Who Works in Community Services?

A profile of Australian workforces in child protection, juvenile justice, disability services and general community services

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Executive Summary

The community services industry is a large and important one in Australia. In 2009, about 490,000 Australians worked in residential care services and social assistance services, the major components of what is usually regarded as the community services sector (ABS 2009a). Community services organisations provide services to Australians who require assistance with a broad range of aspects of everyday life. The single largest client group is older Australians, and aged care is the single largest employer of community service workers. However, there are a range of other sectors in the community services industry, including children's services, child protection, juvenile justice, disability services and more general family support and other community services. Despite the importance of community services, our knowledge of the workforces in these various sectors has been limited. This report presents a profile of the Australian workforce in four important sectors of the community services industry for which detailed data has previously been unavailable. These sectors are:

- Child protection;
- Juvenile justice;
- Disability services;
- General community services.

The profiles are based on new representative sample surveys of community service 'outlets' in these four sectors, and of workers in each sector. A total of 1,040 community service outlets and 3,789 workers across the four community service sectors responded to the surveys in late 2009. The overall survey response rate was 51 per cent for community service outlets and about 30 per cent for workers. These surveys provide a sound basis for generating a detailed profile of the workforces in these four sectors.

Child Protection

We estimate that about 13,000 people were employed in Australia to directly provide child protection services or to manage the work of those who directly provided such services in 2009. Of these, about 11,300 provided child protection services while the remainder managed their work. Taking account of part-time employment (defined as less than 35 hours per week), this workforce was equivalent to about 10,000 full-time workers (8,500 of whom would be direct providers of child protection services).

Professional workers made up about 56 per cent of child protection workers and about 64 per cent of equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more. The professional workforce included child protection investigation officers, social workers, case managers, and psychologists. About 31 per cent of child protection workers (21 per cent of EFT workers) were non-professional service providers, including direct care workers and family, youth or child support workers. The remaining 15 per cent of child protection workers were service managers, coordinators or administrators.

Major features of this workforce were:

Terms of employment

- Permanent full-time employment was dominant in child protection. The vast majority of professionals (80 per cent) and managers/administrators (85 per cent) were employed on this basis. Fewer non-professional service providers were employed this way (39 per cent), with many being either permanent part-time (29 per cent) or casual (28 per cent) workers. There were virtually no casual employees amongst professionals or managers/administrators.

- Very little use was made of temporary employment (agency, sub-contract and self-employed staff) in child protection. Overall, only 8 per cent of child protection outlets used any such staff.

- Just under 60 per cent of child protection workers were employed by government agencies (69 per cent of EFT workers), with virtually all of the remainder working for non-profits.

Demographics

- Just under 80 per cent of all child protection workers were women. This included 83 per cent of professionals, 70 per cent of non-professional direct service providers, and 80 per cent of managers/administrators.

- The child protection workforce was relatively young, with one quarter being under 30 and 58 per cent being under 40 (compared to 29 per cent and 50 per cent respectively of the Australian female labour force).

- Child protection workers were predominantly (79 per cent) Australian born, though more were Indigenous Australians (9 per cent) than in the general population.

Skills and Qualifications

- Child protection workers generally had qualifications that were appropriate to their jobs in both level and field. Thus, 81 per cent of professionals and 67 per cent of managers/administrators held at least a Bachelor degree, and 77 per cent of non-professionals had at least a Certificate 3 qualification. Qualifications were generally in areas such as social work, psychology or counselling, community work, or youth work. Around one quarter of child protection workers were studying for a qualification, with the proportion in study being highest amongst non-professionals (37 per cent).

- Almost universally, child protection workers believed they had the skill they needed to do their jobs. Employers were more circumspect, with about one third believing that at least some of their workers did not have the skills they need. However, most employers reporting some skill deficiencies said that less than half of their employees were missing important skills.

The Work Experience

- Child protection workers commonly cited the desire to help others or to do something worthwhile as reasons for entering the sector. They expressed quite high

levels of organisational commitment, with about one third saying they would turn down a better paid job to remain in their current organisation.

- Child protection workers were generally satisfied with most aspects of their jobs, with job satisfaction levels a little below the national averages implied by estimates from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey. However, they were much less satisfied with their pay than with other aspects of their jobs, unlike Australians generally.

- Child protection workers held very positive assessments of the quality of workplace relationships, both between management and employees and amongst workmates.

Employment Preferences

- Child protection workers had an overwhelming preference for employment on permanent contracts (96 per cent preferred this), rather than fixed term or casual arrangements.

- Most (62 per cent) child protection workers were happy with their current hours of work. However, one third would prefer to work shorter hours, and only 5 per cent would prefer more hours of work. Thus, there was little spare labour capacity in the currently employed child protection workforce.

Career pathways

- Child protection workers entered the sector from a range of previous occupations, with over 40 per cent coming from welfare or carer roles in other sectors.

- Child protection workers often entered the sector early in their careers (half of professionals entered before they turned 30). However, most did not appear to remain long. Child protection outlets estimated that 27 per cent of their child protection workers had been in their jobs for 1 year or less, and 72 per cent had held their positions for less than 5 years. Indeed, 52 per cent of surveyed workers said that they had worked in the sector for less than 5 years.

- Nevertheless, two thirds of child protection workers said they expected to be working for their current employer in 12 months, and 60 per cent said they expected still to be working in child protection 3 years after they were surveyed.

Hiring child protection workers

- Overall, child protection workers were about equally likely to have heard about their jobs through formal advertising as through informal methods (family and friendship networks or simply approaching employers).

- Just over half of child protection outlets had no vacancies at the time of the survey. Vacancies for professionals were much more common than those for other workers (one third of outlets had such vacancies).

- Most recent vacancies were filled within two months. However, one third of outlets said their most recent professional vacancy had taken longer than this to fill.

- Child protection outlets quite often employed workers without optimal skills, with 39 per cent saying that their most recent professional appointee did not have optimal skills. However, very few outlets (4 per cent) had recently employed professionals who lacked essential job skills. Some 12 per cent had employed non-professional direct child protection workers without essential skills, suggesting a willingness to train these workers.

Juvenile Justice

We estimate that about 3,400 people were employed in Australia to directly provide juvenile justice services or to manage the work of those who did directly provide such services in 2009. Of these, about 2,800 provided juvenile justice services while the remainder managed their work. Taking account of part-time employment (defined as less than 35 hours per week), this workforce was equivalent to about 3,000 full-time workers (2,400 of whom would be direct providers of juvenile justice services).

Professional workers made up about 44 per cent of juvenile justice workers and about 49 per cent of equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more. The professional workforce included juvenile justice officers, social workers, case managers, and psychologists. About 38 per cent of juvenile justice workers (32 per cent of EFT workers) were non-professional service providers, including residential care workers and youth workers. The remaining 17 per cent of juvenile justice workers were service managers, coordinators or administrators.

Major features of this workforce were:

Terms of employment

- Permanent full-time employment was dominant in juvenile justice. The vast majority of professionals (78 per cent) and managers/administrators (86 per cent) were employed on this basis, as were most non-professionals (64 per cent) directly providing juvenile justice services. Casual employment was most common amongst non-professionals (20 per cent). There were virtually no casual employees amongst professionals or managers/administrators.

- Limited use was made of temporary employment (agency, sub-contract and self-employed staff) in juvenile justice. Overall, only 15 per cent of juvenile justice outlets used any such staff.

- About 83 per cent of juvenile justice workers were employed by government agencies (84 per cent of EFT workers), with all of the remainder working for non-profits.

Demographics

- Just 55 per cent of all juvenile justice workers were women. This included 59 per cent of professionals, 48 per cent of non-professional direct service providers, and 57 per cent of managers/administrators.

- The juvenile justice workforce was relatively young, with just under one quarter being under 30 and 54 per cent being under 40 (compared to 28 per cent and 50 per cent respectively of the Australian labour force).

- Juvenile justice workers were predominantly (82 per cent) Australian born, though more were Indigenous Australians (11 per cent) than in the general population.

Skills and Qualifications

- Juvenile justice workers were generally fairly well educated, and tended to have qualifications in fields relevant to their jobs. Nearly 60 per cent of professionals and managers/administrators held at least a Bachelor degree, and about 80 per cent of non-professionals had at least a Certificate 3 qualification. Qualifications were generally in areas such as social work, psychology, counselling, community work, or youth work. Around one quarter of juvenile justice workers were studying for a qualification, with the proportion in study being highest amongst non-professionals (38 per cent).

- Almost universally, juvenile justice workers believed they had the skills they needed to do their jobs. Employers were not quite so positive, with just over 20 per cent believing that at least some of their workers did not have the skills they needed. However, most employers reporting some skill deficiencies said that less than half of their employees were missing important skills.

The Work Experience

- Juvenile justice workers commonly cited the desire to help others or to do something worthwhile as reasons for entering the sector. They expressed quite high levels of organisational commitment, with nearly 30 per cent saying they would turn down a better paid job to remain in their current organisation.

- Juvenile justice workers were generally satisfied with most aspects of their jobs, with job satisfaction levels a little below the national averages implied by estimates from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey. They were less satisfied with their pay than with other aspects of their jobs (unlike Australians generally), but more satisfied with pay than workers in any other community service sector.

- Juvenile justice workers held very positive assessments of the quality of workplace relationships, both between management and employees and amongst workmates.

Employment Preferences

- Juvenile justice workers had an overwhelming preference for employment on permanent contracts (95 per cent preferred this), rather than fixed term or casual arrangements.

- Nearly three quarters of juvenile justice workers were happy with their current hours of work. However, one fifth preferred to work shorter hours, and only 7 per cent preferred more hours of work. Thus, there was little spare labour capacity in the currently employed juvenile justice workforce.

Career pathways

- Juvenile justice workers entered the sector from a range of previous occupations, with about 40 per cent coming from welfare or carer roles in other sectors.

- Juvenile justice workers often entered the sector early in their careers (half entered before they turned 30). However, most do not appear to remain long. Juvenile justice outlets estimated that 24 per cent of their juvenile justice workers had been in their jobs for 1 year or less, and that 66 per cent had held their positions for less than 5 years. Indeed, 57 per cent of surveyed workers said that they had worked in the sector for less than 5 years.

- Nevertheless, nearly two thirds of juvenile justice workers said they expected to be working for their current employer in 12 months, and nearly 60 per cent said they expected still to be working in juvenile justice 3 years after they were surveyed.

Hiring juvenile justice workers

- Overall, juvenile justice workers were about equally likely to have heard about their jobs through formal advertising as through informal methods (family and friendship networks or simply approaching employers). However, non-professionals much more often found out about their jobs through informal methods, while professionals and administrators more usually heard of their jobs through some form of advertising.

- Two thirds of juvenile justice outlets had no vacancies at the time of the survey.

- Most recent vacancies were filled within two months. However, nearly one third of outlets said their most recent professional vacancy had taken longer than this to fill.

- Juvenile justice outlets quite often employed workers without optimal skills, with 30 per cent saying that their most recent professional appointee did not have optimal skills. However, no outlets had recently employed professionals who lacked essential job skills. Nearly 20 per cent had employed non-professional direct juvenile justice workers without essential skills, suggesting a willingness to train these workers.

Disability Services

We estimate that about 68,700 people were employed in Australia to directly provide disability services or to manage the work of those who did directly provide such services in 2009. Of these, about 58,200 provided disability services while the remainder managed their work. Taking account of part-time employment (defined as less than 35 hours per week), this workforce was equivalent to about 34,000 full-time workers (25,000 of whom would be direct providers of disability services).

Non-professional workers made up about 76 per cent of disability workers and about 62 per cent of equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more. The non-professional workforce included personal carers, home care workers, community care workers, and disability and residential support workers. About 9 per cent of disability workers (12 per cent of EFT workers) were professional service providers,

including allied health workers, social workers, and disability case managers. The remaining 14 per cent of disability workers were service managers, coordinators or administrators.

Major features of this workforce were:

Terms of employment

- Permanent part-time employment was most common in the disability sector. Some 55 per cent of non-professionals were employed in permanent part-time positions, as were 44 per cent of professionals and 27 per cent of managers/administrators. Casual employment was quite common amongst non-professionals (31 per cent were employed this way), but virtually no professionals or managers/administrators were employed as casuals. Permanent full-time employment was most common amongst managers/administrators (68 per cent) and professionals (52 per cent), with 14 per cent of non-professionals being on such contracts.

- Some use was made of temporary employment (agency, sub-contract and self-employed staff) in disability. Overall, 23 per cent of disability outlets used such staff. Mostly, they appeared to be used as a stop-gap measure.

- About 73 per cent of disability workers were employed by non-profit agencies (73 per cent of EFT workers), with 21 per cent working for government organisations, and 6 per cent working in for-profit outlets.

Demographics

- Most disability workers were women (81 per cent overall). This included 83 per cent of professionals, 80 per cent of non-professional direct service providers, and 82 per cent of managers/administrators.

- The disability workforce was quite varied in age, though mature aged workers predominated. Thus, 14 per cent were under 30 (compared to 29 per cent of the Australian female workforce), and 64 per cent were 40 or older (compared to 49 per cent of the Australian female workforce).

- Disability workers were predominantly (77 per cent) Australian born, with the single largest overseas born group being those from the United Kingdom (9 per cent).

Skills and Qualifications

- Disability workers were generally fairly well educated, and tended to have qualifications in fields relevant to their jobs. Nearly 80 per cent of non-professionals had at least a Certificate 3 qualification. About 70 per cent of professionals and 34 per cent of managers/administrators held at least a Bachelor degree. Qualifications were generally in areas such as social work, disability, psychology, counselling, or community work. One quarter of disability workers were studying for a qualification, with the proportion in study being highest amongst managers and administrators (30 per cent) and non-professionals (26 per cent).

- Almost universally, disability workers believed they had the skill they needed to do their jobs. Employers were not quite so positive, with just over 40 per cent believing

that at least some of their workers did not have the skills they needed. However, most employers reporting some skill deficiencies said that less than half of their employees were missing important skills.

The Work Experience

- Disability workers commonly cited the desire to help others or to do something worthwhile as reasons for entering the sector. Few said extrinsic rewards such as career prospects, pay, or even job security were reasons that they had been attracted to work in the sector. They expressed high levels of organisational commitment, with nearly half saying they would turn down a better paid job to remain in their current organisation.

- Disability workers were generally satisfied with most aspects of their jobs, with job satisfaction levels around the national averages implied by estimates from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey. However, they had fairly low levels of satisfaction with their pay, both compared to other aspects of their jobs and compared to other Australian workers.

- Disability workers held extremely positive assessments of the quality of workplace relationships, both between management and employees and amongst workmates.

Employment Preferences

- Disability workers generally had a clear preference for employment on permanent contracts (87 per cent preferred this), rather than fixed term or casual arrangements.

- Over one quarter of non-professionals in the sector wanted more hours of work, while professionals and managers/administrators were much more likely to prefer shorter hours. Thus, there is clearly significant spare capacity amongst existing non-professional disability workers.

Career pathways

- Disability workers entered the sector from a range of previous occupations, with only about 20 per cent coming from welfare or carer roles in other sectors.

- Disability workers tended to enter the sector at a wide range of ages. Nearly 40 per cent had begun work in the sector before they were 30, while almost 40 per cent did not begin until they were aged 40 or older. Disability outlets estimated that 24 per cent of their disability workers had been in their jobs for 1 year or less, and that 63 per cent had held their positions for less than 5 years. However, workers' experience in the sector was often much longer than this. Indeed, only 36 per cent of workers in our survey said they had been in the sector for less than 5 years, and nearly 40 per cent said they had been in the sector for 10 years or more.

- Over 70 per cent of disability workers said they expected to be working for their current employer in 12 months, and just over 60 per cent said they expected still to be working in disability 3 years after they were surveyed.

Hiring disability workers

- Non-professional disability workers tended to have heard about their jobs through friends or family, or simply by approaching an employer (57 per cent altogether). Professionals and managers/administrators were much more likely to have responded to advertisements of some kind, though networks were still quite important in these occupations too.

- Just over two thirds of disability outlets had no vacancies at the time of the survey.

- Over 70 per cent of outlets said that their most recent non-professional vacancy had been filled within one month. Professional and managerial/administrative vacancies took longer to fill.

- Disability outlets quite often employed workers without optimal skills, with 22 per cent saying that their most recent professional appointee did not have optimal skills. However, no outlets had recently employed professionals who lacked essential job skills. Some 60 per cent had recently employed non-professional disability workers without optimal skills, suggesting a strong willingness to train these workers.

General Community Services

We estimate that about 32,200 people were employed in Australia to directly provide general community services (support and assistance to families and children) or to manage the work of those who did directly provide such services in 2009. Of these, about 23,900 directly provided general community services to clients while the remainder managed their work. Taking account of part-time employment (defined as less than 35 hours per week), this workforce was equivalent to about 18,100 full-time workers (12,300 of whom would be direct providers of general community services).

Non-professional workers made up about 45 per cent of general community workers and about 35 per cent of equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more. The non-professional workforce included carers, referral or information workers, and family, youth and child support workers. About 29 per cent of general community workers (33 per cent of EFT workers) were professionals, including social workers, case managers, psychologists and counsellors. Some 21 per cent of general community service workers were managers or administrators.

Major features of this workforce were:

Terms of employment

- Permanent part-time employment and permanent full-time employment were almost equally common in the general community services sector (39 per cent and 42 per cent of the workforce respectively). Non-professionals were more likely to be employed as casuals than other groups, with 28 per cent employed this way.

- Limited use was made of temporary employment (agency, sub-contract and self-employed staff) in general community services. Overall, only 12 per cent of general community service outlets used such staff. Mostly, they appeared to be used as a stop-gap measure.

- About 85 per cent of general community workers were employed by non-profit agencies (87 per cent of EFT workers), with all of the remainder working for government organisations.

Demographics

- Most general community workers were women (83 per cent overall). This included 82 per cent of professionals, 85 per cent of non-professional direct service providers, and 81 per cent of managers/administrators.

- The general community services workforce was quite varied in age, though mature aged workers predominated. Thus, 15 per cent were under 30 (compared to 29 per cent of the Australian female workforce), and 62 per cent were 40 or older (compared to 49 per cent of the Australian female workforce).

- General community workers were predominantly (73 per cent) Australian born, with the single largest overseas born group being those from the United Kingdom (9 per cent). Some 10 per cent of non-professionals in general community services were Indigenous Australians.

Skills and Qualifications

- General community services workers were generally fairly well educated, and tended to have qualifications in fields relevant to their jobs. Nearly 80 per cent of non-professionals had at least a Certificate 3 qualification. Three quarters of professionals and 53 per cent of managers/administrators held at least a Bachelor degree. Qualifications were generally in areas such as social work, psychology or counselling, youth work, and community work. Nearly one quarter of general community services workers were studying for a qualification, with the proportion in study being slightly higher amongst non-professionals (27 per cent).

- Almost universally, general community services workers believed they had the skills they needed to do their jobs. Employers were also positive about their workers' skills, with nearly 80 per cent believing that none of their workers were lacking skills they needed for their jobs. Those employers that did report some skill deficiencies said that less than half of their employees were missing important skills.

The Work Experience

- General community services workers commonly cited the desire to help others or to do something worthwhile as reasons for entering the sector. Few said extrinsic rewards such as career prospects, pay, or even job security were reasons that they had been attracted to work in the sector. They expressed high levels of organisational commitment, with over 40 per cent saying they would turn down a better paid job to remain in their current organisation.

- General community services workers were generally satisfied with most aspects of their jobs, with job satisfaction levels around the national averages implied by estimates from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey. However, they had fairly low levels of satisfaction with their pay, both

compared to other aspects of their jobs and compared to other Australian workers. They also had concerns about their job security.

- General community services workers held extremely positive assessments of the quality of workplace relationships, both between management and employees and amongst workmates.

Employment Preferences

- General community services workers overwhelmingly preferred employment on permanent contracts (94 per cent preferred this), rather than fixed term or casual arrangements.

- Two thirds of general community service workers were happy with their hours of work. About one fifth of non-professionals in the sector wanted more hours of work (13 per cent wanted fewer), while professionals and managers/administrators were much more likely to prefer shorter hours (around one quarter did so). Thus, there was clearly some spare capacity amongst existing non-professional disability workers.

Career pathways

- General community services workers entered the sector from a range of previous occupations, with only about 15 per cent coming from welfare or carer roles in other sectors.

- General community services workers tended to enter the sector at a wide range of ages. Some 47 per cent had begun work in the sector before they were 30, while 25 per cent did not begin until they were aged 40 or older. General community services outlets estimated that 26 per cent of their general community workers had been in their jobs for 1 year or less, and that 70 per cent had held their positions for less than 5 years. However, workers' experience in the sector was often much longer than this. Indeed, only 32 per cent of workers in our survey said they had been in the sector for less than 5 years, and over 40 per cent said they had been in the sector for 10 years or more.

- Some 60 per cent of general community services workers said they expected to be working for their current employer in 12 months, and 68 per cent said they expected still to be working in general community services 3 years after they were surveyed.

Hiring general community workers

- General community services workers were about equally likely to have heard about their jobs through advertisements of some sort (48 per cent) as through informal channels such as friends or family or simply by approaching an employer (43 per cent).

- Just over three quarters of general community services outlets had no vacancies at the time of the survey.

- Two thirds of outlets said that their most recent non-professional vacancy had been filled within one month. Professional and managerial/administrative vacancies often took longer to fill.

- General community services outlets quite often employed workers without optimal skills, with about 30 per cent saying that their most recent professional appointee did not have optimal skills. Nearly 40 per cent had recently employed non-professional general community services workers without optimal skills, suggesting a willingness to train these workers.

1. Introduction

Community services organisations provide a large range of vitally important services to Australians. A broad definition of these organisations includes those in areas such as aged care, children's services, disability, child protection, juvenile justice, family support services, and other community support services. Organisations providing these services are significant employers of Australian workers. Most employ far more women than men, and, in 2009, some 410,000 women were employed by organisations providing 'residential care services' and 'social assistance services' (ABS 2009a). The community services sector has been growing rapidly by any measure. For example, in 2000, 'residential care services' and 'social assistance services' organisations employed 6.5 per cent of Australian women, but by 2009, the figure had grown to 8.2 per cent (calculated from ABS 2009a).

In such an important and rapidly growing sector, understanding workforce dynamics is essential to workforce planning aimed at promoting an appropriate supply of skilled community service workers into the future. However, detailed information on the community services workforce is patchy, at best. In some sectors, notably aged care and childcare, substantial studies have recently been undertaken to provide reliable national baseline profiles of the workforce (Martin and King 2008; National Children's Services Workforce Study 2006; Richardson and Martin 2004). However, in many other sectors basic information required to build an accurate workforce profile is still lacking.

In this context, the Structural Issues in the Workforce (SIW) sub-committee of the Community and Disability Services Ministers Advisory Council (CDSMAC) commissioned the National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS) to undertake research to produce a profile of the workforce in four previously neglected community service sectors. This report presents the profiles of these workforces generated by that research. The four community service sectors covered by this report are:

- Child Protection (CP)

- Juvenile Justice (JJ)

- Disability Services (DS)

- General Community Services (GCS)

The objectives and anticipated outcomes of this Workforce Profiling Project (WPP), as agreed by CDSMAC in endorsing the research, were:

Objectives:

- To develop an indicative profile of the characteristics of the community services workforce, across government and non-government sectors, using existing data standards and classifications, and building on existing data collections where possible;

- To establish and document a replicable methodology to collect information on the factors that are currently impacting upon attraction and retention of the workforce in the community services sector, ensuring that the breadth and complexity of the community services sector is taken into account; and

- To collect information on current attraction and retention issues of the community services sector and how they vary across jurisdiction, sub-sector and type of worker.

Anticipated outcomes:

- An indicative profile of the existing workforce of the community services sector identified in scope for this project;

- Identification of the factors that impact upon the size and characteristics of the community services workforce, and in particular factors that impact on attraction and retention of the workforce;

- Identification of how these factors differ across the sub-sectors of the community services workforce (government / non-government type of community service provided), different types of workers and the reasons for this variation;

- Information which informs retention, attraction and recruitment strategies;

- Enhanced capacity to develop, implement and evaluate national and jurisdictional strategies to address workforce issues especially regarding attraction and retention; and

- Information that will assist workforce planning in the community services sector.

Together with the previously conducted studies of the aged care and children's services workforces, the workforce profiles presented here allow the construction of the first detailed, reliable pictures of Australia's current community services workforce.

The report aims to provide a profile of the workforce in each of these sectors that answers the following basic questions:

- Who is currently working in the sector?

- What are the characteristics of the organisations that employ them?

- What rewards are they receiving for their work?

- What are workers' typical patterns of movement into and out of jobs in the sector?

- Are there symptoms of imbalance between labour supply and demand in the sector?

- What are the intentions and desires of workers about their future work in the sector?

- What aspects of their work do workers like or dislike?

The report begins by describing how we collected information about the community services workforce. It then provides the results for each of the four sectors we examined, and concludes with a consideration of how the sectors compare with each other in some key workforce aspects.

2. Building a Profile of the Community Services Workforce

Building a profile of the community services workforce in the four areas that are the focus of this report was challenging. It required resolving a number of key issues. These included:

- How are the boundaries of the relevant workforces to be drawn?

- What information should be collected?

- How should the relevant information be collected?

- How should the data collected be analysed to present the most accurate picture possible of the relevant workforce?

In this section of the report, we outline our approach to each of these issues, and the results when these approaches were put into practice.

2.1 Defining the Community Services Workforce

We used activity based definitions to define the workforce that was in-scope for each of the community services sectors profiled here. These activity based definitions focus on what organisations and workers produce and the processes they use to do so. This concept of activity is the basis for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) industry classifications (ABS 2006). Our approach was to define the activities that compose each of the sectors covered in this report, and then seek to construct a profile of workers employed to deliver those services. The definitions we used cover subsets of the activities included in the ABS's Australian and New Zealand Standard Industry Classification (ANZSIC) (ABS 2006).

Our activity based definitions of each sector were developed in consultation with the SIW sub-committee of CDSMAC, and agreed by them. The in-scope workforce for the project consisted of all workers who directly provided the services as defined by the activity definitions and all those employed to manager or coordinate their work.

For the purposes of this project, the activities of each sector were defined as follows:

Child Protection activities:

1. Providing social support and social assistance services to children and young people who have experienced, or are at risk of, abuse, neglect or other harm. Such services include out-of-home care services that provide care for children and young people who are placed away from their parents or family home for reasons of safety or family crisis. (Subset of ANZSIC Codes 8790 and 8609);

2. Receiving and assessing allegations of child abuse, neglect or other harm to children. (Subset of ANZSIC Code 7711 and, possibly, 7520). For the purposes of this project, children and young people are defined as those aged 0 to 17 years.

Juvenile Justice activities:

1. Managing and operating correctional institutions and detention centres for juveniles. These facilities are generally designed for confinement, correction and rehabilitation of juveniles. (Subset of ANZSIC Code 7714).

2. Providing social support and social assistance services targeted at juvenile offenders. This includes a range of social support and assistance services including specifically targeted educational services, psychological services, work services and sport/recreation services. It also includes case management and youth conferencing. (Subset of ANZSIC Codes 8790 and 7520). For the purposes of this project, juveniles are those defined as such in the jurisdiction where the activity occurs.

Disability Service activities:

Providing social support and social assistance services to people requiring support or assistance because of a disability. Such services assist people with a disability to participate in the community. They include providing support to people with a disability in institutional settings (hostels, group homes) or in the disabled person's own home (including HACC), and respite services. (Subset of ANZSIC Codes 8790 and 8609).

General Community Service activities:

Social support and assistance services provided directly to children and families. These activities include only services that are not covered by definitions of other sectors in this report, and are not directed specifically at the aged, at providing housing or supported accommodation, or crisis services. (Subset of ANZSIC Code 8790).

2.2   What Information to Collect?

The main aim of this project was to collect information necessary for workforce planning in each of the sectors that is examined in this report. The National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS) reviewed existing data on the sectors, data from other community service sectors, and data widely used in workforce planning. On this basis, NILS suggested a set of data items that should be collected. SIW and NILS then undertook a consultation process with key informants in the relevant sectors, and a final set of data items was agreed.

Where possible, data for this project were collected in a form that conforms to national data standards. NILS followed this principle in developing definitions and questionnaire items for collecting the data. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Standards and Classifications were used wherever possible. However, ABS standards did not exist for all relevant data items. In cases where an ABS standard did not exist, NILS sought to use definitions and/or questionnaire items from other well established and widely recognised sources. For example, the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey is a large Commonwealth Government funded panel survey that produces data in wide use amongst Australian social researchers. HILDA is essentially a nationally representative survey. Collecting data using the same items as HILDA follows a *de facto* national standard and allows comparison of information about the community services workforces under

consideration here with other segments of the Australian population. Several other national surveys were used as sources for data items not available from ABS standards or HILDA. These included the National Aged Care Census and Survey 2007, and the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA).

2.3 *Collecting Data*

Recent profiles of the aged care and children's services workforces offered a model for collecting workforce data in community services (Martin and King 2008; National Children's Services Workforce Study 2006). These studies used similar two stage surveys to collect data. The first stage involved surveying organisations directly employing workers, to collect information about the workforce employed to provide the relevant services. The second stage involved surveying the workers themselves, to collect information that they would be in the best position to provide. In previous studies, the workers survey has been sent to employers who then distributed the survey to workers. In both the aged care and children's services studies mentioned above, this two-stage approach was reasonably successful in providing profiles of the relevant workforces. This basic model was therefore used to collect the data reported here.

Virtually all organisations providing aged care and children's services are funded under a relevant Commonwealth Government program. As a result, the Commonwealth Government was able to provide a list of all relevant organisations providing aged care and children's services when surveys were conducted in these areas. However, in the four community service areas under consideration for the current project, funding sources are disparate, and the Commonwealth Government does not directly fund most service providers. No other source of a complete list of organisations was available in these sectors. As a result, such a list had to be constructed for this project.

In line with the aged care and children's services projects, this project sought to collect information from offices that directly managed or coordinated the day to day work of in-scope workers. In general, we regarded these offices as the most reliable sources of the information we required, and as providing the most effective way of distributing questionnaires to a sample of workers. We defined such offices as community service 'outlets', and refer to them in this way throughout this report.

Like the aged care and children's services projects, this project used mailback surveys as the main form of data collection. We sought to undertake a census or sample survey of outlets in each sector in each jurisdiction, depending on the number of outlets in sectors and jurisdictions. We used extensive telephone contact and follow-up with outlets to maximise response rates and the quality of data. Outlets were asked to distribute worker questionnaires to a sample of their in-scope employees. They were also asked to follow-up with these workers one week after the initial questionnaire distribution to maximise response rates.

2.3.1   Developing a Sample Frame

Surveying community service outlets in the four areas covered by this report required, first, being able to locate those outlets. At the commencement of this project, there was nothing approaching a complete list of outlets in any of the community service areas covered by this

report. NILS developed a systematic procedure to construct such lists ('frames') for each sector.

NILS's strategy for developing the frames revolved around using multiple sources to locate relevant organisations and outlets and cross-checking to verify their relevance and to eliminate duplicates. In each State or Territory, NILS used the following sources to develop the frame:

1. State government directories of community services organisations; for example, Directory of Community Services 2008 (SA), DHS Human Services Directory (Victoria).

2. Local government (council) directories of community services.

3. Membership lists from peak bodies:

    a. State Councils of Social Services (COSS annual reports)

    b. National Disability Services (annual report)

4. Lists provided by SIW sub-committee state representatives

    a. Funded NGOs

    b. Government department service offices/outlets

5. Individual community services provider websites - to identify details of other offices/outlets.

6. Other directories of community services; for example:

    a. The Infoxchange Service Seeker (www.serviceseeker.com.au) - directory of government and non-government community services organisations with coverage across all States and Territories.

    b. Child Support Agency Community Services Directory (www.csd. csa.gov.au) - This directory provides information on organisations which provide services to assist parents on a wide range of family related issues, with coverage across all States and Territories.

NILS used a hierarchical process in searching these sources. We began with the first source, and built frames by progressively using the remainder. Websites and telephone white pages listings were used to verify entries in the frame where necessary. In general, we erred on the side of including outlets in the frame if there remained doubt about whether they were in-scope for a particular frame. NILS conducted a brief validation of the initial frame, by telephoning a random sample of outlets from the frame. This validation suggested that the frame did include out of scope outlets, as was expected.

The resulting final sampling frame contained 8,514 outlets. The distribution of outlets across sectors and States and Territories is listed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: **Number of community service outlets (government, non-profit and for-profit) in sampling frame, by community service area, by State and Territory**

Location	Child Protection	Juvenile Justice	Disability Services	General Community Services	Total
NSW	281	78	816	1,222	2,397
VIC	160	52	700	792	1,704
QLD	304	53	681	683	1,721
SA	44	18	305	429	796
WA	72	31	380	481	964
TAS	39	26	178	182	425
NT	12	22	99	177	310
ACT	40	3	72	82	197
Total	952	283	3,231	4,048	8,514

2.3.2 Developing Instruments

Two questionnaires were developed in the course of this project. The Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009 was used to collect information about the outlets employing the relevant groups of workers. The Survey of Community Services Workers 2009 was used to collect information about the workers themselves. Both questionnaires were developed using existing data items that conformed to national standards, where possible. Where such items did not exist for data to be collected, new questionnaire items were developed.

ABS Statistical Clearing House approval was sought and received for the project once instruments were developed.

Pilot testing for the surveys was undertaken in two steps. Cognitive testing of questionnaires was undertaken with a small sample of outlets and workers, and some minor modifications were made to the questionnaires as a result. An implementation pilot was then conducted by the Social Research Centre (SRC), the survey organisation engaged to field the surveys. In general, this implementation pilot indicated that the survey instruments required little modification, and that most survey procedures were working effectively (for more details, see below). However, the implementation pilot suggested that response rates may not be satisfactory under the initial survey regime. As a result, considerable further telephone support and follow-up with outlets was introduced in the full surveys.

Examples of the final survey instruments are provided in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

2.3.3 The Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009

The surveys for the project were conducted by the Social Research Centre, an expert survey research organisation headquartered in Melbourne. Outlets were sampled from the sampling frame to a maximum of 165 outlets per community service sector per State/Territory. Where a State or Territory had fewer than 165 outlets in a sector, all were included in the sample, meaning that an attempt was made to conduct a census in some sectors and jurisdictions. The Social Research Centre undertook an initial cleaning and validation of the sample list provided to it, which resulted in a reduction of the sample by 14 per cent. An attempt was

then made to complete initial courtesy calls to all remaining outlets, to alert them to the survey and seek their cooperation. In this process, some outlets were identified as out of scope, some as parts of larger organisations that were surveyed through a head office, and some as duplicates. As a result of this process, initial mailouts were sent to 74 per cent of the original sample of outlets.

Intensive telephone follow up was used to maximise responses. A final outlet response rate of 51.3 per cent was achieved. Table 2.2 shows response rates and total responses by sector. It should be noted that a number of these responses cover multiple outlets from the original sampling frames. Further detail about response rates in sectors and jurisdictions is provided in Appendix 3 of this Report.

Table 2.2: **Outlet survey response rate by community services sector**

Sector	Fully responding	Response rate
Child Protection	224	59.6%
Juvenile Justice	63	41.2%
Disability Services	397	52.0%
General Community Services	356	48.4%
Total	1,040	51.3%

2.3.4 The Survey of Community Services Workers 2009

We conducted a sample survey of community service workers in each sector and jurisdiction by requesting outlets to distribute questionnaires to a sample of in-scope workers. Outlets were asked to distribute questionnaires to six employees or to all in-scope employees if they had fewer than six. Outlets with more than six employees were asked to distribute questionnaires to the six with the most recent birthdays, to ensure random choice of respondents. Workers were provided with pre-paid return address envelopes to return their questionnaires directly to the Social Research Centre. In effect, this procedure produced a cluster sample of workers within selected outlets, with probability of inclusion in the sample being inversely proportional to the number of in-scope employees in the outlet. Outlet managers were asked to follow up with sampled workers one week after the initial distribution of surveys, urging workers to respond, and providing them with a second copy of the questionnaire if they required it.

Response rate calculations for this sample cannot be definitive because they depend on the number of in-scope workers in each sampled outlet, which is not known. However, it is possible to make reasonable estimates of response rates. The Social Research Centre's best estimate is that the minimum achieved response rate for the worker survey was 32.7 per cent. This rate is based on assuming that there were six in-scope workers in each outlet for which information about the in-scope number was not received during the initial courtesy call to outlets. This assumption is conservative, and the actual response rate will have been higher by an unknown amount.

In general, responses were received from appropriate workers, and most were complete. Some 3,885 full responses were received from staff working for in-scope outlets. However, a number of responses were from lower level administrative staff who were outside the scope of the workforce under study, and these were excluded. The result was a sample of 3,789

useable responses from in-scope workers. Table 2.3 shows the distribution of worker returns across sectors.

Table 2.3: Number of useable worker responses received, by sector, 2009

Sector	Number received
Child Protection	765
Juvenile Justice	242
Disability Services	1,507
General Community Services	1,275
Total	3,789

Worker survey forms were coded with the identification code of the outlet that passed the survey to the worker. This allowed worker survey responses to be linked to the appropriate outlet responses. This facility was used in constructing sampling weights for the workers survey, as described in the next paragraph.

The procedures used to sample workers for this project produced some sample design effects that could lead to sample bias. First, the cluster sampling procedure that generated the workers sample meant that a worker's probability of inclusion in the sample was inversely proportional to the number of in-scope workers employed by their outlet, as noted above. Sampling weights were calculated for each worker case to correct this bias. Due to the large range in the number of workers employed by outlets, the range of these weights was too large to be usable. A standard weight trimming procedure was used to overcome this problem (see Longford 2008). Second, a ceiling was placed on the number of outlets that could be sampled within a sector within a State or Territory. This had the effect of reducing the probability that workers in large sectors and large States would be included in the sample. To correct for this bias, State and Territory distributions of workers within sectors from the weighted workers sample were compared with estimates derived from the outlet survey. An additional component was then added to the worker survey weights to bring the State and Territory distributions in line with those derived from the outlet survey. In this report, all results from the workers survey are based on analyses using the final weight that corrects for both forms of sampling bias.

2.4   Estimating workforce numbers

One important goal of the present research was simply to estimate the size of the workforce in each sector in each jurisdiction. We also sought to use outlet responses to estimate the distribution of the workforce on some key characteristics. The basic procedure here was simply to multiply up from totals calculated from outlet responses. Sampling fractions (the proportion of in-scope outlets that were sampled) and response rates within sectors within States and Territories were the basis for this multiplication. Thus, for example, if 50 per cent of in-scope outlets in a sector and State were included in our sample, and the survey response rate for these was 50 per cent, then the total number of employees reported by responding outlets would be multiplied by 4 to produce an estimate of the total employment in that sector in the State. This procedure was modified in cases where complete enumeration was available for a subset of the relevant outlets. Most frequently, this occurred where a central government agency had supplied complete workforce numbers for its workers. We also undertook case by case examination of responses from outlier outlets that reported unusually large numbers of workers in a sector and State. In a few situations,

investigation showed that these cases represented a complete enumeration of all large employers in a sector and State/Territory. In those cases the normal multiplication procedure was appropriately modified.

2.5 Jurisdictional and government / non-profit analyses

Most analyses of the survey data provided in the following chapters of this Report are at the national level. These analyses were also conducted at the jurisdictional level. They were also conducted to compares government and non-profit outlets. Where there were jurisdicational differences or differences between government and non-profit outlets that were worth noting, and we were confident that these differences were likely to be reliable, they are noted in the text of the Report. Where there is no reference to jurisdicational differences or differences between government and non-profit outlets in the text, it can be assumed that our analyses provided no reliable evidence of such differences. Where differences are reported, limited responses in some sectors and jurisdictions, and some possible differences in staff classification, mean that these differences should nevertheless be treated with caution.

3. Child Protection

Child protection is an important activity of governments in Australia. Most child protection is organised by State and Territory governments. non-profit organisations also provide services in the child protection area. This project defined child protection activities as:

1. Providing social support and social assistance services to children and young people who have experienced, or are at risk of, abuse, neglect or other harm. Such services include out-of-home care services that provide care for children and young people who are placed away from their parents or family home for reasons of safety or family crisis. (Subset of ANZSIC Codes 8790 and 8609);
2. Receiving and assessing allegations of child abuse, neglect or other harm to children. (Subset of ANZSIC Code 7711 and, possibly, 7520). For the purposes of this project children and young people are defined as those aged 0-17 years.

The in-scope workforce for the child protection workforce in this report was therefore those employed to provide these services, and those who directly manage and coordinate their work. This definition excluded foster carers, because they are not employed directly by child protection agencies.

3.1 Profile of the Child Protection Services Workforce

A key aim of the current project was to generate a profile of the current workforce in the selected community service areas. In this part of the report, we present such a profile for the child protection workforce. We begin with total employment, and then examine the key aspects of workforce and employment structure such as occupational distribution, employment contract, use of staff not directly employed by outlets, hours of work, wages, and worker demographics.

3.1.1 Total Employment

Our best estimate is that a little more than 13,000 people were employed across Australia in directly providing child protection services or managing those who provide these services at the time of our surveys. As a significant number of these employees worked part-time, this number translated into about 10,000 equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more (Table 3.1a). We estimate that about 11,300 workers (or 8,500 EFT workers) provided child protection services directly, while the remainder managed their work. Outlets providing child protection services also employed other workers who provided other services or administered the organisations. Our estimate is that, including such workers, outlets providing child protection services employed a total of about 23,000 workers.

Our Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009 indicated that child protection workers were distributed across the States and Territories as shown in Table 3.1a. While we can be broadly confident of these numbers, they should be treated with some caution. In particular, limited responses from the non-government sector in South Australia made estimates there uncertain. Taking this limitation into account, it appears that the States and Territories employed child protection workers roughly in proportion to their populations.

Table 3.1b provides further detail about the numbers of child protection workers (on an EFT basis) relative to the resident population of each State. Nationally, there were approximately

45 EFT child protection workers for every hundred thousand Australians, with marginally higher ratios in Tasmania and Queensland. However, these differences were largely the result of State-level variation in the numbers of non-professional and managerial employees. There was less variation in the numbers of professional employees, who delivered the bulk of child protection services (see Section 3.1.2, below).

Table 3.1a: Estimated employment in the child protection services sector, by State and Territory, 2009

	Total employees (estimated)	Total child protection employees (estimated)	Total EFT child protection employees (estimated)
NSW	4,763	4,023	3,342
VIC	7,390	2,795	1,749
QLD	5,530	3,394	2,725
SA	1,685	1,145	853
WA	2,138	949	790
TAS	1,342	469	365
NT	*	*	*
ACT	181	146	*
Total	23,186	13,038	9,993

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.
* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

Table 3.1b: Estimated EFT employment in the child protection services sector relative to the population per 100,000 persons, by State/Territory and occupation, 2009

	Non-professionals (estimated)	Professionals (estimated)	Managers and administrators (estimated)	Total (estimated)
NSW	5	38	4	46
VIC	5	22	5	32
QLD	21	27	13	61
SA	17	28	7	52
WA	5	22	7	35
TAS	25	34	13	72
NT	*	*	*	*
ACT	*	*	*	*
Total	10	29	7	45

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010c.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.
* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

Table 3.2 shows employment by government and non-government sector. It indicates that nearly 60 per cent of child protection workers were employed by government, while 40 per cent worked in non-profit organisations. The for-profit sector provided virtually no child protection services. Focusing on EFT employees confirmed that government was providing the bulk of child protection services, with nearly 70 per cent of EFT employees.

Table 3.2: **Direct service employment in the child protection services sector, by organisation type, 2009**

	Per cent of employees	Per cent of EFT employees
Non-profit or charitable	40	30
Privately owned, for-profit	1	1
Public, government, or government owned	59	69
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

3.1.2 Child Protection Workers' Occupations

Child protection work requires workers with a range of skills and abilities. Table 3.3 shows the distribution of workers by the main occupations we identified in this sector. In much of the following analysis, we compare workers across occupations. To simplify this discussion, we collapsed the occupations shown in Table 3.3 into three broad categories, defined below.

Non-professionals were "Direct care workers" and "Family, youth or child support workers".

Professionals were "Child protection investigation officers", "Social workers, case managers and child protection practitioners", and "Psychologists, counsellors and therapeutic workers".

Managers and Administrators were "Service or program administrators, managers and coordinators".

(In most comparisons, we exclude the 1 per cent of workers who are in the 'Other' occupation category shown in Table 3.3, as there are too few of them in our sample to permit further analysis.)

Professional workers dominated employment in the child protection sector, constituting over half (56 per cent) of employees and nearly two thirds (64 per cent) of EFT workers. Non-professionals, who would typically require at most Certificate 3 level qualifications, made up almost one third (31 per cent) of workers and just over one fifth (21 per cent) of EFT workers. The remaining employees managed or coordinated these workers, and constituted around 15 per cent of the workforce (persons and EFT).

There are some variations in these proportions when we examine the data on a State by State basis. Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania had comparatively low percentages of their child protection workforces in professional jobs, while in New South Wales this proportion was well above the national average of 56 per cent. The State-level picture was similar when EFT estimates were used, with Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia having relatively low

proportions of EFT professional workers and New South Wales having a relatively high proportion.

There were also large differences in the results displayed in Table 3.3 between the government and non-government sectors. In government child protection outlets, 75 per cent of employees were professionals, compared to 29 per cent of employees in non-government outlets. And, because the government sector was the largest employer in absolute terms, this meant that almost 80 per cent of child protection professionals were employed directly by governments. The government sector employed an even higher proportion (84 per cent) of all child protection professionals in EFT terms.

Table 3.3:   Occupation of child protection workers, 2009 (per cent)

	Number of Persons	Equivalent Full Time
Direct care worker	17	11
Family, youth or child support worker	14	11
Non-professionals subtotal	*31*	*21*
Child protection investigation officer	22	27
Social worker/case manager/child protection practitioner	31	33
Psychologist/counsellor/ therapeutic worker	3	3
Professionals subtotal	*56*	*64*
Service or program administrator/manager/ coordinator	13	15
Other	1	1
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Minor differences between the subtotals and the sum of the row values occur due to rounding.

