

HOW WE OPERATE

Our people

We have an approved permanent establishment of 37.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.

As at 30 June 2020, we:

- had 40.23 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff³
- received grant funding from the Queensland Government provided through the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. Our 2019-20 total appropriation was \$7.249M.

Eighty-two percent of our active and paid employees are permanent, including permanent employees seconded to the OIC from other Queensland Government agencies. Two permanent employees resigned during 2019-20. Our permanent separation rate was 5.26 percent as at 30 June 2020.

At 30 June 2020, two employees (Two FTE) were on paid parental leave. We paid no early retirement, redundancy or retrenchment packages during the reporting period.



Note: Active and paid staff only.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we implemented remote working arrangements. Staff use video conferencing software to conduct internal and external meetings and maintain contact with stakeholders via email, phone and postal services. We support staff via regular communication from the leadership

³ All figures are taken from fortnight ending 19 June 2020.

Our FTE incorporates active and paid employees including 2 FTE on paid parental leave.

team and their supervisors and consulted them on all plans to ensure a safe return to the workplace in early July 2020.

We also encouraged staff to consider secondments in contact tracing roles as part of the Community Recover Ready Reserves program.

Investing in our people

Our people are our most important asset. We have a comprehensive employee performance framework covering induction, performance management, staff development and recognition. We foster ongoing learning and development to achieve a capable, professional and adaptable workforce.

During the year, we:

- consulted and engaged staff on a wide range of issues including health and wellbeing initiatives and strategic and operational planning
- worked with staff to co-develop actions from the 2019 Working for Queensland survey
- encouraged staff to develop skills through higher duties or secondments
- provided coaching, mentoring and access to relevant training courses, seminars and workshops
- improved our systems and procedures to support efficient and effective work practices
- advertised positions broadly
- provided free confidential counselling services to staff and their families through our employee assistance program
- offered wellness initiatives including flu vaccinations, sit stand desks, ergonomic assessments, end of trip facilities and lunchtime yoga.

In 2019-20 we spent \$128,151 on staff professional development, training and workshops. This equates to 2.19 percent of employee expenses, and an increase of \$35,442 from 2018-19.

Consistent with our strategic plan, we invested in an extensive professional development program to support our career growth strategy. This also aligns with the recommendations of the independent Strategic Review of the OIC and the Working for Queensland 2019-20 results. The program aims to enhance employee capability and skills development in:

- leadership coaching
- team building
- conflict resolution
- vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue.

The program will continue in 2020-21.

All new staff members completed mandatory training in public service code of conduct, workplace bullying and workplace health and safety.

During the year, our shared service provider implemented a new learning management system. This implementation took longer than planned and disrupted the delivery of our annual staff online training program by several months.

Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on staff:

- health, safety and wellbeing
- career development strategies
- professional development in negotiation, dealing with high conflict personalities, leadership and vicarious trauma management.

Flexible working arrangements

We recognise the importance of flexible work arrangements in attracting and retaining a highly skilled workforce. Our employees actively embrace flexible work options including flexible start and finishing times, part-time work, job sharing, telecommuting, accrued time and access to a parenting room.

We facilitated four job-share arrangements this year. In 2020-21, we anticipate more requests for flexible work arrangements to manage COVID-19 restrictions and as we move to a hybrid model, where all roles can be performed remotely for part of the time.

Working for Queensland survey 2019

We participated in the annual Working for Queensland Survey. In 2019, 86 percent of our staff took the opportunity to share their views and experiences of working at OIC. We use this information to drive workplace improvements.

Following the 2019 survey results we invited staff to participate in three workshops about removing red tape and managing workload, using technology to improve process accuracy and efficiency, and clearly documenting governance arrangements.

