

Understanding the Human Resources Capability Framework

(to be read in conjunction with the [Powerpoint presentation](#))

SLIDE 1

Late last year, many of you attended forums that foreshadowed the changes which would flow from the [Public Sector Reform Act 2010](#).

This included what changes would mean for you and your agencies with the establishment of the independent Public Sector Commission and proposed changes to recruitment, selection and appointment and disciplinary provisions. At that time we were working on the Commissioners Instructions which will be the policy instruments supporting the new legislation.

SLIDE 2: The vision

Those briefings closed with vision for the public sector – a public sector that:

- proportionally manages risks;
- shares innovation;
- works collaboratively;
- achieves results within an accountability regime;
- sees itself as one public sector with different business streams; and
- has confidence in itself and the confidence of Government, Parliament and the community

SLIDE 3: Employment and filling a vacancy

With this in mind the PSC has developed two [Commissioners Instructions](#), with effect as of today:

- The Employment Standard
- Filling a Public Sector Vacancy

These standards are enabled by changes to the Public Sector Management Act (Breaches of Public Sector Standards) Regulations 2005. These instructions taken together provide CEOs with greater discretion as to how to advertise and fill vacancies and facilitate efficient management of Breach of Standards claims. It is critical that HR Practitioners understand and are able to apply these Commissioners' Instructions to effectively support their agencies.

SLIDE 4: Workforce Planning

As many of you are well aware the labour market is becoming tighter and as well as implementing the changes to recruitment practices, workforce planning across the public sector is critical in this environment and therefore one of the highest priorities for the Commission.

In May 2009 the [Strategic Directions for the Public Sector Workforce was launched](#). [Strategic Directions](#) has 38 initiatives being implemented by central and line agencies over a five year period. These initiatives address challenges faced by the public sector in relation to attraction, retention, leadership, capacity building and flexibility in metropolitan and regional Western Australia.

For the past two years' Chief Executive Performance Agreements have included workforce initiatives relating to Strategic Directions and there has been steady progress made by agencies in this regard.

However, there is still more to do to ensure the public sector workforce is well positioned to face the challenges ahead.

Importantly Workforce Planning must be seen as an integrated function which picks up the beginning, middle and end of the employment relationship (i.e. recruitment, development and management and separation) and incorporates the diversity agenda as part of a wider workforce plan.

To support this approach, on 1 December 2010 the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity was incorporated into the Public Sector Commission. The independent statutory office remains, but the work of the EEO Office has been integrated with the PSC; Workforce Planning and Programs. Michael Palermo is both the head of the Workforce

Planning area of the PSC and the DEOPE. The new team now has a broader scope, whilst ensuring diversity interests continue to be progressed and this focus will be reflected in a new [Commissioner's Circular](#) which is released today.

However, that these changes mean nothing unless those who are charged with the responsibility of implementation are across them – and in the first instance, that is HR managers and practitioners.

SLIDE 5 – building HR capability

This leads to the issue of the absolute necessity to build the capacity of HR Practitioners.

A key function of the Commission is to build the capacity of the sector. This includes working with human resource practitioners to build the requisite skills, knowledge and abilities to undertake their role which is critical to an agency's ability to plan and manage its workforce.

We have many HR practitioners who exhibit an exceptionally high standard of professionalism and commitment and we have some real talent within the sector.

We would all agree however that in recent years turnover, competition from the private sector and the contracting out of certain human resource functions, such as classification and recruitment, has contributed to a depletion of skills in the profession in the WA public sector.

The profession has been stretched beyond its capacity and the opportunity to share and build knowledge has been lost as there is less of it within the sector. The capacity of the HR profession to add value to the sector as a strategic business partner has been diminished. This loss of knowledge is more acute in some agencies than others.

As part of addressing this variation and building the capacity of the sector's human resource practitioners the Public Sector Commission invited senior human resource practitioners to participate in a series of forums.

This provided an opportunity

- to exchange ideas and opinions ,
- to work collaboratively to share expertise and experience,
- to identify and address training needs and
- ultimately build the capability of the profession and the people within it.

SLIDE 6: By practitioners for practitioners

As a priority, HR managers asked for a framework that would define the desired HR capabilities in order to determine what is required to build capability of the profession.

In direct response to that need, the HR Capability Framework project commenced with the Australian Human Resources Institute.

10 agencies provided over 100 JDFs which were used, along with a range of strategic documents, to map WA public sector HR capabilities to the AHRI Model of Excellence as a starting point.

Almost 400 HR practitioners and 160 Directors General and senior executives contributed their time, opinions and perceptions of the role of the HR function and the capabilities and qualifications of the ideal HR practitioner.

While those survey results showed that there is room for improvement it is encouraging to note that there was alignment between HR people and the DGs and Execs who participated. Both believe that an effective HR function is necessary and critical to organisation performance.

Nearly 500 HR practitioners took part in a survey as part of a complementary project with Government Skills Australia to establish an understanding of the current skill and qualification base of our HR workforce, to allow us to best determine development needs for the future.

