



GERARD DANIELS

Department of Education & Training

**REVIEW OF TEACHER
RECRUITMENT PRACTICES**

Final Report

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1 Basis of the Report

The advice in this report is provided to the Department of Education & Training only. The report provides a list of recommendations only and it is the responsibility of Department of Education & Training to consider and implement the advice within the context of their governance obligations. The Department of Education & Training requires the written permission of the Global Practice Leader, Human Resource Planning & Board Consulting at Gerard Daniels, to release the report to any other party or to publish the report.

2 Executive Summary

The staffing of Western Australian schools is the most important activity of the Department of Education & Training ('the Department'). This is not an original idea. It was put to the Parliament and the Department in the 2000 report by the Office of the Auditor General 'A Tough Assignment: Teacher Placements in Government Schools'.

The greatest risk for the Department is that it cannot provide teachers for its schools. At the beginning of the 2007 school year, 90% of all schools were fully staffed. There were 254 full-time and part-time (0.4 FTE or greater) unfilled teaching positions. Country schools accounted for two thirds of vacancies. A number of regional high schools faced multiple vacancies.

After careful examination of the available data, we have formed the conclusion that without any immediate action by the Department to deal with its recruitment of new teachers and retention of current teachers, it will sustain a larger teacher shortage next year. Unless there is a significant downturn in the Western Australian labour market, the shortage will occur for several years.

This year the Department has been surprised by the larger than usual number of resignations of permanent teachers aged under 55 years, the growing number of retiring teachers over 55 years, the unprecedented number of graduates who rejected offers of employment and the complete collapse of the supply of new teachers prepared to work anywhere in the State. The many teaching and learning initiatives of the Department are also absorbing a significant number of skilled teachers into taskforces.

We argue some of the changes to the workforce could and should have been predicted by the Department. We give numerous examples of published workforce data for teaching that should have signalled to the Department that it was facing a teaching shortage. Its workforce planning and governance of human resource management generally is clearly inadequate. As the largest employer in Western Australia, and an employer dependent almost entirely on professional human capital, we would expect to see a much more sophisticated approach to workforce planning, recruitment and retention. As a matter of urgency the Department should create a senior leadership role 'Deputy Director General Workforce', with a small professional workforce planning team and technical workforce model, to provide the Corporate Executive with analysis, forecasting and HR strategy. The Minister should require of the Department's Corporate Executive robust supervision of its human resources. The Human Resources Division needs review and restructuring to improve its strategic delivery of staffing and improve candidate services.

Our surveys of graduate teachers and resigning teachers demonstrate that the employment brand of the Department has been diminished. For graduate teachers, the Department's recruitment system is impersonal and too complex. In an unenviable display of 'application fatigue', we found that graduate teacher applicants are required to complete, in handwriting, between six and eight forms requiring the same personal details. 55.4% of graduate teachers rated their experience of the recruitment process as poor or very poor. The recruitment process for graduates and other new

entrant candidates needs to be overhauled, including policies for filling vacancies, financial and non-financial incentives, timing of employment offers and support for candidates during the recruitment process.

The Department's recruitment processes are antiquated. This is surprising, given the high volume of annual placements and applications and the coexistence of the central and local selection systems. We understand that requests for funds to develop a fully electronic recruitment system have been rejected in the past. It is imperative that work begin now to implement a user friendly e-recruitment system and website. The recruitment website is one of the worst we have encountered. It does no service to the Department which has long viewed itself as an iconic employer in Western Australia.

The Department largely relies upon its existing workforce to supply its 20,000 classroom teachers. Of the permanent teachers who had recently resigned, only 44% would definitely contemplate returning to teaching with the Department and 61% would not recommend the Department as an employer. The Department operates a very centralised employment system and it struggles to create a rapport with its employees or potential employees. Retention strategies – beyond the scope of this report – that incorporate better communication with current and potential employees are critical for workforce management.

A number of stakeholders expressed concern that the status of teaching has been diminished as a consequence of the politicisation of teaching policy nationally and locally. This affects the attachment of current teachers to the Department, the employment value proposition for potential employees and demand for teaching degrees in universities. Fortunately, we found that many graduates and resigning teachers strongly support the idea of good public education and remain faithful to the role of the teacher to make a difference to children. The local marketing campaign to improve the image of nursing, which captured the fundamental values of nursing, was often cited by stakeholders as the type of campaign that should be applied to teaching. We recommend the Department invest in such a campaign that captures the fundamental values of teaching.

Finally, there is evidence that suggests the supply of teachers and graduates is closely associated with the buoyancy of the economy. Teachers have many skills that are attractive to employers and in Australia it is estimated that about 25% of qualified teachers are employed elsewhere. The booming Western Australian labour market will compete with the Department for teachers and university graduates. Non-government schools are demonstrating that they are more adept at recruiting graduate teachers. The Department needs to seriously consider how it competes with all employers for its specialised workforce.

Without action now to address these multi-faceted reasons for the current teaching staff shortage, the Department and its schools will be in a much worse position next year. Changes will require additional funding to make any significant difference. We would not recommend that the Department tries to “scrimp and save” to fund the recommendations. Anything short of a proper investment in workforce planning and human resource and staffing systems will be a waste of time and energy.

3 Consolidated Recommendations

3.1 Governance

The Department of Education and Training is the largest employer in Western Australia. The most important role of the Department is to put teachers into classrooms to teach students. However this fundamental role has not been well governed. It is essential that the Government continuously monitor the teaching workforce to anticipate and remedy short and longer term teacher shortages, so as to cause the least disruption to students. The consultants recommend that the governance of workforce planning is strengthened so that it operates within a strong framework of accountability to the Minister and the corporate executive of the Department. The human resources function needs to be better integrated to ensure a coordinated delivery of strategic HR decisions.

1. We **recommend** that the Department's Corporate Executive negotiate with the Minister the addition of a KPI for workforce planning (pg 24).
2. We **recommend** the creation of the senior position of Deputy Director General Workforce responsible for all human resource functions and that the appointment to the role of an outstanding strategic human resource professional is undertaken as a matter of urgency (pg 24).
3. We **recommend** that the Corporate Executive devise with the new Deputy Director General Workforce relevant workforce and risk reports (based on the KPI) that are considered regularly by the Corporate Executive and reported in summary form to the Minister and to Parliament in the Annual Report (pg 24).
4. We **recommend** that the Department's proposed risk system assign an appropriate (high) priority to broad and specific workforce risk, and the Corporate Executive on the advice of its Audit Committee regularly monitor these risks (pg 24).
5. We **recommend** the Department review the HR Division structure and implement governance arrangements and leadership styles that improve internal planning, coordination and communication within the Division (pg 25).
6. We **recommend** the HR Division create greater collaborative links with HR Shared Services and Corporate Communications (pg 25).

3.2 Workforce Planning

The Department has clearly failed to develop a workforce planning strategy for school teachers. This has occurred even though there was evidence from various sources that a shortage could occur under a number of conditions, including an economic boom. The advice of Auditor General in 2000 and 2004 to improve the performance of workforce planning in the Department seemingly went unheeded. The Department needs to rebuild its workforce planning effort. At the same time it needs better data and modeling to assess demographic and workforce change and the affect of human resource and industrial relations decisions and external policies on the pattern of staffing.

7. We **recommend** that the Department recasts its workforce plan as the basis for all human resource policy and process and complete the first plan before June 2007 (pg 26).
8. We **recommend** the Department collaborate with the Office of the Auditor General to design:
 - o An 'evidence based' approach to policy inquiry and option building.
 - o Evaluation methods to assess options and review workforce programs and processes (pg 26).
9. We **recommend** that the Department creates a sophisticated workforce model and ensure that within the Department's workforce planning team there are sufficient skills and technology systems to routinely apply the workforce modelling to workforce planning (pg 26).
10. We **recommend** that a small team of human resource professionals with considerable workforce planning experience be recruited by the Deputy Director General Workforce, reporting directly to that role and responsible for the workforce plan, workforce modelling, assessment of HR and IR initiatives and FTE effects of education initiatives, evaluation of HR and IR initiatives, and analysis and reporting for Corporate Executive (pg 27).
11. We **recommend** that the Department create its own workforce planning priorities and not rely on the two yearly enterprise bargaining system to set these priorities (pg 27).
12. We **recommend** that the Department closely assess the implications of the research and findings of the Twomey Taskforce for departmental workforce planning and recruitment strategies (pg 31).
13. We **recommend** that the WA College of Teaching regularly conduct surveys, designed to provide meaningful workforce data for teacher employers, education and other planners as part of the registration process of Western Australian teachers (pg 31).

3.3 Employment Brand

The Department should be held out as an iconic employment brand. It is one of the oldest continuous employers in WA, it is the largest employer and it employs a highly educated, largely loyal workforce. However in a highly competitive labour market, both within the education sector and the broader labour market, the brand is not attracting recruits. This is of grave concern when the Department needs to replace the increasingly aged teaching workforce. In 2007 the Department clearly did not have employment offers that were attractive to many graduates. Many offers were rejected. We recommend that the Department re-engineer its brand, including its job offer to graduates.

14. We **recommend** the Department develop and implement an employment positioning strategy to promote the Department as employer of choice brand (pg 36).
15. We **recommend** the Department provide final year education students with a recruitment package (pg 37).
16. We **recommend** the Department review the “Teaching – Shaping Young Lives” recruitment website (pg 37).
17. We **recommend** the Department provide better quality information about the positions available (pg 37).
18. We **recommend** the Department review incentives for rural and remote locations that are known to be difficult schools to staff (pg 37).

3.4 Recruitment Process

The current recruitment process from a candidate perspective is cumbersome and confusing. Candidates are not kept informed on the status of their application and feel like a “number”. The process is manual and overly complex and was widely criticised in our survey. We recommend that the Department re-engineer its recruitment processes.

19. We **recommend** the Department shorten the length of recruitment process (pg 38).
20. We **recommend** the Department re-engineer the recruitment process (pg 38).
21. We **recommend** the Department implement an e-recruitment system (pg 38).
22. We **recommend** the Department implement a formal offer and acceptance process (pg 39).
23. We **recommend** the Department increase the number of teacher advocates in universities (pg 39).
24. We **recommend** the Department establish a helpdesk to assist graduates with their applications, placement requests and other queries they may have (pg 39).
25. We **recommend** the Department review the interview and presentation process (pg 39).
26. We **recommend** the Department implement measures to determine the effectiveness of the recruitment process (pg 40).
27. We **recommend** the Department review concurrent processes of central and local selection (pg 40).
28. We **recommend** the Department restructure the Staffing Directorate (pg 40).

3.5 Retention

The teaching profession is the oldest aged profession in Australia; and Western Australia has the oldest teacher profile of any state or territory. The Department therefore faces the challenge of increasing rates of retirement for the foreseeable future, putting pressure on it to find new recruits. The number of resignations pre-55 years old has been larger than expected. Our survey of recently resigned teachers found that more than half would not return to teaching with the Department and a majority would not recommend the Department as an employer. The Department cannot always rely upon replacement demand and must pay more attention to retaining experienced staff, ensuring it build its employer brand with existing employees and potential employees.

29. We **recommend** that the Department carefully analyse all its recruitment and human resource policies that create pressure points that tip over into resignations (pg 56).
30. We **recommend** that the Department implement a usable, mandated exit survey and the results of the survey are analysed by the workforce planning team for use by the Corporate Executive and Human Resources Division (pg 56).
31. We **recommend** that Department engage DAA to undertake an analysis of its teacher retirement intentions as a matter of urgency (pg 57).
32. We **recommend** the Department engage in a sophisticated community marketing campaign to improve the image of government teaching (pg 57).
33. We **recommend** the Department publish a short quarterly electronic newsletter to all its current and potential employees (pg 57).

4 Scope of Work

The Department of Education and Training sought the services of an independent expert in recruitment and human resources planning to conduct a review of its current practices in sourcing and recruiting for teachers.

This need arose because the Department was short of 254 teachers as at 29 January 2007. This higher than expected vacancy level arose partly because it received 900 resignations in 2006 from teachers under the age of 55, and because only 500 of the 1500 teacher graduate applicants accepted an appointment with the Department.

The Department is undertaking a number of short term initiatives to overcome the shortfall, but requires long term solutions in relation to workforce planning and recruitment. The review should recommend how the Department can become a competitive employer in current labour market conditions.

Gerard Daniels, a leading international recruitment and human resource planning consultancy company, was asked to submit a proposal to undertake this review on behalf of the Department, on the following terms:

- Review Work Force Planning practices adopted by the Department.
- Review Strategic Recruitment Planning against the Workforce Plan.
- Determine why graduates did not accept offers of employment in 2007.
- Determine the primary reasons why a larger than expected number of teachers under the age of 55 resigned in 2006.
- Form recommendations with respect to current and future needs.

5 Methodology

Gerard Daniels conducted its assignment over seven weeks, from the first week of the 2007 school year. In that time we spoke to 27 stakeholders, sent out 1,577 surveys and successfully surveyed 300 graduates electronically and successfully surveyed 88 resigning teachers using a paper-based survey. We made contact with 56 respondents who were willing to be further interviewed and completed 33 graduate and resigning teacher interviews. A scan of relevant Australian and Western Australian teacher workforce planning research and data sources was undertaken; as well as a review of recent media coverage of school recruitment.

5.1 Stakeholder Engagement

We met internal and external stakeholders including:

- Leaders and key staff on the Department's Corporate Executive and in the Human Resources Division.
- All Deans of Education at the five Western Australian universities.
- The Chief Executive of the WA College of Teaching.
- The Chief Executive Officer and Officer of the Department of Education Services.
- Presidents of Principals Associations.
- The President of the State School Teachers Union.

A list of these meetings is published at Appendix 1.

5.2 A Survey of Reports

We also undertook a survey of recent labour market and strategic human resource reports that provide data about the state of the teaching workforce in Australia, WA and within the Department. We met with Executive Directors responsible for human resource management and workforce planning in the Education Departments in Victoria and South Australia.

A bibliography of those reports is attached at Appendix 2.

5.3 Survey Study

A key line of enquiry was why graduates did not accept offers of employment in 2007. With the assistance of the Department, Gerard Daniels undertook a study, integrating four surveys, to explore the attitudes of education graduates to the Department's recruitment practices and to understand the recruitment environment in which the Department is competing.

5.4 Objectives of the Survey Study

The key objective of this study was:

“To determine the reasons why graduates have not taken up all the offers of employment with the Department.”

Specifically, this study:

- Explored why graduates undertook an education degree.
- Explored why graduates who accepted an offer of employment from the Department did so.
- Explored why graduates who rejected an offer of employment from the Department did so.
- Explored why some graduates did not apply for employment with the Department.
- Profiled the post-graduation job market for teachers to understand what sort of employment opportunities the Department is competing against.
- Profiled the employment packages accepted by those not employed by the Department whilst exploring attitudes to the Department's package and how it compared with other job offers.
- Determined their attitudes to the Department's recruitment process and how it contrasted with any other recruitment processes they experienced.
- Measured attitudes to key aspects of the Department's employment, such as permanency, rural & remote fast-track promotion benefits, rural & remote financial benefits, international teacher exchange opportunities, etc.
- Profiled graduate teachers to identify differences occurring between those employed by the Department and those not employed by the Department.

5.5 Research Study

To meet these objectives, the study consisted of quantitative research, comprised of four online surveys hosted by Zoomerang, which were emailed to four groups of graduate teachers:

- Graduate teachers recently employed in a teaching position by the Department.
- Graduate teachers who declined an offer of employment as a teacher with the Department.
- Graduate teachers who registered with WACOT but did not follow this up with an application for employment with the Department.
- Graduate teachers who applied for a teaching position with the Department but did not receive an offer of employment from the Department.

