

Reporting against other statutory requirements

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ACIAR Values

We are committed to partnerships that:

- help reduce poverty
- respect each other's values, cultures and laws.

In our work we believe in:

- open, honest communication that is personally and culturally sensitive, within and beyond ACIAR
- scientific and professional excellence to guide decision making
- innovation and creativity within the context of the APS values
- efficient use of resources.

As an organisation we value:

- the commitment of our people and partners to the mission and work of ACIAR
- integrity, consultation, professionalism, fairness and ethics
- a satisfying workplace.

Management of human resources

Snapshot of ACIAR staff as at 30 June 2007

Staff employed under the PS Act	48* FTE: 43.84
Median length of APS service	6.2 years
Median age	50
Women as % of total	54.2%
NESB staff as % of total	16.7%
Part-time staff as % of total	20.8%
Non-ongoing staff as % of total	33.3%
Employee turnover for 2006–07	25.3%

* excludes five inoperative employees

Ms Sue Allen, Personnel Administrator



ACIAR 4-year perspective

Staff employed under the Public Service Act 1999

	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
Staff at 30 June	47	45	48	48
Staff (FTE)	44.3	42.04	44.44	43.84
Base salaries	\$3,362,474	\$3,159,222	\$3,483,490	\$3,579,420
Cessations	11	12	6	13
Staff turnover	23.4%	26.7%	12.8%	25.3%
Women	57.4%	51.1%	47.9%	54.2%
Part-time	14.9%	20%	20.8%	20.8%
Non-ongoing	21.3%	26.7%	31.3%	33.3%
Learning and development activities	\$85,596	\$44,158	\$66,793	\$60,507

Overseas staff

	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
Staff (FTE)	18.8	20.5	20.5	20.5
Base salaries	\$505,919	\$440,224	\$575,523	\$664,683
Learning and development activities	\$8,047	\$8,990	\$5,344	\$6,147

Performance management

ACIAR's performance management scheme operates on a 3-point rating scale and employees who are rated as 'meets expectations' or 'exceeds expectations' in the annual performance assessment receive an increment (where they are not on the top of a salary range). In the cycle concluded in June 2007 there were 43 completed assessments. Thirty employees were rated as 'meets expectations' and 10 as 'exceeds expectations', with two employees rated as being between meeting and exceeding expectations. Of the 42 employees rated as meeting expectations or higher, 12 were advanced one salary point. There was one employee rated as not meeting expectations.

Learning and development

In 2006–07 ACIAR spent \$60,507 on external training for its Canberra-based employees, which averages at \$1,261 per employee. This expenditure does not take into account in-house training and workshops conducted by consultants for ACIAR employees or the attendance of Research Program Managers at work-related conferences and seminars in Australia and overseas. ACIAR continues to provide substantial study assistance for formal study and employees are encouraged to take up broader development opportunities to enhance their skills.

Organisation bonuses

Employees rated as 'meets expectations' or higher in the performance cycle, who have worked for ACIAR for at least 9 months and who were still employed by ACIAR on 30 June 2007, received a bonus of \$2,000 in recognition of ACIAR's achievements against the 2006–07 Annual Operational Plan. Part-time employees received a pro rata payment based on hours worked. Thirty-seven employees received the performance bonus with payments totaling \$64,740.

Classification*	Number of employees	Aggregated amount	Average bonus payment
APS2-4	11	\$19,000	\$1,727
APS5-6	10	\$17,160	\$1,716
EL1-EL2	6	\$8,580	\$1,430
RPM Group, incl CoD1	10	\$20,000	\$2,000
Total for agency	37	\$64,740	\$1,750

* Due to the small number of staff employed, including some classification levels with less than five employees, classifications have been aggregated to ensure that payments to individuals cannot be identified.

Occupational health and safety

There were no accidents or dangerous occurrences giving rise to issue of any notices or directions under the *OHS (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*.

ACIAR employees and their families have access to a free Employee Assistance Program that provides professional counselling services and a variety of other services including career and personal planning and individual assistance to line managers. The provider reported that there was a lower usage of this service in 2006–07.