14 agencies participated in site visits over several days to explore in more detail the raw data resulting from the skills survey.

Your opinions on the draft framework were sought and a group of HR managers volunteered to form a working group to take that feedback and refine the framework.

This really has been a collaborative effort, with significant consultation - this would not have been possible without many HR managers and practitioners contributing their time and expertise.

This comprehensive consultation process has identified the critical capabilities that will contribute to a human resources profession that can effectively support the future needs of the sector.

SLIDE 7: The Human Resources Capability Framework for the WA Public Sector

The Framework identifies and defines seven interrelated core capabilities for both the HR function and the HR practitioner.

They are:

Strategic Alignment - Shape and manage a people strategy aligned with whole of government objectives.

As the largest employer in WA the public sector needs to be anticipate and respond to all factors with the potential to affect the current and future workforce. HR practitioners must build their capability to shape and manage a people strategy that addresses these challenges and meets business objectives.

Results Driven: build capability and expertise within the WA government to deliver results

This capability focuses on the need for HR professionals to turn strategy into reality and deliver results aligned to organisational objectives. It identifies the day-to-day “good practice” of delivering fundamental HR services and the need to step outside of the day-to-day to look at our work differently.

Workforce Capacity: build workforce capacity for current and future requirements of the WA government

This capability identifies the crucial role that HR plays in planning for current and future workforce requirements – in recruiting, developing, retaining and promoting the right people. There is also an emphasis transferring people management skills to the organisation.

Relationship Management: Build and manage productive relationships and partnerships

This capability identifies the need for HR to build and maintain collaborative relationships, incorporate others’ perspectives and needs in the development of people strategies, and to develop people management capability within the organisation.

Credible Influence: Advise and influence with integrity and self awareness to achieve organisational objectives

The credibility of HR practitioners is defined not only by what they do, but how they conduct themselves. This capability identifies the need for the HR practitioner to act with integrity, be accountable, ethical and professional. There is a focus on quality and personal responsibility for behaviour and outcomes and the sharing of knowledge and information to build capability in others.

Professional Expertise: Build and apply human resource knowledge and expertise to deliver value to the organisation

Specialised experience and knowledge and its application to the organisation are recognised in this capability. This capability identifies the need for the individual to develop and maintain the knowledge required for the role and apply it appropriately to achieve organisation outcomes.

Culture and Change Management: manage change processes and work to support desired organisational culture

This identifies the responsibility of HR to work with the Executive to articulate and communicate the optimum culture for achieving organisational objectives. It defines the practitioner's role in designing and delivering activities and change processes taking that culture into account, and in assisting managers and employees to understand the impact of their behaviour on the culture.

These capabilities are applied to both the HR function and the HR practitioner.

SLIDE 8: The HR Function

If you turn to Pages 8 and 9 of the [HR Capability Framework booklet](#), you'll see the HR Function view of the Framework. You can also download the [HR function view of the Framework](#) as a separate document.

This defines at a high level, the capabilities that the HR function must develop if it is to build its internal capability to be recognised as a source of expertise and guidance to the public sector.

It provides HR directors and managers with a common language on which to talk with their organisations about the work of the HR function and to define its value to the organisation. It can also be used in strategic HR planning.

This view comprises:

- the capability title
 - a description that clarifies the objective of the capability for the HR function; and
 - the elements that must be met by the HR function to demonstrate the achievement of that capability and its objective.
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SLIDE 9: The HR Practitioner

The HR Function capabilities are the basis on which the capabilities of the HR practitioner are defined.

Each of the HR Function capabilities are mapped to various groups of levels to detail the capabilities required of the individual HR practitioner.

The HR Practitioner profile can be viewed in two ways:

- the Individual Profile, that shows all the capabilities for an individual HR role; and
- the Comparative Profile that describes one capability across all HR levels.

It's important to note that this is not a job classification tool and as such the HR Practitioner capabilities do not translate directly to a particular level, but apply across a range of job levels that may require a similar range of capabilities.

This more accurately reflects the reality of the differences in roles across agencies from the generalist to the specialist, accommodates agency specific requirements and business needs, and takes into account that issues and challenges will vary from agency to agency and consequently from role to role.

These profiles also define the degree of activity and knowledge expected of individuals in roles at that range.

At the lower range activity focuses on administration, support and processing, where practitioners are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of HR and deliver basic activities. The complexity of activity and knowledge increases through the levels until it reaches the most senior HR practitioner in the organisation, who is expected to drive HR's contribution to the organisation's strategy and to represent the HR function to the organisation.

SLIDE 10: The HR Practitioner Individual Profile

Pages 11 of your booklet gives you an overview of the HR Practitioner Individual Profile.

This view shows all the capabilities applicable to a level range, that individuals need to develop and apply in order to be successful and effective HR professionals.

For HR managers this is a tool to define the expected capabilities for specific roles within your organisation.

For individuals, it provides you with an overview of where you may need to develop particular aspects of a capability to more effectively and efficiently perform your role, or one to which you aspire.