5.5.1 Questionnaire Design

A structured questionnaire was designed by Gerard Daniels with technical input from the Staffing Directorate from the Department. It was designed to explore why graduates did and didn't accept jobs with the Department and to measure attitudes to the Department's recruitment process and key aspects of the Department's employment.

5.5.2 Sampling and Data Collection

An online survey, hosted by Zoomerang, was chosen as the most cost-effective and efficient research approach given the time constraints on the broader review project.

All graduate teachers for whom the Department had an email address were emailed an invitation by the Department to participate in the study. A total of 300 responded in the week allowed for the survey (16-26 February), a response rate of 25% after discounting bounce-backs and out of office replies.

In order to be representative of the graduate teacher population, the sample was weighted by membership of the four groups as follows:

1. Graduate teachers recently employed in a teaching position by the Department	44.2%	(50.0% of the actual sample)
2. Graduate teachers who declined an offer of employment as a teacher with the Department	7.1%	(7.3% of the actual sample)
3. Graduate teachers who registered with WACOT but did not follow this up with an application for employment with the Department	21.4%	(8.0% of the actual sample)
4. Graduate teachers who applied for a teaching position with the Department but did not receive an offer of employment from the Department	27.2%	(34.7% of the actual sample)

Overall, a sample of 300 derived from a population of 1,512 provides a maximum sampling error of $\pm 5.1\%$ at the 95% level of confidence.

5.5.3 Response Rates

The overall survey achieved a response rate of 25%. The finite population of graduate teachers (N=1,512) and the size of the returned sample are sufficient for findings to be extrapolated to the broader population of graduate teachers.

The size of the returned samples of newly employed teachers (group 1) and graduates who applied for but were not offered a position with the Department (group 4), while not sufficient to confidently extrapolate to the broader population, are large enough to measure opinions with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

The size of the returned samples of graduate teachers who declined an offer of employment with the Department (group 2) and graduates who registered with WACOT but did not apply to the Department (group 3) are too small to represent the opinions of those groups with any degree of accuracy. As such, the findings of these two groups should be treated as qualitative feedback.

The table below outlines the population and sample sizes, response rate and forecasting error.

	Population	Sample Emailed ¹	Sample	Response Rate	Forecasting Error ²
1. Graduate teachers recently employed in a teaching position by the Department	669	577	150	26%	± 7.08%
2. Graduate teachers who declined an offer of employment as a teacher with the Department	108	99	22	22%	± 19.17%
3. Graduate teachers who registered with WACOT but did not follow this up with an application for employment with the Department	323	171	24	14%	± 19.69%
4. Graduate teachers who applied for a teaching position with the Department but did not receive an offer of employment from the Department	412	370	104	28%	± 8.20%
TOTAL	1512	1217	300	25%	±5.08%

5.5.4 Statistical Analysis

The data was analysed using a number of techniques including descriptive statistics, frequencies, cross-tabulations and statistical tests of significance.

5.5.5 Validity

Each question was carefully reviewed to ensure that only one concept or idea was measured in each question. The questionnaire was reviewed by representatives of Gerard Daniels and approved by the Department prior to its administration.

5.5.6 Follow up Interviews

Where respondents showed a willingness to participate in a telephone interview, consultants from Gerard Daniels followed up with a 15 minute telephone interview. Not all respondents could be contacted to complete the interview. A total of 33 respondents were interviewed over all study groups.

5.6 Survey of Resigned Teachers

384 permanent teachers resigned in 2006. A paper based survey was mailed to all of these teachers. In the short timeframe allowed, 88 surveys were returned, representing 23% response rate (considered statistically significant). Some respondents indicated they were available for a telephone interview. All were contacted. 14 interviews were completed, using a standard questionnaire.

¹ From a population of 1,512 graduate teachers, valid email addresses were obtained for 1,290. After accounting for bounce backs and out of office replies, there were 1,217 graduate teachers contacted and invited to participate in the survey. A total of 451 viewed the survey (37%) and 300 went on to complete the survey (a view to completion ratio of 67%).

² At the 95% confidence interval

6 Background

The Department of Education was created in 1893. Geographically, it can be described as serving one of the largest education districts in the world. It is the largest single employer in Western Australia, employing approximately 36,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees in school teaching and administrative roles and the TAFE sector. It is the largest employer in our public sector, accounting for 25% of the Western Australian public sector workforce. It is also the largest educational institution in Western Australia. The Department's schools are required to teach all local students who present for enrolment.

6.1 Employment

This year, 776 government schools will provide teaching and learning to 251,555 students. The Department employs 17,609 FTE teachers (including 696 teachers on leave). It employs 9,995 (FTE) primary teachers and 6,870 (FTE) secondary teachers and 744 (FTE) education support teachers. The number of actual persons (rather than FTE) who are permanent and temporary teachers in government schools, in teaching and school administration roles, is 19,428 persons. There are two categories of teachers – classroom teachers and school administrators (principals, deputy principals, heads of departments, etc).

Employees in the Department are largely employed under the *Schools Education Act 1999* and some under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*. Public Sector Human Resource Standards, created by the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*, apply to the entire employed workforce. The Industrial Agreement creates conditions of employment for teachers, (see 'The School Education Act Employees' (Teachers and Administrators) General Agreement 2006', which expires on 1 March 2008). The *Industrial Relations Act 1979* and a range of other state employment related acts (EEO, Worksafe, etc.) and government policies also affect employment arrangements.

6.2 Current Recruitment Situation

At the commencement of the school year, on 29 January 2007, 90% of all schools were fully staffed. There were 254 unfilled vacancies throughout the State for part-time (greater than 0.4FTE) and full-time vacancies. All vacancies were for four weeks up to one year fixed employment. Country schools accounted for two thirds of the vacancies. A number of regional senior high schools faced multiple vacancies. English, science and mathematics secondary teachers were the most difficult to find. For a number of senior schools, Distance Education and other temporary teaching arrangements are in place for students at the time of writing this report.

The Department was not prepared for this shortage. The Department considers that three immediate events impacted on teacher placement for term 1 2007:

- o A large number of teachers declined teacher positions. There were approximately 1,500 registrations for teaching posts of which only one third accepted the offer made to them.
- o Recent teacher graduates did not nominate rural placements and lodged limited placement requests.
- o There was a larger than usual number of resignations by permanent teachers in 2006 and early 2007.

By 22 March 2007, there were 84 vacancies – 67 full-time positions and 17 part-time positions. Secondary schools accounted for 63 vacancies and primary schools 21 vacancies.

6.3 Demand for Teachers

Student demand is the largest driver of teacher demand. Although government schools have lost students to the independent and Catholic school systems, there are a number of student related factors that continue to drive demand for government teachers:

- Reduced class sizes (reduced student: teacher ratio).
- The extension of the compulsory school age in both directions to pre-schoolers and teenagers.
- Increased student retention.

These are all matters driven by government educational policies.

In addition, specific government policy and industrial agreements drive demand for teachers. For example, large projects requiring large project teams, such as the literacy, numeracy and behaviour management initiatives, have taken about 700 teachers from the classroom and contract and casual relief pools. Industrial agreements that increase time based conditions such as DOTT (Duties Other than Teaching) impact on FTE. It is estimated that for every additional 10 minutes of DOTT time for teachers, another 46 FTE are required by the Department.

6.4 Supply of Teachers

There are approximately 36,000 registered teachers in Western Australia. A large number (54%) are employed by the Department. Some of the remainder is employed in the non-government sector. Not all registrants are teaching or available to teach.

The Department largely relies upon the ongoing employment of permanent staff, fixed term contract staff and casual relief staff to meet its demand for about 20,000 teachers. 28% of the teaching workforce are contract employees. New teachers are required for replacement of retired, resigned, on leave and not available teachers. Most new teachers are recent teacher graduates. There has largely been an oversupply or balance of graduate teachers over the last decade.

The Department seeks to create supply by:

- Having access to a contract and casual pool of teachers.
- Providing scholarships for teaching students in target groups.
- Signalling to university education faculties shortages in supply in subject area teachers and sometimes working to create scholarship incentives to support new university programs.
- Engaging in overseas recruitment campaigns, from 2006.
- Providing an entry orientation program for overseas teachers or teachers who have been out of the system for more than five years.

6.5 Graduates

Each year in Western Australia approximately 2,000 teachers graduate from the education faculties of the five Western Australian universities. Graduate numbers have been healthy but are now deteriorating. In 2006, local universities graduated 1,040 primary trained graduates and 697 secondary trained graduates (1,737 in total). The Department of Education Services (DES) projects for 2007 1,072 primary trained and 716 secondary trained graduates (1,788). Until recently there had been high university intakes into the four year teaching programs and one year postgraduate teaching programs. However, there has been a drop in demand for these university programs over the last two years. There was downturn in applications to TISC for teaching degrees for the 2007 academic year. The DES commented that universities are reporting difficulty attracting students into science, maths, information technology and design technology, which are all areas of shortages for education employers in WA. This creates a pipeline problem for employers of teachers for the next four years.

Historically, most graduate applications to the Department were from women aged under 30. The profile of university students in education faculties has altered to include a much higher proportion of mature students seeking career changes. The DES advised that the majority of education students in WA are aged over 30. Mature age university entry is currently deteriorating as a direct consequence of the booming Western Australian labour market. As one Dean of Education noted, this mature cohort creates three distinct challenges for the Department: firstly, they tend to be less mobile because they often have family commitments; secondly, they have greater career options if they are unhappy with the Department's career offer; and thirdly, they can delay entry into university programs in the booming labour market.

The Department receives applications from about 75% of graduate teachers. About one third of applicants in 2005 for the 2006 school year went on to cancel their application, presumably because they had found alternative employment in teaching or elsewhere. The DES estimates that 60% of graduates who take up teaching are employed by the Department and 40% in non-government schools. Because the non-government schools recruitment is not centralised it is not possible to gain comparable data sets about challenges in graduate employment in non-government schools.

The Department relies upon young teachers to work in country schools. The number of graduates who indicate they are available for teaching anywhere in the State has markedly declined from about 80% in 1992 to around 10% in 2005. About 70% of the graduate applicants in 2005 indicated they were available for specific rural locations but only 10% were available for statewide appointment. In 2006 this was 3%. The DES noted in its recent report that government and non-government school systems experience major difficulties recruiting graduates for rural and remote teaching.

According to DES, there is a shortage of supply of graduates for teaching areas of need, such as science and mathematics, in both government and non-government schools.

6.6 Competition for Graduates

The Department recognises that it is not successfully competing for graduate teachers either in the buoyant labour market or with the independent and Catholic school systems.

The Deans of Education provided the best insights about the interaction between their graduates and the Department. The following is a cumulative summary of the Deans' feedback.

All five universities invite representatives of the Department to address education students about recruitment opportunities and processes. A recruitment pack is provided to the university students. The Deans said the Department does sell a good story to students during their on-campus visits and students respond well to the story.

Students also develop a relationship with government schools during their practicum, the bulk of which are offered places by government schools. All education students undertake a practicum in each year of study. The major practicum (“long prac” of 6 to 10 weeks duration) occurs in the final semester of their degree. The results of the long prac greatly influence the employability of the graduate. However, the Deans and the DES have noticed a decline in the number of practicums in government schools and an increase in non-government schools. This may have the effect of lessening the ties between graduating students and government schools.

Some non-government schools are targeting the best graduates before graduation. These employers are using the practicums to assess potential graduate employees, and in some cases, are making employment offers, conditional upon a successful long prac and graduation, during the final university semester. They can do this because each school is a separate employer with discretion to make speculative appointments and they have far greater certainty about enrolments because they decide which students they enrol. These schools work with the graduating student and WACOT to commence the registration and completion of the pre-employment processes prior to the school year. Employment is assured as long as the student successfully completes their degree and other compulsory processes. Also, university students who attended non-government schools often return to that sector.

The Department requests registration for employment in early August but starts interviewing after the long prac and makes offers in December, January and February as vacancies occur. As a result, the Department is often the last in the queue as an employer of graduates.

Graduates want assured permanent employment, especially if they are carrying a HECS debt. A non-government school will be able to offer a specific position in a specific location with specific terms of employment. By contrast, the Department asks graduates to list their preferred location across Western Australia and their preferred subject area. There are no assurances that the graduate will be offered a position in their first geographical or subject choice or permanent employment. Salaries are not always competitive with some non-government schools. The Department’s offer is often not as competitive for graduating students with HECS debts and family responsibilities.

The Deans commented that many of their students are committed to the idea of public education and wish to work in government schools. However, many students, especially mature age students, are not able to take country teaching posts. An increasing number of education students are mature age students.

Deans also commented that their graduating students are discouraged by the emphasis on rural and remote placements and are worried they will be stuck in the country. To some graduates, it seems the entire recruitment system is geared towards staffing hard to fill school vacancies. Some Deans are concerned that new graduates will not receive the mentoring support they require in the first three years of teaching if they are isolated in small remote schools. The incentives for any country employment are probably not sufficient to attract graduates.

A number of Deans commented that the Department does not understand Generations X and Y and has not been able to design work that will attract a steady supply of top graduates.

The status of teaching is discouraging students. A number of Deans commented on the success of the nursing recruitment campaign that has re-positioned nursing. The Teaching Development Agency in the United Kingdom is also admired for its efforts to improve teacher status and graduate and teacher recruitment. Deans are worried that any deterioration in the image and status of teaching will affect demand for university places and will have an inevitable consequence for the supply of graduate teachers.

In a competitive environment, the Department needs to make hard decisions about its current recruitment process to compete with other employers. This clearly foreshadows a revolution in the timing of offers to students.

It was suggested by the Deans and other stakeholders that the Department should analyse their broad replacement needs for the forthcoming year, taking into account their recent graduate recruitment patterns, to create a pool of hundreds of graduating students who are made conditional offers early in second semester for the forthcoming year.

The Deans are keen to cooperate with the Department to solve general and specific supply problems and to create courses that respond to emerging shortages in specific areas. We analyse the students' experience of the Department later, in Section 9.

6.7 Retirements and Resignations – Short Commentary

The Western Australian teaching profession is an ageing profession. National data illustrates that teachers are an older workforce than many professions and the Western Australian teaching profession is older than the teaching professions of other states and territories. Over 30% of the Department's workforce is aged over 50. The oldest teachers are from the sciences, mathematics and technology and enterprise areas.

6.8 Turnover – Number of Placements each year

Each year, the Department fills a large number of vacancies created by promotions, transfers, resignations and teachers taking leave. The career and transfer system is a perpetual feature of the government teaching system in Australia. The promotion and transfer system has always been a key incentive to encourage rotation of teachers through country schools and hard to fill schools.

For the beginning of the 2007 teaching year, the Department placed teachers in 5,314 positions. There were a further 1,170 placements that were pursued but for various reasons cancelled. The Department was therefore managing the placement of over a third of its workforce leading up to the start of the 2007 teaching year.

6.9 Description of Registration for Teaching

The process for appointment to teaching roles became more complex from March 2006.

The WA College of Teaching (WACOT) is a new regulatory authority that registers all WA teachers, regardless of the sector in which they are employed. It was created by the *WA College of Teaching Act 2004*.

Since March 2006, no teacher in Western Australia may teach full-time, part-time or casually without being registered by WACOT. By 31 March 2006, 35,171 teachers were registered to teach in WA, including 2,500 provisional teachers (being new graduates and all other people

new to teaching in WA). Teachers are required to renew their registration every five years. As is the case in other professions, many teachers will register to maintain their professional status without being available to teach.

Provisionally registered teachers are subject to national police clearances, which is undertaken by the Department, and assessment of their qualifications, which is undertaken by WACOT.

From 2007, new teachers are also required to obtain a clearance from the Department of Community Development (DCD) to work with children, which is a requirement of the *Working With Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*. The Department will soon be an accredited approved screening agency to undertake the Working With Children (WWC) checks for its workforce. In the meantime, the Department officers are located within DCD, under its supervision, to assess teacher WWC applications.

