

Making It Happen

Corporate Governance

This chapter describes and reports on Treasury's corporate governance arrangements. Corporate governance is the means by which Treasury directs and controls its operations to enable the organisation to achieve its objectives and meet its responsibilities to its stakeholders. It also ensures that decision making and operations are guided by a set of principles that maintain ethical standards.

Accountability

Senior Management Group

Treasury's SMG is responsible for strategic decision making and policy setting in relation to Treasury's operations and internal processes. The group also provides leadership and strategic direction to the organisation and ensures Treasury meets its corporate requirements.

SMG generally meets on a weekly basis. For administrative efficiency, SMG also sits, in effect, as the risk and audit, human resource management and information management subcommittees.

Corporate Governance Committees

Six standing committees support SMG in carrying out its responsibilities in providing leadership on key issues affecting the organisation:

- risk and audit;
- human resource management policy;
- professional development;
- information management;
- occupational health and safety; and
- energy management.

SMG considers reports and briefings from each committee and provides direction and approval of corporate policy or organisational projects. Each committee's role, performance in 2008-09 and priorities in 2009-10 are outlined in this section.

Directors and Staff

Treasury's directors are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of business units, managing and developing performance and producing outputs towards achieving the agency's desired outcomes. They are accountable to their respective SMG members (see Organisation Chart at page 16).

The corporate governance and accountability framework is presented in Figure 7.

Values

Treasury's values are underpinned by trust, integrity and professionalism. We are committed to providing frank, accurate and timely strategic advice. Treasury staff take responsibility for their work and behaviour and act in a collaborative way with integrity, respect and fairness. We recognise the dedication and expertise of our staff and support them in balancing professional and personal priorities.

Strategic Objectives

Treasury strives to provide:

- quality analysis and public policy advice on economic, fiscal, social and commercial issues;
- best practice financial management;
- effective intergovernmental financial relations;
- a fair and efficient Territory tax system; and
- appropriate superannuation arrangements for the Territory public sector.

Through a well-managed and flexible organisation, we:

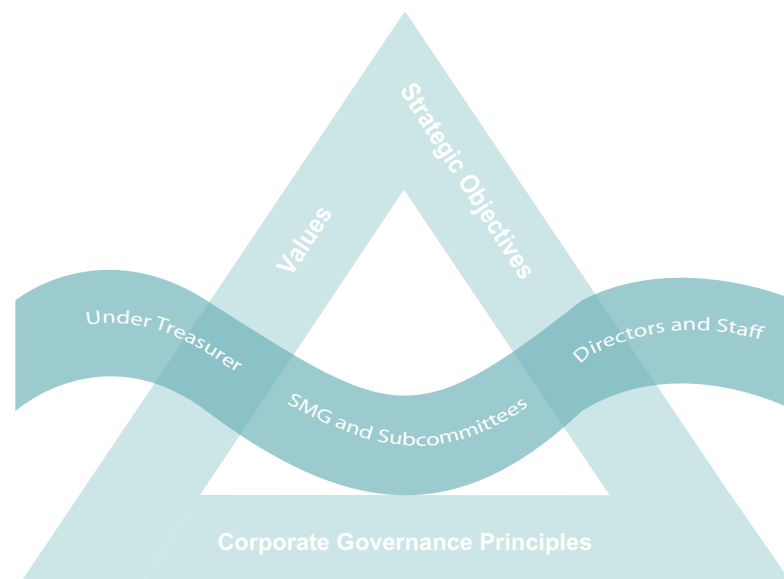
- recruit and retain high quality staff; and
- are committed to high quality output in a safe, supportive workplace.

Corporate Governance Principles

The key principles that Treasury endeavours to consider when making decisions and taking action on day-to-day operations are:

- **Accountability:** Treasury and its employees take responsibility for their decisions and actions;
- **Transparency:** decisions, actions and advice are open to, and can withstand, the scrutiny necessary to ensure that stakeholders can have confidence in Treasury decision-making processes;
- **Leadership:** modelling and fostering behaviour that supports Treasury's values, inspires and influences others and shapes organisational culture;
- **Integrity:** actively promoting honesty and ethical conduct by upholding appropriate standards of behaviour; and
- **Equity:** fairness and equity in decision making that is free from bias.