3.1.3   Child Protection Workers' Employment Contracts

The arrangements through which child protection workers are employed are important for a range of reasons. Less secure employment contracts may predispose workers to leave jobs if they can find equally attractive employment that gives more employment security, while more secure arrangements are likely to increase the likelihood that they will stay. Where a significant number of workers is employed part-time (defined as working less than 35 hours per week), increased labour demand may be satisfied, at least partially, by increasing the hours of these workers.

Permanent full-time employment accounted for the vast majority of professional and manager/administrator employees in child protection. Some 80 per cent of the former and 85 per cent of the latter were employed in this way (Table 3.4). Overall, over 90 per cent of both professional and managerial/administrative workers were employed permanently, with casual and contract employment accounting for less than 10 per cent. In contrast, nearly 30 per cent of non-professionals were employed casually. Nevertheless, about two thirds were employed on permanent contracts, with over 40 per cent of these employed part-time.

The prevalence of permanent full-time employment was higher in the government sector than in the non-government sector, with employers in the latter group relying to a greater extent on permanent part-time arrangements. Casual employment was also more prevalent in the non-government sector, a result that was largely due to higher rates of casualisation among non-professional workers. These workers were around three times more likely to be casuals if they worked for non-government organisations (35 per cent) than for government organisations (9 per cent).

The respective State and Territory jurisdictions providing child protection services generally followed the national employment arrangement patterns shown in Table 3.4. But there are two differences warranting further comment. First, Western Australia made greater use of permanent part-time employment arrangements than other jurisdictions. One in every three permanent positions in Western Australian child protection was part-time, compared to about one in five nationwide. Second, Victoria made greater use of casual employment than other jurisdictions (20 per cent compared to the national average of 10 per cent). This difference was a result of a high casualisation rate for both professional and non-professional child protection workers in Victoria.

Table 3.4: **Employment type of child protection employees in the last pay period, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent full-time	39	80	85	68
Permanent part-time	29	11	10	17
Casual	28	3	1	10
Contract	4	6	4	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

3.1.4 Use of Agency, Contract, and Self Employed Staff

Employers in all industries sometimes rely on staff they do not directly employ. Such agency, contract and self-employed staff may be an important component of the workforce, and may be used for a variety of reasons. Sometimes employers use them because permanent or casual staff are not available. Some employers may prefer such staff because they provide more flexibility, or because they are cheaper. Our survey sought information about the extent and importance of such staff in the child protection area. In general, we found that child protection services used very few of such staff, and did not appear to rely significantly on them.

Overall, only 8 per cent of child protection outlets used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff to deliver child protection services. Table 3.5 shows that the most common form of such staff usage was for outlets to use self-employed non-professional staff, but even here only 3 per cent did so. Our survey suggested that, in total, just under 900 staff of this kind were used by outlets across Australia in the pay period before the survey (normally two weeks). Almost all of these workers were care and support (non-professional) workers. They were equally split between agency, sub-contract and self-employed workers (Table 3.6). Where such workers were used, the small number of shifts for which they were employed

strongly suggests that they were used to fill unexpected staffing needs, rather than as a preferred form of employment (Table 3.7).

Table 3.5: Outlets that used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency	2*	1*	1*	2*
Sub-contract	1*	0*	0*	2
Self-employed	3*	2*	1*	6

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

Table 3.6: Number of agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Other	Total
Agency	289	10	7	0	306
Sub-contract	313	2	0	5	320
Self-employed	186	52	8	2	248

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Table 3.7: Median number of shifts done by agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency	15*	4*	5*	10*
Sub-contract	25*	1*		5*
Self-employed	8*	5*	2*	7

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Notes: Median estimates exclude outlets with zero shifts in each category. Cells are blank where no workers were reported for that category in Table 3.6.

* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

3.1.5   Demographics of the Child Protection Workforce

A key element in the profile of the child protection workforce is its demographic structure. Here, we examine the proportion of men and women amongst child protection workers, their age distribution, and their birthplace patterns.

As in most community services sectors, child protection workers were overwhelmingly female. Table 3.8 shows that about 80 per cent of professionals and managers/administrators were women, as were 70 per cent of non-professional workers. In total, 79 per cent of child protection workers were women. Women were also the majority of workers in all

jurisdictions, although men represented a higher share of employees in the Northern Territory (36 per cent), particularly in professional occupations (46 per cent). Men made up a slightly higher proportion of total child protection employment in the non-government sector (26 per cent) than in the government sector (18 per cent), but there was no significant difference between these two sectors in the gender composition of professional employment.

Table 3.8: **Sex of employees in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	**Professionals**	**Managers and administrators**	**Total**
Male	30	17	20	21
Female	70	83	80	79
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

The child protection workforce was quite varied in age. Over a quarter of workers delivering child protection services were under 30, while nearly two thirds were aged under 40 (Table 3.9). Managers and administrators were older, with only just over 10 per cent aged under 30, and 30 per cent aged 50 or older. Compared to the Australian female workforce, child protection workers were more likely to be under 40, indicating that this was a relatively young workforce, and that workforce aging was not a major issue in child protection. There were, however, some significant jurisdictional differences that qualify the overview presented in Table 3.9. Western Australia and South Australia had older child protection workforces, with 27 per cent and 28 per cent of workers in these States aged 50 years or over (compared to the national average of 18 per cent). Queensland had the youngest workforce, with 68 per cent of its workers aged under 40 years. The older profile of the Western Australian and South Australian workforces was particularly apparent for non-professionals and managers/administrators, but was less marked among the professional workers who delivered the bulk of child protection services (see earlier, in Table 3.3).

Table 3.9: **Age of employees in the child protection services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian female workforce (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	**Professionals**	**Managers and administrators**	**Total**	**Australian female workforce**
Less than 30	29	26	11	25	29
30 to 39	36	33	27	33	21
40 to 49	21	23	32	24	23
50 to 59	13	14	24	15	19
60 or more	2	3	6	3	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010a.

About two thirds of professional and non-professional child protection workers were non-Indigenous people born in Australia (Table 3.10). Our survey suggests that some 15 per cent of non-professional workers and just under 8 per cent of professional workers were Indigenous Australians. The remaining workers were born in a range of countries, though

those from the UK and New Zealand figure prominently. Managers and administrators were slightly more likely than other workers to have been born in Australia, with over 85 per cent being Australian born, though they were less likely to be Indigenous Australians. Overall, these figures are similar to the Australian female workforce as a whole, though Indigenous Australians were clearly over-represented amongst child protection workers.

Indigenous child protection workers were concentrated in certain jurisdictions, with about 20 per cent of Queensland child protection workers in our survey identifying as Indigenous, as did nearly 10 per cent of NSW child protection workers. Indigenous child protection workers were also more likely to work for non-government employers, with nearly 20 per cent of non-government child protection employees being Indigenous, compared to about 7 per cent of government workers. Moreover, child protection workers in Western Australia were more likely to be non-Australian born than those in other States, with 42 per cent being overseas born, compared to the national average of 21 per cent.

Table 3.10: Birthplace of employees in the child protection services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian female workforce (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Australia, non-Indigenous	66	69	80	70	73
Australia, Indigenous	15	8	6	9	1
New Zealand	4	4	*	4	3
United Kingdom	6	8	6	8	6
Other	9	10	7	9	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2010b; ABS 2009b.
Note: Within the 'Other' category, the countries reported most frequently by child protection workers were Ireland, Germany, the Philippines, South Africa and Fiji.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.1.6 Child Protection Workers' Hours of Work and Tenure

Our surveys provided two sources of information about the hours of work of employees. We asked respondents to our workers survey how many hours in total they usually worked per week in their child protection job, and how many of these hours were paid and unpaid (Table 3.11). We also asked outlets to tell us the number of workers in each occupation category who worked 30 or fewer hours during the fortnight before the survey (i.e., an average of 15 hours per week or less), and the number who worked more than this (Table 3.12).

Both surveys showed that the vast majority of child protection workers were employed for normal full-time hours (35-40 hours per week). Around 80-85 per cent of professionals and

managers/administrators worked these hours (Tables 3.4 and 3.11). Both surveys indicated that only a small minority of child protection workers were employed for very short hours (15 hours per week or less), though the outlets survey suggested the proportion is higher than does the workers survey, at least for non-professional workers.[2] It seems likely that around one half of non-professional child protection workers were employed part-time (for less than 35 hours per week). The incidence of very short part-time hours was significantly higher for these workers in the non-government sector (28 per cent) than in the government sector (11 per cent).

Table 3.11:   Hours paid per week in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 15	*	*	*	1
16 to 34	28	14	13	17
35 to 40	67	79	76	76
41 or more	*	6	9	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.12:   Hours worked in past fortnight in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 30	23	7	11	12
31 or more	77	93	89	88
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Respondents to our workers survey were also asked how many unpaid hours they worked per week in their child protection jobs. Unpaid hours appeared to be quite common amongst these workers, with half of professionals and 60 per cent of managers/administrators saying that they usually worked unpaid hours (Table 3.13). Indeed, nearly 40 per cent of managers/administrators and 20 per cent of professionals said that they worked more than 5 unpaid hours per week. Unpaid hours were much less common amongst non-professional workers, though even here over one quarter of workers said that they worked such hours.

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[2] In all sectors covered in this report, the outlets survey suggests that more workers were employed very short hours than does the workers survey. This is likely to reflect a small bias in our sample of workers towards those working longer hours, possibly because these workers were easier for outlets to contact and pass questionnaires to, and were more likely to respond if they did receive questionnaires. It is also likely that outlet responses somewhat overstated the proportion of workers employed for 30 or fewer hours per fortnight because some employers may have misread the question as asking about weekly hours. Our assessment is that the proportion of employees in each sector working short hours lay somewhere between the numbers suggested by the two surveys.

Table 3.13: **Hours unpaid per week in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Zero	72	52	39	55
1 to 5	18	28	23	26
6 to 10	6	13	21	13
11 or more	4	6	17	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Our survey of outlets asked respondents to indicate the number of workers in each occupational group who had worked in their current outlets for various periods. Non-professional workers providing child protection services had quite low tenure with their current outlet, both compared to other child protection workers and compared to other community service employees (Table 3.14). Thus, over one third of non-professionals had been in their current outlet for one year or less, while only 17 per cent had tenure of five years or more. Professionals had noticeably longer tenure, with only one quarter having had one year or less and one third having been with their current outlet for 5 years or more. Managers/administrators had longer tenure, with nearly half having tenure of 5 years or more. These results indicated that child protection outlets faced significant challenges in recruiting workers and/or in inducting them in to new workplaces, especially if the workers were directly providing child protection services.

Our indicator of tenure is likely to mean somewhat different things depending on whether the outlet is a government or non-government one. Government employees' tenure combines movement from one government outlet to another with initial employment by the organisation, while the tenure of those working in non-government outlets mostly reflects time since an initial appointment to the outlet. (As we have already noted, about 60 per cent of child protection workers were employed by government outlets.) Our results indicate that workers in government outlets had significantly longer tenure than their counterparts in non-government outlets, in each of the three broad occupational groups shown in Table 3.14. Overall, 36 per cent of government child protection workers had been with their current employer for 5 years or more, compared with 20 per cent of non-government child protection workers. These results suggest that while the government sector is more successful than the non-government sector in retaining workers, it faces larger challenges in terms of recruiting and promoting new staff to replace long-serving employees who leave through promotion or retirement.

Table 3.14: **Tenure with current employer of employees in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 year or less	36	24	16	27
2 to 5 years	47	45	36	45
More than 5 years	17	32	47	29
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

3.1.7 Child Protection Workers' Earnings and Multiple Job Holding

The earnings of workers are important for many reasons. Earnings are a basic incentive for workers to take jobs and stay in them. Very low earnings mean that the monetary costs of leaving their jobs for workers may be quite low, increasing any difficulties employers may face in retaining them. In this sense, very low earnings may signify workers' limited attachment to the labour market.

Table 3.15a shows the distribution of gross weekly earnings for child protection workers. Even amongst non-professional workers, very few child protection workers had very low earnings. Unsurprisingly, professional and managerial/administrative employees tended to earn more than non-professional workers, with managers/administrators reporting the highest earnings. Over half of managers/administrators and one third of professionals reported earning $1,200 per week or more at the time of the survey.

Table 3.15a: Weekly earnings by occupation in the child protection services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
$1 to 399	3	*	*	1
$400 to 799	36	16	6	19
$800 to 1199	52	51	36	49
$1200 to 1599	8	25	31	23
$1600 or more	0	8	25	8
Total	100	100	100	N=650

Missing cases = 59
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

It is also possible to calculate an hourly wage rate for each employee, by dividing their gross weekly earnings by the hours that they were paid to work each week. This approach allowed us to approximate the rate of remuneration for each hour of work, abstracting from differences in weekly earnings that are due to the variation in working hours. However, there is likely to be more measurement error in the hourly wage variable we derive than in weekly earnings, because both earnings and working hours will be misreported by some workers. To reduce this imprecision in our analysis, we limited hours paid to a maximum of 50 per week prior to calculating the hourly wage variable, and also treated as missing data apparent hourly wage rates of more than $100. (In combination, these adjustments affect about 5 per cent of the sample.)

Table 3.15b shows the resulting distribution of hourly wage rates, by occupation, for child protection workers. About half of all workers in the sector had an hourly wage rate between $20 and $29 (inclusive), with the largest proportion (28 per cent) paid between $25 and $29 per hour. The mean hourly wage rate in the child protection sector ($30) was a bit higher than the mean hourly cash earnings for all female employees ($27.60, excluding overtime), according to the ABS Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) conducted in August 2008 (ABS, 2009c, p.20). As with the data on weekly earnings, the distribution of hourly wage rates looked quite different by occupation in the child protection sector. Non-professionals were the lowest paid, with 17 per cent working for less than $20 per hour, and 53 per cent

working for less than $25 per hour. Managers/administrators were the highest paid, with one third working for at least $40 per hour. Managers in the child protection sector had a marginally higher average hourly wage rate ($36) than female managers generally ($33.70), according to the EEH survey (ABS, 2009c, p.23).

Earnings differed significantly between the government and non-government sector. Thus, about 45 per cent of government child protection workers earned $1,200 per week or more, compared to less than 10 per cent of non-government workers. In large part, this was because hourly earnings in the government sector were higher: just over 60 per cent of government workers earned $30 or more per hour compared to less than 20 per cent of non-government workers. There was also some variation in earnings across States and Territories, with Victorian and Queensland child protection workers having lower weekly and hourly earnings than those in other jurisdictions. Thus, 23 per cent of those in Victoria and 12 per cent of those in Queensland earned $1,200 per week or more, compared to over 40 per cent in NSW, South Australia and Western Australia. Similarly, about one quarter of workers in Victoria and Queensland earned $30 per hour or more, compared to over half of those in NSW, South Australia and Western Australia.

Table 3.15b: Hourly wage rates by occupation in the child protection services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than $20	17	7	5	9
$20 to 24	39	16	11	20
$25 to 29	28	29	18	28
$30 to 34	9	20	19	17
$35 to 39	4	13	15	12
$40 or more	*	15	32	14
Total	100	100	100	N=635

Missing cases = 74
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

In some industries and occupations, workers quite often hold multiple jobs. Particularly where their primary job is part-time, this may indicate that they are unable to get the number of hours of work they would like. Multiple job holding may also reduce their attachment to their jobs.

Very few child protection workers had second jobs. Perhaps 7 per cent held such jobs (Table 3.16). Those who did hold such jobs worked an average of about 12 hours per week (analysis not shown here). Clearly, in this sector, multiple job holding was not a significant factor in workforce dynamics.

Table 3.16: Number of jobs by occupation in the child protection services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Has one job only	95	93	93	93
Job 2 same sector	*	1	0	1
Job 2 elsewhere	3	6	7	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.2   A Profile of Child Protection Services Outlets

Child protection services are provided by a range of government and non-government organisations. Our survey of child protection 'outlets' focused on agencies and offices that directly provided child protection services. In this section of the report, we present a profile of these outlets.[3] The profile covers the size of outlets, the mix of services they provide, their funding arrangements and their use of casual and contract staff.

3.2.1   Size of outlets

Government organisations employed over half of child protection workers (close to 60 per cent), while non-profits employed almost all of the remainder (Table 3.2). Government child protection outlets varied considerably in size, with over one third employing 10 or fewer child protection workers and the same proportion employing more than 20 (Table 3.17). Non-profits tended to be smaller than government outlets, with over 60 per cent employing 10 or fewer workers, and only about 15 per cent employing more than 20.

Table 3.17:   Distribution of child protection services outlets by sector and employment size (number of direct care workers), 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	Private	Government	Total
1 to 5	26	85	17	24
6 to 10	36	*	21	28
11 to 20	21	*	24	22
21 to 40	8	*	21	14
41 or more	9	*	17	12
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.2.2   Mix of Services

Organisations in the community services sector often provide services across a variety of community service areas, though this is more common in some areas than others. We asked service outlets what proportion of their service activity (measured by the number of hours worked by relevant workers) was in child protection, and what proportion was in other community service areas. Three quarters of government outlets providing child protection services did not provide other services, while most of the remainder said that child protection constitutes more than half of their activity (Table 3.18). In contrast, only one quarter of non-profit outlets providing child protection services said that this is their only activity. Indeed, nearly half indicated that most of their activity was in areas other than child protection.

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[3] The profile presented here is weighted to ensure that the figures reflect the actual contribution of outlets in each State and Territory to the national totals.

Table 3.18: Proportion of direct service activity (staff hours) in the child protection services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	**Private**	**Government**	**Total**
Less than 50%	46	*	9	29
50% to 99%	31	*	16	23
100%	24	*	75	47
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.2.3 Funding Sources and Conditions

Community service organisations in the non-government sector may receive funding from a variety of sources including various levels of government, charitable sources and donations. Our survey asked outlets to specify the proportion of their funding that came from each of the main sources. We show only the breakdown for non-profit outlets because government outlets received their funding as government agencies by definition, and virtually no child protection services were provided by private for-profit outlets. Virtually all non-profit outlets in this sector received most of their funding from government sources, with State government being the dominant funder (Table 3.19). Indeed, amongst outlets that specified which level of government was the source of most of their funding, about three quarters said that it was State level government.

Table 3.19: Principal funding source in the child protection services sector, non-profit outlets, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit outlets
Government agency	25
Commonwealth government sources	8
State government sources	57
Local government sources	*
Non-government sources	*
Mixture	6
Total	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Shows proportion of outlets receiving the majority of their funding from each source shown.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Community services organisations are often given funding that is conditional on certain levels, standards or types of service being provided. Our survey asked outlets whether there were any special conditions of this kind attached to any of their funding, and if so what these conditions were. A little over half of non-profit child protection service outlets indicated that such conditions did apply to some of their funding (Table 3.20). Interestingly, about 20 per cent of government outlets also said that some of their funding was conditional. Almost all of the very small number of for-profit outlets providing child protection services said that their funding was unconditional.

The main funding conditions outlets were subject to are listed in Table 3.20. It is important to recognise that outlets may have been subject to more than one condition, and we asked outlets to specify all of the conditions that applied to their funding. Across all sectors, the most common conditions were meeting required staffing levels or service quantity targets. Each of these conditions was required of between half and three quarters of outlets that had some conditional funding (Table 3.20). Another third of outlets with conditional funding were required to meet accessibility conditions, while around 20 per cent had to open after hours.

Table 3.20: Funding conditions in the child protection services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	**Private**	**Government**	**Total**
Unconditional	44	85	79	61
Conditional	56	*	21	39
	100	100	100	100
Funding conditional on:				
Required staffing levels	62	*	69	64
Service quantity targets	71	*	55	68
After-hours opening	22	*	*	19
Accessibility	34	*	*	29
Other	17	*	*	15

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Multiple funding conditions could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent. Within the 'Other' category, the funding conditions reported most frequently by child protection offices or outlets were: Providing services specific to the service type, providing services to a specific demographic target, and financial or general reporting requirements.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.2.4   Use of Contract and Casual Staff

Contract and casual staff are not used in providing child protection services as commonly as in providing some other community services. However, we have already noted that about one third of non-professional staff in the sector were employed casually. Such staff may be employed under a variety of conditions and for a variety of reasons. Our survey asked outlets whether they employed such staff, and if so why they used them.

Most non-profit and government child protection agencies did use contract or casual staff or both (Table 3.21). Indeed, only 30 per cent of non-profit and just over 20 per cent of government outlets in our survey said that they used neither of these forms of staffing. About one third of non-profit outlets use both contract and casual staff, and another third used casuals only. Only a small proportion used only contract staff. Government outlets were more likely to use both contract and casual staff, about one half did so, and one quarter used contract staff only.

The dominant reason that government outlets used contract staff was to replace permanent staff on leave. Overall, more than 60 per cent of government outlets used contract staff for this purpose. However, non-profits used these staff for a wider variety of reasons including for specific projects and as a result of non-recurrent funding, as well as to replace permanent staff on leave. The nearly 60 per cent of non-profit outlets that used casual staff employed them for a variety of reasons too. Responding to fluctuating or unpredictable demand was

the most common reason, closely followed by replacing permanent staff on leave and short notice shift cover (presumably mainly due to permanent staff being unavailable at short notice).

Table 3.21: **Use of contract and casual staff in the child protection services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-profit	**Government**	**Total**
Neither contract nor casual	30	22	27
Contract only	10	25	18
Casual only	29	*	17
Both	32	49	38
Total	100	100	100
Why use contract workers?			
Non-recurrent funding	34	7	18
Specific project	67	15	34
Replace permanent staff on leave	54	85	71
Other reasons	15	11	15
Why use casual workers?			
Short notice shift cover	39	12	27
Replace permanent staff on leave	50	22	38
Fluctuating or unpredictable demand	61	28	47
Other reasons	25	67	43

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.3 Skills, Training and Preparation for Work

An appropriately skilled workforce is widely recognised as a crucial element in a comprehensive and effective child protection system. Indeed, the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, agreed between the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments in April 2009, refers frequently to this issue, and to initiatives aimed at ensuring that the goal of a sufficiently skilled workforce is achieved. Formal training and qualifications are central to the skill level of this workforce, especially given the importance of professional workers skilled in dealing with complex and difficult issues and problems. In this section, we examine the qualifications and training of the current workforce, and report workers' perceptions about how adequate their skills are and whether these skills are used in their jobs. The analysis differentiates between seven broad types of qualifications, following the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) (ABS, 2001).

3.3.1 Level of education and field of qualification

Professionals are central to the child protection workforce, making up nearly two thirds of equivalent full time (EFT) workers in the sector (Table 3.3). These workers were employed as social workers, case managers, child protection practitioners and investigation officers, psychologists and counsellors. About 80 per cent of professionals held a Bachelor or Postgraduate degree, with another 10 per cent having a Diploma (Table 3.22). In general, these qualifications were in areas highly appropriate to child protection; some 40 per cent were in social work with about 30 per cent in psychology or counselling and another 15 per cent in community work (Table 3.23).

The non-professional workforce providing child protection services made up about 20 per cent of the EFT workforce. It is made up of workers such as direct care workers and family, youth or child support workers. Overall, three quarters of these non-professional workers had post-school qualifications (Table 3.22), with most being in areas directly relevant to child protection (Table 3.23). Vocational qualifications were the most common highest formal education of these workers, with just under half having a Diploma or a Certificate 3 or 4 as their highest qualification. Nearly one third of these workers held degrees, mostly in areas such as social work, psychology and community or youth work. It is worth noting that about one quarter of non-professionals had no post-school qualification.

About two thirds of child protection managers and administrators held degrees, the majority being in areas directly relevant to child protection such as social work, psychology or community work. This pattern is consistent with most managers and administrators being largely drawn from the ranks of professionals who directly provide child protection services. However, about one third of managers and administrators had their highest qualifications in other areas, so that some may have had limited training relevant to the sector.

In sum, these patterns indicate that most child protection workers had qualifications that were highly relevant and appropriate to their jobs. Over three quarters of those who completed post school qualifications did so in the fields of social work, psychology, counselling, community work or youth work. The child protection workforce was also highly educated by comparison with the whole Australian workforce. Although this partly reflects the professional composition of the workforce, it was also the case that non-professionals in the sector were more likely to have obtained post-school qualifications than other Australian workers generally (Table 3.22).

There were quite substantial differences in the balance of field of highest qualification across States and Territories, especially amongst professionals in child protection. Thus, in South Australia almost all of the highest qualifications (90 per cent) of child protection professionals were in social work, while in Victoria and Western Australia the figure was around 50 per cent, in NSW around 30 per cent and in Queensland just over 20 per cent. Those with psychology or counselling qualifications made up about 40 per cent of professional workers in Queensland, about 30 per cent in NSW and about one quarter in Victoria and Western Australia. Community work qualifications were most common amongst NSW and Queensland professionals (about 20 per cent in each State).

Table 3.22: Highest level of education/qualification in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Postgraduate degree	8	24	20	20	8
Bachelor degree	23	57	47	48	19
Diploma	23	11	13	14	10
Certificate 3 or 4	23	4	11	9	19
Year 12	10	2	7	4	17
Year 11 or Certificate 1 or 2	6	1	*	2	12
Year 10 or below	8	1	*	3	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2009d.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.23: Field of highest qualification in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	13	40	27	34
Disability	8	*	*	2
Psychology, counselling	10	29	18	24
Community work	25	15	17	17
Youth work	18	*	*	4
Other	26	15	32	19
Total	100	100	100	N= 629

Missing cases = 46

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by child protection workers were (in descending order): Education, Arts/Humanities, Business/Business Management, Children's Services and Administration.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.3.2   Qualifications most relevant to the work

Workers' highest qualifications are not necessarily those most relevant to their jobs. Significant discrepancies between highest qualification and the qualification most relevant to the job indicate that workers may be accepting jobs outside their field of primary interest and skill because more suitable jobs are unavailable. We asked child protection workers who had post-school qualifications about the level and field of the qualification that was most relevant to their current job. The results indicated that, for most workers, their highest qualification was also the one most relevant to their job.

Over 80 per cent of professionals said that their degree (Bachelor or Postgraduate) was the qualification most relevant to their child protection job, just as about 80 per cent said this was their highest qualification. Similarly, three quarters said that the field of their most relevant qualification was social work, psychology/counselling or community work, and about 85 per cent said that their highest qualification was in one of these areas. As we would expect, these responses indicate that there was a small group of professionals whose highest qualifications were not those most relevant to their jobs. The proportion was small, however, and does not suggest any systematic or worrying mismatch between qualifications and jobs amongst this group.

A similar pattern held amongst non-professional child protection workers. The proportions reporting qualification fields relating to child protection as the most relevant to their jobs closely mirrored the proportions reporting these as the fields of their highest qualification.

Managers and administrators, too, usually seemed to find their highest qualification to be most relevant to their jobs. However, nearly half of these employees said that qualifications in areas outside those typically seen as related to child protection were most relevant to their jobs (Table 3.25). This proportion was high, given that only about one third of them said that their highest qualifications were in these other areas (Table 3.23). Presumably some child protection managers and administrators found that qualifications in management, business or similar areas were most relevant to their jobs, even though they had social welfare qualifications too.

There were similar variations across States and Territories in the field of the qualification most relevant to their jobs amongst professionals in child protection to those already noted for field of highest qualification.

Table 3.24: **Level of qualification most relevant to current job in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	11	18	16	16
Bachelor degree	25	66	52	57
Diploma	26	10	11	13
Certificate 3 or 4	29	3	15	9
Other qualification	9	3	5	4
Total	100	100	100	N=615

Missing cases = 60
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications.

Table 3.25: **Field of qualification most relevant to current job in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and Administrators	Total
Social work	12	32	18	27
Disability	*	*	*	2
Psychology, counselling	8	27	15	22
Community work	29	16	15	18
Youth work	15	*	*	3
Other	29	23	46	27
Total	100	100	100	N=519

Missing cases = 156
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by child protection workers were (in descending order): Arts/Humanities, Children's Services, Education and Business/Business Management.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.3.3 Current study

One way of increasing the overall and average levels of skill in a workforce is to hire new workers whose average skill levels are higher than those of existing workers. Another very important route to improved skills in a workforce is for existing workers to upgrade their qualifications. Workers who gain qualifications while on the job may be those obtaining a first qualification that is relevant to their job, those seeking qualifications that will allow them to fill higher level positions in the field, or those simply seeking to update their skills.

Undertaking study for a qualification is quite common in the child protection workforce. Over one third of non-professionals, and around one fifth of professionals and managers/administrators, were studying at the time of our survey (Table 3.26).

About half of non-professionals were studying for degrees, while most of the remainder were studying for Certificate 3 or 4 qualifications (Table 3.27). All of the qualifications being

studied by these workers were in areas relevant to child protection (Table 3.28). These results suggest that non-professionals who were currently studying fell into two groups – those undertaking Bachelor degrees or higher studies to move into professional positions, and those seeking a first qualification in a field that was relevant to their current job.

Table 3.26: Whether currently studying for any qualification, child protection workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	37	22	19	24
No	64	78	81	76
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 3.27: Qualification level of current study, child protection workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	15	54	*	38
Bachelor degree	34	12	24	21
Diploma	13	19	35	19
Certificate 3 or 4	36	12	*	20
Other qualification	*	*	*	*
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.28: Qualification field of current study, child protection workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	21	18	*	19
Disability	*	*	*	*
Psychology, counselling	19	39	*	29
Community work	45	23	*	30
Business	*	*	41	4
Other	*	17	24	16
Total	100	100	100	N=167

Missing cases = 6
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying. Within the 'Other' category the fields reported most frequently by child protection workers were (in descending order): Training and Assessment, Other Health, Mental Health and Education.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.3.4   Skill utilisation and mismatch

Even though workers have relevant qualifications and training, they may still find that they lack the skills needed for their jobs. Alternatively, they may find that the skills they do have are not used in their jobs. Each of these situations represents a skill mismatch (under-skilling in the first case, and over-skilling in the second case). These mismatches cause friction, and are known to have a variety of other adverse consequences, including unsatisfactory work performance, low job satisfaction and high employee turnover.

Child protection workers almost universally agreed with the proposition that they have the skills needed to do their jobs, when we put this question to them in our survey (Table 3.29a). At least 90 per cent of workers across all occupational categories agreed with this proposition. The proportion disagreeing was 2 per cent for the whole workforce, and negligible for non-professional workers. These results suggest that child protection workers saw a very close match between their own skills and the skills required in their jobs.

We put a similar question to child protection employers in our survey of outlets or offices. The responses to this question, while generally supportive of workers' perceptions, differ in two key respects. First, employers saw a higher incidence of under-skilling than workers did. About one third of child protection employers indicated that at least some of their employees did not possess the skills needed for all aspects of their jobs. In 10 per cent of outlets, employers said that about half of their employees were under-skilled. Second, employers saw greater variation in under-skilling incidence across occupations. Whereas only about 10 per cent of outlets said they had under-skilled managers or administrators, 40 per cent said they have under-skilled workers in the non-professional occupations (Table 3.29b). The differences in under-skilling prevalence reported by workers and employers suggested that they did not share the same understanding about what skills were needed to work effectively in the child protection sector, particularly in non-professional jobs. There may be scope here for some employers to clarify with workers their expectations about the minimal and optimal skills that are required for effective work performance in each occupation represented within their office.

Table 3.29a: Perceived skill match ('I have the skills I need to do my current job') in child protection services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	*	3	*	2
Neutral	8	5	*	5
Agree	90	92	97	92
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.29b: **Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are under-skilled in child protection services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	60	67	88	68
Under half	22	20	6	19
About half	9	11	4	10
Over half	9	*	*	*
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

We also asked employees and employers to give their views about the extent of over-skilling, where workers were not using some or all of the skills they possessed in their current positions. There was a closer correspondence in the two groups' perceptions about this issue. About 90 per cent of child protection workers said that they used many of their own skills on the job, and there was little variation across occupations (Table 3.30a). About 20 per cent of child protection providers said that they had some over-skilled workers, with non-professional workers having a slightly higher probability of being perceived as over-skilled (Table 3.30b). Of the two types of skill mismatch, under-skilling appeared to be the greater problem than over-skilling in the child protection sector, especially in the eyes of employers.

Table 3.30a: **Perceived skill utilisation ('I use many of my skills in my current job') in child protection services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	*	3	*	3
Neutral	6	6	*	6
Agree	90	91	93	91
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.30b: **Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are over-skilled in child protection services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	81	84	87	79
Under half	12	9	5	12
About half	*	3	4	6
Over half	*	4	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.4 The Work Experience

People's experience of their job is essential to understanding the dynamics of any workforce. Employees' motivations and experiences at work have large effects on who enters occupations, on workers' performance in their jobs, on their propensity to remain with an employer and in an industry, on their inclination to develop and upgrade skills, and on many other aspects of workforce dynamics. Our survey of child protection workers collected data allowing us to profile workers' experiences in four main areas: their motivations for entering and remaining in the sector, their job satisfaction, their experience of workplace relationships, and their experience of autonomy and control in the workplace. Together, these experiences provide a sound basis for a basic profile of the work experience of child protection workers.

3.4.1 Recruitment and retention

People's motivations in entering their jobs both predict their commitment to them, and colour their response to their work experiences. When asked why they were first attracted to work in child protection, workers in our survey most often acknowledged aspects of their work that were intrinsic to performing it. Thus, a desire to help others and a desire to do something worthwhile were each chosen by nearly three quarters of workers with little difference across occupations (Table 3.31). Other aspects of the job, such as the learning it involved and the possibility of applying skills, or the variety in tasks, were also commonly selected, each by about half of respondents. Rewards which are extrinsic to employees' jobs – job security, career prospects and independence/ autonomy/ responsibility – were selected by about one third of respondents. Only about one in five respondents indicated that pay was a factor that attracted them to child protection. However, the flexibility in hours and shifts appears to be important for non-professional workers, with about one third indicating this mattered. Overall, these patterns show that child protection workers were very likely to select intrinsic rewards – those arising directly out of the experience of doing their jobs – as the reasons they chose to work in the sector. Extrinsic rewards such as job security, pay and flexible hours or shifts were selected by a much smaller proportion of workers, though they were clearly important to a significant group.

Workers' organisational commitment affects the likelihood that they will stay in their jobs, and is associated with their commitment in performing their work. Our survey used a single simple measure: whether a respondent would turn down another job with higher pay to remain in their current organisation. About one third of child protection workers indicated that they would prefer to continue working in their current organisation than move to a higher paying job elsewhere. This was a slightly higher level of organisational commitment than is generally found in the Australian female workforce, where about one quarter of workers agreed with the statement, according to data from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 shown in Table 3.32.

There appears to be some difference amongst professionals in their organisational commitment depending on whether they worked in government or non-government outlets. Thus, some 42 per cent of non-government professionals would keep their current job in preference to a better paid job elsewhere, compared to 26 per cent of government professionals.

Table 3.31:   Reasons attracted to work in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Desire to help others	77	72	68	73
Desire to do something worthwhile	64	74	66	71
Learning, training, application of skills	47	54	38	51
Variety in tasks	47	46	38	45
Job security	23	35	31	32
Career prospects	27	31	34	31
Independence, autonomy, responsibility in work	32	30	29	30
Work being valued and appreciated	32	20	26	24
Supportive co-workers and management	24	19	23	21
Pay	21	20	13	19
Flexibility in hours, shifts	29	14	17	17
Other reasons	1	4	1	3

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so values do not sum to 100 per cent.

Table 3.32:   Organisational commitment ('I would turn down another job that offered quite a bit more pay to stay with this organisation') in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Disagree	44	48	42	47	49
Neutral	19	22	14	20	24
Agree	37	30	43	33	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

3.4.2   Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is widely recognised as a key indicator of employees' experience in the workplace. It is related to whether workers stay in their jobs, and whether they intend to, and also to many aspects of job performance. Our survey used an 11 point job satisfaction

scale in which respondents were asked to rate their job satisfaction from 'totally dissatisfied' (0) to 'totally satisfied' (10) on a range of aspects of their jobs. Thus, scores above 5 indicate some level of satisfaction with the job, while those below 5 indicate dissatisfaction. This question was reproduced from the Household and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, allowing benchmarking against national figures.

Overall, child protection workers generally expressed some level of satisfaction with their work, with mean scores well above 5 on all aspects of their jobs except 'total pay' (Table 3.33). Differences across occupational groups were generally small, though professionals did have somewhat lower satisfaction than non-professionals on all aspects of their jobs except job security and total pay. Child protection workers did appear to be slightly less satisfied than the Australian female workforce as a whole (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 3.33). However, with the notable exception of satisfaction with 'total pay', the differences between child protection workers and the Australian female workforce were small, amounting to less than 1 point on the 11 point scale.

Satisfaction with total pay was strikingly low amongst child protection workers, about 2 points lower than for the female Australian workforce. This low pay satisfaction is common amongst community services workers, and has been previously noted in the aged care sector (Martin and King 2008). State by State comparison of pay satisfaction also shows quite large differences between States. Child protection workers in New South Wales had high pay satisfaction compared to those in other States, with a mean of 6.1 on our 11 point scale. In contrast, Victorian workers had a mean of only 3.8, indicating extraordinarily high levels of pay dissatisfaction. The means for Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia lie between these extremes (4.7, 5.3. and 5.9 respectively).

Table 3.33: **Employee satisfaction with various dimensions of their work in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Your job security	7.1	7.5	7.9	7.5	8.0
The work itself	7.5	7.1	7.4	7.3	7.7
Overall job satisfaction	7.4	7.1	7.6	7.2	7.7
Work/life balance	7.1	6.6	7.3	6.8	7.5
The hours you work	7.1	6.6	6.5	6.7	7.3
Your total pay	4.8	5.1	5.8	5.1	7.0

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).
Note: Weighted means, ranked by total within sector, and scaled from 0 (Totally dissatisfied) to 10 (Totally satisfied).

3.4.3 Relationships in the workplace

Workplace relationships have a strong influence on workers' commitment to their workplace and their jobs, and to their propensity to stay in their jobs. Our survey asked about

respondents' perceptions of the relationships between employees and management, and between workmates. We used a question from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 to facilitate benchmarking of child protection workers' responses against national patterns.

Overwhelmingly, child protection workers perceived relations between management and employees as positive (Table 3.34). Between 70 per cent and 90 per cent of respondents in each occupational group saw relations as either 'quite good' or 'very good'. Managers and administrators held the most positive views. Comparison with the Australian female workforce indicated that child protection workers were more likely to view these relationships as 'very good' than the average Australian female worker.

Child protection workers had even more unequivocally positive views about relations between workmates/colleagues (Table 3.35). Over half of those in each occupation viewed these relationships as 'very good'. This is well above the proportion of all Australian female workers who held this view. Indeed, around 90 per cent of child protection workers had a positive view of the relations between workmates.

These results suggest that child protection workers generally found considerable support from workmates and, to slightly lesser extent, managers in the difficult work they undertook. These relationships were likely to be very important in determining the commitment and effectiveness with which they worked, and the likelihood they would remain in their jobs.

Table 3.34: Perceived relations between management and employees in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Very bad	*	4	0	3	3
Quite bad	9	10	*	9	9
Neither good nor bad	16	10	7	11	15
Quite good	34	39	43	38	43
Very good	37	37	46	38	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.35: **Perceived relations between workmates/colleagues in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Very bad	*	0	0	*	1
Quite bad	4	3	*	3	2
Neither good nor bad	11	7	4	7	10
Quite good	32	34	40	34	48
Very good	53	56	53	55	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.4.4   Autonomy and task discretion

The extent to which workers feel they have control over how they do their jobs is strongly associated with their job satisfaction and commitment to their jobs. Our survey asked respondents about how much freedom they have in deciding how to do their work, and whether they believe they have adequate control over their work tasks.

In general, child protection workers indicated that they have quite high and adequate levels of control over their work. Between two thirds (professionals) and three quarters (non-professionals and managers/administrators) of child protection respondents agreed that they 'have a lot of freedom to decide how' they do their work (Table 3.36). These proportions were higher than in the Australian workforce as a whole, where 59 per cent of employed women held this view (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 3.36), but they were similar to attitudes amongst community based aged care workers (Martin and King 2008: 85). The latter comparison suggests that child protection work is organised in ways that require similar levels of discretion on the part of workers as community based aged care work.

Table 3.36: **Perceived job autonomy ('I have a lot of freedom to decide how I do my work') in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Disagree	12	18	8	15	25
Neutral	13	16	17	16	16
Agree	75	66	77	69	59
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).

Child protection workers were also very likely to say that they had 'adequate control over' their work tasks, with about 70 to 80 per cent of respondents holding this view (Table 3.37). This sense may be a little weaker amongst professionals than other workers, though the difference is not large.

Overall, these patterns suggest that child protection workers have a strong sense of autonomy in their work, and believe that their discretion is at adequate levels. These views are likely to have positive effects on their commitment to their work and jobs.

Table 3.37: **Perceived task discretion ('I have adequate control over my work tasks') in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	10	15	*	12
Neutral	12	17	18	16
Agree	78	68	80	71
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.5   *Meeting Labour Demand*

Employers, policy makers and employees alike have a strong interest in various aspects of how labour demand is met. We collected information on a range of aspects of the process of filling vacancies, including the level of vacancies and the ease with which they are filled, and the process by which employees typically find jobs.

3.5.1   Vacancy rates

The number of vacancies employers have is one important indicator of the state of the labour market for workers in an industry. Child protection outlets responding to our survey appeared to have quite high levels of vacancies for professional workers, with lower levels for other workers (Table 3.38). One third of outlets had vacancies for at least 1 professional worker, while over 10 per cent had vacancies for more than 2. These are noticeably higher vacancy levels than in other community services areas. Vacancy levels for non-professional child protection workers and for managers/administrators were much lower with only around 10 per cent of outlets reporting vacancies in each of these occupational groups.

Table 3.38:   Number of equivalent full-time (EFT) vacancies in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	87	67	92	55
1 or less	4	17	6	19
More than 1 to 2	5	4	*	10
More than 2	4	12	*	17
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.5.2   How employees find jobs

How employees find jobs is a central aspect of the operation of any labour market. Child protection organisations' capacity to find the workers with the skills they need, and to recruit them to jobs, partly depends on how workers find out about the jobs available to them. Most studies of labour markets show that formal methods of recruitment, such as job advertisements in newspapers or on the internet, are important routes for recruitment. However, informal methods, such as those based on family or friendship networks, are also frequently important.

Our survey of employees asked how they found their jobs (Table 3.39). Non-professionals in child protection were much more likely to find jobs through informal means than are professionals or managers/administrators. Indeed, about half of non-professionals found their jobs through friendship or family networks and nearly 10 per cent found them simply by asking employers for a job. Nevertheless, nearly one third of non-professionals heard about their jobs through advertisements (either in newspapers or on the internet). In contrast, such formal methods were much more commonly the basis for professionals, with over half hearing about their jobs through some form of advertisement. Nevertheless, about one third of professionals said they heard about their jobs through friends or family, or by

simply approaching an employer for a job. Managers/administrators were almost equally likely to have heard about their jobs through formal or informal channels.

These patterns suggest that child protection agencies are able to rely more on informal recruitment pathways for workers with lower levels of formally certified skills (non-professionals), while they are likely to use more formal channels to find employees with higher level training (professionals). However, neither formal nor informal recruitment pathways are used exclusively in any occupation. It is likely that paying conscious attention to both forms of recruitment, while being aware of their relative importance, will ensure the most efficient recruitment experiences for both employers and employees.

There was some variation across States in the ways employees had heard about their jobs. Just over half of child protection workers in Queensland had relied on informal methods (networks or a direct approach to an employer) compared to about 30 per cent in NSW and just under 40 per cent in Victoria.

Table 3.39: **How discovered that current job in the child protection services sector was available, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Friend, family networks	49	23	22	29
Newspaper	19	26	23	24
Internet	11	16	*	13
Approach to employer	8	12	21	12
Other	6	9	13	9
Government notice, gazette	*	10	8	8
Employment agency	*	3	*	3
Workplace notice-board	*	2	7	2
Total	100	100	100	N=686

Missing cases = 23
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Response categories are ranked in descending order by the total for all occupations. Within the 'Other' category, the most frequently reported responses by child protection workers were: Work Placement/Work Experience and Approached by Employer.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.5.3   Difficulties filling vacancies

How long employers take to fill vacancies is a useful indicator of the difficulty they have in finding suitable workers. Child protection outlets appeared to find it easier to fill non-professional vacancies than professional ones. Over half of the most recent non-professional vacancies were filled within 4 weeks, compared to a little over 40 per cent of professional vacancies. More strikingly, nearly 20 per cent of professional positions had taken 3 months or

more to fill, compared to virtually no non-professional vacancies. A similar proportion of managerial/administrative positions took a long time to fill, though nearly 60 per cent were filled within 4 weeks.

Information provided by outlets about the number of applicants for recent vacancies also indicated that professional positions were more difficult to fill than others. Thus, over one third of most recent professional vacancies attracted no applicants (Table 3.41).

Table 3.40: **Average number of weeks required to fill most recent vacancy in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
2 or less	27	28	33	27
More than 2 to 4	28	15	26	23
More than 4 to 8	30	24	22	23
More than 8 to 12	11	15	*	14
More than 12 to 26	*	9	8	8
More than 26	0	9	9	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.41: **Average number of applicants for most recent vacancy in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	11	35	15	23
1	8	9	*	11
2	*	7	11	6
3 to 5	25	24	43	25
6 to 10	17	13	16	22
11 to 20	13	11	*	8
More than 20	22	*	*	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.5.4   Suitability of recent hires

In labour markets where the labour supply is tightly constrained, employers will be forced to offer jobs to workers who do not have the skills the employer sees as ideal for the position. In general, employers will prefer to hire workers who have all the skills they need for their jobs before they begin. This removes the need for employers to spend time and resources training workers, or to accept reduced productivity. However, it is important to be aware that when employers hire workers without optimal skills, this does not mean that an organisation is unable to perform necessary duties or functions. Instead, employers may have to provide

additional training for such workers, or hire more employees to ensure that necessary tasks are completed. Where additional training is provided, newly hired workers who have undergone this training may quickly gain the optimal set of skills. Thus, the issue of whether the skills of newly hired workers are optimal from the employer's viewpoint is primarily an indicator of the state of the labour market, and not a measure of the skill level of the employed workforce in its day to day work.

