

2023 WA Public Sector Census – Quality Statement

Institutional environment

The WA Public Sector Commission led the first Census of all public sector employees. Participation was voluntary. The Census information will be used for workforce planning, workforce policy and workforce statistical activities by the Commission and agencies.

Relevance

Permanent, fixed-term contract, casual, sessional, sworn police officers and Chief Executive Officer/Senior Executive Service employees from the WA public sector were asked to participate. The scope covered 66 agencies, which included 116 entities. Topics covered included demographics, tenure, workforce characteristics, diversity, education, job type, integrity, flexible working, bullying and harassment, and discrimination.

Percentages are calculated using the most relevant data. For example, when percentages for females or males are shown, they are based on the responses as a percentage of the total number of females or males who responded to the census.

Partial responses were included if they met pre-determined criteria based on the number of questions answered. This means the expected number of responses per question may differ.

Timeliness

The Census was open for 6 weeks from 6 March to 16 April 2023 inclusive. This included a soft open which commenced on 6 March 2023. The official live period occurred from 13 March to 2 April 2023. 44 out of the 66 agencies opted for a one-week extension until 9 April 2023 to increase their response rates. A soft close occurred until 16 April 2023.

Accuracy

Approximately 165,340 employees in the WA Public Sector were asked to voluntarily participate in the Census. Total number of responses was 47,115 (28.5%). Employees completed the Census using an anonymous link (97%) or through a QR code (3%). Agencies engaged their employees, encouraged participation and distributed the link/QR code.

Coherence

The Census collects sector wide information not currently available through other sources, such as additional information on diversity and why employees plan to stay or leave an agency. Census data can be used in conjunction with other data sources, such as Human Resource Minimum Obligatory Information Requirements (HR MOIR) to provide additional insights. For the 17 agencies who participated in the 2021 Census Pilot, the 2023 Census is comparable as most questions remain unchanged.

Some payroll information presented in this document will differ to sector wide published information. For example, appointment type is shown by headcount to match Census methodology, whereas FTE is often published for sector wide workforce statistics.

Interpretability

The Census comprised of 91 questions that an employee could be sequenced. Sequencing occurred based on answers to previous questions. For example, all employees were asked whether they had experienced bullying and harassment. However, only those that answered yes to this question were asked subsequent questions about that experience.

Potentially sensitive questions included an option of 'prefer not to say'. Results presented for these questions exclude these responses when calculating percentages and totals.

Most questions only allowed one response to be selected. However, there are questions where a respondent could choose more than one response (multi-response). This means that the count of response options for a multi-response question may be higher than the number of people who responded.

Accessibility

Access to individual level data in the Commission is restricted on a need to know basis. User access permissions ensure only authorised staff have access to this data. Census data is used to produce aggregate statistics (grouped in totals). These are provided to WA public sector agencies. Aggregated statistics provided to a WA public sector agency may be shared by that agency to communicate results to their employees and respond to enquiries. Individual responses are not provided to agencies. Information is aggregated and provided only when there are enough responses to maintain the confidentiality of individual responses. Text fields are limited to postcodes and language spoken.