6.10 Graduates and other Teacher Entrants as Employees

A graduate is an Australian graduate who has completed a four year undergraduate teaching degree at a recognised university or a graduate diploma of one year in addition to another degree at a recognised university.

A graduating student will apply to the Department in August and after a temporary ID number is issued, make known their preferences for the area of teaching (primary/secondary/subject area) and their geographical school preferences. All graduates are expected to be interviewed by Department Level 3 teachers.

Most offers of employment are made by the central staffing directorate. Occasionally offers are made by principals. There is no formal offer and acceptance. The acceptance is implied when the employee arrives at the school to teach.

To be employed a graduate must:

- Be registered with WACOT (and through WACOT and the Department successfully complete a national criminal history record check if their last check has expired).
- Be offered an appointment.
- Be recorded on the Department payroll system.
- Commence duties at the school.
- Within five days of commencing employment in a school apply for a WWC check.

Cumulatively the employment process takes time to complete (now up to eight weeks, excluding the WWC check). The graduate must complete unique application forms for each process. There are fees for some processes. The WWC check (\$50) and WACOT registration fees (\$70 plus \$33 for the national criminal record check) are met by the graduate and not the Department as the employer.

Our survey showed that almost all graduates (92.7%) understood the difference between the WACOT registration and the Department's employment application processes.

6.11 Other Teacher Entrants

The Department attracts some teachers from interstate and overseas. They are required to establish provisional registration with WACOT and must participate in the compulsory Teacher Entry and Orientation Program. The program comprises a three day workshop, 10 days teaching practicum and a final interview. During 2006, 306 teacher applicants participated in the program. There is currently a queue for the compulsory program.

6.12 Starting Salaries

National surveys (Grad Stats, MyCareer.com, Grads Online Survey) of graduates give some indication of the position of Education graduates. Nationally the Class of 2005 education graduates, employed in 2006, were ranked 6th for graduate starting salaries (after, for example, dentistry, medicine, physical science and engineering) and ahead of law. The median national teacher starting salary (for all school sectors) was \$43,000 and the average \$49,000. WA (all school sectors) had the lowest median starting salary of \$40,000. Education graduates were better paid if they went into teaching than if they took up employment in industry and commerce (\$35,000 median salary). Education graduates had high employment rates in their chosen field of teaching with 93% employed in the education sector and most employed within four months of graduation.

In WA the graduate teacher is defined as a teacher who is in their first two years of teaching. They usually enter the Department as a Level 1.5 teacher on a base salary of \$43,743pa plus a graduate teacher allowance of \$800.

6.13 Attraction to Rural, Remote and Country Service

Teachers who chose rural and remote service receive a range of financial and non-financial allowances. The financial allowances are made up of the locality allowance (range \$166 to \$4,356pa) and the school differential allowance (from \$10,000 to \$15,000pa) which vary depending on the school. Non-financial allowances include additional leave, transport and travelling allowance, free accommodation and boosted transfer points.

Country service in schools, other than the designated rural and remote schools, also attracts a percentage of the remote locality allowance, between 42.5% and 57.5%.

Teachers in rural and remote schools accrue higher transfer points than metropolitan teachers which they can hold for 10 years. The transfer points are taken into account in the central recruitment system and are the mechanism that allows teachers to move back into metropolitan schools. The transfer points are not taken into account in the local school selection process.

6.14 Retention Salaries

Classroom teacher salaries start at \$43,743pa and peak at \$72,572pa. School Administrators (principals, deputy principals and heads of schools) are paid within the range of \$72,572 and \$106,971pa as at February 2007. Government teachers' working hours are not defined and teachers do not receive overtime payments.

6.15 Appointments

The appointment process for the Department's large workforce is complex and time consuming. Part of the complexity is caused by the relative volatility of school enrolments, itself a consequence of the general obligation of government schools to teach all local students who present for enrolment. Schools, especially secondary schools, are also required to adjust their staffing profile to respond to the subject preferences of students.

From March each year, vacancy planning, promotions, transfers and placements occur for the next school year. Graduates are placed along with other fixed and entry/re-entry teachers according to their Department ranking.

6.16 Description of Recruitment Systems

The Department has in place two recruitment systems. The central staffing system deals with the applications made to the 'Department'. The central system is a highly automated system that allows the quick computer-based matching of candidates' preferences with vacancies.

School based selection allows principals to directly select teachers. Phased in from May 2004, local selection is now available to most schools. The central recruitment system remains available for schools, often remote and hard to fill schools, which do not use local selection.

In reality there is considerable central control of school vacancies and only about 23% of vacancies in a school are filled by the principal via local selection.

The recruitment system is discussed in more detail in Section 8.

6.17 Notes on the Appointments and Resignations

The Department does not make a formal written offer or expect a formal written acceptance when making a graduate appointment. It does make formal offers for promotions and transfers. The Department does not provide a formal written acknowledgement on receiving the resignation of a teacher. It does formally acknowledge retirements.

7 Terms of Reference 1 – Workforce Plan

7.1 The Workforce

The Department requires a steady supply of about 20,000 teachers each year. Most come from its existing workforce and relief pool and about 3.5% (700) from graduates.

The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) concluded in its 2005 report on Australian teacher demand and supply that:

The need to attract teachers will remain a major challenge for education providers in the next decade. Beyond raw numbers of teachers, workforce planners will increasingly be faced with the challenge of finding teachers with the right skill sets in the right location – or prepared to move there. To achieve this they need to obtain the right mix of teaching graduates from universities, and to tap into sources beyond new graduates.

Like the rest of Australia, the Department's teaching workforce has a bi-modal structure made up of quite a few older teachers (the largest part of the Department's workforce is aged 45 – 55) and quite a few young teachers. There are relatively fewer teachers in the middle age group. In the second half of this decade there are and will be fewer graduate teachers, especially in high demand specialist areas.

The Western Australian teaching workforce is ageing at a faster rate than other teaching professions. The MCEETYA report illustrated that WA has the largest over 60 years and over 55 years cohorts (as a percentage of the government teaching workforce) in Australia.

For Australia, MCEETYA predicted replacement demand for teachers is on the rise over the period 2004 – 2014 and will peak around the end of this decade. In Western Australia, the Department has estimated that 2,982 teachers (representing 15% of its teacher workforce) will reach the retirement eligibility age of 55 during 2006 – 2009. A significant number are in the high demand areas of mathematics (141), science (107) and English (168).

In 2006, 346 teachers aged over 55 retired or separated from the Department. By 20 March 2007, another 96 teachers had retired. A total of 125 teachers have signalled their intention to retire in 2007.

The State School Teachers' Union and Principals Associations predict that the new superannuation laws that take effect on 1 July 2007 will hasten retirements.

The Department is part of a survey of retirement intentions of WA public sector employees due to be published before Easter.

Given that the most significant source of supply for the Department is its current workforce, workforce retention is the most critical factor in its workforce planning. The Department was taken by surprise by the number of resignations in 2006 and early 2007. In 2006, 384 permanent teachers under the age of 55 resigned from the Department. This was an increase on the 252 resigning teachers in 2005 and 165 in 2004.

The teacher pool of fixed term employees and casual and relief teachers is also under pressure. Approximately 500 fixed term contract teachers also became unavailable to the Department.

There are nearly 1,406 teachers on extended leave (maternity leave, leave without pay, long service leave and deferred salary leave).

In the survey of new teachers, 28.5% of respondents indicated that they will stay with the Department for up to five years. A further 18.6% indicated their intention to stay for six to 10 years. Only 52.6% intended to stay for 11 or more years.

In reality, the Department has reported that the vulnerable resignation points lay with new graduate employees, with 25% leaving after two years and 50% leaving after five years of service.

The Department appears to be facing a higher than anticipated separation rate (of retirements, resignations and extended leave). This is unusual for the Department, which has traditionally experienced low separation rates compared to other states and territories. Our research indicates that the Department is not a competitive employer for the traditional replacement supply of graduates.

The Department therefore faces significant workforce pipeline problems – it faces the possibility of not retaining sufficient middle age teachers within its workforce or attracting and retaining graduates coming into its workforce to replace teachers leaving the workforce. Although there is a large pool of recently retired teachers, a recent study by the Australian Secondary Principals Association Inc found that they do not seem inclined to join the casual teacher relief pool. Like many teacher employers in Australia and internationally, the Department is also competing to attract a diminishing pool of Australian and overseas teachers. MCEETYA noted there is little teacher mobility between states and territories and other countries are aggressively acting to retain their teaching workforce and attract Australian teachers.

The MCEETYA report commented that in Australia a large proportion of qualified teachers were not working as teachers (based on 2001 census data). About 20% of qualified teachers were not in the workforce and 25% were in other occupations. The report commented that the flow back into teaching is likely dependent upon good alternative job prospects in the rest of the economy (which discourages re-entry to teaching) and strong demand for teachers and low competition from graduates (which encourages re-entry to teaching). As one informed observer put it, the Department needs a recession to return to a comfortable oversupply of teachers.

At least in the short term, the Department cannot rely on a contraction in the Western Australian labour market to improve its teacher supply. It needs to be much more proactive in the management of its workforce.

7.2 Workforce Planning Defined

As the largest employer in Western Australia, the Department would be expected to have a very significant and sophisticated approach to workforce planning.

The Public Sector Management Office in the Western Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet defines workforce planning as “having the right people with the right skills doing the right jobs at the right time.”

It goes on to say that “Workforce planning is an approach to people management that aims to maximise options and minimise risks both now and in the future. This continuous process gives managers a framework to shape the workforce based on an organisation’s mission, strategic plan, budgetary resources and a set of desired workforce competencies. Therefore, the development and implementation of policies and practices to enhance the effectiveness of a workforce is an integral part of workforce planning.”

“As part of the 2003/2004 CEO Performance Agreements, CEOs are required to make formalised progress towards providing for workforce planning in their Agency.”

We note it is not a feature of the 2006/07 CEO Performance Agreements in the WA public sector.

Workforce planning is also described as the systematic process for identifying the human capital required to meet the Department’s goals and developing the strategies to meet these requirements.

The US National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), which assists Congress to improve government at all levels, in its ‘Building Successful Organisations: A Guide to Strategic Workforce Planning’ (2000), concluded that workforce planning involves:

- A systematic process that is integrated, methodical, and ongoing.
- Identifying the human capital required to meet agency goals, which consists of determining the number and skills of workers and where and when they will be needed.
- Developing the strategies to meet these requirements, which involves identifying actions that must be taken to attract (and retain) the number and types of workers the agency needs.

Workforce planning requires a very clear view, firstly, of the current and future student demand for schools, courses and learning. It then requires an assessment of the size of the teaching workforce and areas of competence of current teachers to meet current student demand. Changes in student demand will determine the changing shape of the future workforce. The workforce plan should optimise the allocation of teachers to teaching areas and schools. It should also optimise the hiring and retention of teachers and, if possible, have some oversupply of skilled and competent teachers willing to work with the Department to optimise flexibility.

A workforce plan should have some high level measurable objectives such as:

- Maximising student access to effective classroom teaching across the State.
- Effectively measuring, monitoring and predicting demand and supply issues, including separations, recruitment rates, pipeline shortages, pool shortages.
- Minimising disruption to schools and students or minimising classroom teaching vacancies.
- Meeting agreed staff retention rates.
- Attracting target groups of teachers (such as teachers prepared to go to hard to fill schools, teachers in high demand subject areas).
- Being an employer of choice for graduates.
- Attracting the best graduates.
- Being an exemplary recruiter.
- Minimising risks associated with the workforce (such as loss of key personnel, erosion of key teaching target groups, school disruption).
- Attracting a reliable pool of contract and casual relief teachers.
- Balancing the flexibility benefits and uncertainty costs of a high proportion of contract employees.

Ideally, workforce planning should be a high level activity that engages the Corporate Executive of the Department. Workforce planning will involve the collaboration of the most senior officers of the Department responsible for schools strategy and policy, budget and human resources. It will require all major decisions related to teacher employment or FTE control – including changes to school age, curriculum, FTE intensive education projects and policies, changes to working conditions in industrial agreements, employment initiatives, workplace rules and policies and staffing processes – to be rigorously assessed for its affect on the workforce by the Corporate Executive.

7.3 A Model of Workforce Planning – Victoria

The Department of Education and Training in Victoria has devoted considerable thought to its workforce planning. The ‘Blueprint for Government Education’ incorporated seven strategies including three related to the development of the teaching workforce. It is conducting its ‘Schools in 2020’ project which engages scenario planning about the future of teaching and learning, especially the effect of technology, to predict the effect on schools and the teacher workforce.

The workforce plan, integrated as it is with broader educational policy, drives human resource planning, policy, processes and industrial negotiation. The leadership and structure of the Human Resource Division appears to support the integration of workforce planning. Relevant to our discussion, it appears that the teacher recruitment process has received significant attention in response to the Victorian Department’s objective to increase teacher supply.

In Victoria, teacher recruitment was completely devolved to government schools in 1994. Schools are funded for teachers based on each student enrolment. Schools and principals decide their staffing profile based on budget, the existing teacher capacity and student demand in learning areas. Any redeployed teachers are managed by their school until placed in a vacancy as a priority placement. There is a bulk round of advertising for the next school year. All schools are required to advertise vacancies for the next school year on 1 March. Schools usually close a vacancy within 14 days but some will hold it open for longer to attract a larger field, especially for difficult to fill schools. Public sector merit based recruitment policy applies to teacher recruitment. The successful applicant takes up the appointment on 1 January. By December, schools will have settled their teaching staff for the next school year. In January there is another round of advertising to deal with any vacancies that occur because of changes in student demand or vacancies created by late transfers. The advertising system is fully online, the applicant rate has improved and vacancies can attract a worldwide field. We rate their recruitment website highly.

Victorian final year graduate teachers are often targeted early by government school principals and the Department’s scholarship program, to compete with other teacher employers. The Department has in place a scheme to allow each school to quarantine up to four teaching vacancies for graduate recruitment. Its attrition rate for teachers under 30 years of age is 1.9%.

7.4 Governance

The success of workforce planning relies upon leadership.

The Western Australian Minister for Education has broad powers to supervise the Department found in the *Schools Education Act 1999*. However, the Director General is the employer of all teachers.

Within the Department there is a Corporate Executive for the entire Department, chaired by the Acting Director General and encompassing the three areas of the Department being schools, training and finance and administration. The Corporate Executive monitors the workforce profile every two years and workforce management on a quarterly basis. Other workforce and human resources indicators are monitored as issues arise.

Unfortunately, the Department does not have a high level of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to drive the effective deployment of its workforce. This is unsatisfactory for a large iconic employer so dependent on highly skilled human capital deployed across the State.

The success of workforce planning requires leadership and professional human resources expertise. Highly skilled human resources professionals are difficult to recruit and are rarely attracted to leadership roles where they do not have a seat on the Corporate Executive. For this reason, and because the Department is a significant employer facing complex and long term workforce issues, it is desirable that it create the position of Deputy Director General Workforce.

We **recommend** that the Department's Corporate Executive negotiate with the Minister the addition of a KPI for workforce planning.

We **recommend** the creation of the senior position of Deputy Director General Workforce responsible for all human resource functions and that the appointment to the role of an outstanding strategic human resource professional is undertaken as a matter of urgency.

We **recommend** that the Corporate Executive devise with the new Deputy Director General Workforce relevant workforce and risk reports (based on the KPI) that are considered regularly by the Corporate Executive and reported in summary form to the Minister and to Parliament in the Annual Report.

7.5 Risk

The Department has a risk management plan that was last updated "a couple of years ago." It does not have as one of its strategic risk areas workforce planning or human resource management generally.