Our survey asked outlets whether the most recently hired worker in each occupational group had optimal skills for the job for which he/she was hired, minimum but not optimal skills, or did not have all the skills needed for the job (see Appendix 1 for exact question wording). About 60 per cent of outlets said that the most recent professional they had hired had optimal skills for the job, while virtually all of the remainder said that appointees had the minimum skills, rather than lacking some necessary skills (Table 3.42). A similar picture emerged with respect to non-professional workers, though there was a small group of just over 10 per cent of outlets that said they had recently appointed non-professional workers who lacked some essential skills. Thus, it seems that child protection outlets are more willing to employ lower skill (non-professional) workers who may need some additional training to gain skills necessary for their jobs than to hire professional workers with similar skill deficiencies. Indeed, the much higher frequency of outlets taking a long time to fill professional compared to non-professional vacancies is consistent with this pattern. Interestingly, 80 per cent of child protection outlets said that the managers/administrators they had most recently hired had optimal skills for their jobs. This is certainly consistent with the relatively short time required to fill most recent manager/administrator vacancies (see above).

Table 3.42:   Employers' perceptions of whether recently hired workers have optimal skills for their jobs in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Under skilled	12	4	*	5
Minimum skills	36	35	16	29
Optimal skills	53	61	80	66
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not make any recent appointments.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.6 Employment Preferences and Intentions

The degree of fit between workers' skills and the skill requirements of their jobs is one, but certainly not the only, important determinant of work performance and workplace harmony. It is also relevant whether the terms and conditions of employment that employees desire are in accordance with their current circumstances at work. Where these preferences are not in line with existing arrangements, and cannot be easily aligned with employers' expectations or needs, workers are likely to feel less satisfied with their work and more inclined to change jobs. Workers also leave jobs for other reasons that are outside employers' influence, such as the desire to study, travel abroad, or raise a family.

In this section, we examine several aspects of child protection employees' work preferences and work plans, using the data from our workforce survey. We ask whether these workers had the type of employment contract they preferred, and whether they had their desired number of paid work hours. Where their current and desired working hours did not match, we estimate by how much, and in which direction, their hours would have had to change to reach their indicated preference. We then report on child protection workers' short-term employment intentions and career plans. We ask how many expected to still be working for their current employer in 12 months and, for those who expected to move on, what motivated this intention. Finally, as an indicator of the medium-term outlook for employee turnover, we estimate the proportion of child protection workers who expected to still be working in this sector in 3 years.

3.6.1 Preferences for terms of employment

The composition of the Australian workforce has changed in important ways over the past 15 to 20 years, as a result of changes in individual preferences, improvements in technology and ongoing efforts by Australian governments at all levels to 'deregulate' the labour market in pursuit of greater flexibility for employers. A major consequence of these forces has been a reduction in the proportion of all employees working on a permanent, full-time basis. From 1992 to 2008, the proportion fell steadily from 71 per cent to 64 per cent and was accompanied by increases in part-time and casual employment. Casual workers comprised 23 per cent of employees (aged 15 to 64 years) in 2008, and 28 per cent of female employees (ABS 2009e).

Our survey of community services offices and outlets showed that casual employment was less prevalent in the child protection sector than in the Australian workforce at large. According to employers in this sector, 11 per cent of their direct care workers were employed casually in 2009. This figure was about half the average casual employment rate for the whole workforce, and was well below the rate for women, who were the majority of child protection workers (Tables 3.4 and 3.8).

Although we have evidence that child protection outlets made comparatively little use of casual (and contract) employment, they used these arrangements to a greater extent than their employees wish. Child protection workers overwhelmingly stated a preference for permanent employment, and this was true irrespective of their occupation (Table 3.43). The discrepancy between actual and preferred employment arrangements was noticeably greater, however, for non-professional workers. Where 67 per cent of these workers in child protection had permanent jobs, 89 per cent would like one (Tables 3.4 and 3.43). It is thus non-professional workers who were least likely to find their desired form of employment in

child protection. For some workers, this mismatch will be experienced as a temporary episode while they take the steps, such as doing further study, required to move them into the professional ranks, where permanent jobs are in greater supply. For other non-professionals, however, the lack of permanency will motivate a search for alternative job opportunities, including perhaps in other industries (see further, below).

Table 3.43: **Preferred terms of employment in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent	89	98	99	96
Fixed term	5	2	*	2
Casual	6	*	*	2
Total	100	100	100	N=629

Missing cases = 80
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.6.2   Hours of work preferences

Another critical determinant of employee satisfaction is the ability to find a job with working hours close to one's ideal. In general, employees' working hours preferences vary significantly by sex, age, marital status and family composition. Many would prefer to have fewer hours because they feel under excessive strain and would like to spare extra time for family and recreation, but continue working because they feel obligations to clients or workmates, or because they have come to depend on the extra income that the work generates. Others would choose to work longer hours because their circumstances have changed and they are looking to acquire further experience or increase their earnings, but meet resistance from their employers.

We asked employees to tell us first whether their working hours would be any different from their current situation if the decision was their own to make, bearing in mind the impact that any change would have on their earnings. The most common response to this question, that given by 62 per cent of child protection workers, was that they would keep their working hours much as they are now (Table 3.44). This result suggests that most workers in the sector were content with the hours they currently do. However, there was a substantial group of workers in every occupation who wished to reduce their hours, and this group greatly outweighed those preferring to increase hours. Overall, while one third of workers would have chosen to reduce their hours, only about 5 per cent wanted to increase them. In fact, the preference for shorter hours was particularly strong amongst government workers, with 37 per cent preferring shorter hours, compared to about one quarter of non-government employees. In both cases, however, far more workers would have preferred shorter than longer hours.

The pattern of preferred hours exhibits much variation by occupation. Non-professionals were the most likely to be satisfied with the current hours, but have the strongest demand for additional hours. Managers and administrators, by contrast, were the least satisfied with their current hours, and had the strongest demand for shorter working time. These results are not surprising, given the earlier evidence that managers and administrators were older,

more experienced, doing more unpaid hours of work, and higher paid, than other child protection workers (Tables 3.9, 3.13, 3.14 and 3.15). They would be expected to be the group most willing to reduce their paid hours in exchange for an increase in leisure time (and a reduction in work-related demands), because their higher salaries and positions of seniority make this possible without risking future unemployment or a prohibitive cut in their living standards.

Table 3.44:   Preferred hours of employment relative to current hours in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Fewer	26	33	42	33
Same	64	62	56	62
More	10	5	*	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

We then asked the workers who favoured some change in their working hours to tell us the number of hours they prefer. Child protection workers' responses to this more detailed item are shown in Table 3.45. For completeness, we include in the Table those workers who said they would prefer to leave their current hours unchanged. (Note that Tables 3.44 and 3.45 show marginally different estimates for this default group, because some workers who said they would change their hours, if they could, nonetheless indicated a preference for the same number of hours as they were already working.)

Two important results emerge from Table 3.45. First, the child protection workers who wanted longer hours – and who tend to be non-professionals – mostly wanted to increase their hours substantially, that is, by at least 10 hours per week. Although the number of workers in this group was not large as a proportion of the total workforce (6 per cent) it does mean that there was a readily accessible supply of additional working time available if employers need to tap into it. The second observation is that most of the employees who preferred shorter hours wanted substantially shorter hours. Again, managers and administrators were most likely to be in this predicament: 28 per cent of these workers would prefer to work 10 or more hours less in the week. Unlike for non-professionals, there was no offsetting group of managers who would willingly increase their hours. These results suggest that child protection offices are already placing quite heavy demands on their managers and administrators, perhaps to the extent that some are overstretched and looking for ways to wind back their job-related commitments.

Table 3.45: **Preferred hours of employment compared to current, per week, in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
10+ fewer	7	19	28	18
1 to 9 fewer	16	14	14	15
Same	67	64	56	64
1 to 9 more	4	2	0	2
10+ more	6	*	*	2
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.6.3 Future career intentions

Insights into employees' turnover intentions are useful for two reasons. First, they aid in the difficult task of workforce planning. Employers can better predict the number and types of vacancies they will have to fill if they can monitor or predict patterns of employee turnover. Second, turnover intentions are indicative of employee commitment and work satisfaction. When workers see themselves staying with an employer, or at least in their current industry, they are more likely to be motivated to form productive working relationships with clients, workmates and managers than when they see themselves changing jobs or not working.

Two thirds of current employees in the child protection sector expected still to be in their jobs in 12 months (Table 3.46). Professionals and managers/administrators were more likely to stay than non-professionals, which is at least partly related to the fact that non-professionals have lower rates of permanent employment in the sector (Table 3.4). About 8 per cent of employees were confident they will leave their current jobs within 12 months. Not all of these will result in vacancies, because some were the result of positions being made redundant (see below), but the majority will require new appointments to meet the existing demand for child protection services. The remaining 25 per cent of child protection workers were either uncertain about their futures, or said that their decision to stay or leave is conditional on what happens in their jobs and their personal lives over the coming year. While some of this ambivalence will translate eventually into turnover, it is difficult to be precise in advance about how much of it will. Government workers were somewhat more likely than non-government workers to expect to be with the same employer in 12 months (70 per cent of the former and 58 per cent of the latter expected this).

We then asked workers who said they would, or might, leave their current jobs to tell us the main reason why they would do so. Their responses are shown (ranked in descending order of importance) in Table 3.47. Job change was the most commonly cited reason for expecting to leave. Child protection workers who expected to change jobs in the next 12 months were evenly divided overall between those who intend to stay in the sector and those who intend to leave it. But there were quite noticeable occupational differences. For non-professionals, job change appeared most likely to occur through a move within the child protection sector. By contrast, managers and administrators more frequently intended to leave the sector entirely. This result suggests some difficulty for the sector as a whole in retaining highly-qualified managers and administrators, whose skills are attractive both to other community

service organisations and to other industries. Other reasons given by child protection workers for planning to leave their current jobs included stress and burnout (11 per cent), study or travel (8 per cent) and retirement (3 per cent).

Finally, we asked current workers to look forward over a 3-year period and indicate whether they expect to be still working in child protection, working somewhere else, or not working at all for pay. Most child protection workers (60 per cent) said they will still be working in the sector 3 years from now. This response was most likely to be given by managers and administrators, but was the response given by a majority of current workers in all three occupations. It seems from these numbers that the sector can expect to have quite a high rate of retention of current staff for the immediate future. Around one in seven child protection workers (14 per cent) said that they will be working elsewhere for pay after 3 years, and only 2 per cent of them expected to leave the paid workforce entirely (Table 3.48). While these career intentions are generally encouraging news for the child protection sector, it is difficult to make confident predictions about how they will translate into action, especially given the high proportion (23 per cent) of workers who are uncertain about where – or even whether – they will be working in 3 years. It is quite likely that the actual proportion who leave the workforce after this period of time will rise from its expected rate of 2 per cent, given the age and gender profile of the workforce (Tables 3.8 and 3.9).

Table 3.46: **Whether expect to be with same employer in 12 months in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	61	69	68	67
No	11	7	9	8
It depends	21	19	19	20
Don't know	7	5	*	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.47: **Main reason may leave employer in 12 months in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Job change, within sector	33	18	*	19
Job change, leaving sector	14	18	27	19
Financial reasons	19	14	*	15
Stress or burnout	*	16	*	11
Family reason	12	7	*	9
Other reasons	*	7	23	9
Study or travel	*	9	*	8
Contract ends	*	9	0	8
Retirement	0	*	*	3
Redundancy, retrenchment	0	0	*	*
Total	100	100	100	N=172

Missing cases = 25

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Estimating samples restricted to workers who say they will or might leave their current employer within 12 months. The 'Other reasons' category included Relocating/Moving/Migrating, Dissatisfied with Job, and Problems with Manager or Workplace.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 3.48: **Where expect to be working in 3 years in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Working in this sector	57	61	66	60
Working elsewhere	12	16	12	14
Not working for pay	*	2	*	2
Don't know	29	22	21	23
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.7 Career Paths

Few employees remain in a single job or even a single organisation throughout their careers. As a result, patterns of entry into jobs and exit from them are central to understanding the dynamics of labour markets. They can also add important dimensions to the picture of workers' skills since career pathways are integral to the experiences and skills workers bring to their jobs. Moreover, patterns of exit from jobs indicate the extent to which experience based knowledge and skills are able to accumulate within a workforce. Understanding career pathways into child protection jobs may suggest areas where common pathways can be supported and enhanced, or where common pathways suggest that there may be difficulties in career paths.

Our focus in this section of the report is on pathways into and out of child protection jobs, rather than career progression amongst those who remain in the sector. We collected information on the jobs child protection workers held before they entered the sector, their age at entry into the sector, their total experience in it, and reasons for moving jobs within the child protection area.

3.7.1 Career before current job

As we have noted above (Section 3.1.5), the child protection workforce is relatively young, especially compared to workers in many other community services areas. Nevertheless, they bring a range of previous experiences to their jobs. Virtually none had no previous paid employment before entering child protection (Table 3.49). About 40 per cent of child protection workers had jobs as welfare workers or carers in other sectors before entering child protection work. Another significant group, nearly 20 per cent, had worked as professionals or managers in other sectors or industries, while a little over 10 per cent had worked as clericals or administrative workers in other areas. Thus, child protection organisations are certainly attracting one large group of their workers from other welfare and community services settings. This is true of all child protection occupations. Indeed, it is likely that well over half or child protection workers had previously worked in community service of welfare settings, since many whose previous jobs were in clerical or professional/managerial positions may have been in such positions in other community services areas.

Table 3.49:   Occupation before first job in child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
No previous paid job	4	3	3	4
Welfare worker elsewhere	26	35	34	33
Carer elsewhere	14	7	8	9
Salesperson	7	10	4	9
Clerical, admin worker	14	12	12	12
Hospitality worker	7	6	8	6
Professional or manager elsewhere	16	17	18	17
Nurse	4	*	*	2
Labourer	3	1	0	1
Other	6	7	9	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Within the 'Other' category, the most frequently reported responses by child protection workers were: Other Education worker/Trainer, Tradespersons, Transport/Logistics and Tradesperson.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

3.7.2   Experience in current sector

Consistent with the relatively young profile of the child protection workforce, nearly half entered the sector before the age of 30 (Table 3.50). Professionals and managers/administrators were slightly younger, on average, when they entered the child protection sector than non-professionals, though the difference is not large. However, child protection work was clearly not only for new entrants to the workforce, with about one quarter of workers in every occupation beginning work at 40 or older.

Table 3.50:   Age when took first job in the child protection services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
21 or less	9	8	10	9
22 to 29	29	42	41	39
30 to 39	34	24	22	26
40 to 49	18	18	17	18
50 or more	10	8	10	8
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Over half of both professional and non-professional employees directly providing child protection services in our sample had been working in the sector for less than 5 years (Table 3.51). Indeed, long experience in the sector was rare, with only just over 20 per cent of professional workers and just over 10 per cent of non-professional workers having worked a total of 10 years or more in the sector. Managers and administrators were more likely to have

longer experience, with two thirds having 5 or more years experience and just over 40 per cent 10 or more years in child protection. These results, combined with the relatively young age and early career entry of child protection workers, strongly suggest that few child protection workers remain in the sector for the bulk of their careers. Indeed, particularly for professionals, our results suggest that child protection is typically undertaken in the early years of a person's career, and that workers typically leave the sector before they have completed 10 years in it (unless they more into managerial or administrative positions).[4]

Queensland has a particularly large group of recent entrants to child protection in its workforce. Just under 70 per cent of Queensland child protection workers in our survey have been in the sector for less than 5 years, compared with less than half of Victorian and New South Wales workers.

Table 3.51: **Length of time working in the child protection services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than 2	24	23	8	21
2 to less than 5	28	34	23	31
5 to less than 10	31	21	29	24
10 to less than 20	13	16	27	17
20 or more	*	6	14	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Child protection employers appear to attract most of their employees from outside the sector. Some 60 per cent of respondents to our survey said that they had not held a child protection position before their current job, irrespective of occupation (Table 3.52). Around 30 per cent had previously worked in other paid child protection jobs, with most having held only paid positions. Clearly, employers' ability to fill child protection positions depends crucially on their ability to attract workers from outside the sector. This is a significant task, given that employers indicated that one quarter of professionals and one third of non-professionals are replaced each year (Section 3.1.6 above).

Table 3.52: **Whether worked previously in the child protection services sector before current job, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes, paid	22	26	28	25
Yes, paid and unpaid	9	5	6	6
Yes, unpaid only	6	7	7	7
No	62	62	61	62
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

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[4] If there has been a significant increase in the employment of child protection workers during the past 5-10 years, the pattern we report could be a result of that increase rather than the career pattern we describe.

Understanding why child protection workers leave their jobs is important in developing strategies to retain workers. Our survey asked respondents why they had left their previous child protection job, if they had held one before their current position. Although the number of such workers was fairly small, the results are interesting. For professionals, they suggest that issues related to the experience of work were most commonly the impetus for seeking another job (Table 3.53). Thus, over 40 per cent left because their sought more satisfying work, found the job too stressful, or sought to avoid conflict. Another substantial group, over one quarter, left because they or their family relocated. Only a very small proportion departed because they were unhappy with formal employment arrangements such as pay, shift arrangements or hours. Non-professionals left their jobs either because they relocated, because they sought more satisfying work, or because a contract or funding ended. Interestingly, the experience of work was a more common reason for leaving amongst current non-government than government workers (about 60 per cent compared to about 30 per cent respectively gave one of these reasons). On the other hand, relocation was more often cited by current government workers as a reason for leaving a child protection job. Clearly, we would need data on the large number of child protection workers who appear to leave the sector entirely when they leave their child protection jobs. However, these results do suggest that issues intrinsic to the experience of child protection work, rather than pay and conditions, are the major forces in workers' decisions to leave child protection jobs.

Table 3.53:   Main reason left previous paid job in the child protection services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Relocated	21	28	21	25
Find more satisfying work	21	23	34	24
Job too stressful	*	12	*	11
Other reasons	*	12	*	10
Contract or funding ended	23	5	*	8
Avoid conflict	*	8	*	8
Better shifts or hours	*	3	*	5
Improve pay	*	5	0	4
Closer to home	*	*	*	3
Private care responsibilities	*	*	*	3
Not enough time with clients	*	*	0	*
Total	100	100	100	N=200

Missing cases = 21

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: The 'Other reasons' category included Further Education, Unhappy with Organisation, Personal Reasons (including Ill Health), and Lifestyle Change.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.   Juvenile Justice

Juvenile justice services are provided largely by State and Territory governments in Australia. Non-profit organisations also provide services in the juvenile justice area. This project defined juvenile justice activities as:

1. Managing and operating correctional institutions and detention centres for juveniles. These facilities are generally designed for confinement, correction and rehabilitation of juveniles. (Subset of ANZSIC Code 7714);
2. Providing social support and social assistance services targeted at juvenile offenders. This includes a range of social support and assistance services including specifically targeted educational services, psychological services, work services and sport/recreation services. It also includes case management and youth conferencing. (Subset of ANZSIC Codes 8790 and 7520). For the purposes of this project, juveniles are those defined as such in the jurisdiction where the activity occurs.

The in-scope workforce for the juvenile justice workforce in this report was therefore those employed to provide these services, and those who directly manage and coordinate their work.

4.1   Profile of the Workforce

A key aim of the current project was to generate a profile of the current workforce in the selected community service areas. In this part of the report, we present such a profile for the juvenile justice workforce. We begin with total employment, and then examine the key aspects of workforce and employment structure such as occupational distribution, employment contract, use of staff not directly employed by outlets, hours of work, wages, and worker demographics.

4.1.1   Total Employment

Our best estimate is that about 3,400 people were employed across Australia[5] in directly providing juvenile justice services or managing those who provide these services at the time of our surveys. As some of these employees worked part-time, this number translates into about 3,000 equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more (Table 4.1a). We estimate that about 2,800 workers (or 2,400 EFT workers) provided juvenile justice services directly, while the remainder managed their work. Outlets providing juvenile justice services also employed other workers who provided other services or administered the organisations. Our estimate is that, including such workers, outlets providing juvenile justice services employed a total of about 6,000 workers.

Our Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009 found that juvenile justice workers were distributed across the States and Territories as shown in Table 4.1a. While we can be broadly confident of these numbers, they should be treated with some caution.[6] Taking the data limitations into account, it is clear that the States and Territories employed juvenile justice workers roughly in proportion to their populations.

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[5] Unfortunately, due to a lack of response to our survey, this number excludes workers employed by non-government providers of juvenile justice services in South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

[6] In particular, we received fewer than 5 outlet responses in Tasmania, the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), making the estimates for these jurisdictions too unreliable to report.

Table 4.1b provides further detail about the numbers of juvenile justice workers (on an EFT basis) relative to the resident population of each State. Nationally, there were approximately 13 juvenile justice workers for every hundred thousand Australians, and the degree of state by state variation around this average ratio was small in the jurisdictions for which our survey provided reliable estimates.

Table 4.1a: Estimated employment in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009

	Total employees (estimated)	Total juvenile justice employees (estimated)	Total EFT juvenile justice employees (estimated)
NSW	1,230	933	691
VIC	2,953	1,001	937
QLD	882	573	513
SA	346	297	264
WA	565	470	407
TAS	*	*	*
NT	*	*	*
ACT	*	*	*
Total†	6,150	3,424	2,962

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers, except in South Australia where only government workers were included. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.
* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.
† Totals include estimates for jurisdictions where estimates are too unreliable to be reported separately.

Table 4.1b: Estimated EFT employment in the juvenile justice services sector relative to the population per 100,000 persons, by State/Territory and occupation, 2009

	Non-professionals and Professionals (estimated)	Managers and administrators (estimated)	Total (estimated)
NSW	7	2	10
VIC	14	3	17
QLD	8	3	11
SA	15	1	16
WA	16	2	18
TAS	*	*	*
NT	*	*	*
ACT	*	*	*
Total†	11	3	13

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010c.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers, except in South Australia where only government workers were included. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.
* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.
† Totals include estimates for jurisdictions where estimates are too unreliable to be reported separately.

Table 4.2 shows employment by government and non-government sector. It indicates that close to 85 per cent of juvenile justice workers are employed directly by government, whether we focus on the number of individuals employed or the EFT total.

Table 4.2:   Direct service employment in the juvenile justice services sector, by organisation type, 2009

	Per cent of employees	Per cent of EFT employees
Non-profit or charitable	17	15
Privately owned, for-profit	0	0
Public, government, or government owned	83	84
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

4.1.2   Juvenile Justice Occupations

Juvenile justice work requires workers with a range of skills and abilities. Table 4.3 shows the distribution of workers by the main occupations we identified in this sector. In much of the following analysis, we compare workers across occupations. To simplify this discussion, we collapse the occupations shown in Table 4.3 into three broad categories, defined below.

Non-professionals are "Residential care workers" and "Youth workers, mentors and youth support workers".

Professionals are "Juvenile and youth justice officers", "Social workers and case managers", and "Psychologists, counsellors and therapeutic workers".

Managers and Administrators are "Service and program administrators, managers and coordinators".

The largest group of juvenile justice workers was professionals, who made up about 44 per cent of all workers. However, the group of workers in positions not usually requiring professional qualifications, such as residential care workers and youth workers, was almost as large, making up just under 40 per cent of juvenile justice employees. Measured in terms of equivalent full-time (EFT) employment, professionals were a somewhat larger proportion and non-professionals a somewhat smaller proportion, constituting nearly half and about one third of EFT workers respectively. Managers and administrators made up the remainder of the workforce, around one fifth of employees.

Table 4.3:   Occupation of juvenile justice employees, 2009 (per cent)

	Number of Persons	Equivalent Full Time
Residential care worker	8	9
Youth worker/mentor/youth support worker	31	24
Non-professionals subtotal	*38*	*32*
Juvenile/youth justice officer	22	26
Social worker/case manager	18	19
Psychologist /Counsellor / Therapeutic worker	4	4
Professionals subtotal	*44*	*49*
Service /Program administrator / Manager /Coordinator	17	19
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Minor differences between the subtotals and the sum of the row values occur due to rounding.

4.1.3   Juvenile Justice Workers' Employment Contracts

The arrangements through which juvenile justice workers are employed are important for a range of reasons. Less secure employment contracts may predispose workers to leave jobs if they can find equally attractive employment that gives more security, while more secure arrangements are likely to increase their intentions to stay.

Permanent full-time employment accounted for the majority of employment in all occupations in juvenile justice, though it is somewhat less predominant in the non-professional occupations compared to the professional and managerial/administrative ones (Table 4.4). Thus, a little under two thirds of non-professional workers were employed on a permanent full-time basis compared to nearly 80 per cent of professionals and about 85 per cent of managers and administrators. Only around 10 per cent of all jobs were permanent part-time in this sector, though the proportion was significantly higher in non-government outlets (26 per cent) than in government outlets (7 per cent). Casual employment was only significant amongst non-professional workers, where around one fifth were employed on this basis.

There was little variation from these overall patterns within the States and Territories providing juvenile justice services. One minor difference was that there seems to be more widespread use of contract employment in Victoria (12 per cent of workers) than in other jurisdictions (the national average, shown in Table 4.4, was 6 per cent).

Overall, the above patterns indicate a workforce that was far less likely to be employed part-time than in other community services sectors (see below). It was also associated with higher levels of male employment than other sectors (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.4: **Employment type of juvenile justice employees in the last pay period, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent full-time	64	78	86	74
Permanent part-time	11	9	10	10
Casual	20	5	3	10
Contract	6	9	1	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

4.1.4   Use of Agency, Contract, and Self Employed Staff

Employers in all industries sometimes rely on staff they do not directly employ. Agency, contract and self-employed staff may be used because they provide more flexibility, because they are cheaper, or because permanent or casual workers are not available.

Our survey sought information about the extent and importance of agency, contract and self-employed staff in the juvenile justice area. In general, we found that juvenile justice services use very few of such staff, and do not appear to rely significantly on them.

Overall, only 15 per cent of juvenile justice outlets used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff to deliver juvenile justice services. Because these staff were rarely used and the number of juvenile justice outlets that returned surveys was small, our estimates of the numbers of such staff and the occupations in which they are used are subject to considerable uncertainty. We report them here, but caution against over-reliance on them. Table 4.5 shows that the most common form of such staff usage was for outlets to use sub-contracted professional and managerial/administrative staff, but even here only 3 per cent did so. Our survey suggests that, in total, perhaps 100 staff of this kind were used by outlets across Australia in the pay period before the survey (normally two weeks) (Table 4.6).

Table 4.5: **Outlets that used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency	0*	0*	2*	5*
Sub-contract	1*	3*	3*	7*
Self-employed	0*	0*	1*	3*

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

Table 4.6: **Number of agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Other	Total
Agency	0	0	2	5	7
Sub-contract	5	14	17	0	36
Self-employed	0	0	2	62	64

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Table 4.7: **Median number of shifts done by agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency			10*	10*
Sub-contract	14*	2*	2*	2*
Self-employed			2*	2*

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Notes: Median estimates exclude outlets with zero shifts in each category. Cells are blank where no workers were reported for that category in Table 4.6.
 * Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

4.1.5   Demographics of the Juvenile Justice Workforce

A key element in the profile of the juvenile justice workforce is its demographic structure. Here, we examine the proportion of men and women amongst juvenile justice workers, their age distribution, and their birthplace patterns.

The juvenile justice sector is very unusual in community services in employing close to equal numbers of men and women. This parity appears most unequivocally in non-professional occupations where the outlets in our survey reported that 52 per cent of their juvenile justice workers were men and 48 per cent were women. Amongst professionals and managers/administrators women were slightly more predominant, with about 60 per cent of workers being women and 40 per cent being men. But this is still a significantly higher proportion of men than in any other community services sector. Overall, 45 per cent of juvenile justice workers were men.[7] One part of the explanation for the atypical gender composition of the juvenile justice workforce is that government outlets are much more likely to employ men (49 per cent) than non-government outlets (30 per cent). This is not the case in the other three community services sectors we surveyed.

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[7] For this reason, tables in this chapter that compare the juvenile justice workforce to the Australian workforce use all employed persons as a comparison, rather than employed women only.

Table 4.8: Sex of employees in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	**Professionals**	**Managers and administrators**	**Total**
Male	52	41	43	45
Female	48	59	57	55
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

The juvenile justice workforce is quite varied in age. Between a quarter and a third of workers delivering juvenile justice services were under 30, while well over half were aged under 40 (Table 4.9). Less than 15 per cent were 50 or over. Managers and administrators were older, with only just over 5 per cent being under 30 and a quarter being 50 or older. Compared to the Australian workforce, juvenile justice workers were slightly more likely to be under 40, indicating that this is a relatively young workforce, and that workforce aging is not a major issue in juvenile justice.

There are some, generally minor, differences between jurisdictions, and between government and non-government outlets, in the age distribution patterns shown in Table 4.9. Among the States and Territories, South Australia had a noticeably older juvenile justice workforce, with 30 per cent of its workers aged 50 years or more – double the national average of 15 per cent. The South Australian workforce was older in all occupations, but the differences were most evident for professional workers. In South Australia, 35 per cent of juvenile justice professionals were aged 50 or more, compared to 12 per cent in the whole sector nationwide (see Table 4.9). Non-government outlets had a significantly younger age profile, with 7 per cent of their workers aged 50 years or more years, compared to 18 per cent of workers in government outlets. However, this difference had relatively little impact on the overall composition of the workforce, since the vast bulk of service activity in the juvenile justice sector was delivered by governments (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.9: Age of employees in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian workforce (per cent)

	Non-professionals	**Professionals**	**Managers and administrators**	**Total**	**Australian workforce**
Less than 30	23	31	6	23	28
30 to 39	32	31	31	31	22
40 to 49	31	26	37	30	23
50 to 59	12	9	21	12	19
60 or more	2	3	5	3	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010a.

About three quarters of professional juvenile justice workers were non-Indigenous people born in Australia, while just under 10 per cent were Indigenous Australians (Table 4.10).[8] Non-professional juvenile justice workers were also predominantly Australian born, though a strikingly high proportion were Indigenous Australians (17 per cent). Managers and administrators presented a similar pattern, with about 70 per cent being non-Indigenous Australian born workers, while about 10 per cent were Indigenous Australians. The remaining workers were born in a range of countries, though those from the UK and New Zealand figured prominently. Overall, these figures are closely reflective of the Australian workforce as a whole, though Indigenous Australians appear to be over-represented amongst juvenile justice workers.

Table 4.10: **Birthplace of employees in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian workforce (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Australia, non-Indigenous	63	75	70	71	72
Australia, Indigenous	17	8	13	11	1
New Zealand	*	3	*	3	3
United Kingdom	*	5	*	5	6
Other	15	8	*	9	18
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2010b; ABS 2009b.
Note: Within the 'Other' category, the countries reported most frequently by juvenile justice workers were India, Malaysia and the United States.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.1.6 Juvenile Justice Workers' Hours of Work and Tenure

Our surveys provide two sources of information about the hours of work of employees. We asked respondents to our workers' survey how many hours in total they usually worked per week in their juvenile justice job, and how many of these hours were paid (Table 4.11) and unpaid (Table 4.13). We also asked outlets to tell us the number of workers in each occupation category who worked 30 or fewer hours during the fortnight before the survey (i.e., an average of 15 hours per week or less), and the number who worked more than this (Table 4.12).

Both surveys showed that the vast majority of juvenile justice workers are employed for normal full-time hours (35-40 hours per week). Around 80-90 per cent of professionals and managers/administrators worked these hours (Tables 3.4 and 3.11). Both surveys indicated that only a small minority of juvenile justice workers were employed for very short hours (15

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[8] Some caution is required in interpreting the Indigenous employment estimates in this section, given the relatively small sample of juvenile justice workers and the low number of Indigenous responses within this sample.

hours per week or less), though we were only able to get a reliable estimate from the outlets survey. Between one quarter and one third of non-professional juvenile justice workers were employed part-time (for less than 35 hours per week).[9]

Table 4.11: Hours paid per week in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 15	*	*	*	4
16 to 34	19	14	*	14
35 to 40	60	76	83	74
41 or more	*	6	*	8
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.12: Hours worked in past fortnight in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 30	13	10	12	11
31 or more	87	90	88	89
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Respondents to our workers survey were also asked how many unpaid hours they worked per week in their juvenile justice jobs. Unpaid hours appeared to be quite common amongst these workers, with one third of professionals and nearly 60 per cent of managers/administrators saying that they usually worked unpaid hours (Table 4.13). However, particularly amongst professionals, the number of unpaid hours worked per week was not large, with virtually all saying they worked 5 or fewer unpaid hours per week. Unpaid hours were much less common amongst non-professional workers, though even here about one fifth of workers said that they worked such hours.

Table 4.13: Hours unpaid per week in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Zero	79	64	43	63
1 to 5	11	32	30	27
6 to 10	*	*	18	5
11 or more	*	*	13	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

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[9] This estimate is based on information in Tables 4.4, 4.11, and 4.12.

Our survey of outlets asked the respondents to indicate the number of workers in each occupational group who had worked in their current outlets for various periods. Non-professional workers providing juvenile justice services had somewhat lower tenure with their current outlet than professionals. Thus, less than one quarter of non-professionals had more than 5 years in their current outlet compared to one third of professionals (Table 4.14). In both groups, around one quarter of workers had been with their current outlet for 1 year or less. Managers/administrators had longer tenure, with over half having tenure of 5 years or more. These results indicate that juvenile justice outlets face significant challenges in recruiting workers and/or in inducting them in to new workplaces, especially if the workers are directly providing juvenile justice services.

Our indicator of tenure is likely to mean somewhat different things depending on whether the outlet is a government or a non-government one. Government employees' tenure will combine movement from one government outlet to another with initial employment by the organisation, while the tenure of those working in non-government outlets will mostly reflect time since an initial appointment to the outlet. (As we have already noted, over 80 per cent of juvenile justice workers were employed by government outlets.) Our results indicate that workers in government outlets had significantly longer tenure than their counterparts in non-government outlets, in each of the three broad occupational groups shown in Table 4.14. Overall, 38 per cent of government juvenile justice workers had been with their current employer for 5 years or more, compared with 11 per cent of non-government juvenile justice workers. These results suggest that while the government sector is more successful than the non-government sector in retaining workers, it faces larger challenges in terms of recruiting and promoting new staff to replace long-serving employees who leave through promotion or retirement.

Table 4.14: **Tenure with current employer of employees in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 year or less	28	24	19	24
2 to 5 years	49	42	25	42
More than 5 years	23	34	56	34
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

4.1.7 Juvenile Justice Workers' Earnings and Multiple Job Holding

The earnings of workers are important for many reasons. Earnings are a basic incentive for workers to take jobs and stay in them. Very low earnings mean that the monetary costs of leaving their jobs may be quite low for workers, increasing any difficulties employers may face in retaining them. In this sense, very low earnings may signify workers' low attachment to the labour market.

Table 4.15a shows the distribution of gross weekly earnings for juvenile justice workers. Even amongst non-professional workers, very few juvenile justice workers had very low earnings. Unsurprisingly, professional and managerial/administrative employees tended to earn more than non-professional workers, with managers/administrators reporting the

highest earnings. About two thirds of managers/administrators and one third of professionals reported earning $1,200 per week or more at the time of the survey.

Table 4.15a: Weekly earnings by occupation in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
$1 to 399	*	*	*	2
$400 to 799	26	17	*	17
$800 to 1199	50	46	24	43
$1200 to 1599	12	31	42	30
$1600 or more	*	*	26	8
Total	100	100	100	N=212

Missing cases = 22
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

It is also possible to calculate an hourly wage rate for each employee, by dividing their gross weekly earnings by the hours that they are paid to work each week. This approach allows us to approximate the rate of remuneration for each hour of work, abstracting from differences in weekly earnings that are due to the variation in working hours. However, there is likely to be more measurement error in the hourly wage variable we derive than in weekly earnings, because both earnings and working hours will be misreported by some workers. To reduce this imprecision in our analysis, we limited hours paid to a maximum of 50 per week prior to calculating the hourly wage variable, and also treated as missing data apparent hourly wage rates of more than $100. (In combination, these adjustments affect about 5 per cent of the sample.)

Table 4.15b shows the resulting distribution of hourly wage rates, by occupation, for juvenile justice workers. About half of all workers in the sector had an hourly wage rate between $20 and $29 (inclusive), with the largest proportion (26 per cent) paid between $25 and $29 per hour. The mean hourly wage rate in the juvenile justice sector ($31) was marginally higher than the mean hourly cash earnings for all employees ($29.70, excluding overtime), according to the ABS Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) conducted in August 2008 (ABS, 2009c, p.20). As with the data on weekly earnings, the distribution of hourly wage rates looks quite different by occupation in the juvenile justice sector. Non-professionals were the lowest paid, with 12 per cent working for less than $20 per hour, and 56 per cent working for less than $25 per hour. Managers/administrators were the highest paid, with 42 per cent working for at least $40 per hour. Managers in the juvenile justice sector had about the same average hourly wage rate ($39) as managerial employees generally ($38.20), according to the EEH survey (ABS, 2009c, p.23).

Earnings differed significantly between the government and non-government sector. Thus, about 43 per cent of government juvenile justice workers earned $1,200 per week or more, compared to less than 20 per cent of non-government workers. In large part, this was because hourly earnings in the government sector were higher: about three quarters of government workers earned $30 or more per hour compared to less than 30 per cent of non-government workers.

Table 4.15b: **Hourly wage rates by occupation in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than $20	12	6	*	6
$20 to 24	44	16	*	19
$25 to 29	27	27	21	26
$30 to 34	*	20	*	15
$35 to 39	*	20	24	18
$40 or more	*	13	42	17
Total	100	100	100	N=204

Missing cases = 30

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

In some industries and occupations, workers quite often hold multiple jobs. Particularly where their primary job is part-time, this may indicate that they are unable to get the number of hours of work they would like. Multiple job holding may also reduce their attachment to their jobs.

Very few juvenile justice workers have second jobs. Perhaps 6 per cent hold such jobs (Table 4.16). Those who do hold second jobs work an average of about 12 hours per week (analysis not shown here). Clearly, in this sector, multiple job holding is not a significant factor in workforce dynamics.

Table 4.16: **Number of jobs by occupation in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Has one job only	100	93	93	94
Job 2 same sector	0	0	*	0
Job 2 elsewhere	*	7	*	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.2   A Profile of Juvenile Justice Service Outlets

Juvenile justice services are provided by a range of government and non-government organisations. Our survey of juvenile justice 'outlets' focused on agencies and offices that directly provide juvenile justice services. In this section of the report, we present a profile of these outlets.[10] The profile covers the size of outlets, the mix of services they provide, their funding arrangements and their use of casual and contract staff.

4.2.1   Size of outlets

Government organisations employed the vast majority of juvenile justice workers (over 80 per cent), while not for-profits employed almost all of the remainder (Table 4.2). Government juvenile justice outlets varied in size, with about one third employing 10 or fewer juvenile justice workers and the same proportion employing more than 20 (Table 4.17). Non-profits tended to be smaller than government outlets, with about 60 per cent employing 5 or fewer workers.

Table 4.17:   Distribution of juvenile justice services outlets by sector and employment size (number of direct care workers), 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	Government	Total
1 to 5	61	14	32
6 to 10	25	18	22
11 to 20	*	33	21
21 to 40	*	16	13
41 or more	*	19	13
Total	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.2.2   Mix of Services

Organisations in the community services sector often provide services across a variety of community service areas, though this is more common in some areas than others. We asked service outlets what proportion of their service activity (measured by the number of hours worked by relevant workers) was in juvenile justice, and what proportion was in other community service areas. Three quarters of government outlets providing juvenile justice services do not provide other services, while many of the remainder said that juvenile justice constitutes more than half of their activity (Table 4.18). In contrast, about two thirds of non-profit outlets providing juvenile justice services said that most of their activity was in areas other than juvenile justice.

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[10] The profile presented here is weighted to ensure that the figures reflect the actual contribution of outlets in each State and Territory to the national totals.

Table 4.18: **Proportion of direct service activity (staff hours) in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-profit	Government	Total
Less than 50%	69	*	33
50% to 99%	20	12	15
100%	*	75	52
Total	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.2.3 Funding Sources and Conditions

Community service organisations in the non-government sector may receive funding from a variety of sources including various levels of government, charitable sources and donations. Our survey asked outlets to specify the proportion of their funding that came from each of the main sources. We show only the breakdown for non-profit outlets because government outlets received their funding as government agencies by definition, and virtually no juvenile justice services were provided by private for-profit outlets. Virtually all non-profit outlets in this sector received most of their funding from government sources (Table 4.19), with State level sources probably being the most common.

Table 4.19: **Principal funding source in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009**

	Non-profit
Government agency	*
Commonwealth government sources	*
State government sources	46
Local government sources	0
Non-government sources	0
Mixture	*
Total	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Shows proportion of outlets receiving the majority of their funding from each source shown.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Community services organisations are often given funding that is conditional on certain levels, standards or types of service being provided. Our survey asked outlets whether there were any special conditions of this kind attached to any of their funding, and if so what these conditions were. A little under half of non-profit juvenile justice service outlets indicated that such conditions did apply to some of their funding (Table 4.20). Interestingly, about one quarter of government outlets also said that some of their funding was conditional.

The main funding conditions to which juvenile justice outlets were subject are listed in Table 4.20. It is important to recognise that outlets may have been subject to more than one condition, and we asked outlets to specify all of the conditions that applied to their funding. Almost all non-profit outlets that had conditional funding were subject to service quantity targets, as were three quarters of all outlets subject to funding conditions. Around two thirds of outlets were also required to meet staffing levels by at least some of their funding

arrangements. Accessibility conditions were also common when funding conditions applied to non-profits, affecting three quarters of those subject to conditions. (We do not report separate estimates for private or government providers in Table 4.20, because there are too few cases in our sample.)

Table 4.20: **Funding conditions in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-profit	**Total**
Unconditional	56	75
Conditional	44	25
	100	100
Funding conditional on:		
Required staffing levels	68	73
Service quantity targets	92	76
After-hours opening	*	41
Accessibility	76	51
Other	*	32

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Multiple funding conditions could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent. Within the 'Other' category, the funding conditions reported most frequently by juvenile justice offices or outlets were: Service quality, and Staff policies and procedures relating to recruitment and governance.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.2.4 Use of Contract and Casual Staff

Contract and casual staff are not used in providing juvenile justice services as commonly as in providing some other community services. However, we have already noted that about one quarter of non-professional staff in the sector are employed casually or on contracts. Such staff may be employed under a variety of conditions and for a variety of reasons. Our survey asked outlets whether they employed such staff, and if so why they used them.

Most non-profit and government juvenile justice agencies do use contract or casual staff or both (Table 4.21). Indeed, only just over one third of non-profits and a little over 10 per cent of government outlets in our survey said that they used neither of these forms of staffing. About half of non-profit outlets used both contract and casual staff, as do over half of government outlets. Around 20 per cent of government outlets used casuals but not contract staff.

The dominant reason that government outlets used contract staff was to replace permanent staff on leave. Overall, about 60 per cent of government outlets used contract staff for this purpose. However, many outlets using these staff also employed them to work on specific projects, presumably projects with limited time horizons. Non-profits used these staff for a wider variety of reasons including for specific projects and as a result of non-recurrent funding, as well as to replace permanent staff on leave. Casual staff were also used for a variety of reasons in both non-profit and government outlets, notably to replace permanent staff on leave and to respond to fluctuating or unpredictable demand. Some government outlets also used casuals for short notice shift cover (presumably mainly due to permanent staff being unavailable at short notice).

Table 4.21:   Use of contract and casual staff in the juvenile justice services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	Government	Total
Neither	37	14	23
Contract only	*	*	9
Casual only	*	21	15
Both	47	57	54
Total	100	100	100
Why use contract workers?			
Non-recurrent funding	73	*	29
Specific project	82	46	59
Replace permanent staff on leave	48	95	77
Other reasons	*	17	15
Why use casual workers?			
Short notice shift cover	*	31	26
Replace permanent staff on leave	55	69	63
Fluctuating or unpredictable demand	68	56	61
Other reasons	*	20	20

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.3   Skills, Training and Preparation for Work

An appropriately skilled workforce is recognised as a crucial element in a comprehensive and effective juvenile justice system. Formal training and qualifications are central to the skill level of this workforce, especially given the importance of professional workers skilled in dealing with complex issues and problems. In this section, we examine the qualifications and training of the juvenile justice workforce and report workers' perceptions about how adequate their skills are, and whether these skills are used in their jobs. The analysis differentiates between seven broad types of qualifications, following the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) (ABS, 2001).

4.3.1   Level of education and field of qualification

Professionals were central to the juvenile justice workforce, representing half of the equivalent full-time (EFT) workers in the sector (Table 4.3). These professionals were employed as juvenile and youth justice officers, social workers, case managers, psychologists and counsellors. Most professionals working in juvenile justice have completed university degrees, 47 per cent at Bachelor degree level and 12 per cent at Postgraduate degree levels. Another 16 per cent have a Diploma (Table 4.22). These qualifications have generally been obtained in fields that are closely related to their work in the sector, including social work (23 per cent), psychology and counselling (19 per cent), and youth work (12 per cent) (see Table 4.23).

Non-professionals made up one third of the EFT workforce in the juvenile justice sector. The workers in this group included residential care workers, along with a large number of youth workers, mentors and youth support workers. The majority of non-professionals working in juvenile justice had post-school qualifications, with 48 per cent having completed Certificate levels 3 or 4 and another 21 per cent having a Diploma. These qualifications were most commonly obtained in fields relevant to juvenile justice, such as youth and community work, although 42 per cent had done their training in an area that is not normally considered closely related to employment in juvenile justice, such as business, education or the arts (Table 4.23).