Consultative Committee

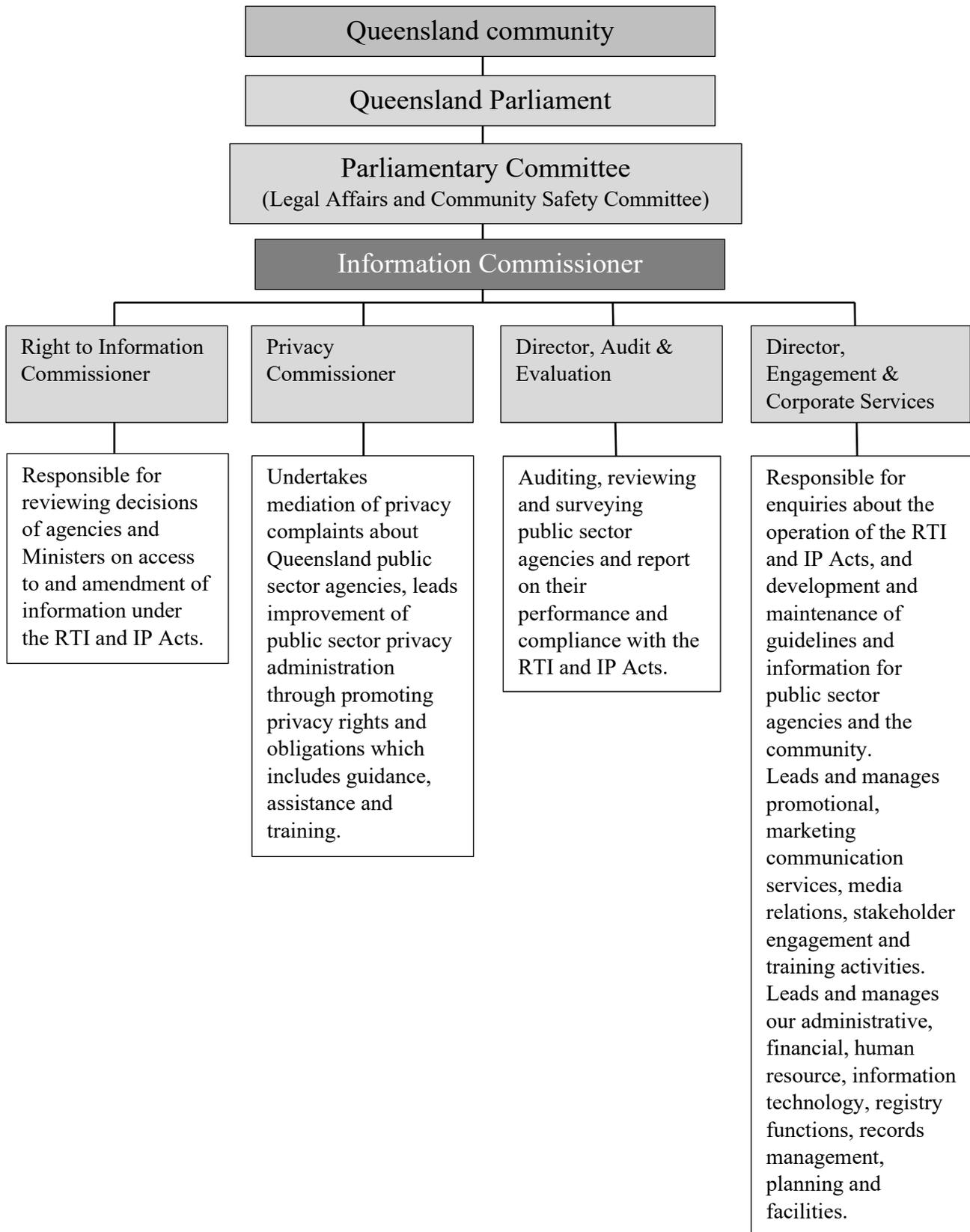
Our Consultative Committee did not operate during 2019-20 as no staff members chose to act as union delegates. We remain committed to consulting and collaborating with all employees on workplace related matters. In June 2020, a staff member requested the formation of a workplace health and safety representative. We conducted a process in July 2020 to elect a new representative, and all staff were advised of the outcome on 4 August 2020.

Enterprise bargaining

We renegotiated our certified agreement with the Together Union and in September 2019 it was certified by the Industrial Relations Commission. The new agreement aligns with the Queensland Government wages policy.

OUR STRUCTURE

Figure 21. Our structure



CORPORATE SERVICES

In 2019-20, we had a service level agreement with the Corporate Administration Agency (CAA) for human resource, internal audit and finance services. After changing provider, our agreement for ICT support with Queensland Parliamentary Services (QPS) ended in December 2019.

Our expenditure for corporate services was \$310,582. This is a slight decrease of \$13,080, from 2018-19 (\$323,662).

Information and technology

We transitioned our ICT systems and services to Datacom in December 2019. The new ICT operating environment introduced new collaboration tools and stronger security measures and enabled staff to work effectively from multiple locations.

