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CORPORATE SUPPORT



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Corporate Support provides a range of services to assist the Institute to meet its goals through developing and applying improved executive, administrative, personnel and information technology policies and practices.

Human resources management

During the year the Institute has worked on aligning its human resource activities to its objectives. The Institute has completed a draft recruitment kit to assist managers with the recruitment process, and has continued to manage a heavy recruitment program with executive appointments and short-term recruitments to perform a number of contracts. The major contracts comprising recruitment action were the National Child Protection Clearinghouse, the Stronger Families Communities Strategy, and *Growing Up in Australia* (the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children).

In line with the Institute's objective of a better alignment of its human resource activities, a review of workforce planning has commenced, which will also focus on educating managers to plan for their resource needs more effectively.

Most aspects of the workplace diversity plan were implemented during the year including a Human Resources and Workplace survey of all staff. The survey resulted in mostly positive feedback from staff, some of which provided assistance to management for future human resources planning.

The Institute's Disability Action Plan was completed during the year. The induction procedures for new staff were updated with revised checklists to be completed for each new starter. The new "Greentree" payroll module has been implemented, however the Institute has been considering options for a more comprehensive human resources database that will produce a broader range of reports for workforce planning. Processes were also updated for the new superannuation arrangements under Comsuper.

Staffing profile

Total number of staff at 30 June 2005 was seventy. Of these, 30 were part-time staff. This includes fixed-term staff hired for specific research projects or functional tasks as they are needed.

Staff development

Staff continued to take part in approved training activities in their respective disciplines as well as general skills development. During 2004–2005, the Institute invested \$112,016 in direct training and development activities.

Workplace diversity/Industrial democracy

The Institute continued to foster a work environment that values and uses the contribution of people of different backgrounds and cultures. It continued to provide flexible working arrangements through its agency agreement to staff to support their different needs. The Institute's Workplace Diversity Plan was ongoing during the year and will run for the course of the current agency agreement to the end of 2005.

Occupational health and safety

Occupational health and safety continued to have a high profile with training on the new legislation and workplace issues provided to all staff. A workplace inspection was also carried out to identify areas of concern among staff – resulting in changes in ergonomic design and office layout for some staff. This inspection, which investigates all OH&S issues in the workplace, is performed annually.

The Institute has an OH&S committee that meets quarterly and considers specific workplace issues and provides recommendations to senior management. The Institute's revised OH&S Agreement is to run for two years from 2004–2005. There were no reports in 2004–2005 of a dangerous occurrence under section 68 of the OH&S Act.

Table 6.1 Staffing overview: actual ongoing and non-ongoing full-time and part-time staff by gender at 30 June 2005

	Ongoing full-time	Ongoing part-time	Non-ongoing full-time	Non-ongoing part-time	Total
Men	6	0	3	4	13
Women	25	11	6	15	57
Total	31	11	9	19	70

Table 6.2 Staff employed under the Public Service Act: actual ongoing and non-ongoing staff by classification level and gender at 30 June 2005

Classification	AIFS classification	Ongoing staff		Non-ongoing staff		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
SES Band 3		0	0	0	0	0
SES Band 1		0	0	0	1	1
Exec Level 2	AIFS Band 5	3	4	1	2	10
Exec Level 1	AIFS Band 4	2	7	1	0	10
APS 5–6	AIFS Band 3	1	15	1	9	26
APS 3–4	AIFS Band 2	0	7	1	7	15
APS 1–2	AIFS Band 1	0	3	3	2	8
TOTAL		6	36	7	21	70

Table 6.3 Staffing overview: salary ranges by classification

	\$ Pay point – lower	\$ Pay point – higher
SES Band 1	88,087	105,388
AIFS Band 5 2.5	0	92,399
AIFS Band 5 2.1–2.3	77,544	90,853
AIFS Band 4	67,232	74,247
AIFS Band 3	48,877	60,244
AIFS Band 2	39,062	47,270
AIFS Band 1	30,304	38,030

Table 6.4 AIFS Certified Agreement and Australian Workplace Agreements

APS employees covered by AIFS Certified Agreement	63
APS employees covered by Australian Workplace Agreements	7

Table 6.5 Non-salary benefits by employment category and classification level

AIFS Certified Agreement	
■	Access to employee assistance program
■	Study assistance
■	Flexible remuneration packaging
■	Purchased leave
■	Special leave
■	Home based work
■	Flexi time
SES Staff: Australian Workplace Agreements	
■	Motor vehicle, fuel and parking
■	Mobile phone for official and incidental personal use
■	Airline lounge membership
■	Home equipment, comprising standard PC monitor, printer and remote access to network
■	Financial and other support for professional and personal development
■	Flexible remuneration packaging
Non-SES Staff: Australian Workplace Agreements	
■	Airline lounge membership
■	Mobile phone for official and personal use
■	Flexible remuneration packaging

Table 6.6 Performance pay

Level	Number	Aggregated amount	Average	Minimum	Maximum
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0
SES 1	1	5,609	5,609	5,609	5,609
Executive Level 2	7	29,310	4,187	1,248	7,392

Information technology

Information Technology staff contribute directly to the productivity of the Institute by developing and maintaining a secure, reliable, effective, efficient and easy-to-use computing and communications environment. This includes management of the Institute's Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) facility, Web server, email, telephone and security systems.