Managers and administrators in the juvenile justice system are a highly educated group. One third had Bachelor degrees and another one quarter had Postgraduate degrees (Table 4.22). Social work and psychology were among the common fields of training for these managers, but Table 4.23 also shows that many of them obtained their highest qualification in an area that is not specifically related to juvenile justice. This implies that managers in the sector were not necessarily drawn from the ranks of juvenile justice professionals, who may not have the required administrative skills or may prefer to continue in direct care roles.

By comparison with the whole Australian workforce, the juvenile justice workforce is highly educated. Although this partly reflects the professional composition of the workforce, it is also the case that non-professionals in the sector were more likely to have obtained post-school qualifications than other Australian workers generally, particularly at the Certificate 3 or 4 and Diploma levels (Table 4.22).

Table 4.22:   Highest level of education/qualification in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Postgraduate degree	*	12	25	13	8
Bachelor degree	10	47	33	37	19
Diploma	21	16	15	17	10
Certificate 3 or 4	48	14	13	21	19
Year 12	*	5	15	7	17
Year 11 or Certificate 1 or 2	*	*	0	3	12
Year 10 or below	*	*	0	3	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2009d.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.23:   Field of highest qualification in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	0	23	12	17
Psychology, counselling	*	19	15	16
Community work	12	17	*	15
Youth work	39	12	*	16
Other	42	28	58	36
Total	100	100	100	N=190

Missing cases = 30

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by juvenile justice workers were (in descending order): Justice/Criminal Justice/Criminology, Education, Business/Business Management and Arts/Humanities.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.3.2   Qualifications most relevant to the work

Workers' highest qualifications are not necessarily those that turn out to be most relevant to their jobs. Significant discrepancies between the highest qualification and that most relevant to the job suggest that workers are accepting jobs outside their field of primary interest and skill because more suitable jobs are unavailable. We asked juvenile justice workers who had post-school qualifications about the level and field of the qualification that was most relevant to their current job. The results indicate that, for most workers, their highest qualification was also the one most relevant to their job. This is an important first indication that

employers are utilising the range of skills available to them and that workers are receiving an adequate return on the investment in education they have made.

Table 4.24 shows a breakdown of workers' perceptions about the level of their most relevant post-school qualification, and illustrates the differences across occupations in this perception. Non-professionals were the most likely to have certificate level qualifications and to nominate these as their most relevant qualifications. Professionals and managers/administrators were more likely to have degrees and typically identified these as their most relevant qualifications. There was some variation within these patterns – for instance, 15 per cent of professionals and 19 per cent of managers/administrators said that their most useful qualifications were at the certificate level – but in general the link between qualifications attained and qualifications utilised on the job was strong in the juvenile justice sector.

Looking at the specific fields of study leading to juvenile justice employment (Table 4.25), we found that qualifications in youth work were perceived as the most relevant to non-professionals while social work was the single most relevant discipline among professionals. The mixture of skills required of juvenile justice professionals was evident in the fact that there was no particular field of training that stood out as most relevant to the work. Professionals employed in this sector nominated social work, psychology and community work as the most relevant fields of study, with this perception presumably being affected by the particular nature of the work to be done in different organisations and different parts of juvenile justice. The responses from managers and administrators suggest that qualifications in areas closely related to juvenile justice are not necessarily the most relevant to the work – 60 per cent nominate other fields as more useful – although this perhaps reflects the current composition of the managerial workforce and the fact that most of them have obtained qualifications in other fields (Table 4.23).

Table 4.24:   Level of qualification most relevant to current job in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	0	7	26	9
Bachelor degree	*	56	42	47
Diploma	19	17	*	16
Certificate 3 or 4	62	15	19	23
Other qualification	0	4	*	4
Total	100	100	100	N=180

Missing cases = 40
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.25: **Field of qualification most relevant to current job in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	0	21	*	16
Psychology, counselling	*	15	*	14
Community work	*	19	*	18
Youth work	52	10	*	15
Other	*	33	60	36
Total	100	100	100	N=162

Missing cases = 58
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by juvenile justice workers were (in descending order): Justice/Criminal Justice/Criminology, Arts/Humanities, Education and Business/Business Management.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.3.3   Current study

One way of increasing the overall and average levels of skill in a workforce is to hire new workers whose average skill levels are higher than those of existing workers. Another very important route to improved skills in a workforce is for existing workers to upgrade their qualifications. Workers who gain qualifications while on the job include those obtaining a first qualification that is relevant to their work, those seeking qualifications that will allow them to fill higher level positions in the field, and those simply seeking to update their skills.

Undertaking study for a qualification is quite common in the juvenile justice workforce. Nearly 40 per cent of non-professionals in the sector, and around one fifth of professionals and managers and administrators, were studying at the time of our survey (Table 4.26). In general, the types of qualifications that juvenile justice workers were currently studying resembled the types of qualifications already present in, and perceived to be most relevant by, the occupational group to which they belong. Hence, non-professional workers were typically studying toward certificate level qualifications if they did study, while professional workers were mostly in the process of acquiring university degrees (Table 4.27). This was also true with respect to the field of current study, with non-professionals favouring study in community work and professionals opting for social work, psychology and community work programs (Table 4.28). We were not able to give breakdowns of manager/administrators' level or field of current study, because we had too few responses in our sample to do this reliably.

Table 4.26: **Whether currently studying for any qualification, juvenile justice workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	38	23	26	27
No	63	77	74	73
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 4.27: **Qualification level of current study, juvenile justice workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	*	33	*	26
Bachelor degree	*	27	*	23
Diploma	*	21	*	21
Certificate 3 or 4	56	*	*	26
Other qualification	0	*	0	*
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.28: **Qualification field of current study, juvenile justice workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	*	19	0	14
Psychology, counselling	*	25	*	23
Community work	44	25	*	28
Business	*	0	*	*
Other	*	28	*	23
Total	100	100	100	N=57

Missing cases = 5

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying. Within the 'Other' category, the field reported most frequently by juvenile justice workers was Justice/Criminal Justice/Criminology.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.3.4   Skill utilisation and mismatch

Even though workers have relevant qualifications and training, they may still find that they lack the skills needed for their jobs. Alternatively, they may find that the skills they do have are not used in their jobs. Each of these situations represents a skill mismatch (under-skilling in the first case, and over-skilling in the second case). These mismatches cause friction, and are known to have a variety of other negative consequences, including unsatisfactory work performance, low job satisfaction and high employee turnover.

Juvenile justice workers almost universally agreed with the proposition that they have the skills needed to do their jobs, when we put this question to them in our survey (Table 4.29a). At least 90 per cent of workers across all occupational categories agreed with this proposition. The proportion disagreeing was 3 per cent for the whole sector (with 5 per cent neutral). These results suggest that juvenile justice workers see a very close match between their own skills and the skills they are required to demonstrate in their jobs.

We put a similar question to juvenile justice employers in our survey of outlets or offices. Their responses, while generally supportive of workers' perceptions, differ in two respects. First, employers saw a higher incidence of under-skilling than workers did. The proportion of outlets reporting that they had no under-skilled workers is 71 per cent, implying that about 30 per cent had at least one under-skilled worker. Second, employers saw greater variation in under-skilling incidence across occupations. While few outlets said their managers/administrators are under-skilled, about 20 per cent appeared to have under-skilled non-professional workers, and perhaps as many as 37 per cent had under-skilled professionals (Table 4.29b). The differences in perceived under-skilling between workers and employers suggest that they do not share the same understanding about what skills are needed to work effectively in the juvenile justice sector, particularly in professional jobs. It may be worthwhile for some employers to audit the skills of their employees and explore how they can correct the shortage of required skills.

Table 4.29a: Perceived skill match ('I have the skills I need to do my current job') in juvenile justice services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	*	*	*	3
Neutral	*	5	*	5
Agree	94	92	90	92
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.29b: Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are under-skilled in juvenile justice services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	79	63	85	71
Under half	14	25	*	22
About half	*	*	*	*
Over half	*	*	*	*
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

We also asked employees and employers to give their views about the extent of over-skilling, where workers are not using some or all of the skills they possess in their current positions. There was a closer correspondence in the two groups' perceptions about this issue. About 90 per cent of juvenile justice workers said that they used many of their own skills on the job, and there was little variation across occupations (Table 4.30a). By comparison, about 20 per cent of juvenile justice providers said that some of their workers were over-skilled, and this was most likely to be true for professionals (Table 4.30b). Of the two types of skill mismatch, under-skilling appeared to be the greater problem than over-skilling in the juvenile justice sector, especially in the eyes of employers.

Table 4.30a: **Perceived skill utilisation ('I use many of my skills in my current job') in juvenile justice services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	*	*	0	2
Neutral	*	7	*	8
Agree	88	90	93	90
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.30b: **Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are over-skilled in juvenile justice services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	86	73	79	78
Under half	*	21	*	13
About half	*	*	*	*
Over half	*	*	*	*
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.4   The Work Experience

4.4.1   Recruitment and retention

People's experience of their job is essential to understanding the dynamics of any workforce. Employees' motivations and experiences at work have large effects on who enters occupations, on workers' performance in their jobs, on their propensity to remain with an employer and in an industry, on their inclination to develop and upgrade skills, and on many other aspects of workforce dynamics. Our survey of juvenile justice workers collected data allowing us to profile workers' experience in four main areas: their motivations for entering and remaining in the sector, their job satisfaction, their experience of workplace relationships, and their experience of autonomy and control in the workplace. Together, these experiences provide a sound basis for a basic profile of the work experience of juvenile justice workers.

People's motivations in entering their jobs both predict their commitment to them, and colour their response to their work experiences. When asked why they were first attracted to work in juvenile justice, workers in our survey most often acknowledged aspects of their work that were intrinsic to performing it. Thus, a desire to help others and a desire to do something worthwhile were each chosen by nearly two thirds to three quarters of workers directly providing services, whether professional or non-professional (Table 4.31). Managers and administrators were somewhat less likely to refer to these aspects of their jobs, though well over half did indicate that they were important in attracting them to the sector. Other aspects of the job, such as the learning it involved and the possibility of applying skills and the variety in tasks, were also commonly selected, each by around half of respondents. Rewards which are extrinsic to employees' jobs – job security and career prospects – were also important to many juvenile justice workers, each being selected by close to half of respondents. Only about one quarter of respondents indicated that pay was a factor that attracted them to juvenile justice. Flexibility in hours and shifts was important in attracting only about one in five juvenile justice workers. Overall, these patterns show that juvenile justice workers were very likely to select intrinsic rewards – those arising directly out of the experience of doing their jobs – as the reasons they chose to work in the sector. However, the extrinsic rewards of job security and career prospects were also important to many workers. On the other hand, other extrinsic rewards such as pay and hours flexibility were much less commonly relevant.

Table 4.31:   Reasons attracted to work in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Desire to do something worthwhile	81	68	63	70
Desire to help others	73	72	55	69
Learning, training, application of skills	46	51	50	50
Variety in tasks	48	51	40	48
Career prospects	46	46	43	45
Job security	44	45	30	42
Independence, autonomy, responsibility in work	38	36	23	34
Work being valued and appreciated	29	31	38	32
Supportive co-workers and management	27	29	15	26
Pay	23	26	20	24
Flexibility in hours, shifts	19	23	10	20
Other reasons	4	4	5	4

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so values do not sum to 100 per cent.

Workers' organisational commitment affects the likelihood that they will stay in their jobs, and is associated with their commitment in performing their work. Our survey used a single simple measure: whether a respondent would turn down another job with higher pay to remain in their current organisation. A little over one quarter of juvenile justice workers indicated that they would prefer to continue working in their current organisation than move to a higher paying job elsewhere (Table 4.32). This is the same level of organisational commitment as is generally found in the Australian female workforce, according to data from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 shown in Table 4.32. Non-professionals were somewhat more likely to show organisational commitment than other juvenile justice workers, with over one third agreeing that they would turn down a higher paying job to keep their current position.

Table 4.32: **Organisational commitment ('I would turn down another job that offered quite a bit more pay to stay with this organisation') in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Disagree	38	51	50	48	49
Neutral	23	23	25	23	25
Agree	38	26	25	28	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

4.4.2   Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is widely recognised as a key indicator of employees' experience in the workplace. It is related to whether workers stay in their jobs, and whether they intend to, and also to many aspects of job performance. Our survey used an 11 point job satisfaction scale in which respondents were asked to rate their job satisfaction from 'totally dissatisfied' (0) to 'totally satisfied' (10) on a range of aspects of their jobs. Thus, scores above 5 indicate some level of satisfaction with the job, while those below 5 indicate dissatisfaction. This question was reproduced from the Household and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, allowing benchmarking against national figures.

Overall, juvenile justice workers generally expressed some level of satisfaction with their work, with mean scores well above 5 on all aspects of their jobs except 'total pay' (Table 4.33). Differences across occupational groups were generally small, though professionals did have somewhat higher satisfaction than the other groups on job security and flexibility to balance work/non-work commitments. Juvenile justice workers showed satisfaction levels very similar to those of the Australian workforce as a whole, except that their satisfaction on job security and pay was somewhat lower (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 4.33). Indeed, mean 'total pay' satisfaction was substantially lower than for the Australian workforce, though not as low as in some other community service sectors.

Table 4.33: **Employee satisfaction with various dimensions of their work in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Your job security	7.3	7.6	7.1	7.5	8.0
The work itself	7.6	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.7
Overall job satisfaction	7.4	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.7
Work/life balance	6.9	7.7	7.1	7.4	7.5
The hours you work	7.2	7.3	7.0	7.2	7.3
Your total pay	5.8	6.0	6.5	6.0	7.0

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).

Note: Weighted means, ranked by total within sector, and scaled from 0 (Totally dissatisfied) to 10 (Totally satisfied)

4.4.3   Relationships in the workplace

Workplace relationships have a strong influence on workers' commitment to their workplace and their jobs, and to their propensity to stay in their jobs. Our survey asked about respondents' perceptions of the relationships between employees and management, and between workmates. We used a question from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 to facilitate benchmarking of juvenile justice workers' responses against national patterns.

Overwhelmingly, juvenile justice workers perceived relations between management and employees as positive (Table 4.34). Around 70 per cent of professional and non-professional workers who directly provide juvenile justice services saw relations as either 'quite good' or 'very good'. Comparison with the Australian workforce indicated that both groups were more likely to view these relationships as 'very good' than the average Australian worker.

Juvenile justice workers had even more unequivocally positive views about relations between workmates/colleagues (Table 4.35). Over half of those in each occupation viewed these relationships as 'very good'. This was well above the proportion of all Australian workers who held this view. Indeed, around 90 per cent of juvenile justice workers had a positive view of the relations between workmates.

These results suggest that juvenile justice workers generally find considerable support from workmates and, to a slightly lesser extent, managers in the difficult work they undertake. These relationships are likely to be very important in determining the commitment and effectiveness with which they work, and the likelihood they will remain in their jobs.

Table 4.34:   Perceived relations between management and employees in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Very bad	*	0	0	*	3
Quite bad	13	12	*	12	8
Neither good nor bad	11	17	*	14	18
Quite good	23	33	55	35	44
Very good	43	39	28	38	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.35:   Perceived relations between workmates/colleagues in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Very bad	*	0	0	*	1
Quite bad	*	*	*	4	1
Neither good nor bad	*	6	*	6	11
Quite good	33	32	35	33	50
Very good	56	58	53	56	37
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.4.4   Autonomy and task discretion

The extent to which workers feel they have control over how they do their jobs is strongly associated with their job satisfaction and commitment to their jobs. Our survey asked respondents about how much freedom they have in deciding how to do their work, and whether they believe they have adequate control over their work tasks.

In general, juvenile justice workers indicated that they have quite high and adequate levels of control over their work. About 70 per cent of both professional and non-professional workers who directly provide juvenile justice services agreed that they 'have a lot of freedom to decide how' they do their work (Table 4.36). These proportions were higher than in the Australian workforce as a whole, where 63 per cent of employed persons held this view (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 4.36), but they were similar to attitudes amongst community based aged care workers (Martin and King 2008: 85). The latter comparison suggests that juvenile justice work is organised in ways that require similar levels of discretion on the part of all workers as community based aged care.

Table 4.36:   Perceived job autonomy ('I have a lot of freedom to decide how I do my work') in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Disagree	21	13	*	14	22
Neutral	*	16	*	13	16
Agree	71	71	85	73	63
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Juvenile justice workers were also very likely to say that they have 'adequate control over' their work tasks, with about 75 to 80 per cent of respondents holding this view (Table 4.37). This sense was consistent across the occupation groups in the sector.

Overall, these patterns suggest that juvenile justice workers have a strong sense of autonomy in their work, and believe that their discretion is at adequate levels. These views are likely to have positive effects on their commitment to their work and jobs.

Table 4.37:   Perceived task discretion ('I have adequate control over my work tasks') in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	17	8	*	9
Neutral	*	12	15	12
Agree	75	80	80	79
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.5 Meeting Labour Demand

Employers, policy makers and employees alike have a strong interest in various aspects of how labour demand is met. We collected information on a range of aspects of the process of filling vacancies, including the level of vacancies and the ease with which they are filled, and the process by which employees typically find jobs.

4.5.1 Vacancy rates

The number of vacancies employers have is one important indicator of the state of the labour market for workers in an industry. Juvenile justice outlets responding to our survey had quite low levels of vacancies for workers in all occupational groups, with over 80 per cent of outlets indicating that they had no vacancies for each group (Table 4.38). Beyond this general pattern, the small number of responding outlets with vacancies means that there are no clear patterns in relation to the number of vacancies.

Table 4.38: **Number of equivalent full-time (EFT) vacancies in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	86	80	84	66
1 or less	*	9	12	15
More than 1 to 2	7	*	*	6
More than 2	*	*	0	13
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.5.2 How employees find jobs

How employees find jobs is a central aspect of the operation of any labour market. Juvenile justice organisations' capacity to find the workers with the skills they need, and to recruit them to jobs, partly depends on how workers find out about the jobs available to them. Most studies of labour markets show that formal methods of recruitment, such as job advertisements in newspapers or on the internet, are important routes for recruitment. However, informal methods, such as those based on family or friendship networks, are also frequently important.

Our survey of employees asked how they found their jobs. Non-professionals in juvenile justice were much more likely to find jobs through informal means than were professionals or managers/administrators. Indeed, nearly half of non-professionals found their jobs through friendship or family networks. Nevertheless, one quarter of non-professionals heard about their jobs through newspaper advertisements. Over 40 per cent of professionals and nearly 60 per cent of managers and administrators found their positions through advertisements, whether in newspapers, government notices or on the internet. In these occupations friend and family networks were less frequently the source of job information, though nearly one third of professionals and one fifth of managers/administrators still said that this was the source of information about their jobs.

These patterns suggest that juvenile justice agencies are able to rely more on informal recruitment pathways for workers with lower levels of formally certified skills (non-professionals), while they are likely to use more formal channels to find employees with higher level training (professionals). However, neither formal nor informal recruitment pathways are used exclusively in any occupation. It is likely that paying conscious attention to both forms of recruitment, while being aware of their relative importance, will ensure the most efficient recruitment experiences for both employers and employees.

There was some variation across States in the ways employees had heard about their jobs. Just 70 per cent of juvenile justice workers in Queensland had relied on informal methods (networks or a direct approach to an employer) compared to less than 40 per cent in New South Wales and Victoria. However, these variations must be interpreted with caution due to the small numbers of responses from juvenile justice employees.

Table 4.39: **How discovered that current job in the juvenile justice services sector was available, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Friend, family networks	44	30	18	30
Newspaper	24	13	13	16
Government notice, gazette	*	16	24	15
Internet	*	13	21	14
Approach to employer	*	14	*	12
Other	*	10	*	9
Employment agency	*	*	*	*
Workplace notice-board	0	*	*	2
Total	100	100	100	N=218

Missing cases = 16
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Response categories are ranked in descending order by the total for all occupations. Within the 'Other' category, the most frequently reported responses by juvenile justice workers were: Work Placement/Work Experience and Approached by Employer.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.5.3 Difficulties filling vacancies

How long employers take to fill vacancies is a useful indicator of the difficulty they have in finding suitable workers. Though the number of responses is small, juvenile justice outlets appear to find it easier to fill non-professional vacancies than professional ones. Around half of the most recent non-professional vacancies were filled within 4 weeks, compared to about one quarter of professional vacancies (Table 4.40). Around one quarter of the most recent vacancies for professionals and manager/administrators took more than 8 weeks to fill.

Information provided by outlets about the number of applicants suggest that juvenile justice outlets quite often received no applicants for the positions they were seeking to fill,

particularly for non-professional and managerial/administrative positions (Table 4.41). On the other hand, over half of outlets indicated that they had received 6 or more applicants for the most recent professional position they sought to fill.

Table 4.40: **Average number of weeks required to fill most recent vacancy in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
4 or less	46	26	38	31
More than 4 to 8	36	45	38	39
More than 8	*	29	25	30
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.41: **Average number of applicants for most recent vacancy in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	18	*	28	17
1 to 2	*	16	21	9
3 to 5	30	22	19	30
More than 5	40	57	31	43
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.5.4 Suitability of recent hires

In labour markets where the labour supply is tightly constrained, employers will be forced to offer jobs to workers who do not have the skills the employer sees as ideal for the position. In general, employers will prefer to hire workers who have all the skills they need for their jobs before they begin. This removes the need for employers to spend time and resources training workers, or to accept reduced productivity. However, it is important to be aware that when employers hire workers without optimal skills, this does not mean that an organisation is unable to perform necessary duties or functions. Instead, employers may have to provide additional training for such workers, or hire more employees to ensure that necessary tasks are completed. Where additional training is provided, newly hired workers who have undergone this training may quickly gain the optimal set of skills. Thus, the issue of whether the skills of newly hired workers are optimal from the employers' viewpoint is primarily an indicator of the state of the labour market, and not a measure of the skill level of the employed workforce in its day to day work.

Our survey asked outlets whether the most recently hired worker in each occupational group had optimal skills for the job for which he/she was hired, minimum but not optimal skills, or did not have all the skills needed for the job (see Appendix 1 for exact question

wording). About 70 per cent of outlets said that the most recent professional they had hired had optimal skills for the job, while all of the remainder said that appointees had the minimum skills, rather than lacking some necessary skills (Table 4.42). A similar picture emerged with respect to managerial/administrative workers, where even more recent appointees (85 per cent) had optimal skills. Juvenile justice outlets less frequently said that their most recent non-professional employees had optimal skills, though just over half still assessed them this way. However, about one fifth of outlets said they had recently appointed non-professional workers who lacked some essential skills. Thus, it seems that juvenile justice outlets are more willing to employ lower skill (non-professional) workers who may need some additional training to gain skills necessary for their jobs than to hire professional workers or managers/administrators with similar skill deficiencies.

Table 4.42: Employers' perceptions of whether recently hired workers have optimal skills for their jobs in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Under skilled	19	0	*	9
Minimum skills	27	30	14	21
Optimal skills	55	70	84	71
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not make any recent appointments.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.6   Employment Preferences and Intentions

The degree of fit between workers' skills and the skill requirements of their jobs is one, but certainly not the only, important determinant of work performance and workplace harmony. It is also relevant whether the terms and conditions of employment that employees desire are in accordance with their current circumstances at work. Where these preferences are not in line with existing arrangements, and cannot be easily aligned with employers' expectations or needs, workers are likely to feel less satisfied with their work and more inclined to change jobs. Workers also leave jobs for other reasons that are outside employers' influence, such as the desire to study, travel abroad, or raise a family.

In this section, we examine several aspects of juvenile justice workers' preferences and work plans, using the data from our workforce survey. We ask whether these workers had the type of employment contract they preferred, and whether they had their desired number of paid work hours. Where their current and desired working hours did not match, we estimate by how much, and in which direction, their hours would have to change to reach their indicated preference. We then report on juvenile justice workers' short-term employment intentions and career plans. We ask how many expected to still be working for their current employer in 12 months and, for those who expected to move on, what motivated this intention. Finally, as an indicator of the medium-term outlook for employee turnover, we estimate the proportion of juvenile justice workers who expected to still be working in this sector in 3 years.

4.6.1   Preferences for terms of employment

The composition of the Australian workforce has changed in important ways over the past two decades. Between 1992 and 2008, the proportion of employees working on a permanent, full-time basis fell from 71 per cent to 64 per cent, alongside increasing part-time and casual employment. In 2008, casual workers comprised 23 per cent of employees aged 15 to 64 years, and 28 per cent of female employees in this age group (ABS 2009e). Our survey of community services offices and outlets shows that casual employment was less prevalent in the juvenile justice sector than in the Australian workforce at large. According to employers, 10 per cent of direct care workers in this sector were employed casually in 2009 (Table 4.4). This figure is less than half the casual employment rate for the whole Australian workforce.

Although we have found that juvenile justice outlets make comparatively little use of casual (and contract) employment, they used these arrangements more frequently than their workers wish. Juvenile justice workers overwhelmingly wanted permanent employment, and this held for all occupations (Table 4.43). The discrepancy between actual and preferred employment arrangements was greatest, however, for non-professionals. Where 75 per cent of these workers had permanent jobs in juvenile justice, 86 per cent wanted one (Tables 4.4 and 4.43). It is non-professionals workers who thus were less likely to find their desired form of employment in juvenile justice. For some workers, this mismatch will be experienced as a temporary episode while they take the steps, such as studying further, required to move them into the professional ranks. For others, the lack of permanency will motivate a search for alternative job opportunities, including perhaps in other industries (see further, below).

Table 4.43:   Preferred terms of employment in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent	86	95	100	95
Fixed term	*	*	0	2
Casual	*	*	0	3
Total	100	100	100	N=207

Missing cases = 27
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.6.2   Hours of work preferences

Another critical determinant of employee satisfaction is the ability to find a job with working hours close to one's ideal.   In general, employees' working hours preferences vary significantly by sex, age, marital status and family composition. Many would prefer to have fewer hours because they feel under excessive strain and would like to spare extra time for family and recreation, but continue working because they feel obligations to clients or workmates, or because they have come to depend on the extra income that the work generates. Others would choose to work longer hours because their circumstances have changed and they are looking to acquire further experience or increase their earnings, but meet resistance from their employers.

We asked employees to tell us first whether their working hours would be any different from their current situation if the decision was their own to make, bearing in mind the impact that any change would have on their earnings. The most common response to this question, that given by 73 per cent of juvenile justice workers, was that they would keep their working hours much as they are now (Table 4.44). This result suggests that most workers in the sector are content with the hours they currently do.

The pattern of preferred hours exhibits some variation by occupation. Non-professionals were the most likely to want additional hours, while managers/administrators had the strongest demand for shorter working time (Table 4.44). The latter result is not surprising, given the earlier evidence that managers and administrators were older, more experienced, doing more unpaid hours of work, and higher paid, than other juvenile justice workers (Tables 4.9, 4.13, 4.14 and 4.15). They would be expected to be the group most willing to reduce their paid hours in exchange for an increase in leisure time (and a reduction in work-related demands), because their higher salaries and positions enable this without risking future unemployment or a prohibitive cut in their living standards.

We then asked the workers who favoured some change in their working hours to tell us the number of hours they prefer. Juvenile justice workers' responses to this more detailed item are shown in Table 4.45. For completeness, we include in the Table those workers who said they would prefer to leave their current hours unchanged. The main observation to be made about the Table was that the workers who wanted additional hours (who are mostly non-professionals) generally want only a small increase of up to 10 more hours, while those who wanted shorter hours (particularly managers and administrators) typically wanted a substantial reduction of at least 10 hours. While juvenile justice providers appeared to have

scope to increase the hours of their non-professional staff, the professional and managerial groups were already under some strain and some workers in these groups were looking for ways to cut back their working time.

Table 4.44: Preferred hours of employment relative to current hours in the juvenile justice sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Fewer	17	19	24	19
Same	71	74	74	73
More	13	6	*	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.45: Preferred hours of employment compared to current, per week, in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
10+ fewer	*	10	23	11
1 to 9 fewer	*	10	*	8
Same	71	74	75	73
1 to 9 more	10	*	0	4
10+ more	*	4	0	3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.6.3 Future career intentions

Insights into employees' turnover intentions are useful for two reasons. First, they aid in the difficult task of workforce planning. Employers can better predict the number and types of vacancies they will have to fill if they can monitor or predict patterns of employee turnover. Second, turnover intentions are indicative of employee commitment and work satisfaction. When workers see themselves staying with an employer, or at least in their current industry, they are more likely to be motivated to form productive working relationships with clients, workmates and managers than when they see themselves changing jobs or not working.

Two thirds of current employees in the juvenile justice sector expected to still be in their jobs in 12 months (Table 4.46). An important finding here was that although non-professional workers were less likely to have permanent employment contracts (Table 4.4), they were no more likely than professionals or managers/administrators to see themselves leaving their current job in 12 months. About 6 per cent of juvenile justice employees were confident they will leave their current job within 12 months. The remaining 30 per cent of juvenile justice workers were either uncertain about their futures, or said that their decision to stay or leave was conditional on what happens in their jobs and their personal lives over the next year. While some of this ambivalence will eventually translate into job separations, it is difficult to

be precise about how much of it will. Government workers were more likely than non-government workers to expect to remain with their current employer over the next 12 months (70 per cent of the former expect this compared to 37 per cent of the latter).

We next asked workers who said they would, or might, leave their current jobs to tell us the main reason why they would do so. Their responses are shown (ranked in descending order of importance) in Table 4.47. Among the most important reasons for leaving or planning to leave was the desire to find another job. A slightly higher proportion of intended job-changers said they will achieve this by leaving the juvenile justice sector than by moving to another job within it. Among the other important reasons juvenile justice workers gave for leaving or for planning to leave were the expiry of their current contract (18 per cent), 'financial reasons' which may reflect dissatisfaction with their current rate of pay or hours of work (15 per cent), and stress-related reasons (15 per cent). We did not comment further on occupational differences in this information – although the detail for professionals is shown in Table 4.47 – because there were generally too few responses in our sample of juvenile justice workers to present reliable estimates.

Finally, we asked current workers to look forward over a 3-year period and indicate whether they expected to be still working in juvenile justice, working somewhere else, or not working at all for pay. Most juvenile justice workers (59 per cent) said they will still be working in the sector 3 years from now (Table 4.48). This response was most likely to be given by non-professional workers, and least likely to be given by managers and administrators. From these numbers, it seems that the sector can reasonably expect to have quite a high rate of retention of current staff in most occupations for the immediate future. It appears, however, that the sector will face increasing difficulties retaining managers and administrators, with 23 per cent of these workers saying they will leave the sector to work elsewhere within 3 years. Unfortunately our survey does not allow us to say confidently why these workers are contemplating leaving the sector.

Table 4.46:   Whether expect to be with same employer in 12 months in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	65	64	63	64
No	*	5	*	6
It depends	19	25	23	24
Don't know	*	5	*	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.47: **Main reason may leave employer in 12 months in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Job change, leaving sector	*	14	*	18
Contract ends	*	20	*	17
Job change, within sector	*	20	*	15
Financial reasons	*	11	*	15
Stress or burnout	*	16	*	15
Other reasons	*	11	*	9
Total	100	100	100	N=66

Missing cases = 4

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Estimating samples restricted to workers who said they would or might leave their current employer within 12 months. The 'Other reasons' category included Relocating/Moving/Migrating and Dissatisfied with Job.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 4.48: **Where expect to be working in 3 years in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Working in this sector	69	59	50	59
Working elsewhere	13	13	23	15
Not working for pay	0	*	0	*
Don't know	21	27	30	25
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.7   Career Paths

Few employees remain in a single job or even a single organisation throughout their careers. As a result, patterns of entry into jobs and exit from them are central to understanding the dynamics of labour markets. They can also add important dimensions to the picture of workers' skills since career pathways are integral to the experiences and skills workers bring to their jobs. Moreover, patterns of exit from jobs indicate the extent to which experience-based knowledge and skills are able to accumulate within a workforce. Understanding career pathways into juvenile justice jobs may suggest areas where common pathways can be supported and enhanced, or where common pathways suggest that there may be difficulties in career paths.

Our focus in this section of the report is on pathways into and out of juvenile justice jobs, rather than career progression amongst those who remain in the sector. We collected information on the jobs juvenile justice workers held before they entered the sector, their age at entry into the sector, their total experience in it, and reasons for moving jobs within the juvenile justice area.

4.7.1   Career before current job

As we have noted above (Section 4.1.5), the juvenile justice workforce is quite varied in age. Juvenile justice workers bring a range of previous experiences to their jobs. Virtually none had no previous paid employment before entering juvenile justice (Table 4.49). About 40 per cent of juvenile justice workers had jobs as welfare workers or carers in other sectors before entering juvenile justice work. The remaining workers in our survey worked in a wide range of occupations before working in juvenile justice, with around 10 per cent in each of professional/managerial jobs, hospitality jobs, clerical/administrative positions, and sales jobs. Juvenile justice organisations are certainly attracting one large group of their workers from other welfare and community services settings. This appears to be true of all juvenile justice occupations. Indeed, it is likely that at least half of juvenile justice workers had previously worked in community service of welfare settings, since many whose previous jobs were in clerical or professional/managerial positions may have been in such positions in other community services areas.

Table 4.49:   Occupation before first job in juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
No previous paid job	0	*	*	*
Welfare worker elsewhere	30	37	35	36
Carer elsewhere	*	4	*	5
Salesperson	*	10	0	7
Clerical, admin worker	*	12	*	11
Hospitality worker	13	11	*	10
Professional or manager elsewhere	*	11	25	13
Labourer	*	*	*	4
Other	17	10	15	12
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Within the 'Other' category, the most frequently reported responses by juvenile justice workers were: Tradesperson, Other Education worker/Trainer and Transport/Logistics.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

4.7.2   Experience in current sector

Consistent with the varied age profile of the juvenile justice workforce, about half entered the sector before the age of 30 (Table 4.50). Professionals were youngest when they entered the workforce, with over half being under 30, managers/administrators were slightly older and non-professionals older again, though the differences were not large. Juvenile justice work was clearly not only for new entrants to the workforce, with about one quarter of workers beginning work at 40 or older.

Table 4.50:   Age when took first job in the juvenile justice services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
21 or under	*	15	*	14
22 to 29	34	37	43	38
30 to 39	34	21	18	23
40 to 49	17	22	18	20
50 or more	*	4	*	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

About 60 per cent of professional and 75 per cent of non-professional employees directly providing juvenile justice services in our sample had been working in the sector for less than 5 years (Table 4.51). Indeed, long experience in the sector was rare amongst these workers, with only about 20 per cent of these direct service workers having a total of 10 years or more in the sector. Managers and administrators were more likely to have longer experience, with

70 per cent having 5 or more years experience in juvenile justice and nearly half having worked in the sector for 10 or more years. These results, combined with the age distribution of the workforce and early career entry of juvenile justice workers, strongly suggest that juvenile justice employees remain in the sector for the bulk of their careers unless they move into managerial positions. Indeed, particularly for professionals, our results suggest that juvenile justice work is typically undertaken in the early years of a person's career, and that workers typically leave the sector before they have completed 10 years in it (unless they move into managerial or administrative positions).[11]

Table 4.51: **Length of time working in the juvenile justice services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than 2	40	22	15	24
2 to less than 5	35	37	15	33
5 to less than 10	*	20	23	18
10 to less than 20	17	16	35	20
20 or more	0	5	13	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Juvenile justice employers appear to attract most of their employees from outside the sector. Some 70 per cent of respondents to our survey said that they had not held a juvenile justice position before their current job, with non-professionals being particularly unlikely to have worked in the sector previously (Table 4.52). Around 20 per cent had previously worked in other paid juvenile justice jobs, with most having held only paid positions. Clearly, employers' ability to fill juvenile justice positions depends crucially on their ability to attract workers from outside the sector. This is a significant task, given that employers indicated that about one quarter of professionals and non-professionals are replaced each year (Section 4.1.6, above).

Table 4.52: **Whether worked previously in the juvenile justice services sector before current job, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes, paid	*	19	33	19
Yes, paid and unpaid	*	5	*	4
Yes, unpaid only	*	7	0	6
No	81	70	65	71
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

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[11] If there has been a significant increase in the employment of juvenile justice workers during the past 5-10 years, the pattern we report could be a result of that increase rather than the career pattern we describe.

Understanding why juvenile justice workers leave their jobs is important in developing strategies to retain workers. Our survey asked respondents why they had left their previous juvenile justice job, if they had held one before their current position. Although the number of such workers was small, the results are interesting. For professionals, they suggest that the main factors are issues beyond the direct experience of work. Thus, over half of those who had left previous juvenile justice jobs had done so either because they had relocated, because funding or a contract had ended, or because they sought higher pay. Less than one fifth moved in search of more satisfying work.

Table 4.53: Main reason left previous paid job in the juvenile justice services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Relocated	*	17	*	24
Find more satisfying work	0	21	*	18
Contract or funding ended	*	17	*	16
Improve pay	0	10	*	14
Job too stressful	*	*	0	*
Other reasons	*	*	0	*
Avoid conflict	0	*	*	*
Better shifts or hours	0	*	0	*
Not enough time with clients	0	*	0	*
Closer to home	0	*	0	*
Private care responsibilities	*	0	0	*
Total	100	100	100	N=49

Missing cases = 5

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: The 'Other reasons' category included Unhappy with Organisation and Further Education.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5. Disability Services

Disability services in Australia are provided by a wide range of organisations. The bulk of services are provided by non-profit organisations, largely funded by government. Governments also directly provide services, and a small proportion of services come from profit-making providers. This project defined disability services activities as:

Providing social support and social assistance services to people requiring support or assistance because of a disability. Such services assist people with a disability to participate in the community. They include providing support to people with a disability in institutional settings (hostels, group homes) or in the disabled person's own home (including HACC), and respite services. (Subset of ANZSIC Codes 8790 and 8609.)

The in-scope workforce for the disability services sector in this report was therefore those employed to provide these services, and those who directly manage and coordinate their work.

5.1 Profile of the Workforce

A key aim of the current project was to generate a profile of the current workforce in the selected community service areas. In this part of the report, we present such a profile for the disability services workforce. We begin with total employment, and then examine the key aspects of workforce and employment structure such as occupational distribution, employment contract, use of staff not directly employed by outlets, hours of work, wages, and worker demographics.

5.1.1 Total Employment

Our best estimate is that about 68,700 people were employed across Australia in directly providing disability services or managing those who provide these services at the time of our surveys. As many of these employees worked part-time, this number translates into about 34,000 equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more (Table 5.1a). We estimate that about 58,200 workers (or 25,000 EFT workers) provided disability services directly, while the remainder managed their work. Outlets providing disability services also employed other workers who provided other services or administered the organisations. Our estimate is that, including such workers, outlets providing disability services employed a total of about 97,000 workers.

Our Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009 found that disability service workers were distributed across the States and Territories as indicated in Table 5.1a. Especially if we focus on EFT workers, disability services employment was closely aligned with the population of jurisdictions. On an EFT basis, Queensland had slightly more disability workers than we might expect, while South Australia had fewer. In general, however, the departures from population distributions were small.

Table 5.1b provides further information about the numbers of disability service workers (on an EFT basis) relative to the resident population of each State/Territory. Nationally, there were approximately 154 disability service workers (including Managers and Administrators) for every hundred thousand Australians, with somewhat higher ratios in Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania. In the most populous States, however, there was relatively little

variation in the numbers of non-professional workers, who delivered the bulk of disability services (see further in Section 5.1.2, below).

Table 5.1a: Estimated employment in the disability services sector, 2009

	Total employees (estimated)	Total disability services employees (estimated)	Total EFT disability services employees (estimated)
NSW	24,427	19,580	11,138
VIC	28,311	16,998	7,842
QLD	27,385	18,235	7,830
SA	4,724	3,917	1,663
WA	7,754	6,193	3,736
TAS	3,078	2,389	1,155
NT	458	388	197
ACT	1,282	960	483
Total	97,419	68,660	34,044

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.

Table 5.1b: Estimated EFT employment in the disability services sector relative to the population per 100,000 persons, by State/Territory and occupation, 2009

	Non-professionals (estimated)	Professionals (estimated)	Managers and administrators (estimated)	Total (estimated)
NSW	99	9	46	155
VIC	89	17	32	143
QLD	98	33	38	175
SA	55	16	30	102
WA	106	23	32	165
TAS	169	13	44	228
NT	49	10	27	87
ACT	80	14	42	136
Total	95	18	38	154

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010c.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.

Table 5.2 shows employment by government and non-government sector. Nearly three quarters of employees providing disability services worked in non-profit outlets, whether measured by the number of people employed or EFT employees. Most of the remainder were employed directly by government, with only about 5 per cent working for profit-making enterprises.

Table 5.2: **Direct service employment in the disability services sector, by organisation type, 2009**

	Per cent of employees	Per cent of EFT employees
Non-profit or charitable	73	73
Privately owned, for-profit	6	5
Public, government, or government owned	21	22
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

5.1.2 Disability Services Occupations

Disability services work requires workers with a range of skills and abilities. Table 5.3 shows the distribution of workers by the main occupations we identified in this sector. In much of the following analysis, we compare workers across occupations. To simplify this discussion, we collapse the occupations shown in Table 5.3 into three broad categories, defined below.

Non-professionals are "Personal carers, home care workers and community care workers", and "Disability or residential support workers".

Professionals are "Allied health workers" and "Social workers and disability case managers".

Managers and Administrators are "Service and program administrators, managers and coordinators."

In most comparisons, we exclude the 1-2 per cent of workers in the 'Other' occupation category shown in Table 5.3, as there are too few of them in our sample to permit further analysis.

The vast majority of disability service workers were non-professional carers and support workers. Together, these non-professionals made up three quarters of all disability workers, and just over 60 per cent of EFT workers. Managers and administrators were the next largest group, composing about one quarter of EFT employees, though fewer total disability workers. Professionals were just over one tenth of EFT workers and a slightly smaller proportion of all workers.

There was limited variation in these proportions between different States and Territories. Non-professional workers comprised lower proportions of the disability services workforces in the Northern Territory (66 per cent) and Western Australia (71 per cent), and a higher fraction in Tasmania (86 per cent), when compared with the national average of 77 per cent. In terms of EFT employment, there was also a somewhat high level of non-professional employment in Tasmania (75 per cent), relative to the national average of 63 per cent. In general, however, the occupational distribution of disability services workers within States and Territories resembled closely the national picture shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3:   Occupation of disability services employees, 2009 (per cent)

	Number of Persons	Equivalent Full Time
Personal carer / home care worker / community care worker	27	19
Disability support worker / Residential support worker	49	43
Non-professionals subtotal	*76*	*62*
Allied Health Worker	3	4
Social worker / Disability case manager	5	8
Professionals subtotal	*9*	*12*
Service / Program administrator / manager / coordinator	14	25
Other	1	2
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Minor differences between the subtotals and the sum of the row values occur due to rounding.

5.1.3   Disability Service Workers' Employment Contracts

The arrangements through which disability services workers are employed are important for a range of reasons. Less secure employment contracts may predispose workers to leave jobs if they can find equally attractive employment that gives more employment security, while more secure arrangements are likely to increase the likelihood that they will stay. Where a significant number of workers is employed part-time (defined as working less than 35 hours per week), increased labour demand may be satisfied, at least partially, by increasing the hours of these workers.

Employment arrangements in the disability sector varied significantly across occupations. The numerically dominant group of non-professional workers were usually employed in 'non-standard' contracts. Just over half worked on a permanent part-time basis, while nearly one third were employed casually. Just under 15 per cent were employed on a 'standard' permanent, full-time contract. In sharp contrast, just over half of professionals, and two thirds of managers and administrators, worked on such contracts. In both cases, almost all of the remaining workers were employed on permanent part-time arrangements, so that casual and limited term contract employment was negligible amongst professionals and managers/ administrators.

Within the State jurisdictions, Victoria had a larger share of its disability services workforce employed in permanent part-time arrangements (62 per cent), at the expense of some permanent full-time and some casual jobs. In South Australia, there was much greater use of casual work (46 per cent), mainly at the expense of permanent part-time jobs. Non-professionals working in the South Australian disability sector were twice as likely to be casually employed (60 per cent) as their counterparts in any of the other mainland States. There was also evidence that casual jobs were prevalent for disability workers employed in non-government outlets. However, this casual effect was largely restricted to non-

professional workers, who were about three times as likely to be casual workers in the non-government sector (35 per cent) as in the government sector (11 per cent). Professionals and managers/administrators were typically in permanent jobs, irrespective of their sector of employment, but they were much more likely to have permanent part-time jobs in the disability services sector if they worked in non-government than in government outlets.

Table 5.4: **Employment type of disability service sector employees in the last pay period, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent full-time	14	52	68	25
Permanent part-time	55	44	27	50
Casual	31	3	3	24
Contract	0	1	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

5.1.4   Use of Agency, Contract, and Self Employed Staff

Employers in all industries sometimes rely on staff they do not directly employ. Such agency, contract and self-employed staff may be an important component of the workforce, and may be used for a variety of reasons. Sometimes employers use them because permanent or casual staff are not available. Some employers may prefer such staff because they provide more flexibility, or because they are cheaper. Our survey sought information about the extent and importance of such staff in the disability services area. In general, we found that disability services use very few of such staff, and do not appear to rely significantly on them.

Overall, 23 per cent of disability services outlets used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff to deliver disability services. Most of these staff were employed in non-professional jobs, and were agency or sub-contract staff (Table 5.5). Overall, our estimate is that disability service outlets in Australia used about 7,100 agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the pay period of the survey (generally a two week period). The majority of these, about 4,850, were sub-contract staff, while agency staff made up about another 1,650 such workers (Table 5.6). The median number of shifts worked by all agency and sub-contract non-professionals in disability outlets that employed them was 8 and 16, respectively (Table 5.7). This small number suggests that such staff are generally used as a stop-gap measure, rather than as a permanent solution to staffing needs in the disability sector.