Testing and securing our systems

In March 2020, we tested our systems to prepare for a general COVID-19 work from home decision. All staff worked off site except for a small onsite contingent. The test proved that our systems were effective. Staff were able to work remotely in a safe and stable environment and our operations remained fully functional.

We engaged TSS Cyber Pty Ltd to undertake security penetration testing of our website, network and connected systems. We shared the findings with our ICT partners to improve the security of our ICT environment. We will continue to implement recommended solutions in 2020-21 and to provide further training for our staff in cybersecurity.

Strengthening our information governance and management

As part of our strategic ICT roadmap and the CCC's *Operation Impala* report, we commenced two projects this financial year to improve our cyber security and information management security:

1. Enterprise information management (EIM)
2. Case management system replacement.

We engaged Datacom (as part of the ITMaaS - Information Technology Management as a Service panel) to review our information management practices, streamline our record keeping and strengthen our information security and governance. We expect this engagement to continue into the new financial year.

Genesys Software Solutions Pty Ltd has supported our case management system for over 10 years. In that time, it has been reconfigured extensively to suit our business needs. Our new ICT environment and changing business and security requirements prompted us to explore options for a replacement system.

We listed the functional requirements and invited offers in June 2020. This will help us understand the range, types and cost of options available and inform our decision to go to tender in 2020-21. As we do not have in-house ICT expertise, we have a contracting arrangement with the Department of Housing and Public Works for a Project Manager at the AO8 classification level to manage the current projects. This role was pivotal in successfully transitioning to Datacom and providing strategic and technical advice across all our ICT projects throughout 2019-20.

Improving our service

Throughout the year, we continued to enhance our corporate services by:

- refining internal business practices to simplify and streamline administrative activities
- reviewing internal policies and procedures to ensure they are contemporary and support our business practices
- updating our ICT tools and services to maximise employee benefits and reduce wastage
- undertaking agency and applicant surveys to measure satisfaction rates
- collaborating with staff to ensure our developmental focus aligns with our strategic goals and their career goals.

OUR EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The executive management team consists of the Information Commissioner, two deputy commissioners (Right to Information Commissioner and Privacy Commissioner) and the Director, Engagement and Corporate Services.

Information Commissioner

The Information Commissioner is the chief executive and accountable officer for the Office of the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner is also an officer of the Parliament and performs statutory functions under the RTI and IP Acts.

The Information Commissioner's functions include independent merits reviews of Ministers and agencies' access and amendment decisions, mediation of privacy complaints about agencies, audit and evaluation of agency compliance with the RTI and IP Acts, and assistance and training for agencies and the community.

Rachael Rangihacata

Appointed as Information Commissioner on 20 September 2013, Rachael champions proactive disclosure of, and appropriate privacy safeguards for, information held by Queensland government agencies including local government, Queensland Government departments, public hospitals and health services and universities, and public authorities.

The Information Commissioner promotes awareness of information rights and responsibilities within the community and Queensland government agencies.

Rachael and her leadership team engage with agency leaders to promote cultures that support good RTI and IP practices, including proactive disclosure, administrative access, pro-disclosure bias in formal access application decision-making and privacy by design.

Before her appointment as Information Commissioner, Rachael held senior leadership positions across all functions of the Office of

the Information Commissioner since 2005. Rachael has over 20 years public sector experience, having also worked in various roles within the Queensland State and Commonwealth public service, primarily in strategic and legislative policy.

Rachael holds a Bachelor of Laws (Honours), Bachelor of Science (AES) and Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Leadership (PSM).

Rachael's current term of appointment is to 20 September 2023.

Right to Information Commissioner

As a deputy to the Information Commissioner, the Right to Information Commissioner has particular responsibilities for matters relating to the Information Commissioner's functions under the RTI and IP Acts. The Right to Information Commissioner leads the external review services of the office and champions the push model of information access to government agencies and the community.

Louisa Lynch

Louisa was appointed Right to Information Commissioner on 6 July 2018. Prior to this appointment, Louisa was Acting Right to Information Commissioner from 28 August 2017 and an Assistant Information Commissioner at OIC for over six years. She brings more than 15 years of significant public sector experience and knowledge of the local government sector to the role of Right to Information Commissioner.

Before joining OIC, Louisa was a senior lawyer in the Department of Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience.

She has also worked in legal roles in a number of government agencies including Queensland Transport, the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

Louisa holds a Bachelor of Laws and was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1990.