Figure 7: Treasury's Corporate Governance and Accountability Framework



Transparency

Corporate Planning and Reporting Process

Each year the Under Treasurer and SMG identify Treasury's strategic objectives. These objectives guide the direction of Treasury's core business areas in the delivery of government outcomes. Achievement of Treasury's objectives, output groups and outputs are reported in each year's Annual Report.

As part of the corporate planning and reporting process, business unit plans are developed annually according to strategic priorities identified for the coming year, and are aligned with the strategic objectives. The business unit plans may need to be adapted throughout the year in response to emerging issues and risks.

Business unit plans are used to determine internal budget allocations and to direct individual work plans, developed between employees and their managers as part of the Performance Development Framework (PDF). Linking business plans to individual employee work plans ensures all Treasury employees know how their work contributes to Treasury's strategic objectives and priorities.

Figure 8 outlines Treasury's key corporate planning documents and shows the connection between corporate planning and individual workplace plans.

Figure 8: Planning Process



Information Act Compliance

During 2008-09, four requests for information were lodged with Treasury under the *Information Act*. All requests were for access to government information, with one subsequently transferred in full to the relevant agency. The status of requests is detailed in Table 13.

Table 13: *Information Act* Requests in 2008-09

Applications carried over from 2007-08	1
Applications to access personal information	nil
Applications to access government information	4
Requests withdrawn	nil
Requests for review	2
Requests transferred to another agency	1
Responses completed within 30-day period	1
Responses completed, exceeding 30-day period	3
Applications on hand as at 30 June 2009	nil

Pursuant to section 131(2) of the *Information Act*, the Under Treasurer must report on Treasury's compliance with Part 9 (Records and Archives Management) of the Act.

Treasury continues to monitor and make improvements to its records management policies and practices to ensure proper preservation of records and to ensure compliance with Records Management Standards of the Northern Territory Government.

Website Links

The website www.nt.gov.au/ntt/info_act assists members of the public who are considering applying to access information held by Treasury. This site presents Treasury's policies and procedures, and the forms required to lodge a request to access government or personal information. Also on the website are links to:

- the *Information Act* and Regulations;
- a register of government information usually held by Treasury. The register will help an applicant decide if Treasury is likely to have the information they seek and specifies if it is available outside the formal process of lodging a request under the *Information Act*;
- Treasury's annual reports and other published information;
- Treasury's organisational chart; and
- the Information Commissioner's website.

Contact Our Information Policy Officer:

Information Policy Officer
Northern Territory Treasury

GPO Box 1974
DARWIN NT 0801

Telephone: +61 8 8999 6800
Facsimile: +61 8 8999 6150

Email: nt.treasury@nt.gov.au

website: www.nt.gov.au/ntt/info_act

Leadership

SMG provides leadership and strategic direction to the organisation and ensures Treasury meets its corporate requirements.

Corporate Values

Treasury's values place expectations on how staff should behave, perform their duties and interact in the workplace. These values are articulated in the Corporate Governance framework. They are incorporated into Treasury's core competencies matrix and PDF, both of which are used to manage and develop staff performance on a day to day basis. Our values also articulate what stakeholders can expect from the organisation and its staff.

Integrity

Corporate Ethics

Treasury's values are underpinned by the NTPS Principles and Code of Conduct, which guide staff on a range of moral and ethical issues they may face during their employment in the NTPS. Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct is a condition of employment and applies to all employees.

The binding nature of the Code of Conduct is explained to all new staff at induction programs and through Treasury's Induction Manual. Treasury's PDF also clearly articulates the expectation that all staff demonstrate behaviours which support Treasury values. Specific Treasury policies have been developed to guide employees in ethical issues such as recognising and managing conflicts of interest, engaging in outside employment, addressing harassment in the workplace and addressing grievances.

A key strategy in maintaining ethical standards is training staff in anti-discrimination, harassment, and Indigenous and cross-cultural awareness. Treasury provides these courses on an ongoing basis throughout the year, including refresher training. During 2008-09, anti-discrimination and cross-cultural awareness courses were held for staff.