Table 5.5: Outlets that used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency	10	1*	2	12
Sub-contract	8	1*	0*	9
Self-employed	2	1*	2	5

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

Table 5.6: Number of agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Other	Total
Agency	1528	43	66	8	1645
Sub-contract	4769	41	2	40	4852
Self-employed	474	52	53	51	630

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Table 5.7: Median number of shifts done by agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency	8	10	2	7
Sub-contract	16	1*	0*	10
Self-employed	10	8*	10*	7

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Median estimates exclude outlets with zero shifts in each category.

* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

5.1.5   Demographics of the Disability Services Workforce

A key element in the profile of the disability services workforce is its demographic structure. Here, we examine the proportion of men and women amongst disability services workers, their age distribution, and their birthplace patterns.

The disability services sector was dominated by women in all occupations. Thus, we estimate that about 80 per cent of disability workers were women, irrespective of their occupation (Table 5.8). This pattern is typical of much of the community services sector, and is to be found in areas such as aged care, child care, and general community services. Men were clearly the minority of employees in all jurisdictions and sectors of the disability services workforce, but they were more likely to work in non-government outlets (21 per cent) than government outlets (13 per cent), and in the regional jurisdictions of Tasmania (24 per cent), the Northern Territory (27 per cent) and the Australian Capital Territory (30 per cent).

Table 5.8:   Sex of employees in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Male	20	17	18	19
Female	80	83	82	81
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

The disability services workforce contained considerable numbers of workers in each age group, though they tended to be concentrated in more mature ages. Professional workers tended to be somewhat younger than others in this sector, with less than a quarter of professionals being 50 or over, compared to about one third of non-professionals and managers/administrators (Table 5.9). Compared to the Australian female workforce, the disability workforce had a somewhat older age profile. Thus, for example, while 37 per cent of non-professional and 43 per cent of professional disability workers were under 40, half of all Australian female employees were in this age group.

We note that there was some variation between the State and Territory jurisdictions in terms of the age distribution of the disability services workforce. The Western Australian workforce was somewhat younger than other jurisdictions, with 46 per cent aged under 40 years, compared to 36 per cent nationally. (This difference was mainly due to the large proportion of Western Australian non-professional workers aged under 30 years.) The Northern Territory workforce was also much younger than in other jurisdictions, with half of its workers aged under 40 years. Victoria had an older disability services workforce, with the main driver being the relatively high proportion of Victorian non-professionals in the 50 years or more age group (42 per cent compared to 33 per cent nationally).

Disability services workers employed in non-government outlets also tended to be younger than those employed in government outlets. In the non-government sector, 41 per cent of workers were under 40 years of age, double the proportion in the government sector. The corollary is that government workers were much more likely to be aged 50 years or over (46 per cent) than their non-government counterparts (29 per cent). The largest differences in age distribution between the two sectors are evident for non-professional workers. In the non-government sector, 42 per cent of non-professionals were under 40 years of age; this is three times the equivalent proportion in the government sector (14 per cent). This is an encouraging sign that non-government outlets are finding substantial numbers of their workers from the ranks of younger non-professionals.

Table 5.9:   Age of employees in the disability services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian female workforce (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Less than 30	16	15	8	14	29
30 to 39	21	28	22	22	21
40 to 49	30	33	36	31	23
50 to 59	26	19	28	26	19
60 or more	7	4	7	7	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010a.

About three quarters of disability services workers were Australian born, and almost all of these were non-Indigenous Australians (Table 5.10). This pattern does not vary significantly across occupations. The remaining workers came from a range of countries, with UK born workers being by far the largest group, accounting for about 10 per cent of workers. Western Australian disability workers were less likely than others to be Australian born, with about 45 per cent being overseas born, compared to the national average of about 23 per cent.

Table 5.10:   Birthplace of employees in the disability services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian female workforce (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Australia, non-Indigenous	73	77	76	75	73
Australia, Indigenous	2	*	2	2	1
New Zealand	4	2	2	3	3
United Kingdom	9	8	10	9	6
Other	12	11	10	11	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2010b; ABS 2009b.
Note: Within the 'Other' category, the countries reported most frequently by disability service workers were Vietnam, Germany, Italy, Ireland and the Philippines.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.1.6   Disability Service Workers' Hours of Work and Tenure

Our surveys provide two sources of information about the hours of work of employees. We asked respondents to our workers' survey how many hours in total they usually worked per week in their disability services job, and how many of these hours were paid (Table 5.11) and unpaid (Table 5.13). We also asked outlets to tell us the number of workers in each occupation category who worked 30 or fewer hours during the fortnight before the survey

(i.e., an average of 15 hours per week or less), and the number who worked more than this (Table 5.12).

Both surveys show that the majority of non-professional workers, the bulk of the disability workforce, were employed on a part-time basis (for less than 35 hours per week). Considerably less than one third of such workers were employed full-time.[12] The small group of professional workers in the disability sector were much more likely to work full-time, with about half working such hours (Tables 5.4, 5.11). Amongst these professionals, full-time hours were much more common in the government sector (65 per cent) than the non-government sector (35 per cent). As in most community service sectors, managers and administrators in the disability services sector were most likely to work full-time, with about 70 per cent doing so (Tables 5.4, 5.11).

Those who did work full-time were rarely paid to work longer hours, with only 3-4 per cent in each occupation group saying that they worked more than 40 paid hours per week. The difference between hours worked and hours paid is largest for managers and administrators, with 24 per cent of them indicating that they worked more than 40 hours (data not shown here).

Table 5.11:   **Hours paid per week in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 15	17	7	4	12
16 to 34	47	40	27	40
35 to 40	31	50	67	43
41 or more	4	3	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 5.12:   **Hours worked in past fortnight in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 30	41	26	15	36
31 or more	59	74	85	64
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Respondents to our workers survey were also asked how many unpaid hours they worked per week in their disability jobs. Few non-professional disability workers said they worked

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[12] Unfortunately, we cannot be much more precise than this. Outlets told us that 14 per cent of their non-professional disability workers worked on permanent full-time contracts, but another 31 per cent worked on casual contracts (Table 5.4) and some of these may work full-time hours. Some 35 per cent of disability workers responding to our survey said that they were paid to work full-time hours (Table 5.11). As noted previously, we are confident that short part-time workers are under-represented in our sample of workers.

unpaid hours, with only 13 per cent indicating this (Table 5.13). About one quarter of professionals providing disability services said they worked unpaid hours, with most working 5 or fewer unpaid hours per week. By contrast, nearly half of managers and administrators said they worked unpaid hours.

Table 5.13: Hours unpaid per week in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Zero	87	73	55	76
1 to 5	8	18	24	14
6 to 10	4	7	14	7
11 or more	1	2	7	3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Our survey of outlets asked the respondents to indicate the number of workers in each occupational group who had worked in their current outlets for various periods. Professional and non-professional workers providing disability services had similar patterns of tenure. Between one fifth and one quarter had been with their current outlet for one year or less, and about one third had tenure of more than 5 years (Table 5.14). Managers and administrators typically had considerably longer tenure, with half having worked in their current outlet for 5 years or more. These results indicate that disability outlets face a significant task in recruiting professional and non-professional workers. Non-professional workers were the vast majority of the disability workforce (making up about three quarters of it). On average, outlets need to replace at least one quarter of these employees every year.

Our indicator of tenure is likely to mean somewhat different things depending on whether the outlet is a government or a non-government one. Government employees' tenure will combine movement from one government outlet to another with initial employment by the organisation, while the tenure of those working in non-government outlets will mostly reflect time since an initial appointment to the outlet. As we have already noted, only about 20 per cent of disability workers are employed by government outlets. For this reason, outlet tenure for these workers will largely reflect tenure with workers' current employer. Our results indicate that disability service workers in government outlets generally had significantly longer tenure than their counterparts in non-government outlets. Overall, about half (54 per cent) of government disability service workers had been with their current employer for 5 years or more, compared with closer to one third (31 per cent) of non-government workers. An exception to this broad pattern was that professionals working in disability services had marginally longer tenure if they worked in non-government than in government outlets. This result suggests that non-government outlets are performing particularly well in the task of retaining professional workers. However, this result must be weighed against the fact that professionals only made up about 10 per cent of the disability services workforce (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.14:   Tenure with current employer of disability services sector employees, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 year or less	26	20	17	24
2 to 5 years	40	46	33	39
More than 5 years	34	34	50	36
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

5.1.7   Disability Services Workers' Earnings and Multiple Job Holding

The earnings of workers are important for many reasons. Earnings are a basic incentive for workers to take jobs and stay in them. Very low earnings mean that the monetary costs of leaving their jobs for workers may be quite low, increasing any difficulties employers may face in retaining them. In this sense, very low earnings may be indicators of workers' weak attachment to the labour market.

Table 5.15a shows the distribution of gross weekly earnings for disability workers. Amongst non-professional workers, the bulk of the disability workforce, about one quarter had very low gross earnings of less than $400 per week. Moreover, three quarters earned less than a modest $800 per week. Unsurprisingly, professional and managerial/administrative employees tended to earn more than non-professional workers, with managers/administrators reporting the highest earnings. Nearly two thirds of managers/administrators and well over half of professionals reported earning $800 or more per week at the time of the survey.

It is also possible to calculate an hourly wage rate for each employee, by dividing their gross weekly earnings by the hours that they are paid to work each week. This approach allows us to approximate the rate of remuneration for each hour of work, abstracting from differences in weekly earnings that are due to the variation in working hours. However, there is likely to be more measurement error in the hourly wage variable we derive than in weekly earnings, because both earnings and working hours will be misreported by some workers. To reduce this imprecision in our analysis, we limited hours paid to a maximum of 50 per week prior to calculating the hourly wage variable, and also treated as missing data apparent hourly wage rates of more than $100. (In combination, these adjustments affect about 5 per cent of the sample.)

Table 5.15b shows the resulting distribution of hourly wage rates, by occupation, for disability service workers. Just over half of all workers in the sector had an hourly wage rate between $20 and $29 (inclusive), with the largest proportion (33 per cent) paid between $20 and $24 per hour. The mean hourly wage rate in the disability services sector ($24) was lower than the mean hourly cash earnings for all female employees ($27.60, excluding overtime), according to the ABS Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) conducted in August 2008 (ABS, 2009c, p.20). As with weekly earnings, the distribution of hourly wage rates differed according to occupation in the disability services sector. Non-professionals were the lowest paid, with one third working for less than $20 per hour and about three-quarters working for less than $25 per hour. Professional workers were the highest paid in the disability services sector, with about one third of these workers earning at least $30 per hour.

Managers in the disability services sector had a significantly lower average hourly wage rate ($26) than female managers generally ($33.70), according to the EEH survey (ABS, 2009c, p.23).

Earnings differed significantly between the government and non-government sector. Thus, nearly 60 per cent of government disability workers earned $800 per week or more, compared to about 35 per cent of non-government workers. In large part, this was because hourly earnings in the government sector were higher: about 65 per cent of government workers earned $25 or more per hour compared to 35 per cent of non-government workers.

Table 5.15a: Weekly earnings by occupation in the disability services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
$1 to 399	25	6	6	17
$400 to 799	52	37	30	43
$800 to 1199	22	40	49	32
$1200 to 1599	2	16	11	6
$1600 or more	*	*	4	1
Total	100	100	100	N=1374

Missing cases = 143
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 5.15b: Hourly wage rates by occupation in the disability services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than $20	35	16	13	26
$20 to 24	38	19	30	33
$25 to 29	17	29	30	22
$30 to 34	8	19	17	12
$35 to 39	1	12	4	4
$40 or more	1	5	5	3
Total	100	100	100	N=1324

Missing cases = 193
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

In some industries and occupations, workers quite often hold multiple jobs. Particularly where their primary job is part-time, this may indicate that they are unable to get the number of hours of work they would like. Multiple job holding may also reduce their attachment to their jobs.

Nearly one quarter of non-professional disability workers in our survey said they held a second job (Table 5.16). About half of those had second jobs in the disability sector. Non-professionals holding second jobs worked an average of 15 hours per week in those jobs

(analysis not shown in tables). Multiple job holding amongst professionals and managers/administrators was more limited, with less than 15 per cent holding a second job.

Table 5.16:   Number of jobs by occupation in the disability services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Has one job only	76	88	89	81
Job 2 same sector	13	6	4	9
Job 2 elsewhere	11	7	7	9
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

5.2   A Profile of Disability Service Outlets

Disability services are provided by a range of government and non-government organisations. Our survey of disability 'outlets' focused on agencies and offices that directly provide disability services. In this section of the report, we present a profile of these outlets.[13] The profile covers the size of outlets, the mix of services they provide, their funding arrangements and their use of casual and contract staff.

5.2.1   Size of outlets

Non-profits employed the majority of disability workers (over 70 per cent), while government organisations employed almost all of the remainder (Table 5.2). Non-profit outlets varied considerably in size, with about 40 per cent employing 10 or fewer disability workers and almost the same proportion employing more than 20 (Table 5.17). Government outlets were slightly less likely to be small (10 or fewer disability workers) and more likely to be large (over 20 disability workers) than non-government ones.

Table 5.17:   Distribution of disability services outlets by sector and employment size (number of direct care workers), 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	**Private**	**Government**	**Total**
1 to 5	22	42	17	23
6 to 10	18	*	18	18
11 to 20	22	*	27	22
21 to 40	18	19	15	18
41 or more	19	*	24	20
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.2.2   Mix of Services

Organisations in the community services sector often provide services across a variety of community service areas, though this is more common in some areas than others. We asked service outlets what proportion of their service activity (measured by the number of hours worked by relevant workers) was in disability services, and what proportion was in other community service areas. About 60 per cent of non-profits providing disability services did not provide any other services (Table 5.18). Of the remainder, the majority said that most of their activity was in areas other than disability services. The small group of private disability service providers presented a similar picture. In contrast, only about one third of government outlets providing disability services were exclusive disability providers. Nearly half said that most of their activity was in areas other than disability.

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[13] The profile presented here is weighted to ensure that the figures reflect the actual contribution of outlets in each State and Territory to the national totals.

Table 5.18: Proportion of direct service activity (staff hours) in the disability services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	Private	Government	Total
Less than 50%	28	19	46	30
50% to 99%	12	19	18	14
100%	60	62	36	56
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

5.2.3   Funding Sources and Conditions

Community service organisations in the non-government sector may receive funding from a variety of sources including various levels of government, charitable sources and donations. Our survey asked outlets to specify the proportion of their funding that came from each of the main sources. We show only the breakdown for non-profit outlets because government outlets receive their funding as government agencies by definition, and very little disability service is provided by private for-profit outlets. Virtually all non-profit outlets in this sector received most of their funding from government sources (Table 5.19), with State level sources being the most common. Just over 10 per cent of non-profits said that they received the majority of their funding from non-government sources.

Table 5.19: Principal funding source in the disability services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit
Government agency	29
Commonwealth government sources	10
State government sources	45
Local government sources	1
Non-government sources	12
Mixture	4
Total	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Shows proportion of outlets receiving the majority of their funding from each source shown.

Community services organisations are often given funding that is conditional on certain levels, standards or types of service being provided. Our survey asked outlets whether there were any special conditions of this kind attached to any of their funding, and if so what these conditions were. About 40 per cent of non-profit disability service outlets indicated that such conditions did apply to some of their funding (Table 5.20). Interestingly, about one quarter of government outlets also said that some of their funding was conditional.

The main funding conditions to which disability outlets were subject are listed in Table 5.20. It is important to recognise that outlets may have been subject to more than one condition, and we asked outlets to specify all of the conditions that applied to their funding. Over 80 per cent of non-profit and government outlets that had conditional funding were subject to service quantity targets. About 40 per cent were required to meet staffing levels in both sectors, if they had funding that was subject to conditions. Some outlets also had funding

that was subject to other conditions such as accessibility and after hours opening requirements.

Table 5.20:   Funding conditions in the disability services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	**Private**	**Government**	**Total**
Unconditional	61	81	72	64
Conditional	39	19	28	36
	100	100	100	100
Funding conditional on:				
Required staffing levels	43	*	38	44
Service quantity targets	87	*	82	85
After-hours opening	20	*	37	23
Accessibility	25	*	45	28
Other	14	0	*	12

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Multiple funding conditions could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent. Within the 'Other' category, the funding conditions reported most frequently by disability service office or outlets were: Service quality, Hours (including number of hours, time of day) and Providing services to specific demographic target groups.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.2.4   Use of Contract and Casual Staff

As we have already seen, about one third of the large group of non-professional workers providing disability services were employed casually. However, casual employment was much rarer amongst professional and managerial/administrative staff, and very few staff were employed on limited term contracts in any occupation. Staff may be employed casually or on contracts under a variety of conditions and for a variety of reasons. Our survey asked outlets whether they employed such staff, and if so why they used them.

Most non-profit and government disability services outlets did use contract or casual staff or both (Table 5.21). Indeed, only one quarter of all disability outlets did not employ staff on either of these forms of contract. Generally, outlets that used these staff employed either only casual staff or both contract and casual staff; very few employed contract staff but not casuals. Close to 70 per cent of outlets employed casual staff, while contract staff were employed by about 45 per cent.

Since casuals employed by non-profit outlets were by far the most common non-permanent staff in the disability sector, the reasons that these outlets use such staff are of most interest. Outlets could nominate multiple reasons for using these staff. About half of non-profits that used casuals said that they were used for each of three reasons: to replace permanent staff on leave, to respond to fluctuating or unpredictable demand, and for short notice shift cover (presumably mainly due to permanent staff being unavailable at short notice). Government outlets using such staff did so for similar reasons, though they were even more likely to refer to replacing permanent staff on leave. Although contract staff were much less often employed than casual staff, replacement of permanent staff on leave was most often the reason when they were used. A number of outlets also employed contract staff for specific projects or because of non-recurrent funding.

Table 5.21: **Use of contract and casual staff in the disability services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-profit	Private	Government	Total
Neither	24	36	18	24
Contract only	7	0	17	9
Casual only	30	48	18	29
Both	39	16	47	39
Total	100	100	100	100
Why use contract workers?				
Non-recurrent funding	37	*	19	32
Specific project	47	*	29	42
Replace permanent staff on leave	57	0	87	63
Other reasons	13	*	24	17
Why use casual workers?				
Short notice shift cover	49	44	48	49
Replace permanent staff on leave	55	*	71	56
Fluctuating or unpredictable demand	57	84	41	56
Other reasons	22	*	16	21

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.3 Skills, Training and Preparation for Work

An appropriately skilled workforce is recognised as a crucial element in a comprehensive and effective disability services system. Formal training and qualifications are central to the skill level of this workforce, as are a range of other learned competencies that allow workers to handle the complex issues and problems they encounter at work. In this section of the report, we examine the qualifications and training of the disability services workforce, and describe workers' perceptions about their skills and how these are used in their current jobs. The analysis differentiates between seven broad types of qualifications, following the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) (ABS, 2001).

5.3.1 Level of education and field of qualification

The disability services workforce was comprised primarily of non-professionals, who made up close to two thirds of all equivalent full-time (EFT) workers in the sector (Table 5.3). These non-professionals were employed as disability support workers, residential support workers, personal carers, and home and community care workers. Most non-professionals working in disability services had post-school qualifications (Table 5.22). The most common type of qualification for these workers was a Certificate 3 or 4, which 54 per cent have obtained. Another 11 per cent of non-professionals had a Diploma, and 14 per cent of them had degrees. The main fields in which these workers had earned qualifications were disability (38 per cent) and community work (26 per cent), both of which are highly compatible with the skills needed in disability services (Table 5.23).

Managers and administrators employed in disability services constituted about one quarter of EFT employment in the sector (Table 5.3). They had quite a broad mixture of qualifications. About one third had a Bachelor degree or higher, one quarter had a Diploma, and another quarter had a Certificate 3 or 4 (Table 5.22). They were about evenly divided between workers whose highest qualification was in an area directly relevant to the activities of the disability services sector (e.g., disability, community work) and those whose qualification was in another, less closely related field (e.g., business) (Table 5.23). This qualification mix suggests that the managerial positions in disability services are probably filled by a combination of recruiting from outside the sector and promoting internally those who have worked as professional or non-professional carers earlier in their careers.

Professionals, who made up approximately the remaining 10 per cent of EFT employment in the sector, were the most highly-educated group of disability service workers. About 70 per cent of these professionals had degrees, including 22 per cent with postgraduate qualifications (Table 5.22). Their qualifications had principally been earned in fields relevant to disability service work, such as community work, social work and disability, but like manager/administrators there was also a substantial proportion – over one third of professionals – whose qualifications came from other fields (Table 5.23). This finding likely reflects the fact that one third of the professionals employed in disability services were allied health workers who have completed specialist qualifications in areas such as physiotherapy, nutrition and podiatry (Table 5.3).

When compared with the whole Australian workforce, the disability services workforce was more highly educated, with fewer persons having no post-school qualifications. The major difference is at the Certificate 3 or 4 level. Disability service workers were about twice as likely to have this type of qualification as Australian workers generally. And this is largely

due to the fact that more than half of non-professional disability workers had a Certificate 3 or 4 as their highest qualification (Table 5.22).

Amongst non-professionals, government employees were more likely to have qualifications in community work than non-government ones. Thus, just over half of government non-professionals had a highest qualification in community work, compared to just over one fifth of non-government non-professionals. Non-government workers in this occupational group were more likely to have qualifications in disability or various other areas. A similar pattern holds in relation to the field of the most relevant qualification for non-professionals.

There are also significant variations across States and Territories in field of highest qualification. Thus, half of non-professionals in Victoria and South Australia had a highest qualification in the disability area, compared to about 30 per cent in NSW, Queensland and Western Australia. In the latter States there was a correspondingly higher proportion with highest qualifications in 'other' areas. However, this pattern was not reproduced in relation to the field of the qualification that respondents saw as most relevant to their job (see next section). Thus, it seems likely that overqualified non-professional disability workers in NSW, Queensland and Western Australia do nevertheless often have disability qualifications that are relevant to their jobs.

Table 5.22:   Highest level of education/qualification in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Postgraduate degree	4	22	15	9	8
Bachelor degree	10	49	19	18	19
Diploma	11	14	23	15	10
Certificate 3 or 4	54	8	25	39	19
Year 12	8	3	8	7	17
Year 11 or Certificate 1 or 2	4	*	2	3	12
Year 10 or below	9	3	9	8	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2009d.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 5.23: **Field of highest qualification in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	2	18	4	5
Disability	38	12	20	29
Psychology, counselling	3	8	8	5
Community work	26	23	21	24
Youth work	1	*	0	1
Other	30	37	47	36
Total	100	100	100	N=1193

Missing cases = 173
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by disability workers were (in descending order): Nursing, Education, Business/Business Management and Administration.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.3.2 Qualifications most relevant to the work

Workers' highest qualifications are not necessarily those that turn out to be most relevant to their jobs. Significant discrepancies between the highest qualification and that most relevant to the job suggest that workers are accepting jobs outside their field of primary interest and skill because more suitable jobs are unavailable. We asked disability service workers who had post-school qualifications about the level and field of their qualification most relevant to their current job. In most cases, workers' highest qualification is also the one most relevant to their job; an important indication that employers are utilising the range of skills available to them and that workers are receiving an adequate return on their investment in education.

Table 5.24 shows a breakdown of workers' perceptions about the level of their most relevant post-school qualification. As we would expect, workers in non-professional positions were more likely to nominate a certificate level qualification as the most relevant to their job than professionals or managers, who more often selected higher qualifications as being the most relevant to their work. One notable feature of Table 5.24 is the high proportion of disability workers who identified a Certificate 3 or 4 as the most relevant to their job, even when they had completed a higher qualification. For instance, 25 per cent of managers and administrators had a Certificate 3 or 4 as their highest qualification (Table 5.22), yet 33 per cent said it was their most relevant qualification (Table 5.24). Similarly, 54 per cent of non-professionals had a Certificate 3 or 4 as their highest qualification, yet 72 per cent said it was the qualification most useful in their current job. These differences suggest that some disability service workers are in jobs that do not make full use of their skills, an issue that we examine more closely later in this section.

Looking across the whole disability services workforce, there is a strong perception that the most relevant qualifications are those obtained in service-related fields such as disability and community work. About one third of current workers said their most relevant qualification was one relating specifically to disability work, and another quarter said this about a qualification in community work (Table 5.25). This pattern is also observed for non-professional workers as a group, but is not so strongly evident among professionals or

managers/administrators. Half of professionals, and over 40 per cent of managers, said that their most relevant qualifications are from other fields that are not directly connected to service provision within the disability sector. We interpret this as indicating that professional and managerial jobs in disability are more specialised positions, where formal training in disability may be useful but is often not a requirement for employment in the sector.

Table 5.24: Level of qualification most relevant to current job in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	2	15	11	7
Bachelor degree	9	58	23	22
Diploma	7	14	25	13
Certificate 3 or 4	72	5	33	49
Other qualification	10	8	7	9
Total	100	100	100	N= 1114

Missing cases = 252
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications.

Table 5.25: Field of qualification most relevant to current job in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	1	13	2	3
Disability	48	13	24	35
Psychology, counselling	3	4	6	4
Community work	28	17	24	25
Youth work	*	*	*	1
Other	19	50	43	31
Total	100	100	100	N=950

Missing cases = 416
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by disability workers were Nursing, Education and Occupational Therapy.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.3.3   Current study

One way of increasing the overall and average levels of skill in a workforce is to hire new workers whose average skill levels are higher than those of existing workers. Another very important route to improved skills in a workforce is for existing workers to upgrade their qualifications. Workers who gain qualifications while on the job include those obtaining a first qualification that is relevant to their work, those seeking qualifications that will allow them to fill higher level positions in the field, and those simply seeking to update their skills.

Undertaking study for a qualification is quite common in the disability services workforce, especially among non-professionals and managers/administrators (Table 5.26). In general, the types of qualifications that disability service workers were currently studying resembled the types of qualifications already represented in, and perceived to be most relevant by, the members of the occupational group to which they belong. Hence, non-professional workers were typically studying for certificate level qualifications if they did study, while professional workers were undertaking degrees (Table 5.27). Managers and administrators who did study were particularly likely to be doing diplomas or certificates, which suggests they were endeavouring to add to their practical understanding of the disability sector. This argument is confirmed by the evidence in Table 5.28 that 40 per cent of managers and administrators who were studying were pursuing a qualification either in disability or community work; the fields that are typically seen by disability workers as most relevant to employment in their sector (Table 5.25). Non-professional students were also typically seeking qualifications in one of these two important fields. Half of them were studying for a qualification that is specific to disability.

Table 5.26:   Whether currently studying for any qualification, disability workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	26	15	30	25
No	74	85	70	75
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 5.27:   Qualification level of current study, disability workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	5	40	11	10
Bachelor degree	19	13	14	17
Diploma	12	*	43	22
Certificate 3 or 4	59	27	33	48
Other qualification	3	*	0	3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 5.28: Qualification field of current study, disability workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	3	*	9	5
Disability	49	9	17	35
Psychology, counselling	6	*	10	8
Community work	16	*	23	18
Business	7	*	32	15
Other	20	44	9	18
Total	100	100	100	N=366

Missing cases = 17

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by disability workers were Nursing, Education and Fitness/Massage/ Alternative Medicine.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.3.4   Skill utilisation and mismatch

Even though workers have relevant qualifications and training, they may still find that they lack the skills needed for their jobs. Alternatively, they may find that the skills they do have are not used in their jobs. Each of these situations represents a skill mismatch (under-skilling in the first case, and over-skilling in the second case). These mismatches cause friction, and are known to have a variety of other negative consequences, including unsatisfactory work performance, low job satisfaction and high employee turnover.

Disability service workers almost universally agreed with the proposition that they have the skills needed to do their jobs, when we put this question to them in our survey (Table 5.29a). At least 92 per cent of workers across all occupational categories agreed with this proposition. The proportion disagreeing was 2 per cent for the whole sector (with 4 per cent neutral).   These results suggest that disability service workers see a very close match between their own skills and the skills they are required to demonstrate in their jobs.

We put a similar question to disability service employers in our survey of outlets or offices. Their responses, while generally consistent with workers' perceptions, differ in two respects. First, employers see a higher incidence of under-skilling than workers do. The proportion of outlets reporting that they had no under-skilled workers was 57 per cent, implying that about 43 per cent had at least one under-skilled worker. Around one third of disability providers said that less than half their employees were under-skilled, and another 10 per cent said that half or more of their workers were under-skilled. Second, employers saw much greater variation in the incidence of under-skilling across occupations than workers did. While only about one fifth of outlets said their managers/administrators were under-skilled, more than half of outlets said they had at least one under-skilled non-professional worker.

When it does exist, under-skilling is mostly mild in severity, in the sense that it affects relatively few members of an office or outlet. However, 16 per cent of disability providers said that at least half of their non-professional workers were under-skilled, and 10 per cent

said the same about their managers/administrators (Table 5.29b). These perceptions among employers may help to explain the relatively high rates of current study among non-professionals and managers/administrators in the disability sector (Table 5.26). This further study is likely to be quite an effective response to under-skilling, provided that, once their training is over, workers intend to remain in the disability sector (see further analysis in Section 5.6).

Table 5.29a: Perceived skill match ('I have the skills I need to do my current job') in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	2	*	1	2
Neutral	4	6	4	4
Agree	93	92	95	94
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 5.29b: Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are under-skilled in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	45	73	78	57
Under half	39	21	12	32
About half	7	*	3	5
Over half	9	5	7	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

We also asked employees and employers to give their views about the extent of over-skilling, where workers are not using some or all of the skills they possess in their current positions. Again the two groups have quite different perceptions of this issue. About 90 per cent of disability service workers said they use many of their own skills on the job, and there is no variation in this perception across occupations (Table 5.30a). These results imply that workers see a very low rate of over-skilling in the disability sector. Their employers, by comparison, see a larger problem. About 40 per cent of disability service providers said that some of their workers are over-skilled, and this perception applies especially to non-professional workers (Table 5.30b).

Our results highlight two problems for disability service providers. First, they appear to face significant skill imbalances in both directions. There are ongoing challenges for providers to clarify their skill requirements and to recruit, promote, retain and, if necessary, train, the workers who meet these requirements, particularly non-professionals. Second, the disability workers themselves generally do not recognise that employers are dissatisfied with their current skills. This perception will need to change if providers wish to alter their skills mix.

Table 5.30a: **Perceived skill utilisation ('I use many of my skills in my current job') in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	3	5	3	3
Neutral	6	5	6	6
Agree	91	91	91	91
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 5.30b: **Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are over-skilled in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	65	75	75	62
Under half	26	12	13	26
About half	5	4	3	7
Over half	4	9	10	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.4   *The Work Experience*

People's experience of their job is essential to understanding the dynamics of any workforce. Employees' motivations and experiences at work have large effects on who enters occupations, on workers' performance in their jobs, on their propensity to remain with an employer and in an industry, on their inclination to develop and upgrade skills, and on many other aspects of workforce dynamics. Our survey of disability workers collected data allowing us to profile workers' experience in four main areas: their motivations for entering and remaining in the sector, their job satisfaction, their experience of workplace relationships, and their experience of autonomy and control in the workplace. Together, these experiences provide a sound basis for a basic profile of the work experience of disability workers.

5.4.1   Recruitment and retention

People's motivations in entering their jobs both predict their commitment to them, and colour their response to their work experiences. When asked why they were first attracted to work in disability services, workers in our survey most often acknowledged aspects of their work that were intrinsic to performing it. Thus, a desire to help others was chosen by three quarters of workers with little difference across occupations (Table 3.31). A desire to do something worthwhile was chosen by nearly 70 per cent, again with little variation across occupations. Other aspects of the job, such as the learning it involved and the possibility of applying skills, or the variety in tasks were also commonly selected, each by close to half of respondents. Rewards which are extrinsic to employees' jobs – job security and career prospects – were each selected by around one quarter of respondents. Less than one in five respondents indicated that pay was a factor that attracted them to disability services. However, the flexibility in hours and shifts appears to be important, especially for non-professional workers, of whom over 40 per cent said that this mattered. Overall, these patterns show that disability workers were very likely to select intrinsic rewards – those arising directly out of the experience of doing their jobs – as the reasons they chose to work in the sector. Extrinsic rewards such as job security, pay and flexible hours or shifts were selected by a much smaller proportion of workers, though they were clearly important to a significant group.

Table 5.31: **Reasons attracted to work in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Desire to help others	79	76	69	76
Desire to do something worthwhile	66	75	70	68
Variety in tasks	45	51	46	46
Learning, training, application of skills	44	54	43	45
Work being valued and appreciated	44	48	41	44
Independence, autonomy, responsibility in work	38	44	38	39
Flexibility in hours, shifts	43	28	26	36
Supportive co-workers and management	28	30	32	29
Job security	30	28	24	28
Career prospects	20	16	26	21
Pay	17	15	15	16
Other reasons	4	4	4	4

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so values do not sum to 100 per cent.

Workers' organisational commitment affects the likelihood that they will stay in their jobs, and is associated with their commitment in performing their work. Our survey used a single simple measure: whether a respondent would turn down another job with higher pay to remain in their current organisation. About half of non-professional disability workers and managers/administrators indicated that they would prefer to continue working in their current organisation than move to a higher paying job elsewhere (Table 5.32). This is a significantly higher level of organisational commitment than is generally found in the Australian female workforce, where about one quarter of workers agreed with the statement, according to data from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 shown in Table 5.32. Professionals were less likely to think they would stay in their jobs if a better paid position was on offer, though one third did hold this view. These levels of organisational commitment are amongst the highest in the community services sector, and confirm that many disability workers find rewards other than pay in their jobs.

Table 5.32: **Organisational commitment ('I would turn down another job that offered quite a bit more pay to stay with this organisation') in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Disagree	34	43	31	35	49
Neutral	18	23	17	18	24
Agree	48	34	51	47	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

5.4.2   Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is widely recognised as a key indicator of employees' experience in the workplace. It is related to whether workers stay in their jobs, and whether they intend to, and also to many aspects of job performance. Our survey used an 11 point job satisfaction scale in which respondents were asked to rate their job satisfaction from 'totally dissatisfied' (0) to 'totally satisfied' (10) on a range of aspects of their jobs. Thus, scores above 5 indicate some level of satisfaction with the job, while those below 5 indicate dissatisfaction. This question was reproduced from the Household and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, allowing benchmarking against national figures.

Overall, disability workers generally expressed some level of satisfaction with their work, with mean scores well above 5 on all aspects of their jobs except 'total pay' (Table 5.33). Differences across occupational groups were generally small, though professionals did have somewhat lower satisfaction than non-professionals on 'the work itself' and 'overall' job satisfaction. Disability workers' job satisfaction was highly comparable with that of the Australian female workforce as a whole on all aspects of their jobs, except their job and, especially, their 'total pay' (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 5.33). Satisfaction with total pay was strikingly low amongst disability workers, about 1.5 points on the 11 point scale lower than for the Australian female workforce. This low pay satisfaction is common amongst community services workers, and has been previously noted in the aged care sector (Martin and King 2008).

Table 5.33: **Employee satisfaction with various dimensions of their work in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
The work itself	8.0	7.3	8.0	7.9	7.7
Overall job satisfaction	7.8	7.3	7.8	7.7	7.7
Work/life balance	7.6	7.5	7.6	7.6	7.5
Your job security	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.3	8.0
The hours you work	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.3	7.3
Your total pay	5.4	5.5	5.9	5.5	7.0

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).
Note: Weighted means (ranked by total within sector) and scaled from 0 (Totally dissatisfied) to 10 (Totally satisfied)

5.4.3 Relationships in the workplace

Workplace relationships have a strong influence on workers' commitment to their workplace and their jobs, and to their propensity to stay in their jobs. Our survey asked about respondents' perceptions of the relationships between employees and management, and between workmates. We used a question from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 to facilitate benchmarking of disability workers responses against national patterns.

Overwhelmingly, disability workers perceived relations between management and employees as positive (Table 5.34). Over 80 per cent of respondents saw relations as either 'quite good' or 'very good', with very little variation between occupational groups. Comparison with the Australian female workforce indicates that disability workers were more likely to view these relationships as 'very good' than the average Australian female worker, with nearly half of non-professionals and managers/administrators holding this view compared to about a third of all Australian female employees. There was a small tendency for non-government disability workers to be even more positive about these relationships than government ones. Thus, while 41 per cent of government employees described the relationships as 'very good', some 50 per cent of non-government workers gave this response.

Disability workers have even more unequivocally positive views about relations between workmates/colleagues (Table 5.35). About 60 per cent of those in each occupation viewed these relationships as 'very good'. This is well above the proportion of all Australian female workers who hold this view. Indeed, around 90 per cent of disability workers had a positive view of the relations between workmates. Again, there was a tendency for some government workers to be even more positive than non-government workers. Thus, some 70 per cent of government professionals and 62 per cent of government managers/administrators described these relationships as 'very good', compared to 54 per cent and 49 per cent respectively of their non-government counterparts.

These results suggest that disability workers generally find considerable support from workmates and, only to a slightly lesser extent, managers in the difficult work they undertake. These relationships are likely to be very important in determining the commitment and effectiveness with which they work, and the likelihood they will remain in their jobs.

Table 5.34:   Perceived relations between management and employees in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Very bad	2	3	1	2	3
Quite bad	7	10	7	7	9
Neither good nor bad	9	13	9	10	15
Quite good	32	33	35	33	43
Very good	49	41	48	48	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

Table 5.35:   Perceived relations between workmates/colleagues in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Very bad	*	0	0	*	1
Quite bad	3	*	2	3	2
Neither good nor bad	5	10	7	6	10
Quite good	33	26	31	32	48
Very good	58	62	59	59	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.4.4   Autonomy and task discretion

The extent to which workers feel they have control over how they do their jobs is strongly associated with their job satisfaction and commitment to their jobs. Our survey asked respondents about how much freedom they have in deciding how to do their work, and whether they believe they have adequate control over their work tasks.

In general, disability workers indicated that they have quite high and adequate levels of control over their work. Three quarters or more of disability sector respondents agreed that

they 'have a lot of freedom to decide how' they do their work (Table 5.36). These proportions are higher than in the Australian workforce as a whole, where 59 per cent of employed women hold this view (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 5.36), but they are similar to those amongst community based aged care workers (Martin and King 2008: 85). The latter comparison suggests that disability work is organised in ways that require similar levels of discretion on the part of workers as community based aged care work.

Table 5.36:   **Perceived job autonomy ('I have a lot of freedom to decide how I do my work') in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Disagree	11	10	8	10	25
Neutral	16	12	10	14	16
Agree	73	78	82	76	59
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).

Disability workers were also very likely to say that they have 'adequate control over' their work tasks, with about 80 per cent of respondents holding this view (Table 5.37). There were virtually no differences in this view by occupation.

Overall, these patterns suggest that disability workers have a strong sense of autonomy in their work, and believe that their discretion is at adequate levels. These views are likely to have positive effects on their commitment to their work and jobs.

Table 5.37:   **Perceived task discretion ('I have adequate control over my work tasks') in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	8	10	7	8
Neutral	11	10	7	10
Agree	82	80	86	83
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

5.5   *Meeting Labour Demand*

Employers, policy makers and employees alike have a strong interest in various aspects of how labour demand is met. We collected information on a range of aspects of the process of filling vacancies, including the level of vacancies and the ease with which they are filled, and the process by which employees typically find jobs.

5.5.1   Vacancy rates

The number of vacancies employers have is one important indicator of the state of the labour market for workers in an industry. Just under 70 per cent of disability service outlets responding to our survey had no vacancies for disability workers of any kind (Table 5.38). One fifth had vacancies for non-professional workers, the most common kind, and most of these had two or fewer vacant positions. Around 10 per cent of outlets had vacancies for professionals and around 7 per cent had vacancies for managers/administrators. Given the fact that three quarters of disability workers are non-professionals and less than 10 per cent are professionals (Table 5.3), this suggests that outlets have much more difficulty recruiting or retaining professionals and managers/administrators than non-professionals.

Table 5.38:   Number of equivalent full-time (EFT) vacancies in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	81	90	92	69
1 or less	8	6	6	14
More than 1 to 2	4	2	1	5
More than 2	7	2	*	11
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.5.2   How employees find jobs

How employees find jobs is a central aspect of the operation of any labour market. Disability services organisations' capacity to find the workers with the skills they need, and to recruit them to jobs, partly depend on how workers find out about the jobs available to them. Most studies of labour markets show that formal methods of recruitment, such as job advertisements in newspapers or on the internet, are important routes for recruitment. However, informal methods, such as those based on family or friendship networks, are also frequently important.

Our survey of employees asked how they found their jobs. Non-professionals in disability services were more likely to find jobs through informal means than were professionals or managers/administrators. Indeed, nearly 40 per cent of non-professionals found their jobs through friendship or family networks and about one fifth found them simply by asking employers for a job (Table 5.39). Nevertheless, nearly one third of non-professionals heard about their jobs through advertisements (either in newspapers or on the internet). In contrast, such formal methods were much more commonly the basis on which professionals and managers/administrators found their jobs, with about half hearing about their jobs

through some form of advertisement. Nevertheless, well over one third of professionals and managers/administrators said they heard about their jobs through friends or family, or by simply approaching an employer for a job.

These patterns suggest that disability service agencies are able to rely more on informal recruitment pathways for workers with lower levels of formally certified skills (non-professionals), while they are likely to use more formal channels to find employees with higher level training (professionals). However, neither formal nor informal recruitment pathways are used exclusively in any occupation. It is likely that paying conscious attention to both forms of recruitment, while being aware of their relative importance, will ensure the most efficient recruitment experiences for both employers and employees.

Table 5.39: How discovered that current job in the disability services sector was available, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Friend, family networks	38	29	29	34
Newspaper	25	37	34	29
Approach to employer	19	9	11	15
Internet	6	11	8	7
Other	4	5	8	5
Employment agency	6	*	4	5
Workplace notice-board	2	*	5	2
Government notice, gazette	1	4	2	2
Total	100	100	100	N=1482

Missing cases = 35
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Response categories are ranked in descending order by the total for all occupations. Within the 'Other' category, the most frequently reported responses by disability workers were: Approached by Employer and Work Placement/Work Experience.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.5.3   Difficulties filling vacancies

How long employers take to fill vacancies is a useful indicator of the difficulty they have in finding suitable workers. Disability outlets found it easier to fill non-professional vacancies than professional or managerial/administrative ones. Over 70 per cent of the most recent non-professional vacancies were filled within 4 weeks, compared to a little over 40 per cent of professional vacancies and just over half of managerial/administrative ones (Table 5.40). A small number of professional vacancies, just over 15 per cent, had taken 3 months or more to fill, compared to virtually no non-professional vacancies.

In general, despite the time taken to fill vacancies, outlets usually had applicants for them. Thus, there were 3 or more applicants for four fifths of the most recent non-professional jobs, and for nearly two thirds of the most recent professional and managerial/administrative

ones (Table 5.41). Nevertheless, a small proportion of vacancies attracted no applicants. This was fairly unusual for non-professional jobs, more common for professional ones, and most common for managerial/administrative positions where nearly one fifth of most recent vacancies attracted no applicants. This pattern is consistent with least difficulty in filling non-professional positions.

Table 5.40: **Average number of weeks required to fill most recent vacancy in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
2 or less	37	21	28	27
More than 2 to 4	34	22	26	27
More than 4 to 8	16	26	23	25
More than 8 to 12	8	15	15	11
More than 12 to 26	4	11	8	7
More than 26	*	5	*	2
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 5.41: **Average number of applicants for most recent vacancy in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	7	12	18	7
1	7	11	9	5
2	4	12	10	9
3 to 5	27	29	24	27
6 to 10	22	16	22	25
11 to 20	18	9	9	15
More than 20	14	11	9	12
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.5.4 Suitability of recent hires

In labour markets where the labour supply is tightly constrained, employers will be forced to offer jobs to workers who do not have the skills the employer sees as ideal for the position. In general, employers will prefer to hire workers who have all the skills they need for their jobs before they begin. This removes the need for employers to spend time and resources training workers, or to accept reduced productivity. However, it is important to be aware that when employers hire workers without optimal skills, this does not mean that an organisation is unable to perform necessary duties or functions. Instead, employers may have to provide additional training for such workers, or hire more employees to ensure that necessary tasks are completed. Where additional training is provided, newly hired workers who have

undergone this training may quickly gain the optimal set of skills. Thus, the issue of whether the skills of newly hired workers are optimal from the employers' viewpoint is primarily an indicator of the state of the labour market, and not a measure of the skill level of the employed workforce in its day to day work.

Our survey asked outlets whether the most recently hired worker in each occupational group had optimal skills for the job for which he/she was hired, minimum but not optimal skills, or did not have all the skills needed for the job (see Appendix 1 for exact question wording). Disability outlets indicated that they often appointed non-professional workers without optimal skills. Indeed, 60 per cent of outlets said that their most recent non-professional appointee did not have optimal skills (Table 5.42). Most appointees did have the minimum skills needed for the job, though nearly 15 per cent of outlets said that their most recent non-professional appointee did not have the skills needed for the job. In sharp contrast, nearly 80 per cent of outlets said that the most recent professional they had hired had optimal skills for the job, while all of the remainder said that appointees had the minimum skills, rather than lacking some necessary skills. Most recent managerial/administrative appointees were also sufficiently skilled – with 60 per cent of outlets indicating that their most recent appointee had optimal skills.

Thus, it seems that disability outlets are much more willing to employ lower skill (non-professional) workers who may need some additional training to gain skills necessary for their jobs than to hire professional or managerial/administrative workers with similar skill deficiencies. Indeed, the higher frequency of outlets taking a long time to fill professional compared to non-professional vacancies is consistent with this pattern.

Table 5.42: Employers' perceptions of whether recently-hired workers have optimal skills for their jobs in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Under skilled	14	0	8	8
Minimum skills	46	22	32	36
Optimal skills	40	78	60	56
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not make any recent appointments.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.6 Employment Preferences and Intentions

The degree of fit between workers' skills and the skill requirements of their jobs is one, but certainly not the only, important determinant of work performance and workplace harmony. It is also relevant whether the terms and conditions of employment that employees desire are in accordance with their current circumstances at work. Where these preferences are not in line with existing arrangements, and cannot be easily aligned with employers' expectations or needs, workers are likely to feel less satisfied with their work and more inclined to change jobs. Workers also leave jobs for other reasons that are outside employers' influence, such as the desire to study, travel abroad, or raise a family.