We have made the observation elsewhere that the Department is very exposed to disruptions to students and schools when it cannot staff its classrooms. Additionally, we have met key personnel in the Staffing Directorate whose loss to the Department would sharply diminish the effectiveness of the current systems. Unplanned changes to areas of work are also putting the human resources function at risk. As an example, recent turnover in the Recruitment Branch has resulted in pre-screening times blowing out from two weeks to eight weeks. The Department should critically assess its risk related to broad workforce vacancies and also its risk related to the loss of specific employees and HR work area capacity.

The Department is revamping the risk systems with the assistance of Risk Cover and intends to provide greater emphasis to risks related to human resources. The Audit Committee will consider the corporate and district risk profiles.

We **recommend** that the Department's proposed risk system assign an appropriate (high) priority to broad and specific workforce risk, and the Corporate Executive on the advice of its Audit Committee regularly monitor these risks.

7.6 Structures

Within the area of Finance and Administration lies the Human Resource Division led by the Executive Director, Human Resources. We have recommended the upgraded position of Deputy Director General Workforce. The role of Executive Director is currently held on an interim, acting basis by an experienced officer on secondment.

The Human Resources Division comprises three directorates of Labour Relations (14 FTE), Staffing (66.1 FTE) and Strategic HR and Professional Learning (25.5 FTE). Within the Strategic HR and Professional Learning Directorate is the Workforce Planning Branch of six middle level policy and projects staff.

Our discussions within the Department led us to conclude that there is little coordination among the three Human Resource Directorates and certainly there is no meeting of minds around a strategic workforce plan. There is not a consensus about whether the Department is currently facing a supply problem or a mobility problem. It appears that the Workforce Planning team responds to workforce data requests and undertakes some workforce planning and specific projects. The Labour Relations Directorate appears to conduct industrial negotiations for the General Agreement that affect workforce demand without reference to the Strategic HR and Professional Learning and Staffing Directorates. Apart from committing to time related conditions affecting FTE, the General Agreement also creates 130 committees and activities in the Department absorbing FTE. The Staffing Directorate is overworked by its complex systems and struggles to have its concerns about workforce demand and supply articulated as strategic concerns within the HR Division or with the Corporate Executive. Some HR services are delivered by Shared Services, which is not part of the HR Division. Overall, the mood is that the HR division is reacting to workforce change rather than leading workforce change.

Other parts of the organisation are involved in recruitment, being the HR Shared Services and Corporate Communications.

We **recommend** the Department review the HR Division structure and implement governance arrangements and leadership styles that improve internal planning, coordination and communication within the Division.

We further **recommend** the HR Division create greater collaborative links with HR Shared Services and Corporate Communications.

7.7 Policy and Planning

Our discussions within the Department and with external stakeholders suggest that the Department, and most of the HR Division, has been complacent about teacher supply issues and corporately has long held the view that there is sufficient supply of all types of teachers – graduates, permanent, fixed and casual.

The Strategic HR and Professional Learning Directorate is responsible for the production of the Department's human resource strategy and workforce profiling. It is also responsible for the workforce planning of the teaching workforce.

A Human Resources Strategic plan for 2007 – 2010 was recently adopted. It is not recognised in the Division as a meta-plan that drives all other decisions. Nor does it appear to enjoy the status as an overarching policy driving human resource decisions in the Corporate Executive.

From discussions, we were left with the impression that the Department, while willing to pursue initiatives to solve workforce problems, does not rigorously articulate the objectives of its workforce initiatives and evaluate their outcomes – which the Office of the Auditor General recommended it do in its two reports on teacher recruitment in 2000 and 2004. Additionally, we were left with the impression that, for workforce initiatives, there is not a routine practice of exploring existing evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives that have been trialled in other school systems or undertaking rigorous cost/benefit analysis of the initiative in the local context. Nor does the Department engage in any serious modelling of internal and external policy effects on FTE and broader teacher supply and demand.

Specifically a workforce model could create scenarios, measure and anticipate trends and integrate a range of factors affecting the workforce and FTE, including:

- o The size and shape of the current workforce, the pool of potential employees and graduates.
- o Replacement demand calculated using retirement, resignation and long term leave data.
- o The effect of major educational policy (eg. school starting age and compulsory school leaving age).
- o The effect of educational initiatives (eg. literacy, numeracy, behaviour management programs).
- o The effect of current and suggested industrial conditions, eg. DOTT time.
- o The effect of staffing initiatives, eg. transfer points, recruitment processes.
- o External policy, eg. superannuation (Commonwealth and GESB) and tax changes, family allowance thresholds.
- o External market, eg. WA labour market demand, economic conditions.

The workforce planning modelling will require data from the personnel systems (HMRIS and TES) and shared services. It may require the Department to change the way it collects data and collaborate with DES and WACOT to create data.

Unusually for government agencies the 2006 General Agreement deals with non-industrial matters including workforce planning. The current agreement at Clause 26 'The Ageing Workforce' recognises the substantial ageing of the teaching profession and commits the parties to the Ageing Workforce Working Party that has provided an interim report. Agreements usually take up to a year to negotiate and initiatives within the two year agreements can take up to two years to implement. By contrast, the workforce planning issues confronting the Department need to be dealt with expeditiously.

We **recommend** that the Department recasts its workforce plan as the basis for all human resource policy and process and complete the first plan before June 2007.

We **recommend** the Department collaborate with the Office of the Auditor General to design:

- o An 'evidence based' approach to policy inquiry and option building.
- o Evaluation methods to assess options and review workforce programs and processes.

We **recommend** that the Department creates a sophisticated workforce model and ensure that within the Department's workforce planning team there are sufficient skills and technology systems to routinely apply the workforce modelling to workforce planning.

We **recommend** that a small team of human resource professionals with considerable workforce planning experience be recruited by the Deputy Director General Workforce, reporting directly to that role and responsible for the workforce plan, workforce modelling, assessment of HR and IR initiatives and FTE effects of education initiatives, evaluation of HR and IR initiatives, and analysis and reporting for Corporate Executive.

We **recommend** that the Department create its own workforce planning priorities and not rely on the two yearly enterprise bargaining system to set these priorities.

7.8 External Review, Research and Commentary

7.8.1 Office of the Auditor General

The workforce planning of the Department was scrutinised by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) in the report of its 2000 performance examination ‘A Tough Assignment: Teacher Placements in Government Schools’ and again in its follow up 2004 Report as part of the ‘Second Public Sector Performance Report.’

The 2000 report found that the most important task of the Department is to keep schools fully staffed. It did not find an overall shortage of teachers but did identify staffing problems in specialised subjects and hard to fill schools. It noted that the centralised staffing placement procedure had resulted in significant differences in staffing profiles, with country schools populated by younger fixed term teachers while easy to fill schools, mainly around Perth, were staffed by older permanent teachers. The report noted that the Department did not adequately monitor staffing and lacked appropriate HR systems. It went on to recommend that the Department, where it made changes to staffing practices, such as:

- Local selection;
- Country employment initiatives including cadetships and transfer points; and
- Interstate and overseas recruitment;

more rigorously articulate their objectives and evaluate their outcomes.

In 2004, the OAG undertook a follow up performance examination of the Department’s teacher placements and made four findings:

- “It is not possible to conclude whether the overall staffing of schools has improved or deteriorated. Detailed objectives and measures that were recommended in the 2000 (OAG) report have not yet been developed by the Department.
- The Department has made some useful changes to staffing practices since 2000. However, for greater effectiveness these need to be linked to systems-wide goals and performance objectives.
- The future staffing of schools will depend heavily on how the Department addresses a number of key issues, such as centralised or school based selection, tenure and incentives to work at less favoured schools.
- There are large variations between schools in age profile, gender balance, turnover rates and other factors that are likely to affect school performance.”

It recommended the Department:

- “Define in greater detail the key principles and objectives of school staffing, provide more comprehensive information about placements and movements, and adopt a more systematic approach to reviewing staffing matters.
- Routinely evaluate significant staffing practices to verify whether planned results are being achieved and identify any adverse side effects.
- Set and measure targets and specify critical values, such as extremes in staff turnover and age or gender mix, to better inform stakeholders and trigger corrective action.”

7.8.2 Department of Education Services

In December 2006, the DES completed its review of ‘Teacher supply and demand and student replacement in Western Australia – Strategic Issues’. Released in February 2007, the Report recommended ways to improve the predictions of teacher supply and demand, encourage workforce planning and improve teacher attraction and retention for all schools.

The report created several goals for the education sector:

- Provide timely and accurate advice about teachers demand and supply.
- Improve the status of teachers including implementing a statewide campaign to improve the image of teaching.
- Retain good teachers in schools.
- Improve opportunities for student teacher practicums.
- Examine new technologies for rural teaching.
- Improve Federal/ State coordination of workforce related issues.

7.8.3 Edith Cowan University

Of relevance, the Edith Cowan University published in March 2006 its ‘Survey Report on the Wellbeing of Regional Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching in Western Australia’.

The Survey asserted that “wellbeing in the professions is indicated by high levels of occupational commitment, respect for organisational leaders, cooperation and support within work units, and feelings that employers treat staff fairly and provide them with opportunities to develop. Professions high in wellbeing can be expected to perform well and adapt well to a changing environment.” The survey found of teachers:

- 50% commented unfavourably – “Many teachers feel that the opportunity to focus on their ‘core work’ (as opposed to ‘paperwork’ for example) is less than ideal.”
- A majority were happy with their level of autonomy.
- Around 75% felt their line manager did a good job.
- Overall “would like more opportunities to receive informal feedback and coaching.”
- 60% of respondents said it was difficult to attain a work/life balance, which impacts upon personal health and wellbeing.
- Just over 50% of teachers do not feel an affinity/loyalty to their employer.



- 80% in regional WA regard their profession as low in status – not an attractive career option.
- 50% are dissatisfied with recognition – both monetary and non-monetary.
- Approximately 75% felt valued in the decision making process and that their principal had a clear vision for the school.
- A majority were happy with “collaborative interactions with other professionals.”
- Nearly 85% felt they could rely on their colleagues.
- 80% felt they worked well as a team to deal with work demands and common goals.
- More than 80% felt under pressure with their workload.
- Discrimination on any grounds was not seen as an issue.
- Bullying by colleagues, students or parents was dealt with appropriately.
- A large majority were happy with work safety.
- Nearly 80% had no plans to leave the profession within the next 12 months.
- The majority felt proud to be teachers.
- Nearly 90% felt stimulated and personally motivated.
- About half felt their organisation “expected one thing but rewarded another.”
- Around 60% felt a low sense of belonging to the employing organisation.
- The vast majority felt they make a difference to the lives of others.
- 90% felt they played an important role at their school and that teaching was of high standard.
- About 80% felt like helpful trusted members of the community.
- About 80% felt their professional status was seen as low, ie. teaching was not a good job.
- Teachers in remote locations felt more able to focus on core work than those in other regional centres.
- Teachers in remote areas felt that they and their profession were more respected than those in other regional centres.
- Teachers in remote locations had a better attitude to the way organisational changes are managed than those in other regional centres.

7.8.4 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

National biennial reviews of teacher workforces have been conducted by MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs of federal, state territory and New Zealand ministers of education), the latest being the ‘Demand and Supply of Primary and Secondary School Teachers in Australia’ (2005). The MCEETYA Report summarised OECD research about the attraction and retention of teachers. The OECD assessed that the following factors make teaching attractive:

- Improving teaching salary competitiveness. In many OECD countries there has been a long term relative decline in teachers’ salaries.
- Improving the image and status of teaching.
- Making reward mechanisms more flexible.
- Using non-financial incentives to reward teachers.

- Making hurdles throughout the career more even, especially job security and salary rises.
- Expanding the supply of teachers, re-skilling existing and former teachers.
- Targeting policies to particular groups of teachers, such as teachers in areas of short supply.
- Considering the effect of low student-to-teacher ratios, which lower teacher salaries.

To retain effective teachers the OECD identified several policies:

- Improving job satisfaction, by valuing and supporting teachers.
- Improving recognition and rewards for effective teaching.
- Providing more opportunities for promotion.
- Reducing workload and stress.
- Improving leadership and school climate.
- Providing more flexible working hours and conditions.

However, we were told that the MCEETYA report will not be repeated in 2007 although some data analysis is available to Education Ministers on request.

7.8.5 Australian Secondary Principals Association Inc

The Australian Secondary Principals Association Inc regularly conducts surveys of teachers' labour markets. Its recent 'Beginning Teachers' Experiences' analysed an online survey of 1,351 teachers of less than three years teaching service, hosted by the Joint Principals' Associations. The results indicate that schools are attracting graduates to teaching who are genuinely interested in the profession and who have a passion for making a difference for their students. However, although 93% of the survey respondents enjoy teaching, 24% indicated that they will leave the profession within five years.

The level of pressure associated with teaching in the first few years of service is seen to be the main contributing factor leading to 25% of beginning teachers expecting to leave the profession. The pressure they feel is from two key stressors, being additional management and administrative workload and pressure to teach in unfamiliar subjects, particularly maths and English. 86% of survey respondents chose to only seek teaching appointments in urban centres. Approximately 55% did not consider rural schools and approximately 80% did not consider an appointment in a remote school.

The Australian Secondary Principals Association Inc also conducts a regular national government teacher supply survey. Its report of the June 2006 survey (completed by 25% of principals in government schools) found there is an insufficient supply of teachers (including relief teachers) in specialist subject areas, which affects the curriculum offering to students, especially country students. Anticipated Australian teacher retirements will exacerbate shortages in maths, English, science and society and the environment over the next five years. The survey indicated that teacher leaders were expected to retire at high rates in the next five years – a third of principals and half of deputy principals.

7.8.6 Other sources

Other peak teacher organisations, university peak committees (eg. the Australian Council of Deans of Teacher Education, the Australian Council of Science Deans), the Australian Council of Education Research, the Australian College of Educators and Department of Education Science and Technology conduct reviews of teacher and graduate recruitment difficulties and area shortages from time to time.

In summary, there are numerous sources of data, analysis and ideas that the Department can assess as part of its workforce planning program.

7.9 Forthcoming Review

The Minister for Education and Training the Honourable Mark McGowan, on 17 February 2007, announced the formation of a taskforce to tackle long-term teachers' supply and demand. It will be chaired by Lance Twomey AM, recently retired Vice Chancellor of Curtin University, and will report later this year on topics of teacher supply and demand, the standing of teachers, the nature of teaching, support structures for teachers and specialised and multi- disciplinary teaching.

It is critical that the Department forecast its needs for 2008 as a matter of priority, notwithstanding the formation of this taskforce.

We **recommend** that the Department closely assess the implications of the research and findings of the Twomey Taskforce for departmental workforce planning and recruitment strategies.

7.10 Measuring Teacher Intentions – WACOT

The five yearly registrations of teachers creates the opportunity for WACOT to regularly survey the teaching workforce – both employed in teaching and out of teaching. Data could be collected to understand key workforce issues, such as the level of qualifications, special teaching areas, availability, age and retirement intentions. The Department and WACOT should consider as a model the New South Wales Law Society annual survey of practitioners associated with its practising certificate renewal process, which is considered a leader in workforce surveys.

We **recommend** that the WA College of Teaching regularly conduct surveys, designed to provide meaningful workforce data for teacher employers, education and other planners as part of the registration process of Western Australian teachers.

8 Terms of Reference 2 – Strategic Recruitment Planning

Workforce Planning is getting the right people at the right time in the right place. Critical to workforce planning is an effective recruitment strategy.

A clearly articulated Recruitment Strategy ensures the recruitment function meets its stated workforce goals and has a significant impact on the organisation. According to Dr John Sullivan, a leading expert in human resources and recruitment:

Having a clearly defined strategy sets up an architecture to focus your efforts and planning beyond basic tactical recruiting and towards establishing a competitive advantage in recruiting. The strategy focuses the actions of a recruiting department, telling everyone what to concentrate on and what is unimportant. It further drives whom you hire as recruiters and how you allocate your budget and your time.