Following Treasury's conflict of interest policy review in 2007-08, middle to senior managers completed conflict of interest declarations in May 2009. These were recorded in a register and reviewed by the Under Treasurer. Proposals for managing perceived and actual conflicts were assessed by the Under Treasurer and appropriate action taken. A review of all conflict of interest declarations will be undertaken on an annual basis. Planned activity in this area for 2009-10 will incorporate information sessions for staff and managers.

Equity

Treasury is committed to being an 'employer of choice'. A key component to achieving and maintaining this status is ensuring equal employment opportunities for potential and existing staff and promoting workforce diversity.

Equity and Diversity

Treasury's Equity and Diversity framework incorporates the agency's requirements under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* and the *Anti-Discrimination Act*, as well as whole of government strategies such as Willing and Able to promote and encourage its diverse workforce.

Work-life Balance/Flexible Work Practices

Flexible working practices allow Treasury staff to achieve a balance between their work and personal lives. Treasury work-life balance and flexible work initiatives include flexible work arrangements (for example, working from home and/or part-time employment), recreation leave at half-pay, cash-out of recreation leave (up to two weeks), purchased additional leave (up to six weeks) and extended leave scheme.

Further details on Treasury's equal employment opportunities, workforce diversity and flexible work programs and performance are provided in the Who We Are and Managing and Developing Our Staff sections of this report.

Corporate Governance Committees

The six committees are detailed here, including a description of each committee's role, its performance in 2008-09 and its priorities for 2009-10.

Risk and Audit Committee

Role

Responsible for:

- monitoring business risk assessments and adequacy of internal controls established to manage identified risks and review the adequacy of policies, practices and procedures that impact on those controls;
- overseeing the audit and risk management function within Treasury, including internal audit and risk management programs and monitoring their outcomes, terms of reference and the implementation of recommendations;
- reviewing the effectiveness of structures and practices that support the key elements of Treasury's corporate governance framework; and
- reviewing the outcomes and monitoring responses to recommendations of external auditors.

2008-09 Performance

- Reviewed Treasury's existing internal control framework and developed a control self assessment approach to internal control.
- Updated Treasury's Risk Register.
- Determined and implemented the internal audit plan for 2008-09 and developed the internal plan for 2009-10.
- Updated Treasury's Business Continuity Plan and developed a business interruption response.

Membership

Under Treasurer, Jennifer Prince (Chair)

Deputy Under Treasurer, Peter Caldwell

Assistant Under Treasurer (Budgets and Finance), Jodie Kirkman

Assistant Under Treasurer (Economic), Tony Stubbin

Executive Director Revenue, Craig Vukman

Assistant Under Treasurer (Corporate and Superannuation), Catherine Wauchope

Senior Director Funds Management and Commissioner of Superannuation, John Montague

Director Corporate Support, Gerard Taylor

2009-10 Priorities

- Implement the control self assessment program to test internal controls regularly.
- Implement the 2009-10 internal audit plan.
- Continue to develop and test detailed plans for business interruption events, particularly relating to IT systems.

Human Resource Management Committee

Role

Responsible for guiding the development and implementation of human resource management policy and planning in Treasury.

Membership

Under Treasurer, Jennifer Prince (Chair)
 Deputy Under Treasurer, Peter Caldwell
 Assistant Under Treasurer (Budgets and Finance), Jodie Kirkman
 Assistant Under Treasurer (Economic), Tony Stubbin
 Executive Director Revenue, Craig Vukman
 Assistant Under Treasurer (Corporate and Superannuation), Catherine Wauchope
 Senior Director Funds Management and Commissioner of Superannuation, John Montague
 Director Corporate Support, Gerard Taylor

2008-09 Performance

- Developed and implemented a succession planning program for the executive levels, to operate over two years from January 2009.
- Developed and launched Treasury's Conflict of Interest policy and Personal/Carers Leave policy.
- Developed an entry-level program aimed at attracting gap year students.
- Made a submission to the Review of the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act*.

2009-10 Priorities

- Continued implementation of the succession planning program for the executive levels.
- Review of Treasury's PDF to ensure the framework remains effective in focusing on continuous performance improvement.
- Review and revise Treasury's recruitment and selection policies and procedures.
- Implement internal policy and procedures to fulfil responsibilities under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* which came into effect on 31 July 2009.

Professional Development Committee

Role

Responsible for setting policy and considering applications for assistance relating to professional development of staff.