ACIAR promotes a healthy lifestyle for employees by providing access to annual health assessments, subsidising healthy lifestyle initiatives, arranging annual flu injections and providing pre-travel assessments for overseas travellers which includes vaccinations and medical kits.

During this reporting period, ACIAR developed a Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan in accordance with Australian Government guidelines and appointed a Pandemic Influenza Contact Officer to monitor developments in this area.

ACIAR engages a qualified workplace assessor to conduct ergonomic assessments for new employees and employees who experience discomfort at their workstation and modifications are made to work practices and work areas as required.

Commonwealth Disability Strategy (CDS)

ACIAR is committed to ensuring that all people seeking employment have fair access to employment opportunities. Applicants with disabilities are encouraged to identify their disability when applying for vacancies and ACIAR's Recruitment and Selection Policy provides advice to selection panels on making provision for the needs of these applicants. People seeking employment with ACIAR can find guidance and assistance on the recruitment page of ACIAR's website.

ACIAR's Certified Agreement and supporting HR Manual provides a framework and guidelines for dispute resolution and internal review of employment actions.

All-staff workshop

ACIAR Week was held from 5–9 February 2007 with local and overseas employees working through an agenda which included forward planning and discussion of priority issues facing the Centre and a number of workshops and information sessions.

Workplace diversity

In this reporting period ACIAR's policies and guidelines were reviewed by a specialist management consultant to determine if there are any aspects of our people management practices that might inhibit our ability to recruit a diverse workforce. The consultant concluded that ACIAR's employment practices are very progressive and flexible and that they provide a good foundation to accommodate people of diverse backgrounds.

Comparison of workforce statistics against service-wide figures

Category	30 June 2004		30 June 2005		30 June 2006	
	APS	ACIAR ¹	APS	ACIAR ²	APS	ACIAR ³
Ongoing	93.2%	77.8%	92.4%	75.6%	91.9%	70.2%
Non-ongoing	6.8%	22.2%	7.6%	24.4%	8.1%	29.8%
Full-time	89.9%	86.7%	88.7%	80.0%	88.7%	78.7%
Part-time	10.1%	13.3%	11.3%	20.0%	11.3%	21.3%
Women	53.1%	55.6%	54.2%	53.3%	55.8%	48.9%
ATSI	2.4%	0%	2.2%	0%	2.0%	0%
NESB1	5.3%	13.3%	5.4%	13.3%	5.6%	12.8%
PWD	3.9%	0%	3.8%	0%	3.4%	4.3%
Under 25	4.3%	2.2%	4.0%	4.4%	4.4%	4.3%
25–34	25.5%	13.4%	25.1%	13.3%	24.8%	12.8%
35–44	30.9%	11.1%	30.5%	15.6%	30.0%	17.0%
45–54	30.0%	42.2%	30.3%	26.7%	30.1%	29.7%
55 and over	9.3%	31.1%	10.1%	40.0%	10.6%	36.2%
APS1-2	6.3%	6.7%	5.1%	2.2%	4.5%	2.1%
APS3-4	36.6%	33.3%	35.7%	33.3%	36.1%	32.0%
APS5-6	33.6%	15.6%	34.1%	17.8%	33.8%	32.0%
EL	21.3%	30.0%	22.6%	44.5%	23.0%	44.7%
SES ⁴	1.5%	4.4%	1.6%	2.2%	1.7%	2.1%
Graduate/trainee	0.6%	0%	0.9%	0%	1.1%	2.1%

1 Based on 45 APS employees, excluding the Director

2 Based on 45 APS employees, excluding the Director

3 Based on 47 APS employees, excluding the Director

4 SES figures include 1 SES equivalent employee

Productivity savings—Certified Agreement Year 2

ACIAR estimated that the 3.5% salary increase to be paid in the second year of the Certified Agreement would equate to a cost of \$294,366. During 2006–07, savings of \$448,146 were achieved through:

- movement of employees from full-time to part-time
- positions being filled at lower levels or at lower salary points
- positions being vacant for periods of time
- employees taking unpaid leave
- savings on superannuation due to vacant positions.