Software

The operating system was upgraded on the Unix servers, ensuring a more secure and robust system. Firewall (VPN) and mail server (IMAP) software was also upgraded to ensure maximum security and accessibility from remote locations.

Payroll functionality was transferred to Greentree financial software to increase the ease with which accounting staff could process payroll.

EndNote bibliographic management software was installed to provide staff with increased reliability, functionality and consistency of style in the production of reports containing bibliographic references.

Apple Remote Desktop software was installed, which has greatly enhanced the productivity of IT staff managing software upgrades.

During the year the following software were upgraded, to ensure that staff had access to the most functional and reliable versions: MacOS X, SIRSI Unicorn (library), CDATA 2001 (ABS Census), Diammond (payroll transfer), ComSuper (superannuation), EtherShare (file server), Norton AntiVirus, Netscape (e-mail & Internet), MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Now Up-to-Date (calendar), File-Maker (database), Acrobat, BBedit, PhotoShop, DreamWeaver (Web), MlwiN, Mplus, SPSS, SAS and Stata (statistics).

The National Archives of Australia “AAA keyword” electronic file structure was implemented in order to facilitate the effective management of electronic records.

Hardware

Twenty new Apple Macintosh computers were purchased to continue the rolling program of replacing equipment that is more than four years old.

A backup tape drive was installed on the Windows server to ensure reliable backup of Institute data.

The computing hardware at the Institute now consists of four Unix servers, one Windows server, 71 desktop Macintoshes, eight Macintosh portables and three Windows desktop PCs. All computers are linked by a local area network, which is connected through a firewall to the Internet, thus ensuring security of Institute data.

Survey Operations and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing

The only Survey Operations and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) project undertaken during the year was the interviewing of 500 parents of children in child care for the Institute’s Child Care Choices project. The second wave of interviewing and programming of questionnaires for the third wave was completed. Interviewing for the third wave was virtually completed during the reporting period. The interviewing for future waves of the Child Care Choices will be outsourced in order to provide a more cost-efficient solution for the Institute, and provide more capacity for the consortium managing the project.

Other work completed by Survey Operations staff included data entry and administrative support for the Institute’s Children and Family Life survey, and for the National Audit of Child Protection Research.

Business and financial management

During the year 2004–2005, the Institute updated information systems that will improve its business planning through more integrated budgeting processes and automatic update of budget information. A major internal auditing exercise was conducted by Ernst and Young (the Institute’s internal auditors) during the year to review internal controls and ensure that proper corporate governance processes are in place. As a major risk planning exercise, the report did not identify any major risks. However, a number of recommendations were made to improve and strengthen accounting procedures, particularly with the new Greentree Financial system.

As a small agency with a finance and funding framework that is increasingly dependent on new business and contract work to supplement its core appropriation funding, the Australian Institute of Family Studies is planning to reduce costs in certain areas of its operations. Complementing this, the Institute is continuing

to vigorously pursue opportunities to increase business and revenue to ensure sustainability into the medium and longer term. During 2004–2005, the Institute had 22 contracts that were separately accounted for through the finance system. However, many of these contracts were small in size and value and did not generate sufficient net revenue for the Institute. The Institute is thus reviewing its business model to ensure that contracts generate sufficient value to the organisation. To reduce costs, the Institute considered a range of options, including efficiencies and improvements in organisation and staffing structures. In overall terms, the Institute has continued to ensure that finances and budgets are closely aligned to its business objectives.

The external audit report for the 2003–2004 Financial Statements did not raise any management issues. The Institute continued to closely monitor the adoption of the Australian Equivalent of the International Financial Reporting Standards (AEIFRS), which will be phased in for full operation in the 2005–2006 financial year. The impact of the new standards on financial figures will be minimal.

The final net asset position for 30 June 2005 is \$1,332,966 which is in line with budget predictions in the 2004–2005 Portfolio Budget Statements. Given the nature of operations and significant contract work, the Institute needs to maintain a buffer in its finances that will allow it to grow the business on the research side.

Consultants and competitive tendering

The Institute's major consulting costs have been concerned with sub-contracting for three research projects – *Growing Up in Australia* (the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children), *Caring for Children after Separation*, and *Fertility Decision Making*. These studies have required major data design and collection phases, which were best delivered by external consulting expertise. All consultants were selected in accordance with the Institute's procurement guidelines. Major sub-contractors were required to meet detailed selection criteria in an open and competitive process.

Records management

Training has been conducted for most of the work groups in the implementation of new electronic arrangements for records management. This has involved new file classification systems using systems recommended by the National Archives of Australia (AAA Keyword), and upgrade of internal IT systems to deal more effectively with email records.

Security

As an Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) measure, the front door of the old building has been alarmed and turned into an emergency exit. Security has also been enhanced at reception to ensure that intruders cannot tamper with security doors or equipment. Maintaining the security of people at work or on the property is considered a key role for the OH&S Committee. Incidents of intruder break-ins were reduced during the year.

