.

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
2.5%	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%

Source: Australian Public Service Commission

Table 2 demonstrates that the percentage of APS employees who are Indigenous fell slightly between 2003 and 2004, from 2.4 per cent to 2.3 per cent, and that there have been small fluctuations in these figures from year to year.

I also noted that the representation of Indigenous people at executive and SES levels has improved over the last ten years. While it has since been noted that the absolute number of Indigenous people at the SES level decreased slightly between 2003 and 2004 (from 27 to 24), it is nevertheless true that the representation of Indigenous people at this level (both proportionately and in absolute terms) has increased since 1995 as noted in Table 1. The Committee may also be interested to know that between 2003 and 2004, the number of ongoing Indigenous employees at the executive level increased from 247 to 260.

As I previously indicated to the Committee, longer term adjustments in Indigenous employment in the APS relate to the changing nature of the public service itself, in particular the decline in APS1-2 level positions. The fact that Indigenous people were 3.7 per cent of APS 1-2 level positions in both 1995 and 2004 indicates that the decline in the number of Indigenous junior staff matches the overall reduction in junior positions in the APS.

ATTACHMENT B

Can the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet provide to the Committee a list of attendees for the Secretary's Group meetings which have been held since July 2004, including the position held and Department represented?

Membership of the Secretaries' Group on Indigenous Affairs includes myself as well as Secretaries of departments with responsibility for delivering programmes and services to Indigenous Australians. However, Deputy Secretaries may attend as well.

Secretaries' Group Meetings – Dates and Attendees 6 July 2004 - 1 February 2005

(1) 6 July 2004

Secretaries

- Peter Shergold (Chair), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- David Borthwick, Department of Environment and Heritage
- Robert Cornall, Attorney-General's Department
- Bill Farmer, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- Ken Matthews, Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Helen Williams, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Deputy Secretaries

- Bob Correll, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Stephen Hunter, Department of Family and Community Services
- Mary Murnane, Department of Health and Ageing
- Patricia Scott, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Bernie Yates, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

(2) 3 August 2004

Secretaries

- Peter Shergold (Chair), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- David Borthwick, Department of Environment and Heritage
- Peter Boxall, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Robert Cornall, Attorney-General's Department
- Bill Farmer, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- Jane Halton, Department of Health and Ageing
- Jeff Harmer, Department of Education, Science and Training
- Ken Matthews, Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Mark Sullivan, Department of Family and Community Services
- Helen Williams, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Deputy Secretaries

- Phil Bowen, Department of Finance and Administration
- Wendy Jarvie, Department of Education, Science and Training
- Patricia Scott, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

- Peter Vaughan, Acting Deputy Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

(3) 7 September 2004

Secretaries

- Peter Shergold (Chair), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- David Borthwick, Department of Environment and Heritage
- Peter Boxall, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Robert Cornall, Attorney-General's Department
- Bill Farmer, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- Jane Halton, Department of Health and Ageing
- Jeff Harmer, Department of Education, Science and Training
- Ken Matthews, Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Mark Sullivan, Department of Family and Community Services
- Helen Williams, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Deputy Secretaries

- Phil Bowen, Department of Finance and Administration
- Bob Correll, Deputy Secretary, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Patricia Scott, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Bernie Yates, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

(4) 5 October 2004

Secretaries

- Peter Shergold (Chair), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- David Borthwick, Department of Environment and Heritage
- Peter Boxall, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Robert Cornall, Attorney-General's Department
- Bill Farmer, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- Jeff Harmer, Department of Education, Science and Training
- Ken Matthews, Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Helen Williams, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Deputy Secretaries

- Mary Murnane, Department of Health and Ageing
- Patricia Scott, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

(5) 2 November 2004

Secretaries

- Peter Shergold (Chair), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- David Borthwick, Department of Environment and Heritage
- Peter Boxall, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Robert Cornall, Attorney-General's Department
- Bill Farmer, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs

- Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- Jeff Harmer, Family and Community Services
- Jane Halton, Department of Health and Ageing
- Lisa Paul, Department of Education, Science and Training
- Mike Taylor, Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Helen Williams, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Deputy Secretaries

- Joanna Davidson (Acting), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Bernie Yates, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

(6) 12 November 2004

Secretaries

- David Borthwick, Department of Environment and Heritage
- Peter Boxall, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- Jane Halton, Department of Health and Ageing
- Jeff Harmer, Department of Family and Community Services
- Mike Taylor, Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Helen Williams, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts

Deputy Secretaries

- Joanna Davidson (Chair – standing in on behalf of Peter Shergold), Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Wendy Jarvie, Department of Education, Science and Training
- Bernie Yates, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

(7) 1 February 2005

Secretaries

- Peter Shergold (Chair), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- David Borthwick, Department of Environment and Heritage
- Peter Boxall, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- Robert Cornall, Attorney-General's Department
- Bill Farmer, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- Wayne Gibbons, Associate Secretary, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- Jane Halton, Department of Health and Ageing
- Jeff Harmer, Department of Family and Community Services
- Mike Taylor, Department of Transport and Regional Services
- Helen Williams, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Art

Deputy Secretaries

- Joanna Davidson (Acting), Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Bernie Yates, Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

ATTACHMENT C

Senator Ridgeway – Property transfers to establish a mother’s group in northern New South Wales have been reassessed by the Department of Family and Community Services according to a different criteria, rather than a common vision. How do you respond to that? Has the money been transferred back into consolidated revenue? (page 33 transcript)

The same question has been directed to the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS). I am advised that FaCS will be providing the Committee with a response.