Each Individual Profile view comprises a number of components.

They are :

- the level of HR knowledge and HR activity that is expected of the HR practitioner at that level range;
- the capability titles (these are the same as the HR Function capability titles)
- a description that clarifies the objective of each capability for the HR practitioner at that level range (these reflect the HR Function descriptions); and
- the elements that the HR Practitioner at that level range must meet to demonstrate the achievement of the capability and its objective (these reflect the HR Function elements).

At pages 12 through to 21 of your booklet you can view the Individual profile for each level range.

To help you to better understand this view, you might like to find the individual view that applies to your job level and consider how those capabilities might assist you in carrying out your job.

For example if you are a Level 4 working in a personnel and payroll area, how might developing your understanding of , and operating according to relevant legislation (Strategic Alignment) be applicable in your day to day work?

Or if you are a Level 5 Human Resources Consultant providing advice to managers in your agency on a wide range of employment matters, how might developing your capability to contribute to processes for effective performance management (Workforce Capacity) assist both you, managers and employees?

SLIDE 11: The HR Practitioner Comparative Profile

Page 22 of the booklet provides an overview of the Comparative Profile.

This view takes each individual capability and provides a snapshot it and all its elements as it applies to the HR function and across the level ranges from 1 to 8 and above.

It allows you to identify the changes in activity, knowledge and capability at each level.

This view is particularly useful to individuals wishing to transition to the next level of expertise, and for managers for workforce and succession planning.

Each Comparative Profile view comprises a number of components.

At the top you will see:

- the capability title (these are the same as the HR Function capability titles) and

- the level of HR knowledge and HR activity that is expected of the HR practitioner across the level ranges

Below that on the left, you will see the capability description for the HR **function** and on the right, that capability description as it applies to the HR **practitioner**.

Sitting below the level range indicator on the left, are:

- the elements that must be met by the HR **function** to demonstrate the achievement of that capability and its objective, and alongside that,
- those same elements as they apply to the HR **practitioner** at that level range

Pages 23 to 37 of your booklet show you the comparative view of each separate capability.

To help you to better understand this view, you might like to choose one particular capability and locate your level. Read the level of HR knowledge and activity that applies to your level, then read through each of the elements, to gain an understanding of what is expected.

Now read through the same information for the next level up and compare the differences in the level of knowledge and activity, and the capability elements.

This will show you the where you may need to develop if you aspire to make a career move.

For example, under Relationship Management at Levels 3 – 4, you are expected to be **contribute to** activities to support managers to understand their people management responsibilities, that is, you will be carrying out already established activities.

At Levels 4 – 5, you are expected to **develop and implement** activities to support managers to understand their people management responsibilities – that is, you will take an active part in devising strategies to support managers.

SLIDE 12: Benefits of the Framework for CEOs

The framework has a number of benefits for human resource practitioners, agencies, the sector and CEOs.

For CEOs the benefits will be

- consistency in the quality of advice they receive;
- clarity with respect to performance expectations;
- effective change management processes;

- workforce practices consistent with current legislative and best practice principles; and
 - human resource functions supported by a comprehensive professional development program.
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SLIDE 13: Benefits of the Framework for HR practitioners

Across the sector, HR practitioners can use the framework for:

- Strategic HR business planning
- job design and recruitment;
- performance management of existing staff;
- the identification training needs;
- workforce and succession planning;
- fast tracking talent; and
- General career planning with the aim to increase the mobility of expert skills.

Practically, the framework will assist your agency when making senior HR appointments and assessing the extent to which candidates display the knowledge, skills and attributes required for a HR role; undertaking performance development discussions by providing clarity around role expectations; and conducting career planning.

SLIDE 14: Immediate priorities

To ensure the framework is implemented and applied at an agency level the Commission is working with HR practitioners to develop products and programs aligned to the capabilities.

Our immediate focus is on assisting you to implement changes arising from public sector reform, and planning for the future workforce through an array of supporting tools and workshops.

[You can view the range of workshops currently on offer on our website.](#)

These are all designed to build specific capabilities within HR practitioners:

SLIDE 15: Next steps

While we have reached an important milestone in releasing the Framework, the Commissioner's Instructions and Circular, there is still much work to be done and we have a challenging and exciting year ahead of us.

Over the coming months, the Public Sector Commission will work with HR practitioners to develop guides, tools and learning and development programs aligned to the capabilities, to assist you to use the framework and build your workforce capability. These will be published on our website as they become available.

The Commission will run [information sessions for HR practitioners](#) to assist them to understand the Capability Framework and how it can be implemented in the workplace and as we develop tools and guides we will make them available to you and work with you to implement.

We will also identify opportunities for you to work collaboratively with us to share your expertise and experience across the sector.

One very important piece of work that has also already begun, is an accredited professional development program aligned to the Framework to build capabilities over the longer term and assure the sustainability of our profession. A group of HR managers have volunteered to assist with curriculum development and we will shortly be calling that group together.