Property issues and assets management

The Institute is continuing to explore its accommodation options given that its current tenancy lease at 300 Queen Street, Melbourne finishes on 28 February 2007. The Institute is considering extending the lease for a further term on conditions that are more favourable, and have engaged property managers, Urbis JHD, to assist with the negotiation and evaluation process.

Purchasing

The Institute has continued to conduct its procurement of goods and services in accordance with internal purchasing guidelines and most government procurement guidelines, which emphasise value for money considerations, as well as the promotion of open and fair competition. The Institute suppliers for both goods and services are predominately Australian based, and their performance is reviewed by program managers on a regular basis.

Advertising and market research

Table 6.8 provides the particulars of advertising and market research expenditure of \$1,500 or greater.

Table 6.7 Consultancy services 2004–2005		
Provider	Service	\$
Australian Bureau of Statistics	LSAC Sub-contract data collection and evaluation Wave 2	331,000
Susan Abbott	Stronger Families related contracts - project management	20,525
Access Co	Library and information specialist services	52,543
APL Management Solutions	New Finance and Payroll system support	12,164
Charles Sturt University	LSAC Consortium Advisory Group	12,775
Colmar Brunton	LSAC Sub-contract data collection and evaluation	1,524,311
Health Insurance Commission	LSAC contract services	22,775
Melbourne University	LSAC Consortium Advisory Group	23,531
Melbourne University	Early Intervention Project - Evaluation	25,900
Murdoch Childrens Research Institute	Parenting Influences on Adolescent Alcohol Use	6,000
Murdoch Childrens Research Institute	LSAC Consortium Advisory Group	7,850
Robyn Penman	Case for Marriage in Australia - project review	38,750
Robyn Penman	Intergenerational Exchange contract	6,250
Robyn Penman	Stronger Families - DHS contract, literature review	10,500
University of Queensland	LSAC Consortium Advisory Group	25,350
RMIT University	ACSSA Police Investigation contract	10,354
Social Research Centre	Australian Working Together contract data evaluation	38,749
Sandi Taylor and Leanne Ramsamy	TELSTRA Foundation project	20,000
Wallis Consulting Group	Taskforce Child Support survey with FaCS	53,719
Wallis Consulting Group	Caring for Children project, data survey preparation	35,812
The total cost of consulting services for 2004–2005 was		\$ 2,278,858

Table 6.8 Advertising and market research costs \$1,500 and over		
Provider	Service	\$
Double Jay Graphic Design	AIFS 2005 Conference Registration brochures	4,790
HMA Blaze P/L	Staff advertising	25,252
Mailcare System P/L	Distribution of Family Matters	15,157
Mailcare System P/L	Newsletter and Bulletin mail-outs for projects	111,406
Mailcare System P/L	AIFS 2005 Conference	2,380
The total advertising and market research costs \$1,500 and over were		\$159,985

Commonwealth Disability Strategy

The Institute has developed a Disability Action Plan that ensures employment and workplace practices are in accordance with the government's Disability Strategy.

Ecologically sustainable management

The Institute has continued to implement the Energy Policy developed last year, and monitors energy usage on quarterly. The results over the last 12 months indicate a reduction in the per capita use of electricity, which is the major energy source of the Institute. A review of the strategies/targets in the policy will be conducted next year.

Risk management

The internal audit program conducted during the year has provided further input for the Risk Management Plan. Recommendations to improve commitment, communication and understanding of the plan at an operational level have been presented by Ernst and Young and will be implemented in 2005–2006.

A major area of risk management for the Institute is contract management and performance, where reputation and ability to generate further business can be significantly at risk. Guidelines in this area have been tightened with increasing accountability for contract performance and delivery of milestones according to contract schedules.

Freedom of information

No requests were made this year of the Australian Institute of Family Studies for information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. The following information about arrangements for access to Institute documents is included under section 8 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Outside participation

The Institute has established and maintains formal and informal contacts with a wide range of individuals and organisations for the purpose of obtaining and giving advice, collaborating on studies, exchanging information, seeking access to data, and exploring options for the development of the Institute's work.

Specific avenues for outside participation include input by experts in design seminars and steering groups of Institute studies, external review of Institute manuscripts prior to publication, Visiting Fellows, and a biennial national Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference.

Institute staff handle external enquiries by phone, facsimile, email, letter, or in person.

Categories of documents and procedures

The Institute maintains the following categories of documents. The first is research data collected by survey interviews (this information is obtained from respondents on the understanding that their anonymity will be preserved and the information provided is confidential to the Institute; datasets may be made available to external researchers when all identifying details are removed). The second

is general correspondence. The third category is published and unpublished research reports.

The procedure the Institute has in place for Freedom of Information requests is that the Institute's Manager, Strategy and Communications, will assist applicants to identify the particular documents they seek. If a request is to be refused on grounds appearing in section 15(2) or section 24(1) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (insufficient information or unreasonable diversion of resources), applicants will be notified and given an opportunity for consultation. The officer authorised to decide about access to documents is the Manager, Strategy and Communications. As noted, no Freedom of Information request was made during the reporting period.