Membership

Assistant Under Treasurer (Corporate and Superannuation), Catherine Wauchope (Chair)

Assistant Under Treasurer (Budgets and Finance), Jodie Kirkman

Assistant Under Treasurer (Economic), Tony Stubbin

Human Resource Officer, Kristina Skipper

2008-09 Performance

- Considered 29 applications for study assistance.
- \$364 000 (2.13 per cent of employee expenses) spent on training and development for Treasury staff, compared to \$330 000 (2.1 per cent of employee expenses) in 2007-08 and \$284 000 (1.87 per cent of personnel expenditure) in 2006-07.

2009-10 Priorities

- Continued emphasis on professional and technical development, including sponsored study, tailored training and participation in professional body activities.

Information Management Committee

Role

Responsible for guiding development, management and use of Treasury's information resources and technology.

Membership

Under Treasurer, Jennifer Prince (Chair)
Deputy Under Treasurer, Peter Caldwell
Assistant Under Treasurer (Budgets and Finance), Jodie Kirkman
Assistant Under Treasurer (Economic), Tony Stubbin
Executive Director Revenue, Craig Vukman
Assistant Under Treasurer (Corporate and Superannuation), Catherine Wauchope
Senior Director Funds Management and Commissioner of Superannuation, John Montague
Director Corporate Support, Gerard Taylor
Manager Information Services and Strategic IT, Richard Smith
Department of Business and Employment – Information Technology Director, Mike Gillam

2008-09 Performance

- Implemented several central systems to improve access to and electronic circulation of corporate information.
- Completed review of IT security and implemented a role-based approach to network access and improvements to network monitoring and reporting.
- Completed upgrades to the standard operating environment and records management software on all Treasury devices.

2009-10 Priorities

- Continue work towards electronic document and records management.
- Continue to advance electronic collaboration capability and access arrangements to improve efficiency, productivity and security.

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Role

Responsible for overseeing and setting direction for occupational health and safety activities.

Membership

Project Officer Organisational Development, Johanna Stieber (Chair)

Director Corporate Support, Gerard Taylor (Alternative Chair)

Corporate Services Group Coordinator, Nadine Parkinson (Secretary)

Executive Assistant, Tamara Hutcheon

Business Development Manager, Territory Revenue Office, Christine Millowick

Policy Analyst, Financial Management Group, Doug Burns

Administrative Assistant, Financial Management Group, Estelita Herbert

Finance Officer, Superannuation Office, Justine Wickham

Principal Policy Officer, Economic Policy, Barbara Neil

Research Officer, Economic Analysis, Joseph Kuhn

2008-09 Performance

- Committee met six times in 2008-09 and reviewed key occupational health and safety activities and issues.
- Commenced a review on all OH&S documents to ensure compliance with the new *Workplace Health and Safety Act*.
- Implemented a Safety Week as an education program for staff.
- Continued risk assessment and first aid training for Treasury staff.

2009-10 Priorities

- Continue regular meetings and training as required.
- Continue educational activities for staff.
- Conduct quarterly internal building inspections.

Energy Management Committee

Role

Responsible for identifying key energy management issues and investigating possible solutions to reduce Treasury's carbon footprint.

Membership

Director Corporate Support, Gerard Taylor (Energy Manager)

Corporate Services Group Coordinator, Nadine Parkinson (Energy Coordinator)

Project Officer Organisational Development, Corporate Support, Johanna Stieber

Director Social Analysis, Economic Group, Anhi Vong

Assistant Director, Economic Group, Tarrant Moore

Financial Policy Analyst, Financial Management Group, Hitesh Khanna

Finance Officer, Superannuation Office, Justine Wickham

Manager Financial Administration, Treasury Corporation, Vicky Coleman

Finance Officer, Treasury Corporation, Jodie Friend

2008-09 Performance

- Formed in December 2008, and met four times in 2008-09.
- Calculated Treasury's carbon emissions for 2008-09.
- Identified a number of strategies to reduce Treasury's emissions and made recommendations to SMG for implementation.

2009-10 Priorities

- Continue to identify key energy management issues, investigate possible solutions and implement where possible.
- Promote energy management through events such as Green Week and Recycle Week.