Louisa's term of appointment is to 5 July 2023.

Privacy Commissioner

The Privacy Commissioner has responsibilities and delegations under the IP Act including dealing with privacy complaints, raising awareness, creating resources and promoting good privacy and data protection practices in government and advising on significant projects and legislation impacting on privacy.

Philip Green

Appointed as the Queensland Privacy Commissioner in December 2015, Philip has an extensive career in the private and public sectors. Philip's legal career includes commercial banking and finance/insolvency. He has extensive central agency experience in criminal justice, legal and economic policy at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in Queensland and a secondment to the UK, Strategy Unit in the Prime Minister's Cabinet Office. Before his appointment, he led Innovation and Small Business for the Queensland Government. He has a keen interest in innovation and technology law and was instrumental in establishing Queensland's first administrative privacy regime.

Philip holds degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Queensland and a master's in law from QUT, majoring in technology law and focusing on policy development about intellectual property, privacy and commercialisation, information technology and regulation of the internet and media.

Philip's term of appointment is to 10 December 2021.

Director, Engagement and Corporate Services

The Director, Engagement and Corporate Services leads the teams responsible for information and assistance, communication, engagement, training, corporate and registry services to internal and external stakeholders.

Adeline Yuksel

Adeline leads the Engagement and Corporate Services team and has delivered a transformational program to improve all aspects of corporate services, communication and engagement at OIC. Adeline has held senior roles leading and managing corporate affairs teams across the public and private sectors over the last 25 years.

Adeline has a Bachelor of Communications and post graduate qualifications in marketing and international relations. She brings extensive experience in issues management, governance, communication, marketing, strategy development and community relations to OIC.

OUR GOVERNANCE

The Information Commissioner is a statutory office holder appointed by the Governor-in-Council under the RTI and IP Acts, and is not subject to ministerial direction in the exercise of the functions under the Acts.

The Privacy Commissioner and the Right to Information Commissioner are statutory office holders appointed by the Governor-in-Council. They support the Information Commissioner who is accountable to the LACSC of the Queensland Parliament.

The Commissioners meet with the LACSC during the year to report on the performance of the Information Commissioner's functions and to discuss issues, such as our activities, structures and procedures, budget, Annual Report and any other significant issues. The parliamentary committee may also require a report on a particular aspect of our performance.

The Information Commissioner provides an Annual Report to Parliament through the Speaker. Our Annual Report, meetings with the LACSC and our Service Delivery Statement ensure our governance and accountability.

We also support the public sector's corporate governance and accountability framework by helping agencies to improve their RTI and IP practices.

While the Information Commissioner is independent of ministerial control, under section 133 of the RTI Act, the Attorney-General, the Minister responsible for the Act, approves our budget.

Related key elements of the governance and accountability framework include the Service Delivery Statement and Estimates Committee hearings.

Section 186 of the RTI Act requires an independent strategic review of our office every five years. The Governor-in-Council sets

the terms of the review. The next strategic review is due to commence by May 2022.

Before appointing a reviewer, the Minister must consult with the parliamentary committee and the Information Commissioner about the reviewer and the terms of reference. The strategic review must include a review of the commissioner's functions and whether the office performs those functions economically, effectively and efficiently.

The 2017 independent strategic review conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers was tabled in Parliament on 11 May 2017.

Legislative compliance

We comply with a range of obligations including:

- A Workplace Health and Safety program is embedded within our culture and practices. It is everyone's responsibility to create and maintain a safe workplace. We expect all staff to identify, report and address Workplace Health and Safety risks.
- All staff know about their obligations to act and make decisions compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019*.
- The Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service applies to our staff. Under the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, all new starters learn about the Code of Conduct through their induction program and are asked to confirm their understanding and ability to apply the code. Staff can access the code through our intranet.

- We require new staff to complete mandatory training at induction and every two years. The online training includes code of conduct, workplace health and safety, workplace bullying and domestic violence and general awareness on the RTI and IP Acts.
- Our Strategic Plan, staff performance agreements, procedures, practices and training consider the approved Code of Conduct, ethical decision-making and *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* in particular, the ethics obligations of public officials and our values.

Internal and external audit

As a small agency, the executive management team is responsible for internal audit and an appropriate internal control framework. We also have access to CAA's internal audit services on a fee-for-service basis for approximately two internal audits conducted per year. We use this service to support our leadership team in areas such as business continuity plans, asset and risk registers, HR processes and finance management procedures.