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/GATELY/pp15js00.htm>; Nov 2004

Dr Sullivan stipulates that a well defined strategy is complex and should contain up to 12 distinct elements. Those elements include:

- The primary goal of recruiting.
- The prioritisation of jobs.
- The performance level to target.
- The experience level to target.
- The employment status of the candidate to target.
- When to search.
- Where to search.
- Who does the recruiting?
- Primary sourcing tools.
- What skills to assess.
- How to assess skills.
- Primary selling points to offer.

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/GATELY/pp15js00.htm>; Nov 2004

8.1 Recruitment Planning

To illuminate this discussion, we suggest the reader also refers to Section 9.

The Department's staffing consultants work with Principals in August of each year to estimate the staffing needs of the school for the next year. Full details of the timeline utilised in 2006 for 2007 is attached as Appendix 3.

A staffing formula allocates the total Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to the schools. Information provided by Principals is inputted in the Teacher Establishment System (TES) including projected student numbers and the number of students with special needs. Staffing Directorate then add additional FTE for special programs such as BMAD (Behaviour Management and Discipline) and GIR (Getting it Right).

The Department applies a formula to local selection schools to require them to place 37% of vacancies via the central matching process, the remainder being eligible for local selection. The formula was developed based on historical data of the number of roles placed through the central process from teachers requesting transfers and was only introduced in 2006 for the 2007 bulk run process.

School based selection occurs from September to December.

Once teachers have completed their leave and transfer requests, the Department begins the process of bulk transfer run from late October.

Fixed term teachers and graduates are placed after permanent teachers from November to February.

The projected staffing numbers are validated in February of the following year through a process referred to as “overs and unders”.

For Graduates, key dates in the Department’s Recruitment Calendar for 2006 were:

Date	Description
30 April 06	Closing date for teaching applications for mid-year graduates
20 July 06	Interviews to be completed by mid-year graduates
1 August 06	Closing date for applications from end-of-year (EOY) graduates
18 January 07	Interviews to be successfully completed by EOY graduates

The Graduate Recruitment Process Flow is attached as Appendix 4.

8.2 Teacher Placements

Teachers are placed into schools via two methods: centralised via an automated vacancy matching process or local selection.

Local selection was available to all schools from 2007; however, a moratorium has been placed on schools, leaving about 100 schools without access to local selection, relying on the central system only. Graduate teachers can apply for any vacancy under local selection and bypass the central process. New schools can select up to 80% of their positions through local selection. Approximately 20% are placed through the Referred Teacher Unit.

The process of local selection bypasses the requirements for the centralised transfer process, most notably, transfer points. Local selection panels make selections based on assessed merit, through the selection process. Local Selection schools are still required to comply with public sector standards and relevant legislation.

The centralised automated matching system, TES, has evolved from the 1996 version of the Transfer Vacancy Matching System (TVMS). TES works by directly matching three areas of a teacher’s Placement Request: the location request of the teacher; the school’s vacancy descriptors with the teaching preferences; and the teacher’s availability for part-time or full-time work.

TES then matches permanent teachers according to their transfer category and number of transfer points to known vacancies listed at that point in time. TES then matches fixed term and graduate teachers to remaining vacancies.

TES operates by considering a category, points and ranking of all teachers requesting placements. The rank order is determined by rank and transfer points (or in the case of graduates, a default score of 7). So if a referred teacher (Category A) has 1 point, they will be considered before a B category with higher points, provided they match the vacancy descriptor, location and part-time fraction.

8.3 Graduate Placements

As at 28 March 2007, 807 graduates were placed into schools. 166 of these were placed after the commencement of the school year, in either existing or new vacancies. 89 graduates (11% of all graduate placements) were placed in schools via local selection.

Graduates are given a rank according to scores on their interview and presentation (10%), the result from their long term practicum (50%) and their course weighted average (40%). The rank is either 7 (if graduates have not completed the interview and presentation), 9 or 10. Graduates appointed as an intern during the final year of their degree, who apply for country placements, receive a rank of 11. Scholarship holders and graduate prize winners receive a rank of 11.5. Graduate teachers identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander receive a rank of 12.

Interviews and presentations are conducted on a semi-regular basis through a process that involves a select group of Level 3 classroom teachers. Graduates are required to enrol in an interview and presentation online and then attend in groups of 32, from 5.30pm to 8.00 pm. Graduates are given two interview questions to prepare before the interview. Interviews are conducted by a Level 3 teacher and scored according to a scoring matrix. Graduates are also required to give an eight minute presentation in groups of 4-5 that include a Level 3 teacher (different from interviewer). However, as at 26 February 2007, approximately 400 new teachers had been placed in schools that had not undergone the centralised recruitment process of interview and presentation.

The interview and selection process resulted in five or six being asked to re-interview because of concerns raised during the initial interview. From these, two were refused appointment and their temporary license revoked.

The interview is compulsory and graduates who do not attend are penalised and receive the minimum rating of 7.

8.4 The Department Website – “Shaping Young Lives”

Websites are a critical information source for potential candidates. The candidate experience when visiting websites is critical in them determining whether to lodge and accept positions with potential employers. A well designed website with information that is accessible and easy to understand enhances an organisation’s employment brand.

The current website for new teachers, ‘Shaping Young Lives’ (<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/teaching/>) contains a lot of relevant. However, it is difficult to navigate, information is out of date and it does not have a consistent “voice” or style. Below are some specific observations on the current website (refer Appendix 5 for a comparative assessment to other teaching websites).

- o There is no dedicated portal for Graduate Teachers. It is very difficult to obtain information on the application process for the 2007 mid year intake, or the 2008 graduate intake. In contrast, TeachNSW has a dedicated portal for the 2008 Graduate

Recruitment Program which commenced taking applications for the mid-year intake from 5 March 2007.

- The Department website is written from an “internal process” perspective rather than from a “market orientated” perspective that recognises the Department is competing for employees. As a result, the text is too detailed and complex for new graduates to fully understand.
- The Department’s salary information provided is correct as at August 2006. The current allowances for the Rural Teaching Service are out of date. Candidates need to read the General Agreement to find out other benefits and allowances. To obtain specific information regarding allowances, the site refers readers to ‘The School Education Act Employees’ (Teachers and Administrators) General Agreement 2006’ which is hard to follow and difficult to understand. In contrast, the TeachNSW website (<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/teachnsw/index.htm>) provides details of 2008 starting teacher salaries being \$50,522 which is higher than Western Australia (comparison \$43,743). The TeachNZ website (<http://www.teachnz.govt.nz/default.aspx>) provides specific details of relocation grants available to overseas trained teachers. The Training and Development Agency website (<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit.aspx>) in the UK shows graduate teaching salaries as being competitive to graduate salaries in competing industries.
- Testimonials from graduates provide personal insights into the rewards and benefits of being a teacher. The United Kingdom, New Zealand, Northern Territory and New South Wales websites provide testimonials from teachers, where as the Department’s site does not. Testimonials should also include information on the benefits of working in rural, remote and priority schools where appropriate.
- The financial and leave benefits on the Western Australian websites for rural services are listed as being between \$2,000 to \$20,000, yet the financial benefits for remote teaching are listed as being \$8,500 to \$11,500. With such large variations in the of type financial benefit available, this information doesn’t provide the candidate with an indication of what they will receive.
- Teaching Scholarships are offered to attract undergraduates into teaching in subjects where there is a shortage, such as mathematics and physical sciences. These are financially lucrative and beneficial to both applicants and the Department. However, information regarding the program and benefits are non-existent on the website (<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/teaching/scholarships.html>).
- The vacancies listed on the Department’s vacancy list are local selection positions. They do not include centrally held vacancies. However, the website does not indicate this and it is possible for a candidate to think these are all the Department’s vacancies.
- The tone of information provided on the Department’s website is more about what the Department requires from candidates. The same information could be provided using a candidate friendly tone that encourages a positive and helpful candidate experience as opposed to a list of instructions directing candidates on what to do.

We observe that:

- Although there is a one page document outlining the process for graduate recruitment, little information is provided to graduates about the role of WACOT and what it means to register with them.
- Candidates are required to lodge a placement request form to be eligible for a placement. This can only be done once the Department issues a temporary ID number. There is no easily available information outlining to candidates that they can change their placement request districts/schools at any time.

- To apply for a position, applicants have to download an eight page application form, with two pages of Checklists. To apply for a teaching role, candidates have to hand write their personal details between six and eight times.
- Candidates who have questions relating to the Department's transfer policy or the placement request process are directed to a nine page Frequently Asked Questions document.

Observations relating to Recruitment Technology used on the Department's website are:

- The Department makes use of online technology by asking students to apply online using their registration number as their access code. This is considered sound practice.
- The website layout itself is hard to follow and candidates have to follow multiple links to find information.
- There are a number of large PDF and Word documents for candidates to download, eg. the General Agreement. These documents are typically policy and procedure documents and, from a candidate's perspective, the important pieces of information may be easily lost given the document sizes.

It is our opinion that the Department's recruitment website is one of the poorest examples we have encountered and was eclipsed by other education employer websites we reviewed during this assignment.

8.5 Recommendations

We recommend the Department:

8.5.1 Develop and implement an employment positioning strategy to promote the Department as employer of choice brand

The Department is the largest employer of teachers. It needs to do more to encourage and motivate education graduates to choose it as their employer.

Graduate teachers place great importance on a series of employment brand values that the Department can offer better than the non-government school sector, a positioning that, in marketing terms, is unique, sustainable and defensible.

The Department offers and should promote to potential teachers:

- *Interesting work* – more jobs, in more locations, working with a greater diversity of students and a broader range of colleagues.
- *Work/Life balance* – no requirement for extra-curricular hours. Holidays can be taken at the same time as students. For those choosing remote teaching, additional leave is given after a qualifying period.

Note: This is articulated on the current website in the Advantages of Teaching section (<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/teaching/about.html#advantages>).

- *Professional development program* – as the largest employer of teachers, the Department can cost effectively provide a first-class professional development program. Further, there are opportunities to be taken advantage of in short term placements in different positions and locations to enable teachers to try their hand at different roles without losing their substantive position (Note: Similarly this is articulated in the current website).

- *Flexible career options* – the opportunity to take time out for further study or to have a family, to change hours worked, area and location.
- *Opportunities for promotion* – as the largest employer of teachers, there are more jobs and, hence, more job opportunities and more promotional opportunities.

Marketing materials, notably those found in the foyer of the Staffing Directorate, should also be updated to reflect the employment brand. Information should not be included that will date (such as commencing salaries) unless a suitable budget is allocated to reprint information with current information (current brochures contain salary information that was current in 2004).

8.5.2 Provide Final Year Education Students with a Recruitment Package

The recruitment package should include step-by-step easy to follow instructions on what they need to do to apply for a role and the required timeframe. A simple DVD or CD-ROM could be distributed to Universities with all the necessary information. In particular, the placement request process and how vacancies are matched to candidates needs to be better understood.

8.5.3 Review the ‘Teaching – Shaping Young Lives’ Recruitment Website

The current website was designed utilising the ‘Shaping Young Lives’ branding. 26.3% of graduate teachers felt the quality of recruitment information on the Department’s website was excellent or good. The branding appears dated and information in the website is difficult to locate and, in some cases, out of date. There is no dedicated portal for graduate teachers. Sites structured like TeachNSW or TeachNZ are considered best practice.

8.5.4 Provide Better Quality Information about the Positions Available

Graduate teachers, particularly those who didn’t receive an offer from the Department, are dissatisfied with the lack of information about vacancies. They would like to know what vacancies exist, their location, what they are for and what impact they have on permanency. This would enable them to amend their placement requests so those who don’t get offered jobs early in the process can widen their preferences to include jobs in rural and remote areas.

8.5.5 Review incentives for rural and remote locations that are known to be difficult schools to staff

Recent initiatives, including the Remote Teaching Program, have improved the attraction and retention of teachers to remote areas, but additional incentives are required for hard to fill schools, such as Port Hedland and Meekathara. Suggestions provided to the consultants through the review include:

- Increase the cash incentives.
- Offer “teacher bonds”, providing an income in the final year of study in return for service in hard to fill locations.
- Entice couples, with country or metropolitan experience, to accept remote locations for a fixed term in return for increased incentives.
- Encourage graduates to rural and remote locations with guarantees of being appointed with a nominated peer. Anecdotal evidence suggests that more graduates would undertake service in rural and remote areas if they could relocate

with a peer into shared accommodation. This provides the support structure needed in the first year of teaching.

8.5.6 Shorten the Length of the Recruitment Process

Graduates were asked to submit their applications by 1 August 2006, yet 166 (representing 20% of placed graduates) were notified of their placements after 29 January 2007. This results in the Department missing out on number of suitable graduates.

The Department competes with the non-government sector which offers positions during third and fourth term. The Department's recruitment matching process begins in late October after offers have been made by the non-government schools. However, with effective workforce planning, a certain number of roles could be identified in areas where there are known shortages and offers of employment made earlier, subject to successful completion of practicum and course completion (ie. this is standard practice for non-government schools) would be known to be vacant, and the Department could make earlier offers of employment to known vacancies.

Note: The consultant acknowledges that some exemptions from the Public Sector Standards may be required to offer jobs prior to a vacancy becoming "clear".

8.5.7 Re-engineer the Recruitment Process

The current application process from a candidate perspective is cumbersome and confusing. 42.3% of graduate teachers felt it was *very easy* or *quite easy* to put in an application for a teaching position. 17.8% of graduates rated their overall recruitment experience as excellent or good. The current process is "process" rather than "candidate" centric. The process should be reviewed concurrently with the establishment of the electronic recruitment system.

8.5.8 Implement an E-Recruitment System

It is understood on two previous occasions, a request for funding was submitted to implement an electronic recruitment system. Given that the Department processes in excess of 6,000 placements, comprising of 5,314 positions filled, 1,170 positions cancelled to 13 February 2007 (Source: TES 13 February 2007) and the applications of approximately 1,500 graduates, the current paper based system is inefficient with limited ability to manage workflows and information. The current processes require a lot of manual and double handling that impacts on applicants' satisfaction with the recruitment process.

The current recruitment process does not provide updates to graduates. The recruitment process should include advice to graduates at key milestones including:

- Application received.
- Application processed.
- Rank on the list of graduate teachers awaiting placement.
- Updates on their rank as time progresses, etc.

A recruitment system will also provide opportunities for process improvements in local selection.

8.5.9 Implement a Formal Offer and Acceptance Process

Transferring teachers are advised of their appointments in writing, but the Department does not have a process to ensure that teachers accept the transfer or have received their advice of transfer. This can result in delays to appointments if the Department assumes a role is filled, only to find out, often at commencement of the new year, that roles were not accepted.

Graduates are offered roles by telephone, but not through a formal issue of contract and returned by a due date to confirm appointments.

8.5.10 Increase the number of Teacher Advocates in Universities

The Department does conduct university information seminars to inform graduates of the opportunities and the application process, but in many cases, these are not long enough, not timely and in some cases, not well attended.

The role of the Teaching Advocates needs to be better understood and communicated by the universities. Sessions are targeted at students in their final year of study, but should be extended to capture students completing their undergraduate degrees, and to third year education students. Graduates need to be engaged earlier in their studies to form a sense of connection with the Department. This is particularly important when promoting the scholarships available for areas short of supply and for the Remote Teaching Service.

8.5.11 Establish a helpdesk to assist graduates with their applications, placement requests and other queries they may have

A helpdesk, even one based on email support, would help graduates by dealing with queries on the process, problems completing the form, how to change their placement requests to improve their chance of getting a position and other concerns they have.

8.5.12 Review the Interview and Presentation Process

Whilst it is stated that all new teachers should undergo an interview and presentation with the Department, the reality is that this is not the case. Over 400 new teachers currently in the system have not undergone this process and less than 0.5% of graduates are deemed unsuitable for teaching from the interview and presentation process.