Other productivity benefits were achieved by abolishing leave banking for Research Program Managers and the introduction of a simplified travel acquittal system.

A table showing the comparison of costs and savings over the first 2 years of the Agreement is below.

	Year 1 2005–06	Year 2 2006–07
Projected cost	\$155,236 (4% increase)	\$294,366 (3.5% increase)
Actual savings	\$285,055	\$448,146
Net savings	\$129,819	\$153,780

In addition, funding was allocated to initiatives relating to training and fellowships without additional staffing supplementation. From 2005–06 to 2006–07 the number of students has increased by 54% which equates to a saving of \$36,629 (based on salary and superannuation at the APS6 level). This figure is not included in the above table.

A breakdown of staff numbers in each broadband at 30 June 2007 is in Appendix 5 (page 217).

Sick Leave and Absenteeism

ACIAR's sick and personal leave usage is provided with figures for the previous 2 years for comparison purposes. The significant increase in the use of sick leave in 2006–07 is due to two employees having critical illnesses during this reporting period.

Category	Type of leave	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
1	Paid or unpaid sick leave	338.44 days (3.0% of available working days)	343.42 days (2.95% of available working days)	451.2 days (3.91% of available working days)
2	Paid or unpaid personal leave	108.92 days (0.95%)	73.11 days (0.63%)	56.4 days (0.49%)
Total		447.36 days (3.95%)	416.53 days (3.57%)	507.6 days (4.4%)

External scrutiny and auditing

Reports by the Auditor General and the ANAO

The only ACIAR-specific audit completed in 2006–07 was of the 2005–06 financial statements, (unqualified).

Through its Audit Committee the Centre looks at the findings and recommendations of relevant Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) reports for their applicability to ACIAR. These audits include the following across agency audits:

- Audit Report No. 5—The Senate Order for the Departmental and Agency Contracts
- Audit Report No. 6—Recordkeeping including the Management of Electronic Records
- Audit Report No. 15—Audits of Financial Statements of Australian Government Entities for the Period Ended 30 June 2006
- Audit Report No. 21—Implementation of the revised *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines*
- Audit Report No. 43—Managing Security Issues in Procurement and Contracting.

The Audit Committee also examines Better Practice Guides issued by the ANAO in regard to their applicability to improve systems and processes. Reports of interest were:

- Developing and Managing Contracts
- Legal Services Arrangements in Australian Government Agencies.

Judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals

There were no decisions made at either the judicial or administrative tribunal level during the 2006–07 financial year that impacted

on ACIAR. No impending decisions relating directly to ACIAR are outsourced or pending.

There are no significant developments relating to the increasing of, limiting of, or other changes to external scrutiny arrangements.

Purchasing and tendering compliance

Purchasing

ACIAR complies with the *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines* and the objectives of Commonwealth Procurement. The Centre applies value for money as the core principle in the procurement process, consistent with section 4 (4.1) of the Guidelines. ACIAR's Chief Executive Instructions include details on delegations, the spending of public moneys and dealing with public property. These instructions have been developed in accordance with the *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines*, the *Environmental Purchasing Guide* and various Finance Circulars.

Most of ACIAR's procurement falls into either: Exemption 5—procurement for the direct purpose of providing foreign assistance, or Exemption 6—procurement of research and development



services, but not the procurement of inputs to research and development undertaken by the agency, as outlined in Appendix B: *Exemptions from Mandatory Procurement Procedures*, in the *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines*.

These contracts and agreements, under Exemption 5 and 6 include: contracts for scoping and feasibility studies; appraisals relating to project design, monitoring and evaluation of programs or projects; project implementation; procurement of goods and services for projects; agreements with NGOs, other governments and international agencies; follow-up activities including workshops to disseminate project outcomes; and post-project assessments and reviews. In relation to project activities the Centre:

- publishes an Annual Operational Plan that includes areas of priority for research, developed in consultation with partner countries
- disseminates this to research providers, both within and outside Australia, inviting suitable experts to submit ideas and develop these in consultation with ACIAR's Research Program Managers.