In this section, we examine several aspects of disability service workers' preferences and work plans, using the data from our workforce survey. We ask whether these workers had the type of employment contract they preferred, and whether they had their desired number of paid work hours. Where their current and desired working hours did not match, we estimate by how much, and in which direction, their hours would have had to change to reach their indicated preference. We then report on disability service workers' short-term employment intentions and career plans. We ask how many expected to still be working for their current employer in 12 months and, for those that expected to move on, what motivates this intention. Finally, as an indicator of the medium-term outlook for employee turnover, we estimate the proportion of disability service workers who expected to still be working in this sector in 3 years.

5.6.1 Preferences for terms of employment

The composition of the Australian workforce has changed in important ways over the past two decades. Between 1992 and 2008, the proportion of employees working on a permanent, full-time basis fell from 71 per cent to 64 per cent, alongside increasing part-time and casual employment. In 2008, casual workers comprised 23 per cent of employees aged 15 to 64 years, and 28 per cent of female employees in this age group (ABS 2009e). Our survey of community services offices and outlets shows that casual employment is about as common in the disability services sector as in the whole Australian workforce. According to disability providers, 24 per cent of direct care workers were in casual jobs in 2009 (Table 5.4). This figure is on par with the Australian workforce estimate of 23 per cent in 2008, and is slightly below the female casual employment estimate of 28 per cent.

Although casual employment is not used noticeably more often by disability providers than by other Australian employers on average, it is significantly more prevalent than workers in the sector would like. Disability service workers overwhelmingly have a desire for permanent employment: 87 per cent would like to have this type of position, with only 10 per cent favouring a casual appointment (Table 5.43). Non-professionals were somewhat more likely than other disability workers to prefer casual jobs (16 per cent), but double this proportion worked casually in the sector already (Table 5.4), implying a wide gap between workers' expressed preferences and actual circumstances. Some non-professionals tolerated this inconsistency in the hope of moving eventually into the professions, where permanent jobs are more readily available. Others were sufficiently frustrated with their current jobs to search for outside opportunities, including perhaps in other industries (see further exploration of this in Section 5.6.3). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the preference for casual employment is concentrated amongst non-government workers in this occupational group. Thus, about 18 per cent of non-government non-professionals preferred

casual jobs, compared to about 6 per cent of government employees in the same kinds of occupations.

Table 5.43: **Preferred terms of employment in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent	81	97	95	87
Fixed term	3	*	4	3
Casual	16	2	1	10
Total	100	100	100	N=1330

Missing cases = 187
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.6.2   Hours of work preferences

Another critical determinant of employee satisfaction is the ability to find a job with working hours close to one's ideal. In general, employees' working hours preferences vary significantly by sex, age, marital status and family composition. Many would prefer to have fewer hours because they feel under excessive strain and would like to spare extra time for family and recreation, but continue working because they feel obligations to clients or workmates, or because they have come to depend on the extra income that the work generates. Others would choose to work longer hours because their circumstances have changed and they are looking to acquire further experience or increase their earnings, but meet resistance from their employers.

We asked employees to tell us first whether their working hours would be any different from their current situation if the decision was their own to make, bearing in mind the impact that any change would have on their earnings. The most common response to this question, that given by 67 per cent of disability service workers, was that they would keep their working hours much as they are now (Table 5.44). This result suggests that most workers in the sector are content with the hours they currently do.

The pattern of preferred hours exhibits some variation by occupation. Non-professionals were the most likely to want additional hours, while managers/administrators had the strongest demand for shorter working time (Table 5.44). The latter result is not surprising, given the earlier evidence that managers and administrators were older, more experienced, doing more unpaid hours of work, and higher paid, than other disability service workers (Tables 5.9, 5.13, 5.14 and 5.15). They would be expected to be the group most willing to reduce their paid hours in exchange for an increase in leisure time (and a reduction in work-related demands), because their higher salaries and positions enable this without risking future unemployment or a prohibitive cut in their living standards.

We then asked the workers who favoured some change in their working hours to tell us the number of hours they prefer. Disability service workers' responses to this more detailed item are shown in Table 5.45. For completeness, we include in the Table those workers who said they would prefer to leave their current hours unchanged. (Note that Tables 5.44 and 5.45 show marginally different estimates for this group, because some workers who said they

would change their hours, if they could, nonetheless stated a preference for the same number of hours as they were already working.)

The main observation to be made about Table 5.45 is that the workers who wanted additional hours (who were mostly non-professionals) generally wanted a substantial increase of 10 or more hours, while those who wanted shorter hours (who were mostly managers and administrators) typically wanted only a small reduction of less than 10 hours. We conclude from these results that there is significant scope for disability providers to increase the working hours of their current non-professional workers, without facing the high costs of recruiting new workers. It would be substantially more difficult to find a supply of professionals and managers willing to work additional hours, since many of these workers already appear to prefer a cut, and for some a very substantial cut, in their current working time.

Table 5.44: Preferred hours of employment relative to current hours in the disability sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Fewer	7	22	28	15
Same	67	70	65	67
More	26	8	7	18
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 5.45: Preferred hours of employment compared to current, per week, in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
10+ fewer	4	12	11	7
1 to 9 fewer	4	10	17	8
Same	69	71	66	68
1 to 9 more	10	5	5	8
10+ more	13	3	2	9
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

5.6.3 Future career intentions

Insights into employees' turnover intentions are useful for two reasons. First, they aid in the difficult task of workforce planning. Employers can better predict the number and types of vacancies they will have to fill if they can monitor or predict patterns of employee turnover. Second, turnover intentions are indicative of employee commitment and work satisfaction. When workers see themselves staying with an employer, or at least in their current industry, they are more likely to be motivated to form productive working relationships with clients, workmates and managers than when they see themselves changing jobs or not working.

Around 70 per cent of current employees in the disability services sector expected to still be in their jobs in 12 months (Table 5.46). An important finding here is that although non-professional workers were less likely than manager/administrators to have permanent jobs (see Table 5.4), they were no more likely to see themselves leaving their current employer in 12 months. About 6 per cent of disability service employees were confident they would leave their current job within 12 months. The remaining 23 per cent of workers were either uncertain about their future, or said that their decision to leave or stay would depend on what happens in their jobs and their personal lives over the next year.

We next asked workers who said they would, or might, leave their current jobs to tell us the main reason why they would do so. Their responses are shown (ranked in descending order of importance) in Table 5.47. Among the most important reasons for leaving or planning to leave was the desire to find another job. A slightly higher proportion of intended job-changers said they will achieve this by leaving the disability services sector than by moving to another job within it. Among the other important reasons disability service workers gave for leaving or planning to leave were financial factors (14 per cent), which may reflect dissatisfaction with their current pay or hours of work, and stress and burnout (13 per cent). Managers/administrators who intended to leave their current employment are especially likely to have said that their move is driven by financial factors, although our survey does not ask them to specify further what particular issues were at play (and hence whether their employer would have any power over them).

Finally, we asked current workers to look forward over a 3-year period and indicate whether they expect to be still working in disability services, working elsewhere, or not working at all for pay. Most disability service workers (61 per cent) said they would still be working in the sector 3 years from now (Table 5.48). This response was most likely to be given by non-professional workers, although it was the response given by a majority of workers in all three occupational groups. Based on these results, it seems that the sector can reasonably expect to retain many of its current staff for the near future. We are cautious about placing too heavy an emphasis on this finding, however, because of the high proportion (27 per cent) of disability service workers who said they did not know where – or even whether – they would be working for pay in 3 years. The government sector may be slightly less likely than the non-government sector to retain workers over this period since about 64 per cent of non-government workers compared to 55 per cent of government workers expected to be in disability work in 3 years.

Table 5.46: **Whether expect to be with same employer in 12 months in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	73	61	73	71
No	6	8	6	6
It depends	14	25	17	17
Don't know	6	7	4	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 5.47:   Main reason may leave employer in 12 months in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Job change, leaving sector	25	23	17	23
Job change, within sector	20	20	11	17
Financial reasons	10	15	22	14
Stress or burnout	15	8	15	13
Other reasons	8	8	10	8
Family reason	10	9	*	8
Contract ends	*	9	7	5
Study or travel	6	*	*	5
Retirement	*	*	7	4
Redundancy, retrenchment	*	*	6	3
Total	100	100	100	N=311

Missing cases = 36

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Estimating samples restricted to workers who say they will or might leave their current employer within 12 months. The 'Other reasons' category included: Problems with Manager or Workplace and Relocating/Moving/Migrating.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 5.48:   Where expect to be working in 3 years in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Working in this sector	64	56	58	61
Working elsewhere	7	11	9	8
Not working for pay	2	2	6	3
Don't know	26	30	26	27
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

5.7   *Career Paths*

Few employees remain in a single job or even a single organisation throughout their careers. As a result, patterns of entry into jobs and exit from them are central to understanding the dynamics of labour markets. They can also add important dimensions to the picture of workers' skills since career pathways are integral to the experiences and skills workers bring to their jobs. Moreover, patterns of exit from jobs indicate the extent to which experience based knowledge and skills are able to accumulate within a workforce. Understanding career pathways into disability jobs may suggest areas where common pathways can be supported and enhanced, or where common pathways suggest that there may be difficulties in career paths.

Our focus in this section of the report is on pathways into and out of disability jobs, rather than career progression amongst those who remain in the sector. We collected information on the jobs disability workers held before they entered the sector, their age at entry into the sector, their total experience in it, and reasons for moving jobs within the disability services area.

5.7.1   Career before current job

As we have noted above (Section 5.1.5), the disability workforce has a significantly older age profile than the whole Australian workforce, with over 60 per cent being aged 40 or over. As a result, disability workers bring a range of previous experiences to their jobs. Very few had no previous paid employment before entering disability services (Table 5.49). Only about one fifth of non-professionals, who make up the bulk of the disability workforce, had previously worked in welfare or care positions. About 40 per cent came from lower skill service occupations such as sales, clerical or hospitality positions. A little under 15 per cent had previously been professionals or managers outside the disability sector.

Nearly one quarter of professionals in disability had previously worked as welfare workers or carers in other sectors, and over one fifth had been professionals or managers in other sectors. Previous work in lower service positions (sales, clerical or hospitality) was quite common amongst professionals, with one third having held positions of this kind before working in disability. Managers and administrators also had quite varied backgrounds, with previous positions as professionals or managers, or in lower service work, being most common.

Table 5.49: Occupation before first job in disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
No previous paid job	7	7	8	7
Welfare worker elsewhere	5	15	8	7
Carer elsewhere	12	9	8	11
Salesperson	10	13	7	10
Clerical, admin worker	16	12	19	16
Hospitality worker	14	9	11	12
Professional or manager elsewhere	13	22	26	18
Nurse	2	3	7	4
Labourer	7	*	2	5
Other	13	9	4	10
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Within the 'Other' category, the responses given most frequently by disability workers were: Tradesperson, Other Education worker/Trainer, Cleaner and Transport/Logistics.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

5.7.2   Experience in current sector

Most disability workers entered the sector at older ages, with a total of 63 per cent having begun work in disability services at age 30 or older (Table 5.50). This pattern is most marked amongst non-professional workers, with almost 70 per cent of these workers being 30 or over when they started work in disability services. Indeed, nearly half of non-professionals were 40 or older when their disability careers began. Professionals were much more likely to have begun careers at younger ages, with 56 per cent beginning disability work before they turned 30, and only 20 per cent commencing at age 40 or more. This pattern suggests that, particularly amongst non-professional workers, the reason for the older age profile of the disability workforce is not so much that an existing workforce has aged without being replaced. Rather, it is a result of people tending to enter the sector at mature ages.

Table 5.50: Age when took first job in the disability services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
21 or under	15	22	23	18
22 to 29	16	34	18	19
30 to 39	23	23	31	25
40 to 49	32	13	19	26
50 or more	14	7	9	12
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

The disability sector experience of workers in the sector was often considerable, though there was also a significant group of workers who had recently entered it. Over half of non-professionals had worked in disability for five or more years, with about one third having 10 or more years experience in the sector (Table 5.51). Nevertheless, nearly one fifth had been in the sector for less than two years. Professionals and managers/administrators in disability typically had more experience in the sector, with over 70 per cent of each group having worked there for 5 or more years. These patterns strongly indicate that many workers remain in the disability sector for long periods once they enter it, even if they change jobs during their disability careers. Given the mature age at which they tend to enter disability work, this suggests that the bulk of the disability workforce – non-professional carers – are likely to remain in the sector after their first job in it.

Victoria appears to have a particularly experienced non-professional workforce in disability services, compared to the other States and Territories. Thus, 30 per cent of Victorian non-professional workers had been in the sector for less than 5 years, compared to 40 per cent of those from New South Wales and Western Australia and about half of those from Queensland and South Australia.

Table 5.51: **Length of time working in the disability services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than 2	18	14	11	15
2 to less than 5	25	15	14	21
5 to less than 10	25	27	24	25
10 to less than 20	23	29	35	27
20 or more	9	15	16	12
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Most disability workers had some experience in the sector before their current job (Table 5.52). Such experience was much more common amongst professionals (two thirds had previously worked in the sector) than non-professionals (just under half had previous disability experience). While most of this previous experience was in paid positions, about one fifth of disability workers in every occupation had some previous unpaid experience in the sector. These patterns indicate that disability employers looked both within the sector and outside it to fill positions. In filling non-professional positions, they were particularly likely to turn to workers outside the sector. It also appears that unpaid positions may be an important route into the sector, though we cannot be certain because we do not know whether they usually preceded paid positions. Amongst non-professional workers, those in the non-government sector were more likely to have previously had paid work in disability compared to government workers (40 per cent compared to 27 per cent). Professionals showed the opposite pattern, with those in the non-government sector being less likely than those in the government sector to have had paid employment in disability before their current job (51 per cent compared to 65 per cent).

Table 5.52: **Whether worked previously in the disability services sector before current job, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes, paid	27	42	38	32
Yes, paid and unpaid	12	17	12	12
Yes, unpaid only	8	6	8	8
No	54	35	42	48
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Understanding why disability workers leave their jobs is important in developing strategies to retain workers. Our survey asked respondents why they had left their previous disability job, if they had held one before their current position.

For non-professional workers, the most common reasons were ones related to how their jobs might fit with other aspects of their lives. Thus, just over half moved either because they relocated, sought better shifts or hours, had private care responsibilities, or wanted to work closer to home (Table 5.53). About one quarter shifted to avoid negative work experiences such as unsatisfying work, workplace conflict, a stressful job, or insufficient time with clients. About 10 per cent lost their jobs because funding or contracts ended. Almost none moved to improve their pay.

Professionals and managers/administrators were much less likely than non-professionals to leave disability jobs for reasons associated with how they fit with other commitments. However, one third of professionals and just over 40 per cent of managers/administrators moved for these reasons. A search for more satisfying work was the most common reason for changing disability jobs for these groups, with one third of professionals and almost the same proportion of managers/administrators citing this reason. Other negative job experiences such as workplace conflict, job stress and not spending sufficient time with clients were the reasons for only about 10–15 per cent of professionals' and managers/administrators' job moves within disability. Seeking higher pay was cited by less than 10 per cent of those who had left previous disability positions.

These results clearly show that retaining disability workers in all occupations, but especially in non-professional ones, will depend on how well their jobs fit with other commitments. Especially where workers are women working part-time, as is the case for the majority of non-professionals, their commitment to family responsibilities may outweigh their commitment to their disability jobs when the two are in conflict. If the family relocates, employers will have limited capacity to affect this issue, though with other aspects of the so-called work/life balance (such as hours or shifts), there may be more scope for adjustments that will keep a worker with an employer. For professionals and managers/administrators these issues are also important, but enhancing the opportunities for intrinsic job rewards is likely to be equally significant in retaining employees. While intrinsic job rewards are clearly very important for non-professionals, not least in attracting them to work in the disability sector, they appear to be less central in retaining them than is the case for professionals. Perhaps this is simply because non-professionals generally receive the levels of intrinsic job satisfaction they seek.

Table 5.53:   Main reason left previous paid job in the disability services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Relocated	31	20	23	26
Find more satisfying work	12	33	28	21
Better shifts or hours	13	9	8	11
Contract or funding ended	10	7	8	9
Other reasons	8	6	3	6
Private care responsibilities	6	3	6	6
Improve pay	4	7	7	6
Avoid conflict	5	4	8	6
Job too stressful	5	4	3	4
Not enough time with clients	3	3	3	3
Closer to home	2	*	5	3
Total	100	100	100	N=594

Missing cases = 76

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: The 'Other reasons' category included: Personal reasons (including ill health), Further Education and Unhappy with Organisation/Agency.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6. General Community Services

General community services in Australia are provided by a range of organisations. The bulk of services are provided by not for-profit organisations, largely funded by government. Governments also directly provide some services. This project defined general community services activities as:

Social support and assistance services provided directly to children and families. These activities include only services that are not covered by definitions of other sectors in this report, and are not directed specifically at the aged, at providing housing or supported accommodation, or crisis services. (Subset of ANZSIC Code 8790).

The in-scope workforce for the general community services workforce in this report was therefore those employed to provide these services, and those who directly manage and coordinate their work.

6.1   Profile of the Workforce

A key aim of the current project was to generate a profile of the current workforce in the selected community service areas. In this part of the report, we present such a profile for the general community services workforce. We begin with total employment, and then examine the key aspects of workforce and employment structure such as occupational distribution, employment contract, use of staff not directly employed by outlets, hours of work, wages, shift arrangements, and worker demographics.

6.1.2   Total Employment

Our best estimate is that about 32,200 people were employed across Australia in directly providing general community services or managing those who provide these services at the time of our surveys. As many of these employees worked part-time, this number translates into about 18,100 equivalent full-time (EFT) workers, assuming a full-time working week of 35 hours or more (Table 6.1a). We estimate that about 23,900 workers (or 12,300 EFT workers) provided general community services directly, while most of the remainder managed their work. Outlets providing general community services also employed other workers who provide other services or administer the organisations. Our estimate is that, including such workers, outlets providing general community services employed a total of about 64,000 workers.

Our Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009 found that general community service workers were distributed across the States and Territories as indicated in Table 6.1a. Although these figures are broadly in line with the relative populations of each jurisdiction, there are some noticeable departures. In particular, the estimates for New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland suggest lower levels of general community services employment than in other States and Territories. Thus, our estimates suggest that NSW and Queensland employed about 24 per cent and 13 per cent of EFT workers, respectively, in this sector compared to their share of 32 per cent and 20 per cent of national population.[14]

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[14] There is a possibility that these figures reflect a lack of response to our outlet survey from large general community service organisations in these two States.

Table 6.1b provides further detail about the numbers of general community service workers (on an EFT basis) relative to the resident population of each State/Territory. Nationally, there were approximately 82 EFT general community service workers for every hundred thousand Australians. There was some variation around this national average in the various jurisdictions. Within the four most populous mainland States (NSW, Victoria, QLD and WA), however, there was a high degree of consistency in the numbers of non-professional and professional employees, who provided the bulk of services in the general community services sector (see Section 6.1.2, below). One exception to this pattern is that WA appeared to have employed many more non-professional general community service workers, per head of population, than NSW, Victoria and QLD (a result which may reflect the responses to our outlet survey).

Table 6.1a: Estimated employment in the general community services sector, 2009

	Total employees (estimated)	Total general community services employees (estimated)	Total EFT general community services employees (estimated)
NSW	11,333	8,693	4,359
VIC	27,208	9,518	4,358
QLD	4,471	3,595	2,415
SA	6,734	3,775	2,698
WA	10,498	4,599	3,001
TAS	673	579	339
NT	2,380	855	623
ACT	776	575	319
Total	64,072	32,189	18,111

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.

Table 6.1b: Estimated EFT employment in the general community services sector relative to the population per 100,000 persons, by State/Territory and occupation, 2009

	Non-professionals (estimated)	Professionals (estimated)	Managers and administrators (estimated)	Total (estimated)
NSW	19	27	15	61
VIC	24	27	28	79
QLD	22	16	16	54
SA	52	58	45	165
WA	59	25	40	132
TAS	25	15	23	67
NT	113	81	80	274
ACT	25	34	31	90
Total	28	27	24	82

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010c.
Notes: (1) Estimates include government and non-government workers. (2) Jurisdictional comparisons

need to be treated with caution, due to possible differences in staff classification and also because of uncertainty arising from limited response in some sectors and jurisdictions.

Table 6.2 shows employment by government and non-government sector. About 85 per cent of employees providing general community services worked in non-profit outlets, whether measured by the number of people employed or EFT employees. All of the remainder were employed directly by government, with none working for profit-making enterprises.

Table 6.2: **Direct service employment in the general community services sector, by organisation type, 2009**

	Per cent of employees	Per cent of EFT employees
Non-profit or charitable	85	87
Privately owned, for-profit	0	0
Public, government, or government owned	15	13
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

6.1.3 General Community Services Occupations

General community services work requires workers with a range of skills and abilities. Table 6.3 shows the distribution of workers by the main occupations we identified in this sector. In much of the following analysis, we compared workers across occupations. To simplify this discussion, we collapsed the occupations shown in Table 6.3 into three broad categories, defined below.

Non-professionals are "Carers (including home, domestic, hostel or refugee care workers)", "Referral or information workers and customer service advisors", and "Family, youth or child support workers".

Professionals are "Social workers or case managers" and "Psychologists, counsellors and therapeutic workers".

Managers and Administrators are "Service and program administrators, managers and coordinators".

In most comparisons, we exclude the workers in the 'Other' occupation category displayed in Table 6.3, as there are too few of them in our sample to permit a reliable separate analysis.

General community service workers were spread fairly evenly across the main occupational groupings. About 45 per cent were non-professionals. Professionals were a somewhat smaller group, making up 30 per cent of workers in the sector. Managers and administrators were just over one fifth of workers. Focusing on equivalent full time (EFT) figures suggests that work in the sector is spread fairly evenly across these three occupational groupings.

There was relatively little variation within the States and Territories from the national estimates shown in Table 6.3. South Australia had a significantly lower share of non-professionals in its general community services workforce (36 per cent), while Western Australia had a relatively high share of non-professionals when calculated on an EFT basis

(47 per cent). Comparing government and non-government outlets, we find that non-professionals comprised a significantly higher share of employment in the government sector (60 per cent versus 45 per cent), while professional workers were more prevalent in the non-government sector (33 per cent versus 14 per cent). Nevertheless, because the non-government sector is by far the largest provider of general community service jobs (Table 6.2, above), a clear majority of both professional workers (93 per cent) and non-professional workers (82 per cent) were employed by non-government outlets.

Table 6.3:   **Occupation of general community services employees, 2009 (per cent)**

	Number of Persons	**Equivalent Full Time**
Carer (including home, domestic, hostel or refuge carer/worker)	18	6
Referral or information worker/ customer service advisor	10	12
Family, youth or child support worker	17	17
Non-professionals subtotal	*45*	*35*
Social worker/case manager	15	18
Psychologist/Counsellor/ Therapeutic worker	14	15
Professionals subtotal	*29*	*33*
Service/Program administrator / manager/ coordinator	21	30
Other	5	2
Total	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

6.1.4   General Community Services Workers' Employment Contracts

The arrangements through which general community services workers are employed are important for a range of reasons. Less secure employment contracts may predispose workers to leave jobs if they can find equally attractive employment that gives more employment security, while more secure arrangements are likely to increase the likelihood that they will stay. Where a significant number of workers is employed part-time (defined as working less than 35 hours per week), increased labour demand may be satisfied, at least partially, by increasing the hours of these workers.

Employment arrangements in the general community services sector vary significantly across occupations. Professional workers, the largest group, were mostly employed on permanent contracts, with an even split between full and part time workers. Only about 10 per cent of those in these occupations worked on a casual basis. Managers and administrators showed a similar pattern, except that they were much more likely than professionals to be employed full time (62 per cent full-time, 30 per cent part-time). In contrast, only just over a quarter of non-professionals worked on a permanent full time basis. Permanent part-time work was the most common pattern for this group, accounting for

about 44 per cent of workers. However, casual employment was also significant, with over a quarter of non-professionals being employed casually.

There was little jurisdictional variation in terms of the proportion of general community service workers who have permanent jobs. Across all States and Territories, the proportion exceeded 70 per cent. There is greater variation, however, in the division between full-time and part-time permanent positions. Queensland and South Australia had noticeably greater proportions of permanent full-time positions (49 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively, compared to a national average of 39 per cent). In Queensland, the difference was driven by professionals, whose permanent full-time employment rate (59 per cent) was well above the national average for professionals in their service area (42 per cent). In South Australia, the difference was driven more by non-professionals, whose permanent full-time employment rate (39 per cent) was also well above the national average (27 per cent).

Table 6.4:   Employment type of general community services sector employees, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent full-time	27	42	62	39
Permanent part-time	44	48	30	42
Casual	28	9	4	17
Contract	1	1	3	2
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

6.1.5   Use of Agency, Contract, and Self Employed Staff

Employers in all industries sometimes rely on staff they do not directly employ. Such agency, contract and self-employed staff may be an important component of the workforce, and may be used for a variety of reasons. Sometimes employers use them because permanent or casual staff are not available. Some employers may prefer such staff because they provide more flexibility, or because they are cheaper. Our survey sought information about the extent and important of such staff in the general community services area. In general, we found that general community services use very few of such staff, and do not appear to rely significantly on them.

Overall, 12 per cent of general community services outlets used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff to deliver general community services. Because these staff are so rarely used, our estimates of the numbers of such staff and the occupations in which they are used are subject to considerable uncertainty. We report them here, but emphasize that they should be interpreted with great caution. Table 6.5 shows that the most common form of such staff usage was for outlets to use agency or sub-contracted non-professional staff, but even here only 2 per cent did so. Our survey suggested that, in total, about 1,300 staff of this kind were used by outlets across Australia in the pay period before the survey (normally two weeks). Nearly half of these workers were self-employed, while the remainder were evenly split between agency and sub-contract workers (Table 6.6). The median number of shifts done by such workers in outlets that used them is small (Table 6.7), strongly suggesting that these

workers were mostly used as a stop-gap measure when workers normally employed were not available.

Table 6.5: **Outlets that used agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency	2	1*	1	4
Sub-contract	2	1*	0*	2
Self-employed	3	3	2	8

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

Table 6.6: **Number of agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Other	Total
Agency	156	42	43	109	350
Sub-contract	328	34	18	0	380
Self-employed	145	131	42	247	565

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Table 6.7: **Median number of shifts done by agency, sub-contract or self-employed staff in the last pay period, the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Agency	3	3	5	5
Sub-contract	6*	6*	10*	13
Self-employed	2	1	1	2

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Median estimates exclude outlets with zero shifts in each category.

* Figure unreliable, based on 5 or less returns.

6.1.6   Demographics of the General Community Services Workforce

A key element in the profile of the general community services workforce is its demographic structure. Here, we examine the proportion of men and women amongst general community services workers, their age distribution, and their birthplace patterns.

The general community services sector was dominated by women in all occupations. Overall, 83 per cent of general community service workers were women. This pattern, of around 80 per cent of general community service workers being women, was consistently found across all occupations (Table 6.8). The pattern is typical of much of the community services sector, and is to be found in areas such as aged care, child care, and disability

services. Men were clearly the minority of employees in all jurisdictions of the general community services workforce, but they were somewhat more likely to work in Tasmania (22 per cent), the Northern Territory (26 per cent) and the Australian Capital Territory (28 per cent) than in any of the mainland States (15-20 per cent).

Table 6.8:   **Sex of employees in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Male	15	18	19	17
Female	85	82	81	83
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

The general community services workforce contains workers of varied ages, though they tended to be concentrated in more mature ages. Managers and administrators were somewhat older than others in this sector, with nearly 40 per cent being 50 or over, compared to about 30 per cent of professionals and non-professionals (Table 6.9).

Compared to the Australian female workforce, the general community services workforce has a somewhat older age profile. Thus, for example, while 41 percent of non-professional and 38 per cent of professional general community service workers are under 40, half of Australian female employees are in this age group.

The youngest workforces were in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, which each had 55 per cent of their workforces under 40 years of age, compared to the average of 38 per cent for all of general community services. Of the mainland States, Queensland and South Australia had the youngest workforces, with 46 per cent and 45 per cent of their workers, respectively, aged under 40 years. The oldest general community services workforces were in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, each with at least one third of their workers aged 50 years or more. In New South Wales and Tasmania, the older profile of professional workers drove up the average age, while it was non-professionals that were significantly older in Victoria.

Table 6.9:   **Age of employees in the general community services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian female workforce (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Less than 30	19	13	7	15	29
30 to 39	22	25	23	23	21
40 to 49	30	31	31	30	23
50 to 59	25	24	31	26	19
60 or more	4	7	8	6	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; ABS 2010a.

Nearly three quarters of general community services workers were Australian born, and almost all of these were non-Indigenous Australians (Table 6.10). About 10 per cent of non-professional workers in this sector were Indigenous Australians, indicating significant over-representation of such workers in this sector. Other occupations in this sector did not display this pattern. The remaining workers came from a range of countries, with UK born workers being by far the largest group, accounting for about 10 per cent of all workers. Western Australian general community service workers were more likely to be overseas born than those from other States and Territories, with just under 45 per cent born outside Australia compared to the national average of about 27 per cent.

Table 6.10: **Birthplace of employees in the general community services sector, by occupation, and in the Australian female workforce (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Australia, non-Indigenous	66	66	70	67	73
Australia, Indigenous	10	3	4	6	1
New Zealand	2	2	1	2	3
United Kingdom	6	10	11	9	6
Other	16	19	14	16	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2010b; ABS 2009b.
Note: Within the 'Other' category, the countries reported most frequently by general community service workers were Greece, Poland, Ireland, South Africa and the United States.

6.1.7 General Community Services Workers' Hours of Work and Tenure

Our surveys provide two sources of information about the hours of work of employees. We asked respondents to our workers' survey how many hours in total they usually worked per week in their general community services job, and how many of these hours were paid (Table 6.11) and unpaid (Table 6.13). We also asked outlets to tell us the number of workers in each occupation category who worked 30 or fewer hours during the fortnight before the survey (i.e., an average of 15 hours per week or less), and the number who worked more than this (Table 6.12).

Both surveys showed that the majority of non-professional workers, the single largest occupational segment in general community services, were employed on a part-time basis (for less than 35 hours per week). About one third of such workers were employed full-time.[15] Professional workers in the general community services sector were much more likely

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[15] Outlets told us that 27 per cent of their non-professional general community service workers worked on permanent full-time contracts, and another 28 per cent worked on casual contracts (Table 6.4) and some of these

to work full-time, with close to half working such hours (Tables 6.4, 6.11). Outlet responses suggested that around one third of both professional and non-professional workers were employed very short hours of 15 or fewer hours per week, although the workers survey suggested the proportion is lower, particularly for professionals. As in most community service sectors, managers and administrators were most likely to work full-time, with around 65 per cent doing so (Tables 6.4, 6.11). Those who do work full-time were rarely paid to work longer hours, with only 1-2 per cent in each occupation group saying that they worked more than 40 paid hours per week. The difference between hours worked and hours paid is largest for managers and administrators, with 23 per cent of them indicating that they worked more than 40 hours (data not shown here).

Table 6.11: Hours paid per week in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 15	14	9	7	10
16 to 34	49	38	26	39
35 to 40	36	52	66	49
41 or more	2	1	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 6.12: Hours worked in past fortnight in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 to 30	35	35	16	31
31 or more	65	65	84	69
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Respondents to our workers survey were also asked how many unpaid hours they worked per week in their general community service jobs. Most professional and non-professional workers providing general community services said they did not work unpaid hours, with only about 20 per cent indicating this (Table 6.13). Amongst those who said they did provide unpaid hours, most provided 5 or fewer hours per week. By contrast, more than 40 per cent of managers and administrators said they worked unpaid hours, with over half of these saying they work 6 or more unpaid hours per week.

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may work full-time hours. Some 51 per cent of general community service workers responding to our survey said that they were paid to work full-time hours (Table 6.11).

Table 6.13:   Hours unpaid per week in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Zero	80	81	56	73
1 to 5	15	13	21	16
6 to 10	3	5	14	7
11 or more	2	2	9	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Our survey of outlets asked the respondents to indicate the number of workers in each occupational group who had worked in their current outlets for various periods. Professional and non-professional workers providing general community services had similar patterns of tenure. Just over one quarter had been with their current outlet for one year or less, and about the same proportion had tenure of more than 5 years (Table 6.14). Managers and administrators typically had slightly longer tenure, with nearly 40 per cent having worked in their current outlet for 5 years or more. These results indicate that general community services outlets faced a significant task in recruiting professional and non-professional workers. On average, outlets needed to replace more than one quarter of these employees every year.

Our indicator of tenure is likely to mean somewhat different things depending on whether the outlet is a government or a non-government one. Government employees' tenure combines movement from one government outlet to another with initial employment by the organisation, while the tenure of those working in non-government outlets mostly reflects time since an initial appointment to the outlet. As we have already noted, only about 15 per cent of general community service workers were employed by government outlets. For this reason, outlet tenure for these workers largely reflected tenure with the workers' current employer.

We found that general community service workers in government outlets had somewhat longer tenure than their counterparts in non-government outlets. About 38 per cent of government workers had been with their current employer for 5 years or more, compared to 28 per cent of non-government workers.

Table 6.14:   Tenure with current employer of employees in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
1 year or less	28	28	21	26
2 to 5 years	46	44	40	44
More than 5 years	26	29	39	30
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

6.1.8 General Community Services Workers' Earnings and Multiple Job Holding

The earnings of workers are important for many reasons. Earnings are a basic incentive for workers to take jobs and stay in them. Very low earnings mean that the monetary costs of leaving their jobs for workers may be quite low for workers, increasing any difficulties employers face in retaining them. In this sense, very low earnings may signify workers' weak attachment to the labour market.

Table 6.15a shows the distribution of gross weekly earnings for general community services workers. Non-professional general community services workers had quite low earnings, with about 70 per cent earning less than a modest $800 per week. Unsurprisingly, professional and managerial/administrative employees tended to earn more than non-professional workers, with managers/administrators reporting the highest earnings. About 60 per cent of managers/administrators, and well over half of professionals, reported earning $800 or more per week at the time of the survey.

Table 6.15a: Weekly earnings by occupation in the general community services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
$1 to 399	19	10	9	13
$400 to 799	49	34	31	39
$800 to 1199	30	49	45	40
$1200 to 1599	2	6	13	6
$1600 or more	0	*	2	1
Total	100	100	100	N=1082

Missing cases = 92
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

It is also possible to calculate an hourly wage rate for each employee, by dividing their gross weekly earnings by the hours that they are paid to work each week. This approach allows us to approximate the rate of remuneration for each hour of work, abstracting from differences in weekly earnings that are due to the variation in working hours. However, there is likely to be more measurement error in the hourly wage variable we derive than in weekly earnings, because both earnings and working hours will be misreported by some workers. To reduce this imprecision in our analysis, we limited hours paid to a maximum of 50 per week prior to calculating the hourly wage variable, and also treated as missing data apparent hourly wage rates of more than $100. (In combination, these adjustments affected about 5 per cent of the sample.)

Table 6.15b shows the resulting distribution of hourly wage rates, by occupation, for general community service workers. About 60 per cent of all workers in the sector had an hourly wage rate between $20 and $29 (inclusive). The mean hourly wage rate in the sector ($25) was lower than the mean hourly cash earnings for all female employees ($27.60, excluding overtime), according to the ABS Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours (EEH) conducted in August 2008 (ABS, 2009c, p.20). As with weekly earnings, the distribution of hourly wage rates differed according to occupation in the general community services sector. Non-

professionals were the lowest paid, with one quarter working for less than $20 per hour, and about two-thirds working for less than $25 per hour. Professional workers were the highest paid, with one third of these workers earning $30 per hour or more. Managers in the general community services sector had a significantly lower average hourly wage rate ($26) than female managers generally ($33.70), according to the EEH survey (ABS, 2009c, p.23).

Earnings differed significantly between the government and non-government sector. Thus, 60 per cent of government general community service workers earned $800 per week or more, compared to about 43 per cent of non-government workers. In large part, this was because hourly earnings in the government sector were higher: about 45 per cent of government workers earned $30 or more per hour compared to 22 per cent of non-government workers.

Table 6.15b: Hourly wage rates by occupation in the general community services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than $20	25	10	14	17
$20 to 24	38	27	28	31
$25 to 29	23	40	31	31
$30 to 34	9	14	17	13
$35 to 39	3	5	6	4
$40 or more	3	4	4	4
Total	100	100	100	N=1049

Missing cases = 125
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

In some industries and occupations, workers quite often hold multiple jobs. Particularly where their primary job is part-time, this may indicate that they are unable to get the number of hours of work they would like. Multiple job holding may also reduce their attachment to their jobs.

Around 15 per cent of general community services workers in our survey held a second job, with the proportion varying only marginally across occupation groups (Table 6.16). Over half of these second job holders had second jobs in other general community services outlets. Workers with second jobs were employed for an average of around 11 hours per week in their second job.

Table 6.16: Number of jobs by occupation in the general community services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Has one job only	82	83	87	84
Job 2 same sector	8	9	4	7
Job 2 elsewhere	10	7	9	9
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

6.2 A Profile of General Community Service Outlets

General community services are provided by a range of government and non-government organisations. Our survey of general community service 'outlets' focused on agencies and offices that directly provide general community services. In this section of the report, we present a profile of these outlets.[16] The profile covers the size of outlets, the mix of services they provide, their funding arrangements and their use of casual and contract staff.

6.2.1 Size of Outlets

Non-profits employed the vast majority of general community service workers (about 85 per cent), while government organisations employed all of the remainder (Table 6.2). Non-profit outlets tended to be fairly small, with about 40 per cent employing 5 or fewer general community service workers and over 60 per cent employing 10 or fewer (Table 6.17). Only 15 per cent of non-profit outlets employed more than 20 general community service workers. This pattern was closely mirrored amongst government outlets in the sector.

Table 6.17: Distribution of general community services outlets by sector and employment size (number of direct care workers), 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	Government	Total
1 to 5	41	43	41
6 to 10	22	18	22
11 to 20	21	19	21
21 to 40	11	*	11
41 or more	4	*	5
Total	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.2.2 Mix of Services

Organisations in the community services sector often provide services across a variety of community service areas, though this is more common in some areas than others. We asked service outlets what proportion of their service activity (measured by the number of hours worked by relevant workers) was in general community services, and what proportion was in other community service areas. Just over half of non-profits providing general community services did not provide any other services (Table 6.18). Of the remainder, the majority said that most of their activity is in the general community services area. Government outlets were somewhat less likely to say that all of their activity was in the general community services area, though 80 per cent said that most of their activity was in this area.

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[16] The profile presented here is weighted to ensure that the figures reflect the actual contribution of outlets in each State and Territory to the national totals.

Table 6.18: **Proportion of direct service activity (staff hours) in the general community services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-profit	Government	Total
Less than 50%	18	21	18
50% to 99%	26	39	27
100%	56	40	55
Total	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: The activity classifications taken to represent General Community Services in this analysis are 'family support services' and 'other community services'.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.2.3　Funding Sources and Conditions

Community service organisations in the non-government sector may receive funding from a variety of sources including various levels of government, charitable sources and donations. Our survey asked outlets to specify the proportion of their funding that came from each of the main sources. We show only the breakdown for non-profit outlets because government outlets receive their funding as government agencies by definition, and virtually no general community services are provided by private for-profit outlets. Virtually all non-profit outlets in this sector received most of their funding from government sources (Table 6.19), with State level sources being the most common. Less than 10 per cent of non-profits said that they received the majority of their funding from non-government sources.

Table 6.19: **Principal funding source in the general community services sector, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-profit
Government agency	16
Commonwealth government sources	23
State government sources	45
Local government sources	2
Non-government sources	8
Mixture	7
Total	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Shows proportion of outlets receiving the majority of their funding from each source shown.

Community services organisations are often given funding that is conditional on certain levels, standards or types of service being provided. Our survey asked outlets whether there were any special conditions of this kind attached to any of their funding, and if so what these conditions were. Just under half of non-profit general community service outlets indicated that such conditions did apply to some of their funding (Table 5.20). Interestingly, about one quarter of government outlets also said that some of their funding was conditional.

The main funding conditions to which general community service outlets were subject are listed in Table 6.20. It is important to recognise that outlets may have been subject to more than one condition, and we asked them to specify all of the conditions that applied to their

funding. Nearly 80 per cent of non-profit and government outlets that had conditional funding were subject to service quantity targets. Around half were required to meet staffing levels in both sectors, if they had funding that was subject to conditions. Some outlets also had funding that was subject to other conditions such as accessibility and after hours opening requirements.

Table 6.20:   Funding conditions in the general community services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	**Government**	**Total**
Unconditional	56	73	58
Conditional	44	27	42
	100	100	100
Funding conditional on:			
Required staffing levels	52	40	51
Service quantity targets	78	77	78
After-hours opening	31	*	31
Accessibility	42	*	42
Other	17	*	17

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Multiple funding conditions could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent. Within the 'Other' category, the funding conditions reported most frequently by general community service offices or outlets were: Service quality, Financial or general reporting requirements, Providing services specific to the service type, and Hours (including number of hours, time of day).
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.2.4   Use of Contract and Casual Staff

As we have already seen, over a quarter of non-professional workers providing general community services were employed casually. However, casual employment was much rarer amongst professional and managerial/administrative staff, and few staff were employed on limited term contracts in any occupation. Staff may be employed casually or on contracts under a variety of conditions and for a variety of reasons. Our survey asked outlets whether they employed such staff, and if so why they used them.

About two thirds of non-profit and government general community services agencies did use contract or casual staff or both (Table 6.21). Outlets were equally likely to employ contract or casual staff, with about half employing casuals and about half employing contract staff. Of these, the majority employed both kinds of staff.

General community service outlets employed contract staff for a variety of reasons. The most common was to work on specific projects. However, these staff were employed almost as frequently because of non-recurrent funding, and somewhat less often to replace permanent staff on leave.

Casuals were also employed for various reasons. About half of outlets that used casual staff said they did so to replace permanent staff on leave, with about the same proportion saying casuals were employed to respond to fluctuating or unpredictable demand for services. About one third of the outlets that used casuals did so to cover short notice shift gaps.

Table 6.21:   Use of contract and casual staff in the general community services sector, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-profit	Government	Total
Neither	30	36	31
Contract only	19	18	19
Casual only	20	13	19
Both	31	33	31
Total	100	100	100
Why use contract workers?			
Non-recurrent funding	53	*	49
Specific project	59	51	58
Replace permanent staff on leave	38	68	41
Other reasons	15	*	16
Why use casual workers?			
Short notice shift cover	34	45	35
Replace permanent staff on leave	58	53	57
Fluctuating or unpredictable demand	51	55	51
Other reasons	24	7	22

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so these values do not sum to 100 per cent.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.3   Skills, Training and Preparation for Work

An appropriately skilled workforce is recognised as a crucial element in a comprehensive and effective system of general community services. Formal training and qualifications are central to the skill level of this workforce, as are a range of other learned competencies that allow workers to handle the complex issues and problems they encounter at work. In this section of the report, we examine the qualifications and training of the general community services workforce, and describe workers' perceptions about their skills and how these are used in their current jobs. The analysis differentiates between seven broad types of qualifications, following the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) (ABS, 2001).

6.3.1   Level of education and field of qualification

The general community services sector consisted of non-professional employees, professionals and managers and administrators in about equal proportions. Non-professionals, who made up 35 per cent of equivalent full-time (EFT) employment in the sector, had jobs as family, youth or child support workers, referral or information officers, and carers (Table 6.3). These workers typically had post-school qualifications. About one third had degrees, one quarter had a Certificate 3 or 4, and another 22 per cent had a Diploma (Table 6.22). Of those with post-school qualifications, one third had studied in the field of community work, but a similar number obtained their qualification in a field that is not generally seen as leading to employment in the general community services sector (Table 6.23).

Professional employment in the general community services sector includes social workers, case managers, psychologists and counsellors. These professionals represented 33 per cent of the EFT employment in the sector (Table 6.3). These are highly-educated workers. Three quarters of them had degrees, including about 40 per cent with postgraduate training (Table 6.22). Most had obtained their qualifications in the fields of psychology and social work and eventually went on to practice professionally (Table 6.23).

Managers and administrators employed in the general community services sector were also a highly-educated group, although less so than professionals in the sector. About half of these managers and administrators had degrees, mostly at the bachelor level. Another 21 per cent had a Diploma (Table 6.22). An important difference between the managerial and professional workforces in the sector was that whereas most professionals had completed qualifications in fields leading directly to service-based employment, most managers and administrators had obtained their highest qualification in a field somewhat separate from community services work (Table 6.23). This provides some indication that the managerial ranks were filled either by former service workers who complete additional qualifications in order to get promoted, or by outside managers who did not have backgrounds in the community services sector.

Compared to the whole Australian workforce, the general community services workforce is highly educated. Workers in this sector were about twice as likely to have a diploma, and about three times as likely to have a postgraduate degree, as other Australian workers. A large part of the explanation for these differences was the very high proportions of professionals working in the general community services sector who have obtained university-level qualifications.

Amongst non-professionals, government sector workers in general community services were somewhat more likely to have degrees than are non-government workers. Indeed, nearly half of government sector non-professionals had Bachelor or Postgraduate degrees compared to only just over one quarter of non-government non-professionals.