The process is time consuming and adds to the overall length of the recruitment process. Graduates were guaranteed to be included in the first teacher placement run after the transfer of permanent teachers if they submitted their applications by 1 August. However, information provided to graduates stated interviews would be completed by 18 January. Graduates were only interviewed once they had completed their practicum.

The process takes considerable time and resources. The timing of interviews does not coincide with the first run of placements.

8.5.13 Implement measures to determine effectiveness of recruitment process

Best practice recruitment functions proactively measure key outcomes to determine their overall efficiency and effectiveness. Measures considered suitable to adopt by the Department include:

- Candidate satisfaction with the recruitment process.
- Principal satisfaction with the recruitment process.
- Time to hire from when a vacancy is created to when it is successfully filled. This should be by teaching category.

8.5.14 Review concurrent processes of central and local selection

TES is a very efficient and necessary system for the central process, though it does not facilitate a personal candidate centric approach. The Office of the Auditor General's Reports 'A Tough Assignment: Teacher Placements in Government Schools'; 2000, p20 and 'Second Public Sector Performance Report'; 2004, p31, both recommend an evaluation of significant changes in staffing practices to verify whether planned results are being achieved and identify adverse side effects in relation to the two selection systems. At the time of writing this report, the consultant is not aware of whether these evaluations have occurred. Perceptions of graduates and the opinion of the consultant, support the recommendations of the Auditor General.

In addition, local selection in Metropolitan schools is impacting on one of the key motivations new teachers have to teaching in rural and remote schools. The concept of gaining permanency and accruing transfer points as a value proposition for rural and remote teaching positions is being compromised due to transfer points having no relevance under local selection principles.

8.5.15 Restructure the Staffing Directorate

The current Staffing Directorate structure has separation of functions in screening, recruitment and staffing. The Screening Branch is responsible for pre-screening of teachers from validation of academic transcripts, conducting criminal background checking and ensuring WACOT registration. Recruitment conduct interviews and critique presentations (through the use of qualified Level 3 teachers). Once a new teacher is "screened" they are given a status of "hired" in the HRMIS.

The Staffing Consultants, who are attached to regions, in the case of pre-primary and primary schools, or teaching areas in the case of secondary schools then match teachers to approved vacancies. In placing new teachers, they do so through TES and often do not have information regarding motivation and interests of candidates. This contributes to the feeling that the process is impersonal and that there is no "ownership" within the Department.

The separation of duties, particularly around the pre-screening, is necessary especially in terms of the levels of work that are required to perform each task. But Staffing Consultants do not know the graduates and this adds to the impression that the staffing process is impersonal.



Given the manual processes within the department, a lot of time is spent on low value tasks. Re-engineering the processes will lead to greater role clarification, ensuring there are dedicated resources to proactively engage with applicants. The current staffing compliment within the Staffing Directorate is already at 100% capacity, given the current process and procedures. The consultant's observations from interviews with key officers would be that the staff are committed, professional and competent, but are so focused on process that they do not have sufficient time to effectively plan and strategically manage the Directorate.

Concern was expressed to the consultant in relation to job levels, key person dependencies, career paths, stress levels and turnover of key people within the Staffing Directorate. The consultant believes key issues with staff in this Directorate need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The staff were highly supportive and cooperative of this review and are looking for tangible changes as a result. They are committed to providing a better service and outcome for their "clients" but need assistance through the change process.

It is the view of the consultant that additional resources will be needed if decisions are made to adopt these recommendations. A change management process will be required through this period to assist line managers and staff in working through the change. As changes may be introduced through critical times in the staffing process, managing impacts will be vital to ensure better outcomes in 2008.

9 Terms of Reference 3 – Why Graduates Did Not Accept a Role

The consultants were asked to determine why graduates did not accept an offer(s) of employment with the Department. A considerable amount of our survey study focussed on this issue and the quality of graduate teacher recruitment generally. The following are our findings.

9.1 Attitudes to and Experiences with the Department's Recruitment Process

The graduate teachers surveyed were asked about their experiences with the Department information sources and recruitment processes.

9.1.1 The Information Search

Graduate teachers primarily relied on the Department or their university for information about the Department teaching opportunities. However, they generally felt that the Department performed poorly in the quality of information it provided.

9.1.2 Information Sources

Graduate teachers sought information about teaching employment opportunities with the Department from 1.75 sources. The most popular were their university (53.1%), the Department visiting their university (52.9%) and the Department website (46.8%).

9.1.3 Quality of Information Made Available Throughout the Recruitment Process

There was no information the Department provided that graduate teachers considered high, or even good, quality. In all cases, fewer than half felt that the information was at least of good quality.

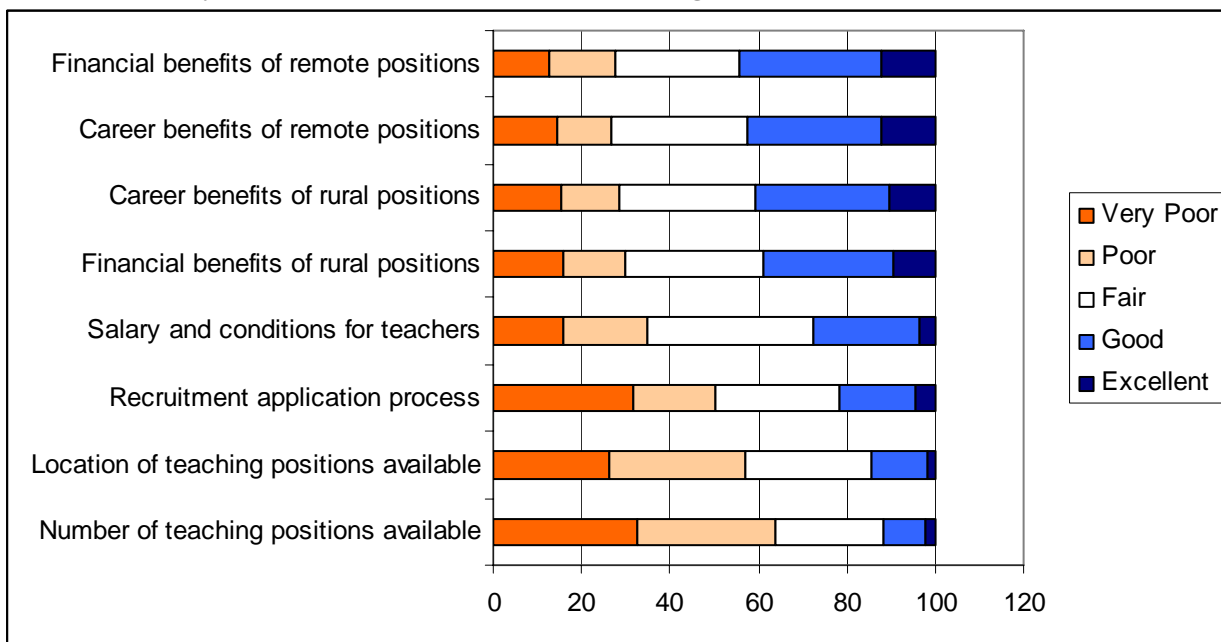
The highest responses were in the areas of the financial benefits of remote positions (44.4% rated the quality *excellent* or *good*), the career benefits of remote positions (42.7%), the career benefits of rural positions (40.6%) and the financial benefits of rural positions (39.0%).

Graduate teachers felt there were distinct differences in the quality of the different sorts of information made available to them throughout the recruitment process.

The middle quality tier of information consisted of the salary and conditions for teachers (27.4%) and the recruitment application process (21.5%).

Information graduate teachers felt was of the lowest quality related to the *location* (14.4%) and *number of teaching positions available* (11.9%).

Quality of Information Made Available Throughout the Recruitment Process



Please rate the quality of information made available to you throughout the recruitment process on: (n=300)

Although information about the number and location teaching positions is of a concern, the quality of information about the recruitment application process should also be a cause for concern. All three received similarly large *very poor* ratings from graduate teachers (32.5%, 26.4% and 31.5% respectively).

9.1.4 Quality of Information on the Website and Other Supporting Material

26.3% of graduate teachers felt the quality of recruitment information on the Department website was *excellent* or *good* and 22.0% gave the same rating for the quality of other information they received relating to employment with the Department. The website received significantly fewer *very poor* ratings (10.8% compared to 20.7% for other employment-related information).

9.1.5 Applying to WACOT for Teacher Registration

46.4% of graduate teachers felt it was *very easy* or *quite easy* to put in an application for teacher registration with WACOT. However, 27.0% felt it was *not very easy* or *not at all easy*, indicating room for improvement.

The problem does not relate to any form of confusion between WACOT and the Department. Most (92.7%) were aware that WACOT is not part of the Department and most were aware that an application for teacher registration with WACOT does not constitute an application for employment with the Department (87.7%).

9.1.6 Applying to the Department for a Teaching Position

42.3% of graduate teachers felt it was *very easy* or *quite easy* to put in an application for a teaching position at the Department. However, 30.2% felt it was *not very easy* or *not at all easy*, indicating room for improvement.

Considerable effort is required for the remainder of the application process:

- Only 13.1% felt *completely* or *mostly* well informed about the progress of their application.
- Only 14.0% felt the timing of the interviews was *better* than other positions they applied for; 39.4% felt the timing was *worse*.
- Only 11.1% felt the timing of employment offers was *better* than other positions they applied for; 73.1% felt it was *worse* (59.8% felt it was *much worse*).

Overall, only 17.8% rated their overall recruitment experience with the Department as *excellent* or *good*. 26.8% felt it was *fair*. 55.4% felt it was *poor* or *very poor*.

9.2 Key Findings

9.2.1 Recruitment Planning

The survey findings indicate that, in some areas of the Department's recruitment planning, there are opportunities for improvement to ensure the Department attracts the right talent needed to fill its teaching positions.

Finding 1: There is a mismatch between the culture demonstrated through the recruitment process and the culture of the graduate teachers being recruited.

The Department's recruitment process requires graduates to complete a written application form, attend an interview and presentation and complete a placement request form. Information from Universities and teaching practicum are combined with interview performance to determine a ranking. This is input into TES along with individual preferences for placement. The graduate rank is entered into TES which then supports a matching process that considers applicant teaching, location and mark from their practicum against vacancies nominated by schools. The perception of graduates is that they are treated like a number and the process is impersonal.

We perceive a mismatch, between an impersonal recruiter and a group of passionate people with different qualifications, different levels of experience and diverse specialities and, in many cases, a strong belief in public service.

Graduate teachers perceive that their preferences, knowledge and skills are not always understood and this lack of recognition leaves them feeling unvalued and unimportant. They feel they have no control over their own destiny.

Finding 2: The main competition for the Department is the non-government sector (Catholic and non-Catholic), rather than jobs outside the teaching role or education sector. The recruitment practice of the non-government sector is school based merit-based and recognises the motivation and talents of the individual.

There is equal preference for the government (38.9%) and the non-government (36.5%) school systems amongst those not currently employed by the Department, with 11.4% having no preference for one or the other. Graduates describe the non-government recruitment process as more personal, treats them as individuals, values their skills and abilities and places them as a person to a specific job.

Finding 3: The Department’s current “brand” positioning is one of size – they control the largest number of teaching jobs and offer the greatest opportunity of finding a job.

35.4% of graduate teachers chose the Department as an employer or a prospective employer because of the range of jobs and job opportunities. This is three times more likely to be mentioned than any other reason.

Finding 4: There is potential “brand” position for the Department that more closely matches the values of graduates. It is one of professionalism, career, interesting work and lifestyle. This is a far more attractive employment proposition than “a job”, particularly in the current “buyers market” employment climate.

The most attractive aspect of being a teacher at the Department is the *interesting work*. This was rated as very important by 64.2% of graduate teachers and very or quite important by 95.7%.

The brand value of *interesting work* matches the passion exhibited by the graduate teachers.

The next most attractive brand values relate to security or to intrinsic needs:

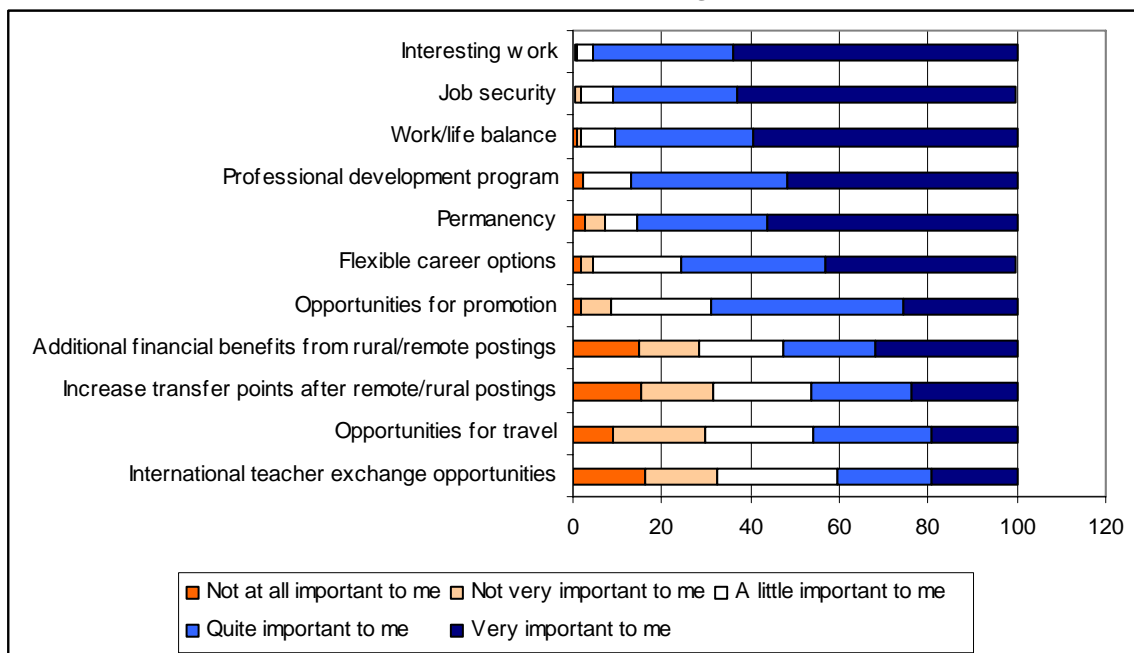
- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| – Job security | 91.0% |
| – Permanency | 85.6% |
| – Work / life balance | 90.7% |
| – Professional development program | 86.9% |

The first two meet the employee’s needs for safety and security but, while important, are readily matched by other employers in a “buyers market” employment climate.

The second two, together with the most attractive *interesting work* brand value, are unique to the Department and difficult for other employers to readily match. In contrast to the non-government sector, the Department offers more:

- Interesting work – because of the variety of positions and variety of students it has.
- Work/life balance – because the non-government sector expects a significant commitment to extra-curricular activities.
- Professional development program – because of its size, the Department can deliver this with greater economies of scale.

Importance of Opportunities and Benefits of Being a Teacher at the Department



Listed are a number of opportunities and benefits of being a teacher at the Department. Please rate how important each of them are to you. (n=300)

These are unique to the Department. They are not readily copied by the non-government sector. They are sustainable by the Department. Promoted to employees and implemented, they provide the Department with a unique sustainable and defensible employment brand positioning.

There are two further brand values that can be added to the mix. While not as important as the others, they are attractive to some graduates and fit with the other brand values.

75.7% rated *flexible career options* as very or quite important. This fits with the work/life balance brand value and with the professional development program brand value (time off for further training without loss of position) and it is not easily matched by the non-government sector where each school is separate employer.

68.9% rates *opportunities for promotion* as very or quite important. This fits with the professional development program (a desired outcome of it) and, again, is not easily matched by the non-government schools, which don't have a sector wide integrated promotional system.