Competitive tendering

No open purchasing (over \$80,000) involving tendering was carried out during 2006–07. ACIAR did not let any contracts for \$80,000 or more that did not provide the Auditor General access to a contractor's premises. No contracts were let in excess of \$10,000 that were exempted from publication in AusTender due to Freedom of Information exemptions.

Purchasing activities are subject to the provisions of the Chief Executive Instruction (CEI 6.02 Procurement) relating to procurement. In accordance with the *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines*, ACIAR prepared an Annual Procurement Plan for 2006–07 and this was published on AusTender.

Consultants and contracts

The policies and procedures for selecting consultants, and approving expenditure for them, are set out in the Chief Executives Instructions. The procurement method is determined having regard to the nature of the work involved and the broad cost thresholds set out in the Chief Executives Instructions.

ACIAR's reporting against the Senate Order of 20 June 2001 requiring departments and agencies to list contracts entered into with a value of more than \$100,000, that were still to be concluded or had been concluded during the previous 12 months, is available on the ACIAR website and reported separately to that outlined below.

During 2006–07, six contracts for consultancies were entered into, involving expenditure of \$175,509. The aggregate value of these contracts was \$246,200 (refer to Table 1) and compared to \$242,040 in 2005–06.

Advertising and market research

ACIAR did not enter into contracts with any advertising agencies, market researchers or polling organisations or media advertising organisations. No direct marketing of information to the public was undertaken, and ACIAR has no contracts. The Centre maintains mailing lists of project personnel and those requesting selected material.

Discretionary grants

ACIAR did not issue any discretionary grants during 2006–07 or have any ongoing grants from previous years.

Table 1: Consultants and contracts 2006–07

Consultant name	Description	Contract price	Selection process ¹	Justification ²
RSM Bird Cameron	Provision of Internal Audit Services	\$55,000	Select tender	Independent skills
Curtin University	Overseas Stakeholder Survey	\$39,870	Direct Sourcing	Need for specialised or professional services
Tim Reeves and Associates	Overseas Stakeholder Survey	\$40,330	Direct Sourcing	Need for specialised or professional services
Clayton Utz	Legal advice relevant to Uhrig review	\$11,890	Direct Sourcing	Need for specialised or professional services
Centre for International Economics	ACIAR project database	\$49,610	Direct Sourcing	Need for specialised or professional services
Centre for International Economics	ACIAR project history analysis	\$49,500	Direct Sourcing	Need for specialised or professional services
TOTAL		\$246,200		

¹ Explanation of selection process terms drawn from the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines (January 2005):

² Justification for decision to use consultancy: a. skills currently unavailable within agency; b. need for specialised or professional skills; c. need for independent research or assessment.

In addition to these consultancies, ACIAR had a large number of aid/research contracts to provide services related mainly to the research program. These contracts totalled \$3,546,000 in 2006–07 compared to \$3,667,000 in 2005–06 (refer to Table 2).

All contracts over \$10,000 were reported in AusTender, contracts were let in excess of \$10,000 that were exempted from publication

in AusTender due to Freedom of Information exemptions.

Purchasing activities are subject to the provisions of the Chief Executive Instructions (CEI 6.02 Procurement) relating to procurement. In accordance with the *Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines*, ACIAR prepared an Annual Procurement Plan for 2006–07 and this was published on AusTender.

Table 2: Consultancy services let during 2006–07, to \$10,000 or more

ACIAR consultancy contracts				Other contracts and agreements*	
	No. of new contracts awarded	Financial limits of new contracts awarded	2006–07 Expenditures	No. of new contracts and agreements awarded	Financial limits of new contracts and agreements awarded
Contracts and agreements				185	\$3,546,000
Tenders	1	\$55,000	\$24,362		
Calls for quotations					
Direct approach	5	\$191,200	\$151,147		
Total	6	\$246,200	\$175,509	185	\$3,546,000

* The distinction between a consultancy contract and other contract forms is in accordance with FMG No. 15: Guidance on Procurement Publishing Obligations