Table 6.22: **Highest level of education/qualification in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian workforce
Postgraduate degree	8	41	24	23	8
Bachelor degree	24	34	29	28	19
Diploma	22	15	21	19	10
Certificate 3 or 4	25	4	16	15	19
Year 12	7	3	3	4	17
Year 11 or Certificate 1 or 2	6	1	3	4	12
Year 10 or below	9	3	4	5	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Sources: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; ABS 2009d.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 6.23: **Field of highest qualification in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	10	32	11	18
Disability	1	*	2	1
Psychology, counselling	8	39	8	19
Community work	33	12	24	23
Youth work	10	1	2	5
Other	37	16	52	34
Total	100	100	100	N=998

Missing cases = 89

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by general community service workers were (in descending order): Administration, Business/Business Management, Arts/Humanities, Children's Services and Education.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.3.2   Qualifications most relevant to the work

Workers' highest qualifications are not necessarily those that turn out to be most relevant to their jobs. Significant discrepancies between the highest qualification and that most relevant to the job suggest that workers may be accepting jobs outside their field of primary interest and skill because more suitable jobs are unavailable. We asked general community service

workers who had obtained post-school qualifications about the level and field of their qualification most relevant to their current job. In most cases, workers' highest qualification was also the one most relevant to their job; an important indication that employers were utilising the range of skills available to them, and that workers were receiving an adequate return on their investment in education.

Table 6.24 shows a breakdown of workers' perceptions about the level of their most relevant post-school qualification. As we would expect, workers in non-professional positions were more likely to nominate a certificate level qualification as the most relevant to their job than professionals or managers, who more often selected higher qualifications as being the most relevant to their work. Despite having obtained higher qualifications, some non-professional workers still nominated their Certificate 3 or 4 qualification as most relevant to their current job (31 per cent said a certificate was most relevant; only 25 per cent had one as their highest qualification). The responses of professionals and managers/administrators generally corresponded closely to the highest qualifications that these workers possessed. This was our first indication that general community services workers perceived their skills as being highly compatible with their work requirements, an issue we return to in Section 6.3.4.

There are distinctive occupational patterns in workers' responses about the field of their most relevant qualification (Table 6.25). Non-professionals nominated community work and youth work; professionals favour social work and psychology; and managers/administrators emphasised other areas of study that presumably were relevant to their current responsibilities as managers. Our results suggested that there were three quite distinctive educational pathways into the general community services sector for those aspiring to work in it. However, for the moment we are dealing only with workers' perceptions. Their views about the relevance of particular qualifications to the work were only of value to prospective employees if they were in line with employers' views. Section 6.3.4, below, expands on this discussion of skills match.

Table 6.24:   Level of qualification most relevant to current job in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	6	31	16	18
Bachelor degree	27	43	34	35
Diploma	25	15	25	21
Certificate 3 or 4	31	4	18	17
Other qualification	11	7	7	9
Total	100	100	100	N=928

Missing cases = 159
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications

Table 6.25: **Field of qualification most relevant to current job in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	7	25	10	15
Disability	*	*	*	2
Psychology, counselling	9	43	7	21
Community work	35	10	30	24
Youth work	12	2	3	6
Other	35	19	47	33
Total	100	100	100	N=819

Missing cases = 268

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Excludes workers without post-school qualifications. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by general community services workers were (in descending order): Education, Art/Humanities, Justice/Criminal Justice/Criminology and Business/Business Management.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.3.3 Current study

One way of increasing the overall and average levels of skill in a workforce is to hire new workers whose average skill levels are higher than those of existing workers. Another very important route to improved skills in a workforce is for existing workers to upgrade their qualifications. Workers who gain qualifications while on the job include those obtaining a first qualification that is relevant to their work, those seeking qualifications that will allow them to fill higher level positions in the field, and those simply seeking to update their skills.

Undertaking study for a qualification was quite common in the general community services sector, especially among non-professionals (Table 6.26). And the types of qualifications that workers were studying for generally resembled the qualifications that were already represented among, and perceived to be most relevant by, the members of their occupational group. Hence, non-professional workers were mostly studying for diplomas or certificates, if they were studying, while professionals were mostly completing degrees (Table 6.27). Managers and administrators typically studied at lower levels than professionals – that is, they pursued diplomas and certificates, rather than degrees – and they exhibited a stronger preference for qualifications in fields such as business and community work (Table 6.28).

Table 6.26: **Whether currently studying for any qualification, general community service workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	27	19	21	23
No	73	81	79	77
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 6.27: Qualification level of current study, general community service workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Postgraduate degree	12	45	20	23
Bachelor degree	18	22	14	18
Diploma	31	14	25	25
Certificate 3 or 4	33	15	32	27
Other qualification	7	*	9	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 6.28: Qualification field of current study, general community service workers, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Social work	14	18	7	13
Disability	*	0	0	*
Psychology, counselling	7	40	10	17
Community work	47	16	23	32
Business	10	*	29	13
Other	21	25	30	25
Total	100	100	100	N=260

Missing cases = 5
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Excludes workers who are not currently studying. Within the 'Other' category, the fields reported most frequently by general community service workers were (in descending order): Training and Assessment, Education and Arts/Humanities.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.3.4 Skill utilisation and mismatch

Even though workers have relevant qualifications and training, they may still find that they lack the skills needed for their jobs. Alternatively, they may find that the skills they do have are not used in their jobs. Each of these situations represents a skill mismatch (under-skilling in the first case, and over-skilling in the second case). These mismatches cause friction, and are known to have a variety of other negative consequences, including unsatisfactory work performance, low job satisfaction and high employee turnover.

General community service workers almost universally agreed with the proposition that they have the skills needed to do their jobs, when we put this question to them in our survey (Table 6.29a). At least 92 per cent of workers across all three occupational groups agreed with this proposition. For the sector as a whole, the proportion disagreeing with this proposition was 3 per cent (with 3 per cent neutral). These results suggest that general

community service workers believe that the skill requirements of their jobs are almost always well matched with their own skills.

We put a similar question to general community service providers in our survey of outlets or offices. Their responses, while broadly consistent with workers' perceptions, differed in two key respects. First, employers saw a higher incidence of under-skilling than workers did. The proportion of outlets reporting that they had no under-skilled workers was 77 per cent, implying that about 23 per cent had at least one under-skilled worker. Around 8 per cent of general community service providers believed that half or more or their workers were under-skilled (Table 6.29b). Second, employers saw greater variation in under-skilling across occupations than workers did. While relatively few providers (13 per cent) said that their managers and administrators were under-skilled, nearly one third said they had at least one under-skilled non-professional worker. It appears that action may already be underway to rectify this perceived under-skilling, since the 27 per cent of non-professionals who were currently studying for a qualification (Table 6.26) is consistent with the proportion of employers who said that some of their non-professionals did not have adequate skills (29 per cent; Table 6.29b).

Table 6.29a: Perceived skill match ('I have the skills I need to do my current job') in general community services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	3	3	3	3
Neutral	5	1	3	3
Agree	92	96	94	94
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 6.29b: Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are under-skilled in general community services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	71	82	87	77
Under half	17	13	7	15
About half	5	2	4	5
Over half	6	3	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

We also asked employees and employers to give their views about the extent of over-skilling, where workers are not using some or all of the skills they possess in their current positions. Again, the two groups had quite different perceptions of this issue. About 90 per cent of general community service workers said they used many of their own skills on the job, and there was little variation across occupations (Table 6.30a). These results imply that general community service workers see minimal over-skilling in the sector. Their employers, by comparison, saw a larger problem. About one in three general community service providers

said that some of their workers were over-skilled (Table 6.30b). Non-professionals were the most likely to be seen as over-skilled, with 33 per cent of providers reporting that they had some over-skilled workers in these occupations. There also appeared to be a surplus of managerial skills in the sector, with 20 per cent of providers reporting that at least half of their managers and administrators had skills over and above those required to do their jobs. Although these results imply that the general community services sector is over-supplied with managerial skills at present, this situation is unlikely to last, as managers will question whether their skills could be put to better use, and earn them higher pay, in another sector. (We look at turnover intentions in Section 6.3.3.)

Table 6.30a: Perceived skill utilisation ('I use many of my skills in my current job') in general community services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	4	3	5	4
Neutral	7	4	5	5
Agree	89	93	90	91
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 6.30b: Employers' perceptions of proportion of employees that are over-skilled in general community services, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	67	75	73	66
Under half	15	10	7	15
About half	6	4	3	11
Over half	11	11	17	8
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any workers in the occupation.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.4   The Work Experience

People's experience of their job is essential to understanding the dynamics of any workforce. Employees' motivations and experiences at work have large effects on who enters occupations, on workers' performance in their jobs, on their propensity to remain with an employer and in an industry, on their inclination to develop and upgrade skills, and on many other aspects of workforce dynamics. Our survey of general community service workers collected data allowing us to profile workers' experience in four main areas: their motivations for entering and remaining in the sector, their job satisfaction, their experience of workplace relationships, and their experience of autonomy and control in the workplace. Together, these experiences provide a sound basis for a basic profile of the work experience of general community service workers.

6.4.1   Recruitment and retention

People's motivations in entering their jobs both predict their commitment to them, and colour their response to their work experiences. When asked why they were first attracted to work in general community services, workers in our survey most often acknowledged aspects of their work that were intrinsic to performing it. Thus, a desire to help others was chosen by around 80 per cent of non-professional and professional workers, and over 70 per cent of managers/administrators (Table 6.31). A desire to do something worthwhile was chosen by 70–80 per cent. Other aspects of the job, such as the learning it involved and the possibility of applying skills, or the variety in tasks were also commonly selected, each by close to half of respondents. Rewards which are extrinsic to employees' jobs – job security and career prospects – were each selected by around one fifth of respondents. Only just over 10 per cent of respondents indicated that pay was a factor that attracted them to general community services, though this was a slightly more common response amongst non-professionals. However, the flexibility in hours and shifts appears to be important, especially for non-professional care workers and managers/administrators, of whom about one third indicated this mattered. Overall, these patterns show that general community service workers were very likely to select intrinsic rewards – those arising directly out of the experience of doing their jobs – as the reasons they chose to work in the sector. Extrinsic rewards such as job security, pay and flexible hours or shifts were selected by a much smaller proportion of workers, though they were clearly important to a significant group.

Table 6.31: Reasons attracted to work in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Desire to help others	81	84	73	80
Desire to do something worthwhile	72	80	76	76
Variety in tasks	53	46	55	51
Learning, training, application of skills	46	53	46	48
Work being valued and appreciated	45	43	43	44
Independence, autonomy, responsibility in work	38	43	44	42
Supportive co-workers and management	38	35	39	37
Flexibility in hours, shifts	34	25	32	30
Career prospects	22	25	20	22
Job security	19	24	16	20
Pay	15	12	10	12
Other reasons	2	4	3	3

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Multiple reasons could be selected, so values do not sum to 100 per cent.

Workers' organisational commitment affects the likelihood that they will stay in their jobs, and is associated with their commitment in performing their work. Our survey used a single simple measure: whether a respondent would turn down another job with higher pay to remain in their current organisation. Across the three occupational groups, about 40-45 per cent of workers indicated that they would prefer to continue working in their current organisation than move to a higher paying job elsewhere (Table 6.32). This is a significantly higher level of organisational commitment than is generally found in the Australian female workforce, where about one quarter of workers agreed with the statement, according to data from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 shown in Table 6.32. These levels of organisational commitment were high compared to most other community service sectors, though not quite as high as in the general community services sector. Nevertheless, they confirm that many general community service workers find rewards other than pay in their jobs.

Government general community services workers were less likely to say they would leave their current job for better pay than are non-government ones. Thus, about 43 per cent of non-government employees said they would turn down a better paid job, compared to 26 per cent of government employees.

Table 6.32: Organisational commitment ('I would turn down another job that offered quite a bit more pay to stay with this organisation') in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Disagree	39	40	35	39	49
Neutral	18	22	19	20	24
Agree	43	38	45	42	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

6.4.2   Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is widely recognised as a key indicator of employees' experience in the workplace. It is related to whether workers stay in their jobs, and whether they intend to, and also to many aspects of job performance. Our survey used an 11 point job satisfaction scale in which respondents were asked to rate their job satisfaction from 'totally dissatisfied' (0) to 'totally satisfied' (10) on a range of aspects of their jobs. Thus, scores above 5 indicate some level of satisfaction with the job, while those below 5 indicate dissatisfaction. This question was reproduced from the Household and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, allowing benchmarking against national figures.

Overall, general community service workers expressed some level of satisfaction with almost all aspects of their work, with mean scores well above 5 on all aspects of their jobs except 'total pay' (Table 6.33). Differences across occupational groups were generally small, though professionals did have somewhat lower satisfaction than others with 'total pay', and slightly higher satisfaction with job security. General community services workers' job satisfaction was highly comparable with that of the Australian female workforce as a whole on all aspects of their jobs, except their job security and, especially, their 'total pay' (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 6.33). Satisfaction with total pay was strikingly low amongst general community service workers. It was lowest for professionals in the sector where average satisfaction was almost 2.5 points lower on the 11 point scale than for the Australian female workforce. This low pay satisfaction was common amongst community services workers, and has been previously noted in the aged care sector (Martin and King 2008).

Table 6.33:   Employee satisfaction with various dimensions of their work in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
The work itself	7.9	7.9	8.0	7.9	7.7
Overall job satisfaction	7.8	7.6	7.9	7.7	7.7
Work/life balance	7.5	7.5	7.9	7.6	7.5
The hours you work	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3
Your job security	6.6	7.0	6.8	6.8	8.0
Your total pay	5.6	4.6	5.6	5.3	7.0

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).
Note: Weighted means (ranked by total within sector) and scaled from 0 (Totally dissatisfied) to 10 (Totally satisfied)

6.4.3   Relationships in the workplace

Workplace relationships have a strong influence on workers' commitment to their workplace and their jobs, and to their propensity to stay in their jobs. Our survey asked about respondents' perceptions of the relationships between employees and management, and between workmates. We used a question from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005 to facilitate benchmarking of general community service workers' responses against national patterns.

Overwhelmingly, general community service workers perceived relations between management and employees as positive (Table 6.34). Over 80 per cent of respondents saw relations as either 'quite good' or 'very good', with very little variation between occupational groups. Comparison with the Australian female workforce indicates that general community service workers are more likely to view these relationships as 'very good' than the average Australian female worker, with at least half of general community service workers in each occupation group holding this view, compared to about a third of all Australian female employees.

There was a small tendency for non-government general community service workers to be even more positive about these relationships than government ones. Thus, while 41 per cent of government employees described the relationships as 'very good', some 55 per cent of non-government workers gave this response.

General community service workers had even more unequivocally positive views about relations between workmates/colleagues (Table 6.35). About two thirds of those in each occupation viewed these relationships as 'very good'. This is well above the proportion of all Australian female workers who hold this view. Indeed, more than 90 per cent of general community service workers held a positive view of the relations between workmates.

These results suggest that general community workers generally find considerable support from workmates and, only to a slightly lesser extent, managers in the work they undertake.

These relationships are likely to be very important in determining the commitment and effectiveness with which they work, and the likelihood they will remain in their jobs.

Table 6.34: **Perceived relations between management and employees in the general community sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Very bad	2	2	*	2	3
Quite bad	6	9	6	7	9
Neither good nor bad	9	11	11	10	15
Quite good	32	25	27	29	43
Very good	50	53	54	52	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 6.35: **Perceived relations between workmates/colleagues in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Very bad	*	*	0	*	1
Quite bad	1	2	2	2	2
Neither good nor bad	7	3	5	5	10
Quite good	28	25	27	27	48
Very good	64	69	67	67	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) 2005.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.4.4   Autonomy and task discretion

The extent to which workers feel they have control over how they do their jobs is strongly associated with their job satisfaction and commitment to their jobs. Our survey asked respondents about how much freedom they have in deciding how to do their work, and whether they believe they have adequate control over their work tasks.

On the whole, general community service workers indicated that they had quite high and adequate levels of control over their work. Three quarters or more of general community service sector respondents agreed that they 'have a lot of freedom to decide how' they did their work (Table 6.36). These proportions are significantly higher than in the Australian

workforce as a whole, where 59 per cent of employed women hold this view (according to HILDA 2008 data shown in Table 6.36), but they are similar to those amongst community based aged care workers (Martin and King 2008: 85). The latter comparison suggests that general community service work is organised in ways that require similar levels of discretion on the part of workers as community based aged care work.

Table 6.36: Perceived job autonomy ('I have a lot of freedom to decide how I do my work') in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total	Australian female workforce
Disagree	9	9	5	8	25
Neutral	15	8	7	11	16
Agree	76	83	88	81	59
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009; Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, wave 8 (2008).

General community service workers were also very likely to say that they have 'adequate control over' their work tasks, with more than 80 per cent of respondents holding this view (Table 6.37). There were virtually no differences in this view by occupation.

Overall, these patterns suggest that general community service workers have a strong sense of autonomy in their work, and believe that their discretion is at adequate levels. These views are likely to have positive effects on their commitment to their work and jobs.

Table 6.37: Perceived task discretion ('I have adequate control over my work tasks') in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Disagree	6	6	5	6
Neutral	12	9	8	10
Agree	82	84	87	84
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

6.5   Meeting Labour Demand

Employers, policy makers and employees alike have a strong interest in various aspects of how labour demand is met. We collected information on a range of aspects of the process of filling vacancies, including the level of vacancies and the ease with which they are filled, and the process by which employees typically find jobs.

6.5.1   Vacancy rates

The number of vacancies employers have is one important indicator of the state of the labour market for workers in an industry. Three quarters of general community service outlets responding to our survey had no vacancies for general community service workers of any kind (Table 6.38). About 10 per cent of outlets had vacancies for employees in each occupational group. Amongst those outlets with vacancies, almost all had 2 or fewer openings. Thus, outlets in this sector appear to generally be able to find workers for their jobs, with few having outstanding openings at the time of the survey.

Table 6.38:   Number of equivalent full-time (EFT) vacancies in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	89	87	92	76
1 or less	7	8	6	12
More than 1 to 2	3	3	1	5
More than 2	2	2	*	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.5.2   How employees find jobs

How employees find jobs is a central aspect of the operation of any labour market. General community services organisations' capacity to find the workers with the skills they need, and to recruit them to jobs, partly depend on how workers find out about the jobs available to them. Most studies of labour markets show that formal methods of recruitment, such as job advertisements in newspapers or on the internet, are important routes for recruitment. However, informal methods, such as those based on family or friendship networks, are also frequently important.

Our survey of employees asked how they found their jobs. The results showed that general community services workers were almost equally likely to have found their jobs through formal and informal means. Nearly half had heard about the vacancy they eventually filled through some form of advertising (newspaper, internet, employment agency, government gazette or workplace noticeboard). Another 40-45 per cent found their jobs through informal means (Table 6.39). These proportions were almost identical across the three types of occupations. Government sector general community service workers were more likely than those from the non-government sector to have found about their jobs through newspapers advertisements (about 50 per cent compared to 30 per cent respectively found their jobs this way). Overall, general community service employers may be most successful in filling

vacancies when they use both formal advertising and informal networks to tap the pools of available workers.

Table 6.39: How discovered that current job in the general community services sector was available, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Newspaper	33	30	33	32
Friend, family networks	34	32	29	32
Approach to employer	11	12	10	11
Internet	8	10	9	9
Other	7	9	11	9
Employment agency	3	4	4	4
Workplace notice-board	3	2	2	2
Government notice, gazette	1	*	3	1
Total	100	100	100	N=1144

Missing cases = 30

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Response categories are ranked in descending order by the total for all occupations. Within the 'Other' category, the most frequently reported responses by general community services workers were: Approached by Employer, Work Placement/Work Experience and Voluntary Work.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.5.3 Difficulties filling vacancies

How long employers take to fill vacancies is a useful indicator of the difficulty they have in finding suitable workers. General community service outlets find it easier to fill non-professional vacancies than professional or managerial/administrative ones. About two thirds of the most recent non-professional vacancies were filled within 4 weeks, compared to about 40 per cent of professional vacancies and just under half of managerial/administrative ones (Table 6.40). A small number of professional and managerial/administrative vacancies, nearly 15 per cent, had taken 3 months or more to fill, compared to virtually no non-professional vacancies.

In general, despite the time taken to fill vacancies, outlets usually had applicants for them. Thus, there were 3 or more applicants for about three quarters of the most recent non-professional jobs, and for more than two thirds of the most recent professional ones (Table 6.41). Nevertheless, a small proportion of vacancies attracted no applicants. This was fairly unusual for non-professional jobs, and most common for professional ones, though even here less than 15 per cent of vacancies attracted no applicants. These patterns are consistent with least difficulty in filling non-professional positions.

Table 6.40: Average number of weeks required to fill most recent vacancy in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
2 or less	28	18	24	17
More than 2 to 4	37	21	23	25
More than 4 to 8	22	33	28	37
More than 8 to 12	7	14	12	9
More than 12 to 26	3	8	9	7
More than 26	2	6	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 6.41: Average number of applicants for most recent vacancy in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
None	9	14	12	9
1	8	8	12	3
2	6	8	12	11
3 to 5	26	29	31	27
6 to 10	23	24	17	26
11 to 20	18	13	10	16
More than 20	9	4	6	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not have any recent vacancies to fill.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.5.4 Suitability of recent hires

In labour markets where the labour supply is tightly constrained, employers will be forced to offer jobs to workers who do not have the skills the employer sees as ideal for the position. In general, employers will prefer to hire workers who have all the skills they need for their jobs before they begin. This removes the need for employers to spend time and resources training workers, or to accept reduced productivity. However, it is important to be aware that when employers hire workers without optimal skills, this does not mean that an organisation is unable to perform necessary duties or functions. Instead, employers may have to provide additional training for such workers, or hire more employees to ensure that necessary tasks are completed. Where additional training is provided, newly hired workers who have undergone this training may quickly gain the optimal set of skills. Thus, the issue of whether the skills of newly hired workers are optimal from the employer's viewpoint is primarily an indicator of the state of the labour market, and not a measure of the skill level of the employed workforce in its day to day work.

Our survey asked outlets whether the most recently hired worker in each occupational group had optimal skills for the job for which he/she was hired, minimum but not optimal skills, or did not have all the skills needed for the job (see Appendix 1 for exact question wording). General community service outlets indicated that most of their most recently hired workers in every occupation had optimal skills for their jobs, with managerial and administrative appointees being most likely to have this level of skill (Table 6.42). Even non-professional employees were usually said to have optimal skills, with 62 per cent of outlets responding this way. Almost all recent appointees were assessed as having at least minimal skills needed for their jobs, with only about 5 per cent of outlets saying that recent appointees did not have skills essential for their jobs.

Thus, general community service outlets are usually able to appoint staff who do not require significant training to be able to successfully perform their work.

Table 6.42: Employers' perceptions of whether recently hired workers have optimal skills for their jobs in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent of outlets)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Under skilled	9	5	5	5
Minimum skills	29	25	20	24
Optimal skills	62	69	76	71
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009.

Note: Estimates exclude offices or outlets that did not make any recent appointments.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.6   Employment Preferences and Intentions

The degree of fit between workers' skills and the skill requirements of their jobs is one, but certainly not the only, important determinant of work performance and workplace harmony. It is also relevant whether the terms and conditions of employment that employees desire are in accordance with their current circumstances at work. Where these preferences are not in line with existing arrangements, and cannot be easily aligned with employers' expectations or needs, workers are likely to feel less satisfied with their work and more inclined to change jobs. Workers also leave jobs for other reasons that are outside employers' influence, such as the desire to study, travel abroad, or raise a family.

In this section, we examine several aspects of general community service workers' preferences and work plans, using the data from our workforce survey. We ask whether these workers had the type of employment contract they preferred, and whether they had their desired number of paid work hours. Where their current and desired working hours did not match, we estimate by how much, and in which direction, their hours would have had to change to reach their indicated preference. We then report on general community service workers' short-term employment intentions and career plans. We ask how many expected to still be working for their current employer in 12 months and, for those that expected to move on, what motivated this intention. Finally, as an indicator of the medium-term outlook for employee turnover, we estimate the proportion of general community service workers who expected to still be working in this sector in 3 years.

6.6.1   Preferences for terms of employment

The composition of the Australian workforce has changed in important ways over the past two decades. Between 1992 and 2008, the proportion of employees working on a permanent, full-time basis fell from 71 per cent to 64 per cent, alongside increasing part-time and casual employment. In 2008, casual workers comprised 23 per cent of employees aged 15 to 64 years, and 28 per cent of female employees in this age group (ABS 2009e). Our survey of community services offices and outlets showed that casual employment was less prevalent in the general community services sector than in the whole Australian workforce. According to employers in the sector, 17 per cent of their direct care workers were casuals in 2009 (Table 6.4).

Although our evidence indicated that casual employment is used less frequently by general community service providers than by other Australian employers on average, it was used more often than workers in the sector would like. General community service workers almost always wanted permanent employment; this was true for more than 90 per cent of the workers in each of the broad occupational categories shown in Table 6.43. Non-professionals were the least likely to have their form of employment preferences satisfied in their current jobs. Whereas 92 per cent said they would like a permanent job, only 71 per cent currently had one (see Table 6.4). The casual employment rate for non-professionals in the general community services sector (28 per cent) was nearly six times as high as current workers would have liked (Table 6.43). This wide gap between non-professionals' preferences and actual circumstances might become a problem for their employers if the lack of permanency motivates some workers to look for other jobs that better match their preferences.

Table 6.43:   Preferred terms of employment in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Permanent	92	95	94	94
Fixed term	3	*	4	3
Casual	5	4	2	4
Total	100	100	100	N=1025

Missing cases = 149
Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

6.6.2   Hours of work preferences

Another critical determinant of employee satisfaction is the ability to find a job with working hours close to one's ideal.   In general, employees' working hours preferences vary significantly by sex, age, marital status and family composition. Many would prefer to have fewer hours because they feel under excessive strain and would like to spare extra time for family and recreation, but continue working because they feel obligations to clients or workmates, or because they have come to depend on the extra income that the work generates. Others would choose to work longer hours because their circumstances have changed and they are looking to acquire further experience or increase their earnings, but meet resistance from their employers.

We asked employees to tell us first whether their working hours would be any different from their current situation if the decision was their own to make, bearing in mind the impact that any change would have on their earnings. The most common response to this question, that given by 67 per cent of general community service workers, was that they would prefer to keep their working hours much as they are now (Table 6.44). This result suggests that most workers in the sector were content with their current hours of work.

The pattern of preferred hours exhibited some variation by occupation. Non-professionals were the most likely to want additional hours, while managers/administrators had the strongest demand for shorter working time (Table 6.44). The latter result is not surprising, given the earlier evidence that managers and administrators were older, more experienced, doing more unpaid hours of work, and higher paid, than other general community service workers (Tables 6.9, 6.13, 6.14 and 6.15). They would be expected to be the group most willing to reduce their paid hours in exchange for an increase in leisure time (and a reduction in work-related demands), because their higher salaries and positions enabled this without risking future unemployment or a prohibitive cut in their living standards.

We then asked the workers who favoured some change in their working hours to tell us the number of hours they preferred. General community service workers' responses to this more detailed item are shown in Table 6.45. For completeness, we include in the table those workers who said they would prefer to leave their current hours unchanged. (Note that Tables 6.44 and 6.45 show marginally different estimates for this group, because some workers who said they would change their hours, if they could, nonetheless stated a preference for the same number of hours as they were already working.)

The main observation to be made about Table 6.45 is that the workers who wanted a change in hours (positive or negative) usually preferred a relatively small change of less than 10 hours per week in either direction. There were some important exceptions to this general observation within occupations, however. When non-professional workers wanted longer hours, they most often preferred increases of at least 10 hours per week. And when managers and administrators wanted to reduce their working time, they normally wanted to do so by at least 10 hours. These results yield some useful insights into labour demand and supply behaviour within general community services workplaces. While it seems that providers in the sector could increase the hours of their current non-professional workers without incurring recruitment costs, they would find it very difficult to increase the workloads of managers without appointing new staff. Our survey suggests that about one quarter of current managers/administrators in the sector would like to work fewer hours than they do now.

Table 6.44:   Preferred hours of employment relative to current hours in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Fewer	13	22	27	20
Same	66	68	65	67
More	21	10	9	14
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 6.45:   Preferred hours of employment compared to current, per week, in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
10+ fewer	3	7	16	8
1 to 9 fewer	9	15	10	12
Same	68	68	66	68
1 to 9 more	8	8	5	7
10+ more	10	2	3	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

6.6.3   Future career intentions

Insights into employees' turnover intentions are useful for two reasons. First, they aid in the difficult task of workforce planning. Employers can better predict the number and types of vacancies they will have to fill if they can monitor or predict patterns of employee turnover. Second, turnover intentions are indicative of employee commitment and work satisfaction. When workers see themselves staying with an employer, or at least in their current industry, they are more likely to be motivated to form productive working relationships with clients, workmates and managers than when they see themselves changing jobs or not working.

Around 60 per cent of current employees in the general community services sector expected to still be in their jobs in 12 months (Table 6.46). Managers and administrators were the most likely to expect to stay, but for the most part the differences across occupations were not large. About one in ten general community service workers were confident they would leave their current job within 12 months. The remaining 28 per cent of workers were either uncertain about their future, or said that their decision to leave or stay was dependent on what happens in their jobs and their personal lives in the next year. Looking at the occupational differences, we found that non-professional workers had no stronger turnover intentions than managers and administrators, despite the evidence earlier in this section that they are much less likely to have their preferred form of employment. The results in Table 6.46 suggest that what workers see as the under-provision of permanent jobs in the general community services sector is not driving a disproportionate number of non-professionals to consider leaving the sector.

We next asked workers who said they would, or might, leave their current jobs to tell us the main reason why they would do so. Their responses are shown (ranked in descending order of importance) in Table 6.47. Among the most important reasons for leaving or planning to leave was the desire to find another job. However, most of these intended job changes occurred within the general community services sector. The proportion who said they would change jobs by leaving the sector (11 per cent) was about half the proportion who said they would change jobs within in it (23 per cent). Among the other important reasons general community service workers gave for leaving or planning to leave their current job were financial factors (14 per cent), which may reflect dissatisfaction with their current pay or hours of work, expiry of contract (13 per cent), and stress or burnout (9 per cent). Professionals and managers/administrators who planned to leave their employer in the next 12 months were especially likely to say this was for financial reasons.

Finally, we asked current workers to look forward over a 3 year period and indicate whether they expected to be still working in general community services, working elsewhere, or not working at all. Most workers (68 per cent) said they would still be working in the sector 3 years from now, and this figure holds across the three major occupational categories (Table 6.48). Based on these results, it seems that the sector can reasonably expect to retain many of its current staff for the near future, although as we saw in Table 6.46 the proportion who intended to stay with the current employer was lower. We take from these results – and from Table 6.47 – the conclusion that general community service workers who contemplate leaving their jobs are often motivated by opportunities to advance within the sector, rather than by more attractive outside offers.

Table 6.46: Whether expect to be with same employer in 12 months in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes	60	57	65	60
No	12	11	11	11
It depends	22	23	18	21
Don't know	7	9	6	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Table 6.47: Main reason may leave employer in 12 months in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Job change, within sector	19	28	24	23
Other reasons	16	15	11	14
Financial reasons	8	18	17	14
Contract ends	15	8	17	13
Job change, leaving sector	16	9	5	11
Stress or burnout	10	9	9	9
Family reason	6	4	6	5
Study or travel	5	*	5	4
Retirement	*	5	6	4
Redundancy, retrenchment	*	*	*	1
Total	100	100	100	N=345

Missing cases = 38

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: Estimating samples restricted to workers who say they will or might leave their current employer within 12 months. The 'Other reasons' category included: Problems with Manager or Workplace, Funding Issues and Relocating/Moving/Migrating.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

Table 6.48: Where expect to be working in 3 years in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Working in this sector	68	68	69	68
Working elsewhere	8	7	7	7
Not working for pay	2	3	5	3
Don't know	23	22	19	22
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

6.7 Career Paths

Few employees remain in a single job or even a single organisation throughout their careers. As a result, patterns of entry into jobs and exit from them are central to understanding the dynamics of labour markets. They can also add important dimensions to the picture of workers' skills since career pathways are integral to the experiences and skills workers bring to their jobs. Moreover, patterns of exit from jobs indicate the extent to which experience based knowledge and skills are able to accumulate within a workforce. Understanding career pathways into general community service jobs may suggest areas where common pathways can be supported and enhanced, or where common pathways suggest that there may be difficulties in career paths.

Our focus in this section of the report is on pathways into and out of general community service jobs, rather than career progression amongst those who remain in the sector. We collected information on the jobs community service workers held before they entered the sector, their age at entry into the sector, their total experience in it, and reasons for moving jobs within the general community services area.

6.7.1 Career before current job

As we have noted above (Section 6.1.5), the general community services workforce had a significantly older age profile than the whole Australian workforce, with over 60 per cent being aged 40 or over. As a result, general community service workers brought a range of previous experiences to their jobs. Very few had no previous paid employment before entering general community services (Table 5.49). Only about one fifth of non-professionals, who made up the bulk of the general community services workforce, had previously worked in welfare or care positions. About 45 per cent came from lower skill service occupations such as sales, clerical or hospitality positions. A little under 15 per cent had previously been professionals or managers outside the general community services sector.

Some 15 per cent of professionals in general community services had previously worked as welfare workers or carers in other sectors, and over one fifth had been professionals or managers in other sectors. Previous work in lower service positions (sales, clerical or hospitality) was quite common amongst professionals, with nearly 40 per cent having held positions of this kind before working in general community services. Managers and administrators also had quite varied backgrounds, with previous positions as professionals or managers, or in lower service work, being most common.

Table 6.49:   Occupation before first job in general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
No previous paid job	7	7	4	6
Welfare worker elsewhere	9	10	9	9
Carer elsewhere	10	5	3	7
Salesperson	12	10	11	11
Clerical, admin worker	18	20	24	20
Hospitality worker	15	9	6	10
Professional or manager elsewhere	13	22	30	21
Nurse	2	2	4	2
Labourer	5	3	1	4
Other	8	11	7	9
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.
Note: Within the 'Other' category, the responses given most frequently by general community service workers were: Tradesperson, Other Education worker/Trainer and Cleaner.

6.7.2   Experience in current sector

General community service workers entered the sector at a wide range of ages. Nearly half in each occupation began working in the sector before the age of 30. On the other hand, about a quarter were aged 40 or over when they began working in general community services. This distribution of ages at the commencement of general community service careers suggests that the current older age profile is a combined effect of workers who started in the sector at young ages and have remained it, and a group of workers who commenced their general community service careers at mature ages. Government sector workers were generally somewhat younger when they entered general community services work than non-government ones. Thus, just over 45 per cent of non-government workers entered the sector before they turned 30 compared to nearly 60 per cent of government workers.

Table 6.50:   Age when took first job in the general community services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
21 or under	21	18	15	18
22 to 29	25	31	31	29
30 to 39	28	25	32	28
40 to 49	20	20	14	18
50 or more	6	7	8	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

The experience of general community service workers in the sector is often considerable, though there is also a significant group of workers who had recently entered it. Over 60 per cent of non-professionals had worked in general community services for five or more years, with about one third having 10 or more years experience in the sector (Table 6.51). Nevertheless, 15 per cent had been in the sector for less than two years. Professionals and managers/administrators in general community services typically had more experience in the sector, with about 70 per cent of each group having worked there for 5 or more years. These patterns strongly indicate that many workers remain in the general community services sector for long periods once they enter it, even if they change jobs during their careers.

Table 6.51: **Length of time working in the general community services sector (in years) by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Less than 2	15	9	12	12
2 to less than 5	24	20	15	20
5 to less than 10	27	24	19	24
10 to less than 20	24	28	35	28
20 or more	10	18	19	15
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Most general community service workers had some experience in the sector before their current job (Table 6.52). Such experience was somewhat more common amongst professionals (80 per cent had previously worked in the sector) than non-professionals (just over 70 per cent had previous general community service experience). While most of this previous experience was in paid positions, 35–45 per cent of workers in general community services occupations had some previous unpaid experience in the sector. These patterns indicate that general community service employers find more of their employees from within the sector than from outside. In filling non-professional positions, they are more likely to turn to workers outside the sector, though even here most workers have previous experience in the sector. It also appears that unpaid positions may be an important route into the sector, though we cannot be certain because we do not know whether they usually preceded paid positions.

Table 6.52: **Whether worked previously in the general community services sector before current job, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Yes, paid	31	35	34	33
Yes, paid and unpaid	24	32	23	27
Yes, unpaid only	17	13	12	14
No	28	20	31	26
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Understanding why general community service workers leave their jobs is important in developing strategies to retain workers. Our survey asked respondents why they had left their previous general community service job, if they had held one before their current position.

For many workers, the main reason for leaving their previous general community services job was related to how their jobs might fit with other aspects of their lives. Thus, just over one third moved either because they relocated, sought better shifts or hours, had private care responsibilities, or wanted to work closer to home (Table 6.53). Another group, of about the same size, shifted jobs to avoid negative work experiences such as unsatisfying work, workplace conflict, a stressful job, or insufficient time with clients. Just over 10 per cent lost their jobs because funding or contracts ended. Almost none moved to improve their pay.

These results clearly show that one important factor retaining general community service workers in all occupations is likely to be how well their jobs fit with other commitments. Especially where workers are women working part-time, as is the case for the majority of non-professionals, their commitment to family responsibilities may outweigh their commitment to their general community service jobs when the two are in conflict. If the family relocates, employers will have limited capacity to affect this issue, though with other aspects of the so-called work/life balance (such as hours or shifts), there may be more scope for adjustments that will keep a worker with an employer. In general community services an equally important issue is enhancing the opportunities for intrinsic job rewards. Negative workplace experiences were equally important in precipitating job moves within general community services in all occupations.

Table 6.53: **Main reason left previous paid job in the general community services sector, by occupation, 2009 (per cent)**

	Non-professionals	Professionals	Managers and administrators	Total
Find more satisfying work	24	20	23	22
Relocated	21	20	21	21
Contract or funding ended	13	10	17	13
Improve pay	6	11	8	9
Avoid conflict	6	8	9	8
Better shifts or hours	8	5	5	6
Job too stressful	7	5	5	6
Closer to home	5	6	4	5
Other reasons	4	7	2	4
Private care responsibilities	4	4	4	4
Not enough time with clients	*	5	*	2
Total	100	100	100	N=634

Missing cases = 57

Source: Survey of Community Services Workers 2009.

Note: The 'Other' category includes Further Education, Unhappy with Organisation/Agency and Retired/Lifestyle Change.

* Too few responses for reliable estimate.

7.   Comparing Sectors

7.1   The Logic of Comparisons – Why Compare?

In this chapter we examine the major workforce features and issues revealed by our surveys in the four community service sectors that are the focus of this report. Considering the four sectors together makes it possible to identify where workforce features and issues are endemic to the community services industry, and where they are peculiar to a particular sector within community services. Workforce issues that are common to all of the main community services sectors are likely to require a different kind of policy response than those that are not found in all sectors. Indeed, where some sectors are dealing with workforce issues with less difficulty than others, we might ask whether the former sectors might learn from the latter.

Comparison across community service sectors needs to be tempered with awareness of the unavoidably different demands some face compared to others. Amongst the sectors that are the focus of this report, differences between those with a substantial statutory role and those without such a role are of this kind. In the child protection and juvenile justice sectors, the main workforce features and workforce issues are necessarily affected by the very substantial statutory provisions that mandate many of the tasks and roles required of workers. There can be little doubt that these requirements shape the structure of the child protection and juvenile justice workforces, and place pressures on workers, in ways that are simply not found in the disability or general community service sectors. On the other hand, compared to child protection and juvenile justice work, much of the focus of disability and general community service work is in the provision of what is usually thought of as 'care' – the provision of assistance with the activities of their everyday lives to those who need it – unalloyed by other aims. One important focus of this chapter is just how different the workforce structure and workers' experiences are across these two groups of community service sectors.

7.2   Employers, Workplaces and Employment in Community Services

The community services industry is large, diverse and complex. The data collected for this report provides the final pieces allowing the first reasonably comprehensive picture of the industry and its workforce to be constructed. The extent of diversity in the industry is suggested by the basic data presented in Table 7.1. While the numbers in this table for each sector are not fully comparable, primarily because the data on which they are based were collected at different times, they provide an extremely useful comparison. Some of the key messages from these combined data are:

- The sectors vary substantially in the number of staff they employ. The aged care sector is by far the largest in community services, accounting for about 54 per cent of total staff (52 per cent of EFT staff). It employs nearly 50 times as many EFT staff as the smallest sector (juvenile justice).

- The four sectors that are the focus of this report are the smallest of the community service sectors. Together, they employ about 25 per cent of direct service community service workers, with the disability services sector being the largest and the juvenile

justice sector the smallest. The disability services sector employs well over half of those working for these four sectors.

- The average number of direct service provision staff employed per outlet varies considerably, indicating that their scale varies too. For example, aged care homes employ on average more than 2.5 times as many staff as disability services outlets, and nearly 8 times as many as general community services outlets.

- In sectors with significant statutory responsibilities (child protection and juvenile justice), most employees work for government agencies. In sharp contrast, the remaining sectors are dominated by non-profit employers, who employ at least half of workers in these sectors.

- However, the balance between non-profit and for-profit employers varies between these sectors. Thus, for-profit providers are absent or employ no more than about 5 per cent of workers in disability services, general community services and community based aged care. However, for-profits employed about one third of workers in residential aged care (in 2007) and children's services (in 2004).

Table 7.1: **Overview of employment and workplaces in community services**

Sector	Number of outlets	Number of direct care workers	EFT direct care workers	Average direct care staff per outlet	Workforce Proportion Government	Workforce Proportion Non-profit	Workforce Proportion For-profit
Child Protection (2009)	952	11,270 (2.9%)	8,489 (3.6%)	11.8	58%	42%	1%
Juvenile Justice (2009)	283	2,823 (0.7%)	2,393 (1.0%)	10.0	83%	17%	0
Disability Services (2009)	3,231	58,202 (15.2%)	25,013 (10.5%)	18.0	21%	73%	6%
General Community Services (2009)	4,048	23,879 (6.2%)	12,321 (5.2%)	5.9	15%	85%	0
Aged Care (Residential) (2007)	2,875	133,314 (34.8%)	78,849 (33.2%)	46.4	9%	58%	33%
Aged Care (Community) (2007)	3,300†	74,067 (19.3%)	46,056 (19.4%)	22.4	22%	73%	5%
Children's Services (2004)	11,043	79,420 (20.7%)	64,383 (27.1%)	7.2	14%*	50%*	32%*
Total	**25,732**	**382,975**	**237,504**	**14.9**			

Sources: Survey of Community Services Offices or Outlets 2009; Martin and King 2008; National Children's Services Workforce Study 2006.
Notes: (1) †Estimate; (2) *Proportion of outlets, not staff

The four community service sectors that are the focus of this report have workforces that varied significantly in the mix of professional and non-professional workers and the kinds of

contracts on which they were employed, though in some respects they were similar (Table 7.2). The key features of these similarities and differences are:

Workforce Structure:
- The child protection and juvenile justice sectors employed more professional than non-professional workers in direct service provision; whereas the disability services and general community services sectors employed more non-professional workers. The disability services sector was distinctive in employing almost 10 times as many non-professional as professional workers.

Employment Contracts:
- In all sectors except juvenile justice, about 30 per cent of non-professionals were employed on casual contracts (in juvenile justice, the figure is 20 per cent).

- In disability services and general community services, the most common form of employment for non-professionals was as permanent *part-time* workers, while in child protection and juvenile justice it was as permanent *full-time* workers. (Where the cut-off between part-time and full-time employment is 35 hours per week.)

- Professionals in child protection and juvenile justice were overwhelmingly employed on permanent full-time contracts.

- Professionals in disability services and general community services were almost all employed permanently, with nearly equal numbers being full-time and part-time.

- Managers and administrators were most often employed on a permanent full-time basis in all sectors. However, a significant minority worked on permanent part-time basis in disability services and general community services.

Use of staff not directly employed by outlets:
- Staff not directly employed by outlets, such as agency, sub-contract and self-employed staff, were used in all sectors to deliver services to clients.

- These staff were not widely used in any sector, with the highest usage being in disability services where less than one quarter of outlets used them.

- Where these staff were used, they performed a small proportion of all work.

These differences and similarities across sectors suggest some core workforce issues that are likely to be similar and others that are likely to be different across the sectors. Thus:

- The centrality of full-time professional employees to the child protection and juvenile justice sectors means that recruiting and retaining these workers is necessarily central to the adequacy and future sustainability of their workforces.

- The disability sector is distinctive amongst the four examined in this report in the extent of its reliance on part-time non-professionals who provide direct services to clients. In this respect, the disability sector most resembles the aged care sector. Recruiting and retaining these workers is likely to involve issues that are different from those faced where full-time professionals are a larger component of the

workforce (as in child protection and juvenile justice). Nevertheless, non-professionals providing client services are important in all sectors.

- The general community services sector is undoubtedly the most diverse in the community services industry, and a successful workforce strategy will need to ensure adequate workers across the range of levels and types of skills and kinds of employment contracts (particularly full-time vs. part-time) required by the sector.

- Currently, no sector relies heavily on staff who are not directly employed by agencies. Given the nature of community service provision, this is probably desirable. Most staff of this kind are used to respond to short-term labour supply problems. Monitoring the use of such staff may be a useful indicator of the trends in labour supply.

Table 7.2: **Key employment patterns in child protection, juvenile justice, disability services and general community services, 2009**

	Child Protection	Juvenile Justice	Disability Services	General Community Services
Ratio of non-professionals to professionals	0.6	0.9	9.5	1.6
Proportion non-professionals who are casual	29%	20%	31%	28%
Proportion professionals who are casual	11%	5%	3%	9%
Proportion non-professionals who are permanent full-time	38%	64%	14%	27%
Proportion professionals who are permanent full-time	80%	78%	52%	42%
Proportion of Managers and Administrators who are permanent full-time	86%	86%	68%	62%
Proportion of outlets that used non-employed staff†	8%	15%	23%	12%
Median number of shifts worked by non-employed staff in last pay period	22	14	24	20

†Includes agency, sub-contract and self-employed staff.

7.3 Demographics

Comparing the basic demographic structures of the workforces examined in this report further illuminates some distinctive aspects of the child protection and juvenile justice workforces, and suggests further notable similarities between the disability services and general community services (and aged care) workforces. Thus, Table 7.3 shows that:

- The child protection and juvenile justice workforces had almost identical age structures, which were comparable to that of the Australian female workforce.