9.2.2 Recruitment Practices and Processes

The Department’s recruitment practices and processes were not perceived as effective.

Finding 5: The recruitment process is not perceived as easy nor is it understood by graduates. Applicants are not well informed and the timing of the whole process is perceived as being poor.

- Only 17.8% rated their overall recruitment experience as *excellent* or *good*.
- 46.4% felt it was *very easy* or *quite easy* to put in an application for teacher registration with WACOT.
- 42.3% felt it was *very easy* or *quite easy* to put in an application for a teaching position at the Department.
- Only 13.1% felt *completely* or *mostly* well informed about the progress of their application.
- Only 14.0% felt the timing of the interviews was *better* than other positions they applied for.
- Only 11.1% felt the timing of employment offers was *better* than other positions they applied for.

By contrast:

- 55.4% felt their overall recruitment experience was *poor* or *very poor*.
- 27.0% felt it was *not very easy* or *not at all easy* to put in an application for teacher registration with WACOT.
- 30.2% felt it was *not very easy* or *not at all easy* to put in an application for a teaching position at the Department.
- 74.3% felt only a *little* or *not at all* well informed about the progress of their application.
- 39.4% felt the timing of the interviews was *worse* than other positions they applied for.
- 73.1% felt the timing of employment offers was *worse* than other positions they applied for; 59.8% felt it was *much worse*.

These concerns match well with the graduate teachers’ suggestions for improvement. The top four suggestions were:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| – Offer jobs earlier | 28.3% |
| – More ongoing communication, progress updates | 21.3% |
| – More information about the recruitment process | 15.5% |
| – Speed up the processing of applications, start process earlier | 13.6% |

Finding 6: Graduate teachers do not believe the Department provides quality information to applicants. The areas it performed best on are the things that don’t matter to graduates – information about working in remote and rural areas.

For its best performing areas, only four in 10 graduate teachers felt the Department provided excellent or good quality information on the financial benefits and career benefits of remote positions or rural positions. These were amongst the least important benefits of being a teacher at the Department.

Finding 7: Graduate teachers would like improved information about the recruitment process. They find the process complex and they are not confident that the information they are providing will give them the best chance of getting the job they want.

15.5% of graduate teachers want more information about the recruitment process.

Finding 8: Graduate teachers would like the Department to speed up the processing of forms and start the whole process earlier.

13.6% of graduate teachers felt that the process was unnecessarily long and needs to be started earlier and sped up. From the graduate teachers' perspective, the wait is agonising. From an organisational perspective, the Department is competing with the non-government sector for the top teachers and they are offering jobs in terms three and four while the Department is still processing applications, thus denying the Department access to some of the top graduates.

Finding 9: Graduate teachers would like more communication: progress updates during the recruitment process and updates on job prospects.

Graduates do not feel they are in control of their destiny. From the time they commence WACOT registration until the time they receive a job offer, or not, they are not kept informed about the progress of their application. For example, there is:

- No confirmation of receipt of forms and often no feedback if they were incorrect.
- No knowledge of when job offers are coming.
- No information on where they sit in the list for placement.
- No advice on how to improve their chances of an offer.

21.3% suggested that more communication during the application and placement process would give them a greater feeling of understanding and control over the process.

Finding 10: Graduate teachers would like the Department to offer jobs earlier.

Suggested by 28.3%, this was the most commonly suggested improvement.

9.2.3 The 2006 Graduate Recruitment Process, including Why Graduates Did/Did Not Accept Roles with the Department

Finding 11: Graduate teachers recently employed by the Department accepted an offer of employment with the Department because they received one.

The main reasons new teachers accepted an offer from the Department are a reflection of the job placement system:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| – I was offered a role in my preferred location | 53.3% |
| – I hadn't received any other offers of employment | 40.0% |
| – I was offered a role in my preferred teaching discipline | 32.0% |

None of these answers suggest any motivation to work for the Department. There is no reflection of the aspects of employment they find important. There is nothing about interesting work, work/life balance or the professional development program, the employment "brand values" mentioned earlier.

Finding 12: Graduate teachers who rejected an offer of employment with the Department tended to do so because they had already accepted a job offer from elsewhere (14/22)³.

These job offers were mainly from the non-government school sector. The other reasons for rejecting the Department offer was that it wasn't what they wanted.

Finding 13: Graduate teachers who did not apply for employment with the Department also tended to do so because they had accepted a job elsewhere (9/24)³.

As with those who rejected the Department's offers, these were also mainly from the non-government school sector. The other reasons for not applying was the perception that the Department's remuneration would be uncompetitive.

Finding 14: If the placement request doesn't include rural or remote locations, then obtaining employment is significantly harder.

One in two recently employed teachers were sent to regional, rural or remote postings. In contrast, only one in four graduate teachers who did not receive an offer included country locations in their placement request.

The demographic profile of graduate teachers completing the survey was:

- 3 in 5 are aged 25+.
- Just under half were in the workforce before they started their teaching studies and 1 in 5 were enrolled at university in a non-teaching course.
- Some have partners, some of whom are not able to leave their current location.
- Some have children, who may already be settled in schools.

Finding 15: The Department's salary and conditions package is not as competitive as graduate teachers employed outside the Department's system are receiving. Those employed outside the Department are receiving:

- A higher starting salary:
 - 38.8% of the Department teachers start on \$40,000 - \$42,999
 - 31.4% of non-Department employees start on \$43,000 - \$44,999
- A broader range of salaries:
 - The two big salary bands of the Department are the \$40,000 and the \$43,000 bands
 - There are three big non-Department salary bands: the \$43,000 band, \$45,000 - \$49,999 and \$50,000 - \$54,999
- Financial assistance with further studies (23.5%)
- Paid professional memberships (14.6%)
- Paid overtime (11.3%)

³ For the small sub-groups, results are generally reported as counts, rather than percentages, as these samples are too small to be extrapolated to the wider population.

While salary and conditions may not be a prime motivator for choosing to work for the Department, 27.3% of the Department’s recently employed teachers do not know their annual salary (25.0% of those working a 1.0 FTE) and 36.7% are unaware of the depreciation allowance.

Teachers who were recently employed by the Department, but applied for teaching jobs outside the Department, felt that the Department’s package was competitive with other packages they looked at.

By comparison, graduate teachers employed outside the Department’s system felt the package they were on was better than what the Department was offering.

9.2.4 Placement Requests

Finding 16: The type of locations requested by the graduate can be a barrier to their placement in employment.

All teachers surveyed who applied for a job with the Department but were not made an offer were asked about their application experience.

The graduate teachers who applied for but were not made an offer with the Department selected a wide variety of locations in their original placement request. The majority (82.7%) included metropolitan locations in their request and 28.8% included country locations in their request.

Locations Selected with the Original Placement Request	%
Individual metropolitan schools	16.3
Selected metropolitan schools	17.3
Selected metropolitan districts	3.8
All metropolitan schools / districts	25.0
Individual country schools	6.7
Selected country districts	7.7
All country districts	1.0
All State-wide available	0.0
Mix of metro and country locations	12.5
Other	9.7

Which locations did you select when you originally submitted your placement request with the Department? (n=104; Not offered a position with the Department)

There is evidence to suggest that the type of locations requested is a barrier to the Department placing those graduate teachers who’ve yet to be offered a job by the Department. Around half the recently employed teachers received a regional, rural or remote posting, significantly more than the one in four of those who did not receive an offer and included country locations in their placement request.

	Recently Employed Location of Posting	Not Offered Job Placement Request
Metropolitan area	48.6%	82.7%
Regional, rural or remote area	51.4%	28.8%

Placement request figures do not add to 100% because applicants could request both metro and country postings.

38.5% of this group altered their placement request after initially lodging it. Of these 40 people, 17 broadened the range of schools they were prepared to teach at, six broadened the range of disciplines or grades they were prepared to teach and two broadened the teaching load they preferred. 17 gave other responses.

There is some evidence from the detailed description of how they changed their placement requests that, for some applicants, their initial requests had little chance of success. They were subsequently advised how to improve their application to more likely succeed.

Competition for graduates in the Western Australian labour market is fierce with graduate programs and sophisticated employers planning well in advance to recruit graduates. The resources sectors initiate graduate recruitment in the March of the year prior to appointment. Some service companies are committing to graduates as they enter university. These approaches to graduate recruitment are significantly altering the perception of the graduate candidate pool and employer responses to the pools.

No longer is there limitless supply of graduates and, as a result, they are demanding a candidate centric approach that treats them as a unique person. There are a range of reasons for graduates not accepting offers of employment with the Department. However, the three most salient points are:

- 55.4% of graduate teachers rated the recruitment experience with the Department as *poor* or *very poor*.
- Only 13.1% of applicants felt informed about the status of their applications.
- 73.1% felt the timing of employment offers was *worse* than other positions they applied for.

These statistics speak loudly of areas for improvement within the Department, but solving the problems requires a significant mind shift from within the Department. A systemic approach is needed to deal with the volume of people that need to be processed, but the current systems and processes were designed when there was a different graduate supply profile available.

The Department has the chance to be an employer of choice in the education sector, given the broad range of opportunities it can provide and the flexible benefits that are available. However, 61% of the teachers that have left the Department in the last 12 months would not recommend the Department as an employer. Communicating the opportunities at the Department and demonstrating how staff are valued once they have joined the Department is of paramount importance to ensure there is a sustainable supply of teachers for the future.

The recommendations we make in Section 8 are designed to overhaul the Department's employment brand and recruitment system.

10 Terms of Reference 4 – Resignations of Teachers Under 55

We were asked to determine the primary reasons why a larger than expected number of teachers under the age of 55 resigned in 2006.

The Department experienced a higher than usual level of resignations of teachers in 2006 and early 2007. By the end of January, about 900 teachers had resigned. Most were fixed term teachers but 384 were permanent teachers. This is more than double the number of permanent resignations two years earlier. The consultants sent a paper based survey to all 384 permanent teachers to explore why they resigned and what the Department could have done to change their decision. 88 surveys were completed. The surveys allowed the respondents to write extensively in response to many questions. 14 respondents were then interviewed. These are the results of our study.

10.1 Why did you resign from your teaching position with the Department?

The top five answers were:

1. Dissatisfaction.
2. Workload.
3. Lack of support.
4. Dissatisfaction with OBE/Curriculum.
5. New Career Path.

Follow up interviews highlighted the first three of these answers, in combination, as being the compelling reasons for leaving the Department. The common theme amongst the interviewees was an “us and them” mentality which they felt existed between the teachers in the classroom and those in central office. In some cases, this feeling also flowed to leadership roles within the schools, eg. Principals.

Teachers also felt the increasing amount of paperwork and administration required to “justify” their daily actions without a corresponding increase in resources made their workload excessive.

10.2 Are you leaving the Department to commence another job?

73% of respondents were leaving to commence another job with over half of those entering non-government schools.

10.3 What could the Department have done to change your decision to leave?

The responses to this question, both at the survey and interview level, could be narrowed down to three key words: inflexibility, no consultation and disrespect.

10.3.1 Inflexibility

This encompasses the Department being unprepared to:

- Consider long term retention benefits of leave without pay (LWOP) over the short term costs.

- Verbally consult with teachers whose transfers, particularly from non-metropolitan to non-metropolitan schools, have been declined.
- Allow room in the merit selection process for consideration of classroom and colleague reputation. The process is considered universally “unfair”, relying on paper-based criteria which supports those teachers with an ability to write but does not adequately assess their ability to teach.

10.3.2 No Consultation

In both the interviews and survey, there was a common belief that classroom teachers have very little input into process and curriculum changes that directly impact the classroom. They said OBE and other “knee-jerk” changes added to the curriculum without diminishing some other aspect of the curriculum or providing additional resources to the classroom teacher. Again, an “us and them” mentality was apparent with a perception that the decision-makers are too far removed from the classroom.

10.3.3 Disrespect

Many teachers who resigned felt there was a lack of support from the Department and a sense of disrespect for the employee. There was a general perception that people at Department were not contactable and did not value the work of teachers in the classroom. This perception permeated the morale of teachers and passed onto the school community.

Disrespect was also an issue for teachers dealing with students with behavioural problems. A lack of support from the Department as well as a lack of formal processes for dealing with such students meant that teachers felt isolated and diminished.

10.4 What were the most positive aspects of your employment with the Department?

There were two standout responses to this question:

1. Interaction with students.
2. Staff/Colleagues relationships.

10.5 What did you least enjoy during your employment with the Department?

The five most common responses were:

1. Paperwork.
2. Curriculum.
3. Workload.
4. Difficult students.
5. Lack of professionalism.

These responses are consistent with those given for Questions 1 and 3.

10.6 Would you consider returning to work for the Department?

Yes	44%
No	46%
Maybe	10%

10.7 Statements

We put a number of statements to respondents:

- I. **“My position was interesting and challenging”**
94% of respondents agreed with this statement.
- II. **“I was involved in the decisions that affected my work”**
39% of respondents felt able to make decision affecting their work; however 49% felt uninvolved in such decisions.
- III. **“I clearly understood my role and what was expected of me”**
72% of respondents felt they understood their role.
- IV. **“I was provided with an appropriate level of professional development opportunities”**
56% of respondents felt they were provided with appropriate professional development opportunities. 35% of respondents disagreed with this statement. Some of those teachers interviewed felt that professional development was often geared to a budget and not to the needs of teachers.
- V. **“There were appropriate career opportunities for me”**
41% of respondents felt there were appropriate career opportunities available compared to 46% who felt there were not. During interviews, dissatisfaction with the paper-based component of the merit selection and Level 3 teacher process was common. Many teachers felt an inappropriate bias was being given to teachers who were able to pass written criteria tests without due consideration being given to the references of colleagues and actual classroom observations.
- VI. **“My salary was comparable to external market rates “**
64% of respondents disagreed with this statement; however, based on written and interview responses, salary was not a major reason for teachers leaving the Department.
- VII. **“My salary was appropriate for the type of work I performed”**
66% of respondents disagreed with this statement. Based on written and interview responses, this dissatisfaction arose primarily out of a lack of acknowledgement by Department and Principals of extra duties taken on by teachers in addition to those for which they are employed.
- VIII. **“My department head/supervisor clearly communicated essential information to me (eg. organisational changes)”**
49% of respondents agreed and 33% disagreed with this statement. This response was confirmed in written and verbal responses. Some respondents felt they were supported by their leaders within the school and others felt that their leaders were not supporting them in a satisfactory manner.

IX. “Complaints and grievances in my school were resolved effectively”

52% of respondents disagreed with this statement compared to 24% who agreed. There were also 24% who either agreed or disagreed. Some of this could be linked to the teachers’ inability to handle difficult students.

X. “The hours I worked to perform my role were reasonable”

63% of respondents felt the hours required to perform their role were unreasonable. This ties in to the responses for VI and VII above. Written and verbal responses indicated there are also excessive paperwork requirements and curriculum changes which teachers found difficult without additional resources.

XI. “I would recommend the Department as a great place to work”

61% of respondents would not recommend the Department as a great place to work.

10.8 Most valuable staff benefits the Department provides to Teachers

1. Employer Funded Superannuation.
2. Housing/Rent Subsidy.
3. Professional Development.
4. Relocation/Depreciation Allowance.

10.9 What suggestions do you have to improve the Department as a place to work?

The overall general response is that the Department should be “humanised” and teachers “not treated as numbers.” Others include:

10.9.1 Transfer/Promotion/Merit Selection Process

- Increase transparency of process and streamline paperwork.
- Incorporate a colleague and classroom assessment.
- Provide flexibility for verbal follow up of denial of applications for transfer/promotion.
- Acknowledge “transfer points system” for regional and remote service. Local selection process places no weight on this system.