Pages 38-62 of this report has a copy of the external audit report and certificate of our financial statements. The Auditor-General has provided an unqualified certificate indicating our compliance with financial management requirements and the accuracy and fairness of the financial statements.

Governance Committee

We are committed to ensuring robust governance arrangements operate, reflective of the size and function of the office.

Corporate governance is the way in which an organisation is controlled and governed to achieve its objectives. The Governance Committee Framework formalises our governance arrangements by setting out the OIC Governance Committee arrangements, including the roles and responsibilities of the committee.

We established the Governance Committee in August 2018 as a decision-making body, providing oversight of our governance arrangements. The Governance Committee comprises the:

- Information Commissioner
- Right to Information Commissioner
- Privacy Commissioner
- Director, Engagement and Corporate Services.

During the year, the committee met monthly to manage issues on:

- risk and audit
- finance and procurement
- people
- information and communication technology.

Risk management

Our governance and assurance strategies for risk management reflect the functions and size of our agency.

The Governance Committee oversees our risk management framework and operational management of risks. Its primary role is to ensure that audit and risk related issues are addressed and managed in accordance with the Financial and Performance Management Standard and the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*. In June 2020, the Committee undertook a review of its terms of reference and will implement changes towards a more robust governance framework. These changes will take effect in the new financial year and ensure that the Committee operates in an accountable and transparent manner.

The OIC Risk Advisory Group supports the committee and makes recommendations about the risk management approach. We addressed and completed all items in the 2019-20 risk register.

Internal audit may also periodically review our risk management framework and its implementation. This year, we engaged CAA, our internal audit provider to audit our business continuity plan and asset and portable equipment register. However, due to the

disruption of COVID-19, this work has been deferred to 2020-21.

COVID-19 response

We activated our Business Continuity Plan COVID-19 Preparedness team (BCP team) on 26 February 2020. When the pandemic was declared on 12 March 2020, we were well prepared for our workforce to work remotely. The BCP team implemented measures to support staff to work effectively from home and informed stakeholders of our new working arrangements.

The office closed on 31 March and all staff commenced working from home, consistent with stage 3 restrictions in Queensland. Throughout the shutdown period, staff continued to deliver services via email, phone, website and video conferencing. There was minimal disruption to services to the community and agencies.

In May, the BCP team started working on COVID safe plans for reopening the office. We consulted with staff and unions to enable the safe return to the workplace. We re-opened our office on 6 July 2020, with staff continuing to work partially from home. This arrangement ensures that we comply with the 4sqm per person social distancing rule around common areas and workstations. To date, we've had no staff diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus.

Complaints management

We endeavour to resolve complaints informally. When this is not possible, the Director, Engagement and Corporate Services receives written complaints and ensures they are handled independently.

However, we cannot deal with complaints about the merits or legality of a privacy or external review decision. In these circumstances, the participant may be able to appeal to QCAT or apply to the Supreme Court for a statutory order of review. Appeals and reviews of this nature can only be taken on a point of law.

During 2019-20, there were no substantiated general complaints about our service, and no public interest disclosures received under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2010*. One individual raised a privacy complaint about the use of their email address for outgoing correspondence instead of their postal mailing address. The Information Commissioner considered that consistent with our commitment to good privacy practices, OIC should check with the individual before doing so in the circumstances of this case, and apologised to the complainant. We also took measures to make it clear in our system that the individual did not want OIC to use their email address for outgoing correspondence. No complaints were made to OIC under the *Human Rights Act 2019* about OIC.

Records management

Ensuring our staff apply good records governance practices continued to be a primary focus. We make and maintain full and accurate records of our activities. We comply with the *Public Records Act 2002*, our retention and disposal schedule, and any relevant policies, standards and guidelines. The schedule guides us in managing our records effectively.

We have internal guidelines, procedures and policies on managing information and records to support our systems. We recognise that information security is critical to our business model and have commenced an enterprise information management project to improve our recordkeeping, automate processes where possible and enhance information security.

Environmental sustainability

Our waste management policy emphasises waste avoidance, reduction, reuse and recycling. We continue to reduce paper usage and encourage all staff to recycle office and kitchen waste. We used significantly less paper while our office was closed and aim to retain electronic processes where possible. The light sensors ensure that lights are turned off when no one is using the facilities.