- The younger age profile of the child protection workforce probably reflects a career pattern in which workers do not spend a large proportion of their careers in direct provision of child protection services.

- The disability and general community services sectors had almost identical age structures, which were significantly older than those of child protection and juvenile justice, and of the Australian female workforce.

- The older age profile in disability services was closely connected to the high proportion of workers who entered the sector at mature ages; whereas that in general community services more likely reflects ageing of the workforce that is in place.

- In all sectors, a large majority of workers are non-Indigenous and Australian born.

- Indigenous workers were much more common in child protection and juvenile justice, where they made up 10 per cent of workers, than in other sectors.

- In three of the sectors, workers were overwhelmingly (about 80 per cent) female, while in juvenile justice almost half (45 per cent) of workers were men.

- The vast majority of workers in all sectors had some post-school qualification.

- Workers in the disability sector were much less likely to have degree qualifications than those in other sectors. Child protection workers were the most likely to have these qualifications, reflecting the high proportion who were in professional positions.

Table 7.3:   Key workforce demographics in child protection, juvenile justice, disability services and general community services, 2009

	Child Protection	Juvenile Justice	Disability Services	General Community Services
Female	79%	55%	82%	83%
Aged Under 30	25%	23%	14%	15%
Aged 30 to 49	57%	61%	53%	53%
Aged 50 or more	18%	15%	33%	32%
Began work in sector prior to age 30	48%	52%	37%	47%
Non-Indigenous, born in Australia	70%	71%	75%	67%
Indigenous	9%	11%	2%	6%
Some post-school qualification	91%	87%	82%	87%
Degree or higher qualification	68%	50%	27%	51%

7.4   *Employment Preferences*

Our research revealed some significant discrepancies between workers' preferred working arrangements, and those they currently experienced. These were in two main areas: the type of contract under which workers are employed, and the hours they work.

With regard to employment contracts, the overwhelming majority of workers in every sector and occupation preferred to work on a permanent contract, rather than a casual or fixed term arrangement. Only in the disability sector was this pattern even slightly moderated, with 10 per cent of workers in that sector preferring casual employment. This is a potentially significant issue in all four sectors, especially with regard to non-professional workers. Some 20-30 per cent of these workers were employed as casuals, and most would have clearly preferred permanent contracts. Although their dissatisfaction with their current contracts may not be sufficient to induce them to leave their current positions, even if a permanent position is on offer, it may exacerbate any other dissatisfactions. On the other hand, it is well known that many workers who are formally employed on casual contracts nevertheless have similar expectations of ongoing employment to those on formally permanent contracts. Nevertheless, the nature of contracts may be one issue on which employers can compromise in order to attract or retain workers, especially non-professional ones.

The level and kind of mismatch between current and preferred hours of work varied considerably between sectors. This is an important issue. Where there are significant numbers of workers who would prefer to increase their hours of work, a workforce has built in capacity to adjust to increased labour demand. Increasing the hours of current workers is a simple and cost effective solution to increasing labour supply, so long as existing workers can provide the skills employers are seeking. In workforces with significant excess capacity amongst existing employees, employers also generally have the ability to gain compromises from workers on other issues. On the other hand, a large number of workers who would prefer shorter hours may indicate problems of overwork and associated negative pressures. Depending on the severity of the issue, such pressures may lead workers to leave their jobs, especially where there are alternatives.

All sectors did have a group of workers who would have preferred longer hours. In the disability and general community services sectors, about 15 per cent of workers would have preferred longer hours, indicating significant excess capacity in these workforces. However, even in these sectors, the problem of overwork appeared to be significant with almost as many disability workers preferring shorter hours as wanting longer hours, and more general community service workers having this preference. Without further detailed analysis, it is difficult to draw strong conclusions from this pattern. It could indicate significant variation in skill levels amongst workers, so that employers have their most skilled employees work as many hours as possible, while minimising the hours of their less skilled ones. It is also possible that the pattern reflects regional variation, so that employees wanting fewer hours are in areas with labour shortages, while those wanting more hours are in areas with labour surpluses.

In child protection and juvenile justice, the group of workers wanting more hours was small and significantly outweighed by workers who would have preferred to decrease their hours. Most dramatically, in child protection, only 5 per cent of workers wished to increase hours, while one third wanted to decrease them. As we have noted already, these are also the sectors in which professionals form the largest proportion of the workforce and the ones in which most workers are employed full-time. Given these patterns, the strong balance of preference for shorter hours suggests that many full time workers in these sectors find themselves unable to complete their work in normal hours. It also suggests that the sectors may rely on workers' willingness to work longer hours than they would prefer because of commitment to clients or colleagues. In both cases, these issues make the workforces vulnerable to burnout or simply to being attracted to other positions or sectors where these

pressures are lessened. They also leave employers with little ability to quickly respond when service demands increase without hiring new workers, since there is little excess capacity in the existing workforce.

7.5   Skills

The types and levels of skills needed by workers in the four community services sectors examined in this report varied considerably. As we have already noted, child protection and juvenile justice were distinctive in the high proportion of staff providing direct services who were professional. As would be expected, this was associated with higher proportions with degree and post-degree training. On the other hand, in the disability sector, with a high proportion of workers in non-professional positions for which the expected level of training is a Certificate 3 or 4, the proportion of workers with degrees was much lower.

In general, workers were confident in their skills, believing that they have the skills they needed for their jobs. There was little variation in this pattern across sectors. On the other hand, although employers generally thought that most of their workers were not underskilled, they did see a significant group as lacking skills they need. This discrepancy in views between employers and employees was present in all sectors, and may warrant some further investigation. It does suggest, at least, that better communication of skill expectations by employers might be necessary.

At the same time, about one quarter of employees in every sector were currently undertaking education towards a formal qualification. Broadly, the qualifications for which they were studying were comparable, in both level and area, with those of the more qualified members of their occupations. They also seemed appropriate for the jobs of those studying. These levels of training were also consistent with indications that many employers had recently appointed workers who did not have optimal skills for their jobs. They suggest that these appointees may be trained quite quickly to hold higher skill levels. Clearly, the availability of appropriate training, and employer support for it where it is needed, will significantly affect the overall skill levels of the workforces.

In addition to formal training, many workers accumulate important skills on the job, sometimes within a single organisation and sometimes across organisations. These skills are much more difficult to identify directly than those associated with formal qualifications. However, length of service with an organisation or in an industry is usually associated with them, though the extent to which they accumulate after an initial period varies greatly between occupations and industries. Our data indicates that there were important variations on these matters across sectors.

In the child protection and juvenile justice sectors, over half of workers had been in the sector for 5 years or less, and over one fifth had been in the respective sector for less than two years. This was in sharp contrast to the disability and general community services sectors where about three quarters of workers had been in each sector for more than 5 years. Given the younger age profile of the child protection and juvenile justice sectors, this pattern strongly suggests that these sectors benefit much less than they might from the skills that come through experience. On the other hand, it seems likely that, while the disability and general community services sectors have workers with lower levels of formal training, they may benefit significantly from a more experienced workforce.

7.6   The Work Experience

As we have noted elsewhere in this report, the motivations workers have in entering jobs and their experiences in them are central to recruiting and retaining a skilled, motivated workforce. In general, the community services workforce is highly committed in providing care and assistance to its clients. This is common across all sectors, and providing employees with opportunities to fulfil their ambitions to supply committed service to clients is undoubtedly highly relevant to developing and maintaining a high quality workforce. Indeed, in all sectors the most commonly mentioned motivations for entering the sector involve seeking rewards that are intrinsic to performing the job, and involve helping others or doing meaningful work. However, the extent to which 'extrinsic' rewards, such as pay and conditions, were motivators did vary somewhat. These factors were more often cited by workers in child protection and, especially, juvenile justice than disability or general community services. This difference may reflect a difference in the relative importance of internal and external factors to workers in these sectors. However, it may also reflect the current relative conditions in the sectors. Thus, for example, the lower importance of pay and conditions in attracting workers to the general community services compared to juvenile justice may be a result of more attractive pay and conditions in juvenile justice.[17] Overall, though, it is clear that pay and conditions were more important in attracting workers to child protection and juvenile justice than they were in the other sectors.

A variety of data reported in earlier chapters indicates that most community service workers experienced their jobs in positive ways, irrespective of the sector in which they worked. Job satisfaction, though slightly below that of the whole workforce, was generally positive and quite high. Given the challenging nature of much community service work, a particularly positive feature of the workforce is the very positive relationships they reported between managers and employers, and between workmates. These relationships are likely to be very important in supporting workers on a day to day basis, and in encouraging them to remain in their jobs. Supporting such relationships is likely to pay considerable dividends in terms of workforce retention.

Of course, the one exception to this positive picture is the remarkably low levels of satisfaction with pay found across community services. The small variation across sectors indicates that this is an issue that goes beyond low pay in any one sector (pay satisfaction is higher in juvenile justice than most other sectors, though much lower than the Australian average). It suggests that many community service workers remained in their jobs despite the pay rather than because of it.

7.7   Workforce Dynamics

All workforces are constantly in flux. Some employees leave jobs, whether to depart the workforce, to take positions they find more attractive, or, more rarely because their employment contracts are ended. New workers are constantly being recruited, through a variety of channels, some of whom will only remain briefly while others are destined to become long term workers in the field. Maintaining an adequate workforce in any industry therefore requires that these flows of workers in and out of jobs are sufficiently balanced and

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[17] Indeed, some one third of juvenile justice professionals earned $35 per hour or more, compared to less than 10 per cent of those in general community services.

efficient to ensure that the main labour needs are being met. In these respects, the community services industry faces similar issues to any other.

In Table 7.4, we have summarised some of the key indicators of workforce dynamics in the four community services sectors. In some respects they were remarkably similar, while in others substantial differences were evident.

First, the turnover rates in these four sectors were quite similar, with employers estimating that about one quarter of employees in every sector had been in their current job for less than one year. This means that employers in all sectors faced a substantial recruitment task, since they must replace at least one quarter of their employees every year.

In all sectors except disability, workers in our surveys were slightly more likely to find their jobs through formal methods such as newspaper advertisements than informal methods such as friendship and family networks or simply approaching employers. In the disability sector, informal methods were slightly more commonly used than formal methods, particularly for non-professional positions. These patterns suggest that employers may well be able to fill positions most efficiently if they consider formal advertising of positions alongside maintaining and mobilising informal networks to publicise vacancies.

Overall, there is limited evidence that employers find it more difficult to recruit workers in some sectors compared to others. Juvenile justice vacancies did appear to be more slowly filled than those in other sectors, but the data here may not be enormously reliable. As we have already noted, no sector showed substantial use of agency, self-employed or contract staff, as might be expected if there were substantial labour shortages. On the other hand, there were some indications that employers were making compromises in hiring workers who did not have what they regarded as optimal skills for their jobs. This pattern was somewhat more common in the disability sector, where nearly 40 per cent of recent appointees did not have optimal skills, than in the other sectors where the figure was around 30 per cent. However, in all sectors, outlets were more likely to make recent appointments of non-professionals without optimal skills than of other occupational groups. Employers may have reasonably expected to have to provide some training to these workers, so that the level of appointment of workers without optimal skills was probably more an indicator of this practice than of a significant skill shortage amongst the pool of applicants. Indeed, virtually no outlets in any sector indicated that they had recently appointed professionals who lacked skills necessary for their jobs.

New workers may be recruited from within a sector, or from similar sectors. Different recruitment strategies may be needed depending on whether employers are seeking workers with previous experience or not. Patterns across the four sectors examined here varied considerably in these respects. Employers in general community services and, to a lesser extent, disability services appeared to rely on recruiting workers from within the sector more than those in child protection and juvenile justice. This suggests that there was more 'churn' within the former sectors than the latter ones. To some extent, this may reflect the higher levels of part-time employment in disability and general community services. Part-time workers may have lower attachment to their jobs than full-time workers, especially if they have significant caring responsibilities and if employment practices in the sector are adapted to allowing workers to move from one job to another with relative ease.

On the other hand, child protection and juvenile justice employees were much more likely than those in disability services and general community services to have held other welfare or caring jobs before entering their current sector. This pattern is common across occupations within these sectors, so that it is not simply a product of the larger proportion of workers who are professional in the former sectors. Child protection and juvenile justice had the smallest total workforces in community services, and this may partly explain why workers in these sectors more frequently had experience in other welfare and caring work.

Overall, these patterns suggest that the scope for workers to move between community services sectors varies considerably. In general community services and disability, workers tended to be recruited from outside community services. Though they may change jobs or employers during their community service careers, they tended to remain in the sector to which they were recruited until they left community services work. Thus, in each of these sectors, the workforce appeared to be fairly discrete, with limited movement out of other community services sectors into them and, probably, limited movement from these sectors into other community services areas. In this respect, these sectors resemble aged care, where there is even evidence that workers do not commonly move from community based to residential aged care or vice versa (Martin and King 2008). On the other hand, child protection and juvenile justice workers were more often recruited from other community services sectors. They appeared to be more likely to leave the sector if they left their jobs, rather than move to other jobs within the sector. Thus, these workers appeared to move much more readily between community service sectors, and the result was that the workforces in child protection and juvenile justice were less isolated from other community service sectors. This pattern may have important advantages for child protection and juvenile justice employers, who may benefit from the previous community services experience of their workers outside these sectors.

It is notable that, despite these differences, about 60 per cent of workers in every sector expected to be working in their current sector three years from the date of the survey, except in general community services where the proportion was somewhat higher. This indicates that there are no dramatic differences in worker morale or commitment across these sectors, and that the sectors can expect to retain a large proportion of their current workforce in coming years.

Table 7.4: Key indicators of workforce dynamics in child protection, juvenile justice, disability services and general community services, 2009

	Child Protection	Juvenile Justice	Disability Services	General Community Services
Proportion with less than 1 year of job tenure	27%	24%	24%	26%
Proportion found job through advert	50%	47%	45%	48%
Proportion found job through networks or direct approach to employer	41%	42%	49%	43%
Proportion with paid experience in sector before current job	31%	23%	44%	60%
Proportion from other welfare or caring jobs	42%	41%	18%	16%
Proportion of jobs filled within 1 month	50%	32%	54%	42%
Proportion expecting to remain in sector in 3 yrs	60%	59%	61%	68%

7.8 Key Workforce Issues

The profiles of community services workforces presented in this report should prove invaluable for a wide range of workforce initiatives and workforce planning. They may be used to identify a wide range of key workforce issues, and suggest strategies for workforce development. Amongst these are the following:

- All community services workforces are dominated by women, with the exception of the juvenile justice workforce. Even in juvenile justice, the majority of workers are women. A large body of research on gender segregation in occupations indicates that the dominance of women in community services jobs cannot be expected to change quickly. Continuing to attract workers to community service jobs, and retaining them when they enter these jobs, can be expected to depend heavily on the extent to which those jobs allow women to combine satisfactorily their jobs with their other life commitments. Sectors like the disability and general community services sector offer one approach to this issue – making many jobs part-time. In other sectors, such as child protection and juvenile justice, part-time work is more limited. In all sectors, employers are likely to benefit greatly from instituting attractive, flexible arrangements for women to continue careers as their other life commitments change through the life course. Indeed, there are likely to be dividends from further research to investigate the adequacy of such arrangements in community services. One possibility is that the current fairly short careers in the child protection and juvenile justice sectors may be partly associated with this issue.

- This research has shown that the age profiles of community service sectors vary considerably, with disability services and general community services having older age profiles than other sectors and the Australian female workforce. Older workforces are often viewed as 'aging' workforces that hint at significant labour shortages in the future. Our research suggests that the age structure of the disability workforce and the general community services workforce results at least as much from many workers entering the sectors at mature ages, as it does from the aging of

an established workforce. While workforce aging in these sectors will be an important issue to monitor, it is equally likely that maintaining a sustainable workforce will be greatly supported by ensuring that these sectors continue to attract and support mature workers.

- All of the community services sectors profiled here have significant turnover in their workforces. In every case, about one quarter of the workforce had current job tenure of one year or less. This indicates a substantial, ongoing recruitment task for employers. However, the issue is of a different kind in the child protection and juvenile justice sectors, compared to the disability and general community services sectors. In the former sectors, it appears that when workers leave their jobs, they also frequently leave the sector. They often do this after fairly short careers in these sectors. In contrast, workers in disability services and general community services appear quite likely to move to other jobs in the same sector, thus preserving their experience and skills in their field. This pattern is probably associated with the high levels of part-time work and lower resultant labour force attachment amongst disability and general community service workers. In any case, a key issue for the child protection and juvenile justice workforces is to understand why workers appear unlikely to remain in their jobs, or with their employers, for large parts of their careers. In contrast, a sustainable workforce in disability services and general community services may involve unavoidable movement of workers between employers. Employment practices that facilitate this movement are likely to enhance the maintenance of an adequate workforce.

- Further to this issue, enhancement of opportunities for workers to move between community services sectors may be useful in supporting community services workforces. In particular, it would be useful to have better understanding of the occupation pathways followed by child protection and juvenile justice workers who leave these sectors. It may be appropriate to develop mechanisms for workers who leave these sectors to move to other community services areas where their skills and experience will be most valued.

- There are some indications of skill mismatch, especially under-skilling, of some workers in all of the workforces profiled here. The messages are mixed, since employers seem more likely than workers to identify this issue. In any case, it emphasises the importance and likely value of support for initial and ongoing training and education. The issue probably needs to be viewed somewhat differently by employers in disability services and general community services than in the other two sectors. In the former sectors, the significant mobility of workers between employers means that it may not be appropriate for employers to expect to reap long term benefits from the particular workers whose training they support. Instead, their training effort will enhance the overall skill level of the disability and general community services workforces. If all employers support training, whether or not workers are long term employees, all will benefit from a more skilled workforce. In contrast, child protection and juvenile justice employers may more reasonably aim for long term benefits from the particular workers whose training they support.

- While it is well known in all labour markets, it is worth emphasising the importance of informal networks and processes in how workers find their jobs. In community services, these are particularly important for non-professional workers in disability

services and, to a lesser extent, general community services. However, they are significant in all occupations and sectors. Employers are likely to reap benefits from cultivating these networks and using them consciously in recruitment, alongside more formal advertising.

- Pay dissatisfaction is a significant issue across the community services sector, with the possible exception of juvenile justice. This dissatisfaction may prompt some workers to leave the sector, and reduce morale amongst those who remain. It is beyond the scope of this report to assess whether this dissatisfaction reflects real pay disparities between community services and other industries. However, it may also reflect a sense amongst community service workers that their work is not valued as highly as it should be. It may not be feasible to increase pay to the extent necessary to overcome this perception. Strategies designed to provide recognition and affirmation of the valuable work done by community services workers may be useful in this respect.

- Overwork is widely recognised as a significant issue in Australian workplaces. The data reported here suggests that, in community services, this issue may be most significant amongst full-time workers in child protection and juvenile justice. Strikingly large proportions of both workforces wanted to reduce their hours of work. It would be worthwhile to conduct further research to investigate whether this issue is affecting important dynamics in these workforces, such as the likelihood that workers will leave the sectors or worker satisfaction and morale. Employers may benefit from careful auditing of workloads and work pressures in these sectors.

- A great strength of the community services sector is that it attracts workers who find deep intrinsic meaning in their work. The desire to help others and to do something worthwhile was mentioned by large majorities of workers in all sectors as reasons for entering their sectors. Workers in all sectors also showed high levels of organisational commitment and were very positive about workplace relationships. Consciously supporting and enhancing these very positive aspects of community services workplaces is likely to pay real dividends in terms of workforce retention and morale.

- There was a clear preference for permanent employment amongst all workforces profiled here. This indicates that employers may be able to increase the probability of retaining some valued employees who do not have permanent jobs by offering them such positions. However, limited-term funding arrangements may preclude some employers from offering these positions, and may require a change in government funding practices.

- In general, the profiles presented here suggest fairly limited excess labour capacity in the existing workforces. However, such capacity did appear to be quite substantial amongst non-professional disability workers and, to a lesser extent, amongst non-professionals in general community services. Employers may be able to increase labour supply when necessary by offering longer hours to existing employees in these sectors and occupations.

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Appendix 1.   Sample Outlet Questionnaire

BLACK Harvest

CHILD PROTECTION

EMPLOYER   BOOK   1

How to fill out this form

- Please cross boxes like this:　　Yes　☒
- Correct mistakes like this:　　　☒ ☒
  (If you make a mistake, simply scribble it out and mark the correct answer with a cross).
- Use a ballpoint blue or black pen (do not use a felt tipped pen).
- Some boxes have 'Go to' instructions that look like this ☐ ➡ **Go to B8a**
  Please follow the 'Go to' even if you miss out on some questions.
- Where exact information is not known, please give the best answer you can.
- Where a written answer is required, please write clearly in the boxes provided.

Example B5:

What is the postcode of the location of your office or service outlet? | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

Information on how to fill out the grids in this form

Throughout this form, you will see that we have used tables or "grids" for you to record the required information.

When recording information in grids, remember:

- If you do not employ workers in a particular employee classification, please cross the 'Not applicable' column for that employee classification.
- If you have workers in a particular employee classification, but none in a given category, please write in "0" in the appropriate space in the grid.

For example, question A6 asks about the total number of employees providing child protection services who fall into specific age categories. If you employ 1 x 45 year old Social Worker, 1 x 38 year old Child Support Worker, and 1 x 42 year old Program Coordinator, your grid would look like this.

Employee classification	Age in years					
	Under 30	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60+ years	Not applicable
NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CATEGORY						
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)						X
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker	0	1	0	0	0	
Child Protection Investigation Officer						X
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner	0	0	1	0	0	
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker						X
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator	0	0	1	0	0	
Other *(please specify)*						X

Section A: About the Workforce

A1. How many people does your <u>office or service outlet</u> employ in total, including all full-time, part-time and casual employees, but excluding agency, sub-contract and self-employed staff?

Please provide the information for current employees (i.e., for those employed during the last pay period).

Remember to count all employees for whom PAYE tax is deducted by your office or service outlet.

PAYE employees

The following questions in this section ask about workers currently employed in your office or service outlet to provide **child protection** services. These questions refer **ONLY** to workers **paid** to provide these services.

A2. Please record the number of people (headcount) employed in your office or service outlet to provide <u>child protection</u> services by occupation classification and employment type.

- *Include all employees for whom PAYE tax is deducted by your organisation.*
- *Do not include agency staff and other staff for whom PAYE tax is not collected. Agency and other non- PAYE contract staff are covered later on in the questionnaire.*

Employee classification	Permanent full-time	Permanent part-time	Casual	Contract	Not applicable
	Jobs with paid annual and sick leave entitlements.		Jobs awarded a higher rate of pay to compensate for lack of permanency and leave entitlements.	Jobs with some leave entitlements but with a short-term employment contract.	

NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CLASSIFICATION

Employee classification	Permanent full-time	Permanent part-time	Casual	Contract	Not applicable
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)					☐
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker					☐
Child Protection Investigation Officer					☐
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner					☐
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker					☐
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator					☐
Other *(please specify)*					☐

A3. How many equivalent full-time (EFT / FTE) employees who provide child protection services do you have in each employee classification in your office or service outlet? Again, please count all employees for whom PAYE tax is deducted, but not agency staff and others for whom PAYE tax is not deducted.

- *For the purposes of calculating FTE staff, a full-time worker is someone who works 35 or more hours per week.*
- *Include only time staff spend working for pay for your office or service outlet.*

Employee classification	Full time equivalent employees	Not applicable
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)		☐
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker		☐
Child Protection Investigation Officer		☐
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner		☐
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker		☐
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator		☐
Other (please specify)		☐

We now ask for more detail about the employees you have listed. Please ensure that you include all these employees in your answers.

A4. How many employees in each occupation classification providing child protection services worked the following paid hours in the past fortnight (please exclude agency staff)?

Employee classification	Hours worked in past fortnight		
	1-30 hours	31+ hours	Not applicable
NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CLASSIFICATION			
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)			☐
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker			☐
Child Protection Investigation Officer			☐
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner			☐
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker			☐
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator			☐
Other (please specify)			☐

A5. Please tell us the total number of female and male workers providing child protection services employed in your office or service outlet. If you are not certain about the number, please provide your best estimate.

Employee classification	Male	Female	Not applicable
NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CLASSIFICATION			
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)			☐
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker			☐
Child Protection Investigation Officer			☐
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner			☐
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker			☐
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator			☐
Other *(please specify)*			☐

A6. Please tell us the total number of employees providing child protection services who fall into the following age categories. If you are not certain about the number for a category, please provide your best estimate.

Employee classification	Age in years					Not applicable
	Under 30	*30 - 39*	*40 - 49*	*50 - 59*	*60+ years*	*Not applicable*
NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CLASSIFICATION						
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)						☐
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker						☐
Child Protection Investigation Officer						☐
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner						☐
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker						☐
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator						☐
Other *(please specify)*						☐

CHILD PROTECTION   1   EMPLOYER   BOOK

A7. Please tell us the total number of employees providing child protection services in each occupational classification who have been continuously employed in this office or service outlet for the periods shown below. If you are not certain about the number for a category, please provide your best estimate.

Employee classification	Period employed			
	1 year or less	2 to 5 years	More than 5 years	Not applicable

NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CLASSIFICATION

Employee classification	1 year or less	2 to 5 years	More than 5 years	Not applicable
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)				☐
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker				☐
Child Protection Investigation Officer				☐
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner				☐
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker				☐
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator				☐
Other (please specify)				☐

Section B: About the Office or Service Outlet

The following questions ask for basic information about your office or service outlet. This information will help us to understand how the community services workforce is distributed across different types of service outlets.

B1. Please indicate the proportion (percent) of your office or service outlet's direct service activity (measured by the number of hours worked by relevant workers) that falls into each category in the table below.

• *If your office or service outlet engages in only one activity, please write '100' in the appropriate box and '0' in the other boxes. Otherwise please write '0' for any categories that are not applicable.*

Activity classification	Approximate percentage (%) of total activity
Disability Services	%
Juvenile Justice	%
Child Protection	%
Family Support Services	%
Other Community Services	%
Other Activities (please specify)	%

B2. **Is your office or service outlet:**
(Please cross the appropriate box)

Not for profit or charitable	☐ 1
Privately owned, for-profit	☐ 2
Public, government, or government owned	☐ 3

B3. **Does your organisation have charitable status (recognised by ATO)?**

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2

B4. **Is your office or service outlet part of a larger organisation (e.g., owned by a company or not-for-profit agency that owns other community services organisations, or part of a larger government organisation)?**

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2

B5. **What is the postcode of the location of your office or service outlet?**

B6. **Please indicate the proportion (approximate percent) of the funding of your office or service outlet that comes from each source below.**

- *If you receive all of your funding from a single source, please write '100' in the appropriate box below, and '0' in all others.*
- *If you receive no funding from a source, please write '0' in the appropriate box.*

Funding classification	Approximate percentage (%) of total funding
Government agency (fully funded government agency)	%
Government contracts or grants	
(a) Commonwealth Government less than 2 years grant or contract	%
(b) Commonwealth Government 2 years or more grant or contract	%
(c) State Government less than 2 years grant or contract	%
(d) State Government 2 years or more grant or contract	%
(e) Local Government less than 2 years grant or contract	%
(f) Local Government 2 years or more grant or contract	%
Non-government funding (e.g., Charitable)	%
Donations	%
Other *(please specify)*	%

Survey of *Community Services Offices or Outlets* ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● **V1 - 7**

B7a. Were any special conditions (such as requirements for a particular number of employees) associated with receiving any of the above funding?

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2 → Go to **B8a**

B7b. What were these special conditions?
(Cross all that apply)

Target / required staffing levels	☐ 1
Client / service quantity targets	☐ 2
After hours opening	☐ 3
Accessibility	☐ 4
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 5

B8a. Has your office or service outlet offered casual or contract employment in the last 12 months?

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2 → Go to **C1a**

B8b. Why does your organisation offer casual or contract employment?
(Cross all that apply)

Contract:

Non-recurrent funding	☐ 1
Specific projects	☐ 2
Replace permanent staff on leave	☐ 3
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 4

Casual:

Short notice shift cover	☐ 1
Replace permanent staff on leave	☐ 2
Fluctuating / unpredictable demand	☐ 3
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 4

Section C:
Vacancies and Skills Amongst Direct Service Staff

C1a. How many equivalent full-time (EFT / FTE) <u>vacancies</u> does your office or service outlet currently have in each occupation classification for employees providing child protection services?

Vacancies are positions available to be filled immediately, for which you have undertaken recruitment steps.

C1b. How many weeks did it take to fill the most recent vacancy for employees providing child protection services in your office or service outlet in each of the following occupations?

C1c. How many applicants did your office or service outlet have for the most recent vacancy in each occupation for employees providing child protection services?

Employee classification	C1a *Number of EFT / FTE vacancies*	C1b *Number of weeks to fill last vacancy*	C1c *Number of applicants*	C1a,b,c *Not applicable*
PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAD NO VACANCIES OR APPLICANTS				
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)				☐
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker				☐
Child Protection Investigation Officer				☐
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner				☐
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker				☐
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator				☐
Other (please specify)				☐

C2. Thinking about the most recent person appointed to a job in your office or service outlet in each of the occupational categories providing child protection services below, please indicate your view about how well their skills matched the position to which they were appointed.

• *Please cross 'Not applicable' if you have not made an appointment in a category within the last year (12 months).*

Employee classification	Does not have all the skills needed for the job	Has minimum, but not optimal, skills for the job	Has optimal skills for the job	Not applicable
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Child Protection Investigation Officer	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
Other (please specify)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

C3. Please give us your best estimate of the proportion of employees providing child protection services in your office or service outlet in each occupational classification who are <u>underqualified</u> for their jobs.

• *By underqualified, we mean not possessing the skills needed for all aspects of the job.*

Employee classification	Underqualified				
	None	Less than half	About half	More than half	Not applicable
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Child Protection Investigation Officer	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Other (please specify)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

C4. Please give us your best estimate of the proportion of employees in your office or service outlet who provide child protection services in each occupational classification in your organisation who are <u>overqualified</u> for their jobs.

• *By overqualified, we mean that they possess skills relevant to the job they do, but at a level significantly higher than needed for the job.*

Employee classification	Overqualified				
	None	Less than half	About half	More than half	Not applicable
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Child Protection Investigation Officer	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

Section D:
Agency, Sub-Contracted and Self-Employed Staff

We would now like to ask about the employment agency staff, sub-contract or self-employed staff <u>for whom you do not deduct PAYE tax</u>, who worked in your office or service outlet during the last pay period.

D1. How many people from employment agencies, sub-contract or self-employed staff worked in your office or service outlet providing child protection services during the last pay period?

Employee classification	Number of agency staff	Number of sub-contract staff	Number of self-employed staff
	Defined as staff contracted from an employment agency. Your office or service outlet has responsibility for supervising these staff.	*Defined as contracted from other community service providers. Your office or service outlet does not have responsibility for training and supervising these staff.*	*Defined as individuals who have their own ABN and operate as independent workers. Your office or service outlet would broker directly with the individual to engage their services.*

NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CLASSIFICATION

Employee classification	Number of agency staff	Number of sub-contract staff	Number of self-employed staff
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)			
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker			
Child Protection Investigation Officer			
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner			
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker			
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator			
Other *(please specify)*			

D2. How many shifts at each classification level were filled by agency, sub-contract or self-employed workers providing child protection services in the last pay period?

Employee classification	Number of shifts agency staff	Number of shifts sub-contract staff	Number of shifts self-employed staff
NOTE: PLEASE WRITE '0' IF YOU HAVE NONE IN A GIVEN CLASSIFICATION			
Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)			
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker			
Child Protection Investigation Officer			
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner			
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker			
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator			
Other (please specify)			

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Estimate of the time taken to complete this form. _____ minutes

PLEASE RETURN TO REPLY PAID 84016, HAWTHORN, VIC, 3122. NO STAMP REQUIRED

Appendix 2.   Sample Worker Questionnaire

Survey of Community Service Workers 2009

BLACK Harvest

CHILD PROTECTION   1   STAFF BOOK

Survey of *Community Service Workers*   ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆   **V1 - 1**

Survey of Community Service Workers

How to fill out this form

- Please cross boxes like this: Yes   ☒
- Correct mistakes like this: ▨ ☒

  (If you make a mistake, simply scribble it out and mark the correct answer with a cross).
- Use a ballpoint blue or black pen (do <u>not</u> use a felt tipped pen).
- Some boxes have 'Go to' instructions that look like this ☐ ➡ **Go to B8a**

  Please follow the 'Go to' even if you miss out on some questions.
- Where exact information is not known, please give the best answer you can.
- Where a written answer is required, please write clearly in the boxes provided.

  Example B4:   **What is the postcode of the location of your workplace?**

3	1	3	3

Does your job directly involve providing child protection services to clients or customers, or managing those who provide such services?

Yes ☐ 1

No ☐ 2

In this job are you paid?

Yes ☐ 1

No ☐ 2

a) If you answered **YES** to **BOTH** questions, please continue.

b) If you answered **NO** to **EITHER** of these questions, please return this questionnaire immediately to the survey coordinator.

Section A: Employment background

The following questions gather information about your decision to pursue employment in the area of child protection services and any previous employment you may have had.

A1. **What attracted you to work in the child protection services area?**
(Cross all that apply)

Desire to help others	☐ 1
Desire to do something worthwhile	☐ 2
Work being valued and appreciated	☐ 3
Supportive co-workers and management	☐ 4
Flexibility in hours / shifts	☐ 5
Independence / autonomy and responsibility in work	☐ 6
Variety in tasks	☐ 7
Learning, training and the application of skills	☐ 8
Job security	☐ 9
Pay	☐ 10
Career prospects	☐ 11
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

A2. **How old were you when you first began working in child protection services?**

☐ **years**

A3. **Taking account of any breaks from working in child protection services, for how long have you actually worked in child protection services?**

☐ **years** ☐ **months**

A4. **What was your last paid job before you first worked in child protection services?**
(Cross one box only)

No previous paid employment	☐ 1
Welfare worker in other setting (social worker, counsellor, youth worker etc.)	☐ 2
Carer in other setting (personal carer, etc.)	☐ 3
Salesperson	☐ 4
Clerical / admin worker	☐ 5
Hospitality worker (waitress, etc.)	☐ 6
Professional or manager in other setting	☐ 7
Other paid employment *(please specify)*	☐ 98

A5. **Had you worked in child protection services before you began your current job?**
(Cross one box only)

Yes, paid only	☐ 1	
Yes, both paid and unpaid / voluntary	☐ 2	
Yes, unpaid / voluntary only	☐ 3	**Go to B1**
No	☐ 4	**Go to B1**

A6. **What was the <u>most important</u> reason you left the last (paid) child protection services job you held before your current one?**
(Cross one box only)

To achieve higher pay	☐ 1
Relocated / moved / migrated	☐ 2
To avoid workmates or managers I did not get along with or like	☐ 3
The job was too stressful	☐ 4
Not able to spend sufficient time with clients	☐ 5
To get shifts or hours of work I wanted	☐ 6
To be closer to home	☐ 7
To fulfil private care responsibilities (including having a baby)	☐ 8
To find more challenging / satisfying work	☐ 9
Contract ended / funding ceased	☐ 10
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

Section B: About your work

Please answer the questions in this section by thinking about the job you do with the employer who gave you this questionnaire.

B1. **What is your job?**
(Cross the one box that best describes the main tasks that you perform)

Direct Care Worker (including Residential Care Worker / Assistant)	☐ 1
Family, Youth or Child Support Worker	☐ 2
Child Protection Investigation Officer	☐ 3
Social Worker / Case Manager / Child Protection Practitioner	☐ 4
Psychologist / Counsellor / Therapeutic Worker	☐ 5
Service or Program Administrator / Manager / Coordinator	☐ 6
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

B2. **How did you find out your current job was available?**
(Cross the one box that best describes how you found out the job was available)

Employment agency (including Job Network and Centrelink)	☐ 1
Newspaper advertisements	☐ 2
Internet sites	☐ 3
Friends / relatives / company or professional contacts	☐ 4
Workplace noticeboards	☐ 5
Government notices / gazette of vacancies	☐ 6
Approached employer	☐ 7
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

B3. **Thinking about the office or service outlet that gave you this questionnaire, what is your best estimate of the number of people it employs to directly provide child protection services to clients or manage the provision of child protection services?**
(Include part-time and casual employees, but not agency workers)

0 to 10	☐ 1
11 to 20	☐ 2
21 to 40	☐ 3
41 or more	☐ 4

B4. **What is the postcode of the location of your workplace?**

B5. **How long does it take you to travel to your workplace for this job?**

Less than 15 minutes	☐ 1
15 minutes to less than 30 minutes	☐ 2
30 minutes to less than 1 hour	☐ 3
1 hour or more	☐ 4

B6a. **On average, how many hours do you work each week in this job?**
(Record whole hours only, including those that are paid and those that are unpaid)

hours per week

B6b. **How many of these are paid hours and how many unpaid?**
(Total hours match those recorded at B6a)
(If you do not work any unpaid hours write 0 in the corresponding box)

paid hours

unpaid hours

B7a. If you could choose the number of hours you work each week, and taking into account how that would affect your income, would you prefer to work...

Fewer hours than you do now	☐ 1
About the same hours as you do now	☐ 2 → **Go to B8**
More hours than you do now	☐ 3
Don't know	☐ 99

B7b. How many hours per week would you like to work in this job?

[   ] **hours per week**

B8a. Which best describes your *current* form of employment?

B8b. Which is your *preferred* form of employment?
(Cross one box only for each question)

	B8a. Current	B8b. Preferred
Casual	☐ 1	☐ 1
Permanent (full or part-time)	☐ 2	☐ 2
Fixed term contract	☐ 3	☐ 3
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98	☐ 98

[   ]

B9a. Are you entitled to paid sick leave?

B9b. Are you entitled to paid recreation (holiday) leave?

	B9a. Sick leave	B9b. Holiday leave
Yes	☐ 1	☐ 1
No	☐ 2	☐ 2
Don't know	☐ 99	☐ 99

B10. For this job, what was the total amount of your most recent pay (to the nearest dollar) before tax or anything else was taken out? Please indicate the period that this covers.

$		Week	☐ 1
		Fortnight	☐ 2
		Month	☐ 3

B11a. **Over the last 12 months, have you had any training to improve your job skills, either at the workplace or somewhere else?**
(Cross all that apply)

Yes, at the workplace	☐ 1
Yes, somewhere else	☐ 2
No	☐ 3 → **Go to B12**
Don't know	☐ 99 → **Go to B12**

B11b. **What type of training was this?**
(Cross all that apply)

Training towards Certificate III or IV	☐ 1
Training towards diploma / graduate diploma	☐ 2
Training towards degree	☐ 3
Other child protection training	☐ 4
Occupational health & safety training	☐ 5
First aid training	☐ 6
Management / supervision training	☐ 7
Finance training	☐ 8
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

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B12. **Here are some questions about how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with different aspects of your job. Using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is 'totally dissatisfied' and 10 is 'totally satisfied', please cross one number on each line to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the following aspects of your job. The more satisfied you are, the higher the number you should pick. The less satisfied you are, the lower the number.**

	Totally dissatisfied										Totally satisfied
a) Your total pay	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6	☐ 7	☐ 8	☐ 9	☐ 10
b) Your job security	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6	☐ 7	☐ 8	☐ 9	☐ 10
c) The work itself (what you do)	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6	☐ 7	☐ 8	☐ 9	☐ 10
d) The hours you work	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6	☐ 7	☐ 8	☐ 9	☐ 10
e) The flexibility available to balance work and non-work commitments	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6	☐ 7	☐ 8	☐ 9	☐ 10
f) All things considered, how satisfied are you with your job?	☐ 0	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6	☐ 7	☐ 8	☐ 9	☐ 10

B13. **In general, how would you describe relations at your workplace?**
(Cross the appropriate box on each line)

	Very bad	Quite bad	Neither good or bad	Quite good	Very good	Can't choose
Between management and employees	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6
Between workmates / colleagues	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5	☐ 6

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B14. The following statements are about your current job.

Please indicate, by crossing one number on each line, how strongly you agree or disagree with each. The more you agree, the higher the number you should cross. The more you disagree, the lower the number you should cross.

	Strongly disagree						Strongly agree
I have the skills I need to do my job	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7
I use many of my skills in my current job	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7
I have a lot of freedom to decide how I do my work	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7
I have adequate control over my work tasks	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7
I would turn down another job that offered quite a bit more pay to stay with this organization	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☐5	☐6	☐7

B15a. Do you expect to be working for the employer who gave you this questionnaire in 12 month's time?
(Cross one box only)

Yes	☐1	Go to **B16**
No	☐2	Go to **B15b**
It depends	☐3	Go to **B15b**
Don't know	☐99	Go to **B16**

B15b. What is the main reason you may finish work for this provider in the next 12 months?
(Cross one box only)

Changing jobs / seeking other employment in child protection services	☐1
Changing jobs / seeking other employment not in child protection services	☐2
Returning to study / travel	☐3
Family reason	☐4
Financial reasons	☐5
Stress / burnout	☐6
Retiring	☐7
Temporary job / fixed contract	☐8
Retrenchment / redundancy	☐9
Other *(please specify)*	☐98

B16. **Where do you see yourself working 3 years from now?**
(Cross one box only)

Working, in child protection service area	☐ 1
Working, not in child protection service area	☐ 2
Not working for pay	☐ 3
Don't know	☐ 99

B17a. **Did you have more than one paid job last week?**

Yes	☐ 1	➡ Go to **B17b**
No	☐ 2	➡ Go to **C1**

B17b. **Is your other job in child protection services?**

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2

B17c. **How many hours per week do you usually work in your other job(s)?** [ ] **hours per week**

Section C: About you

C1. **Are you male or female?**

Male	☐ 1
Female	☐ 2

C2. **What was your age on your last birthday?** [ ] **years**

C3. **Do you live together with a partner?**

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2

C4. **Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?**
(Cross one box only)

No	☐ 1
Aboriginal	☐ 2
Torres Strait Islander	☐ 3
Both	☐ 4

C5. **In what country were you born?**
(Cross one box only)

Australia	☐ 1
New Zealand	☐ 2
United Kingdom	☐ 3
Italy	☐ 4
Greece	☐ 5
Viet Nam	☐ 6
Hong Kong	☐ 7
Singapore	☐ 8
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

C6. **What is the highest level of primary or secondary school you have completed?**
(Cross one box only)

Did not go to school	☐ 1
Year 8 or below	☐ 2
Year 9 or equivalent	☐ 3
Year 10 or equivalent	☐ 4
Year 11 or equivalent	☐ 5
Year 12 or equivalent	☐ 6

C7. **What is the highest qualification you have completed?**
(Cross one box only)

Postgraduate degree (e.g., Graduate Certificate; Graduate Diploma; Masters; Doctoral, etc)	☐ 1
Bachelor degree	☐ 2
Diploma	☐ 3
Certificate IV	☐ 4
Certificate III	☐ 5
Certificate I or II	☐ 6
No post school qualification	☐ 7 → **Go to C10**
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

C8. **What is the main field of study of the highest qualification you have completed?**
(Cross the one box that best describes the field of study)

Social Work	☐ 1
Disability / Disability Studies	☐ 2
Psychology / Counselling	☐ 3
Community Work / Community Services / Welfare Services / Care Work	☐ 4
Youth Work / Youth Services	☐ 5
Children's Services	☐ 6
Administration	☐ 7
Business / Business Management	☐ 8
IT	☐ 9
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

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C9. **What qualification (list only one) do you hold that is most relevant to your job? (Please state the level and field of the qualification e.g. Certificate in Disability Services, Graduate Diploma in Community Services, Bachelor degree in Social Work etc.)**

Level:

Field:

C10. **Are you currently studying towards any qualifications?**

Yes	☐ 1	
No	☐ 2	**Go to C13**

C11. **Which qualifications?**
(Cross all that apply)

Postgraduate degree	☐ 1
Bachelor degree	☐ 2
Diploma	☐ 3
Certificate IV	☐ 4
Certificate III	☐ 5
Certificate I or II	☐ 6
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

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C12. **What is the main field of study for this qualification?**
(Cross the one box that best describes the field of study)

Social Work	☐ 1
Disability / Disability Studies	☐ 2
Psychology / Counselling	☐ 3
Community Work / Community Services / Welfare Services / Care Work	☐ 4
Business / Business Management	☐ 5
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

C13. **Do you have financial dependents?**
(Cross one box only)

No	☐ 1
Yes, spouse / partner only	☐ 2
Yes, children only	☐ 3
Yes, spouse / partner and children	☐ 4
Other *(please specify)*	☐ 98

C14. **In the last two weeks, did you provide unpaid care, help or assistance to family members or others because of a disability, a long term illness or problems related to old age?**

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2

C15. **In the last two weeks, did you spend time looking after a child (under 15 years), without pay?**

Yes	☐ 1
No	☐ 2

C16. **How many hours per week do you spend caring for children (under 15 years) or disabled or elderly relatives who live in your household?**
(If you have no care responsibilities, write 0 in the space provided)

☐ **hours**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Estimate of the time taken to complete this form. ☐ **minutes**

PLEASE RETURN TO REPLY PAID 84016, HAWTHORN, VIC, 3122. NO STAMP REQUIRED

Appendix 3. Detailed Outlet Survey Response Rates

The Table below shows response rates to the outlet survey, by sector and jurisdiction. The overall outlet response rate was 51 per cent.

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
Child Protection	77%	46%	56%	73%	43%	71%	60%	56%	60%
Juvenile Justice	40%	28%	52%	20%	63%	36%	43%	50%	41%
Disability Services	49%	55%	51%	47%	56%	65%	34%	62%	52%
General Community Services	41%	44%	61%	47%	52%	51%	39%	55%	48%
Total	53%	47%	55%	48%	52%	57%	39%	58%	51%