10.9.2 Remuneration

- Time in lieu for additional duties performed, eg. attending school camp.
- Acknowledge extra duties performed, eg. school band.
- Increase regional/remote subsidies to encourage good teachers to the country.

10.9.3 Workload

- Curriculum changes should be accompanied by implementation strategies so Department can see the “man hours” impact of each change.
- All classes K – 6 should have access to a Teachers Aide for at least 2½ days per week.
- Upgrade teacher facilities.
- Detail process and back-up from the Department to deal with students with behavioural issues.

10.10 Commentary

The retention of teachers is the most important human resource activity for the Department. The current workforce provides more than 90% of its staffing. This study is redolent with human resource challenges for the Department its Human Resource Division.

In the context of our discussion about workforce supply and demand we are concerned that:

- o Experienced permanent teachers, such as graduates, are responsive to competitive labour markets, evidence by the numbers in our sample resigning to take up roles with the non-government schools sector.
- o Almost half the resigning teachers would not re-enter employment with the Department, which affects its fixed and relief pool and permanent re-entry pipeline.
- o 61% would not recommend the Department as a great place to work.
- o The recruitment system, especially faceless candidate care processes and the tension between the central transfer points system and local selection, is discouraging employees. A number of respondents were disappointed the Department did not acknowledge their resignation.
- o The increased intensity and hours of employment are not matched by the Department’s remuneration.
- o Short term workforce planning, such as moratoriums on LWOP, encourages separations from the Department.

We have already recommended a wholesale reform of the vacancy filling process that may deal with candidate care issues.

We **recommend** that the Department carefully analyse all its recruitment and human resource policies that create pressure points that tip over into resignations.

We had little time to survey the resigning teachers. The Department does have an exit survey for resigning teachers that can be completed online. It is not compulsory and is not often completed. Interactive exit surveys can provide a rich vein of intelligence for employers wanting to improve their responsiveness to workforce concerns and to identify emerging “tipping points” leading to resignations.

We **recommend** that the Department implement a usable, mandated exit survey and the results of the survey are analysed by the workforce planning team for use by the Corporate Executive and Human Resources Division.



All stakeholders we consulted raised the problem of the current and future shortages of subject teachers in science, mathematics, English, design and technology and home economics. Without being prescriptive, we would encourage the Department to consider targeted differential retention strategies to lengthen the service of these teachers. It should consider, too, re-training and up-skilling teachers to allow them to enter the targeted groups. The South Australian Department of Education and Youth Affairs has developed an attractive package for experienced country maths and science teachers that is worthy of review.

In relation to separation of experienced teachers, the Department is part of the WA public sector 'Retirement Intentions Survey', to be published by Easter, which will give it better data to assess the loss of older teachers. The Department has been invited by the Public Sector Management Office to work with their consultants, DAA, to produce a more specific report about teacher retirement intentions.

We **recommend** that Department engage DAA to undertake an analysis of its teacher retirement intentions as a matter of urgency.

The deteriorating image of the teaching profession, and its status in the community, caused concern for all stakeholders. The success of the nursing recruitment campaign was held up by many as a model to be adopted by the Department. We understand the Corporate Communications Directorate is considering a teachers campaign.

We **recommend** the Department engage in a sophisticated community marketing campaign to improve the image of government teaching.

Lastly, we observed that the Department is quite reliant on fixed term, casual and re-entry teachers. However, it does not regularly communicate with this workforce or its 'alumni' of qualified teachers who are taking an absence from teaching. A simple regular electronic newsletter to its workforce and alumni can be an effective means to maintain rapport with current, occasional and potential employees. There are plenty of examples in the higher education and membership association sectors.

We **recommend** the Department publish a short quarterly electronic newsletter to all its current and potential employees.

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Appendix 1 – Meetings with Stakeholders

Date	Meeting with
29 January	Sharyn O'Neill – Acting Director General, DET Rob Lindsay – Acting HR Director, DET Peter McCaffrey – Deputy Director General, Finance & Administration, DET Kim Ward – Director Staffing, DET
2 February	Peter McCaffrey, Rob Lindsay, DET
7 February	Rob Lindsay, Kim Ward, Martin Clifford, Jonric Ridley, Jill Proctor, DET
8 February	Martin Clifford, DET
8 February	Jonric Ridley, DET
8 February	Kim Ward, DET
9 February	Professor Bill Loudon, Dean of Education, University of Western Australia
9 February	Professor Michael O'Neill, Executive Dean, Notre Dame University
9 February	Rob Lindsay, DET
9 February	Mark Dennison, DET
9 February	Glenys Bray, DET
12 February	Margery Evans, Executive Director HR & Workforce Development, Department of Education & Children's Services (South Australia)
13 February	Brett Gaines, DET
16 February	Dr Suzanne Parry, Director, WACOT
16 February	Professor Greg Robson, Head of School of Education, Edith Cowan University
19 February	Brett Gaines, DET
20 February	Barry Kissane, Dean of Education, Murdoch University
22 February	Rob Lindsay, DET
22 February	Geraldine Farr, DET
26 February	Michelle Moyes, DET
26 February	Tony Bugden, HR General Manager, Office of Resources Management & Strategy, Department of Education and Training (Victoria)
1 March	Rob Lindsay, DET
6 March	DET Staffing Branch Committee Meeting – Fiona Donaldson, Helen Gerrard, Bruce Hicks, Amelia Rossi
8 March	Michelle Moyes, DET
12 March	Mike Keely, President, State School Teachers Union of WA
13 March	Neil Wilson, DET
20 March	Professor Graham Dellar, Dean, Faculty of Education, Language Studies & Social Work, Curtin University of Technology
22 March	Martin Clifford, Glenys Bray, DET
23 March	Jeff Macnish, President, WA District High School Administrators Association

Appendix 2 – Bibliography of Reports

1. Australian Policy Literature

ACER Policy Briefs ‘Initiatives to address teacher shortage’ Issue 5, November 2003

Australian Secondary Principals Association Inc ‘Beginning Teachers’ Experiences Survey’, 2007 and ‘Annual National Government Teaching Survey Supply Report’, 2007

Connors, Lindsay, for the NSW Public Education Alliance ‘Time and Tide...A report on the Need to Invest in the Renewal of the Public School Teaching Service’

Edith Cowan University ‘Survey Report on the Wellbeing of Regional Professions: Policing, Nursing and Teaching in Western Australia’, March 2006.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training ‘Top of the Class’, tabled February 2007

MCEETYA ‘Demand and Supply of Primary and Secondary School Teachers in Australia’, 2005

The Centre for Independent Studies Jennifer Buckingham ‘Teachers and the Waiting Game: Why Decentralisation is Vital for Public Schools’ No 80, 5 February 2007

2. West Australian Public Sector Acts and Reports

Public Sector Management Act 1994

School Education Act 1999

Western Australian College of Teaching Act 2004

Department of Education Services ‘Teacher supply and demand and student placements in Western Australia – Strategic Issues’, December 2006

Department of Education and Training Documents

Human Resources Strategic Plan 2007 - 2010

‘The Teaching Workforce: A Profile’, April 2004

‘Workforce Profile 2006’, June 2006

Office of the Auditor General:

- o ‘A Tough Assignment: Teacher Placements in Government Schools’, Report 9th October 2000
- o ‘Second Public Sector Performance Report 2004’, June 2004

3. Industrial Agreement

The School Education Act Employees’ (Teachers and Administrators) General Agreement 2006

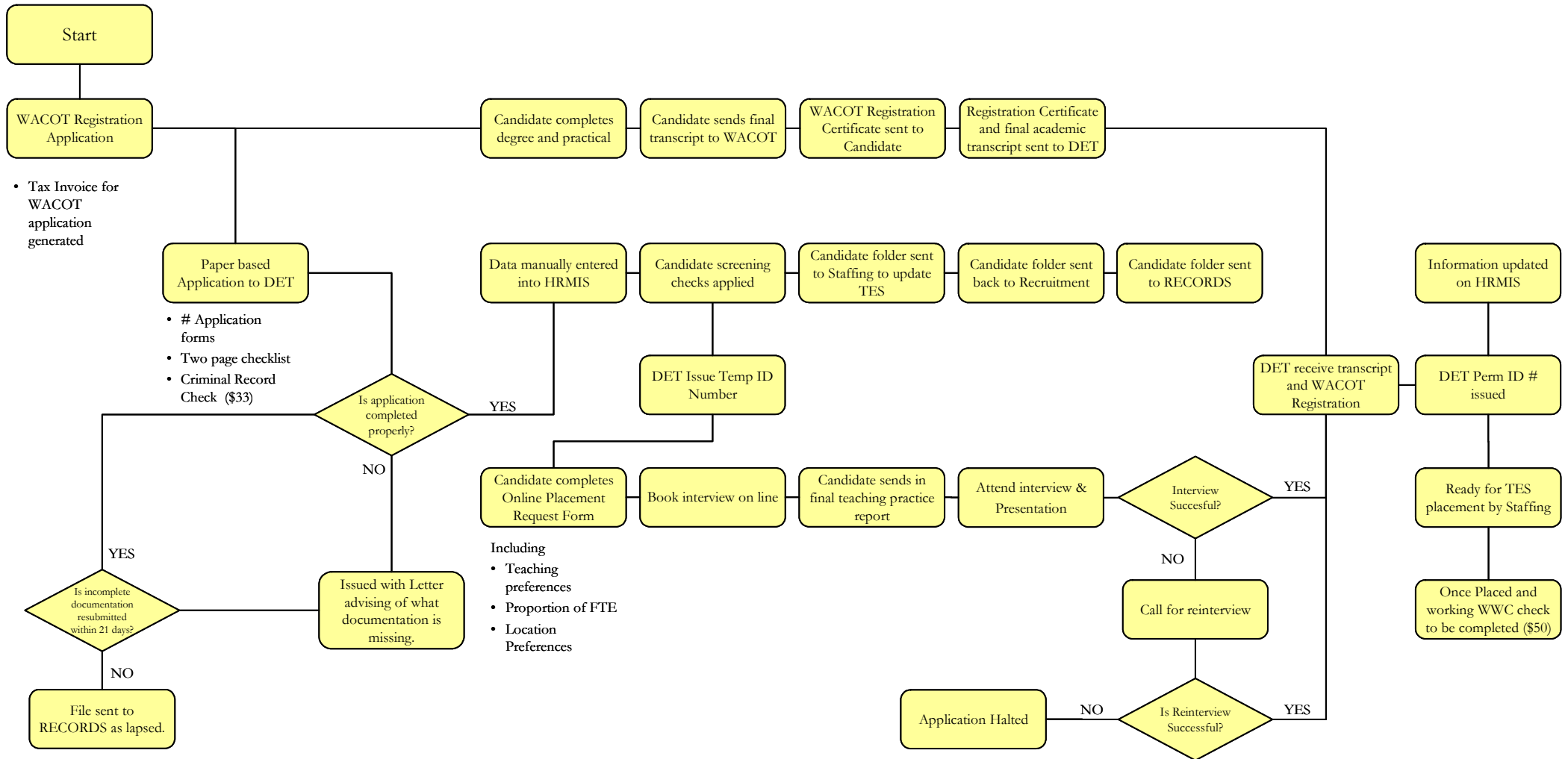
4. International

Training and Development Agency for Schools (UK)

Appendix 3 – Timeline for Schools Teacher Planning 2006/2007

	2006									2007	
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Time line communicated to schools	7th										
Schools receive staffing package			28-30th								
Schools receive staffing calculator				3rd							
Teacher establishment report 2007				3rd							
Electronic school staffing & vacancy forms				3rd							
Schools check & submit teacher establishment report					2nd						
Schools submit primary LOTE application form					2nd						
Pre compulsory enrolments cut off					2nd						
Email school staffing allocation chart					14th						
Contact Details for Principals or their delegates					18th						
Notification of vacancy & recommended applicants form					18th						
Secondary & district high school 2007 FTE summary form					18th						
Secondary school staffing & vacancy area details sheet 2007					18th						
Secondary school staffing & vacancy form 2007					18th						
Primary school staffing & vacancy form 2007					18th						
Staffing consultants conduct interviews with local selection principals					30th						
Movement and variation advices					30th						
Commence EIP process					30th						
Referred teacher unit submits resumes to local selection schools						8th					
Principals advise of ranking of referred teachers for positions						8th					
Complete recruitment analysis form						8th					
Local Selection principals will advise of ranking of referred teachers for positions						22nd					
Complete recruitment analysis form						22nd					
Staffing consultants interview with principals non local selection schools							11th				
Central transfer run							16th				
Local Selection schools provide notification of vacancy & recommended applicants form									13th		
Local Selection schools recruitment analysis form									13th		
Commencement & movement & variation advices & job share form									13th		
STAFFING & LEAVE REQUESTS 2006/2007											
Due date for Leave requests for 2007				7th							
Due date for placement requests for permanent & pre-permanent teachers				14th							
Due date for placement requests for fixed term teachers, graduate teachers & psychs seeking a transfer or placement for 2007				14th							
Due Date referred teachers resumes - permanent unplaced teachers & EIP teachers				28th							
Due Date Permanency forms for 2007					18th						
Permanent teachers seeking transfer last date to alter placement requests					30th						
Permanent teachers seeking transfer final date for transfer withdrawals					30th						
Permanent teachers seeking transfer final date to activate protective transfers					30th						
From late October - placement notification to referred teachers							From Late Oct				
From late October - placement notification to permanent & pre-permanent teachers							From Late Oct				
From late October - placement notification to fixed term & graduate teachers							From Late Oct				
GRADUATE RECRUITMENT											
Closing date for teaching applications for mid-year graduates	30th										
Interviews to be completed by mid-year graduates				20th							
Closing date for applications from end-of-year (EOY) graduates					1st						
Interviews to be successfully completed by EOY graduates										18th	

Appendix 4 – Graduate Recruitment Process Flow





Appendix 5 – Website Valuation

Education Recruitment Websites

Websites Evaluated

Websites Evaluated	Western Australia	Northern Territory	New South Wales	New Zealand	United Kingdom
Evaluation Criteria:	Score out of 10	Score out of 10	Score out of 10	Score out of 10	Score out of 10
Clearly articulated candidate value proposition	6	8	8	9	9
Clearly articulated candidate value proposition for returning teachers	4	4	9	9	8
Clearly articulated candidate value proposition for graduates	4	4	7	9	9
Clearly articulated candidate value proposition for international teachers	4	6	9	9	9
Clearly articulated candidate value proposition for rural/remote posts	4	9	8	9	8
Clearly articulated indigineous recruitment value proposition	4	9	9	9	N/A
Teacher testimonials on website	N/A	9	8	9	8
Ease of navigation around the recruitment website	3	6	8	8	9
Clearly articulated recruitment process information	4	5	6	8	9
On line application process	0	8	7	8	9
Real time recruitment database	0	7	8	8	9
Use of recruitment agencies	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Comments	Very difficult to navigate around the website. The recruitment process and value proposition is geared around DET's needs not those of the candidate.	Hard to find information for graduate recruitment process	Hard to find information on how to apply for graudate positions. Dept visits universities ealy in the year, but limited information on the process	All teaching positions advertised using the gazette or can apply through agencies. Use of online application forms.	Multiple avenues for candidates to apply for teaching positions. Can apply direct to schools/ocal areas, go through agencies or thorough various websites.
	Positions advertised are local selection but doesn't say that on the website				

Western Australia

<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/jobs.asp>
<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/staffing/remote.htm>
<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/teaching/>

New Zealand

<http://www.teachnz.govt.nz/default.aspx>
<http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/>
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/>

Northern Territory

<http://www.teaching.nt.gov.au/>
<http://www.teaching.nt.gov.au/>

United Kingdom

<http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/becomingateacher.aspx>
<http://www.teachfirst.org.uk/>
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachinginengland/>

New South Wales

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/index.htm>
<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/teachnsw/index.htm>