

Support services

Information Services

Our Information Services Division provides OSR's computer, business and information communications and technology systems, including information storage, infrastructure and networks.

The division maintains, develops and provides reliable, effective and responsive support for our computer facilities and applications.

The division ensures the maintenance and availability of our IT systems and ensures any productivity loss is minimised. It also provides project management and governance for the organisation's information technology projects.

Programs and projects delivered

Some of the major IT projects our Information Services Division delivered this year included:

- land tax web enhancements which allow automated processing of land tax variation returns
- redesign and launch of our websites in line with the NSW Government Website Directive
- a web-based stamp duty calculator package
- improved web server availability for handheld fines devices for councils
- enhanced our EDR application, giving more efficient processing of electronic transactions and improved system stability.


Corporate Governance

The Corporate Governance Unit was created in late 2007 from the merger of the former Audit and Review Support Group with the Business Improvement Unit.

Corporate Governance achievements include:

- successfully passing two external surveillance assessments conducted by Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance Ltd to maintain our ISO 9001:2000 quality management certification. The reviews assess whether OSR is compliant with the standard, including reviewing whether staff practices comply with our process and procedure documents, which are used in their day-to-day work and to assist with training
- developing and measuring a number of 'quality' key performance indicators and establishing an Executive Quality Council. The Council is OSR's peak body responsible for monitoring and overseeing quality improvement initiatives across the organisation
- completing a number of business process improvement reviews designed to identify ways to make processes more efficient and effective. Two of the key processes we reviewed during the year were the processing of Section 47 Land Tax Clearance Certificates and the processing of objections and reviews in relation to taxes and grants matters
- conducting financial, operational and information system audits as part of our annual tactical audit plan, which provides assurance that there are adequate internal controls over these processes



We launched our inaugural Succession Planning Program designed to identify, mentor and nurture talented staff with the ability and potential to fill future senior management roles. 

- review of the Internal Control Environment within OSR, as well as a review of our Corporate Governance framework. Both reviews were favourable with recommendations for only minor improvement, which are currently being implemented
- conducting a comprehensive fraud awareness survey in late 2007, which 831 staff completed as part of our Fraud Prevention Strategy. This survey was followed-up with a second smaller online survey in April 2008 completed by 451 staff, to gauge any improvements in staff fraud awareness.

The results reveal a significant improvement between the two surveys, which were conducted about 7 to 8 months apart:

For the question: 'I am aware of the contents of the OSR Code of Conduct and the Anti-Corruption policy.' In the first survey, only 50 per cent of respondents said that they were aware of the Code of Conduct and the Anti-Corruption policy. In the follow-up survey, the number of respondents who were aware of the code and Anti-Corruption policy had jumped to 81 per cent.

For the question: 'I know what to do if I come across an instance of fraud in my workplace.' In the first survey, 78 per cent of respondents said they knew what to do. In the follow-up survey, the number of respondents who knew what action to take had increased to 88 per cent.

The improvement is likely to be a result of the comprehensive training sessions delivered in between the two surveys and the heightened awareness and communications about OSR's stance on fraud, through emails and articles in the staff newsletters.

Managers, supervisors and team leaders received additional training on 'ethical problem solving and decision making' in May and June 2008. The workshops focused on building managers' skills in values-based problem solving.

The Operations Division held a series of workshops in May and June 2008 to identify and address key fraud and probity risks which could impact on the achievement of business objectives.

Workforce initiatives

This year we launched our inaugural Succession Planning Program designed to identify, mentor and nurture talented staff with the ability and potential to fill future senior management roles. The need for the program was identified as part of our Mature Age Worker Strategy.

Candidates undertook a rigorous assessment and selection process involving an in-depth application and competency questionnaire, 360 degree survey and an assessment centre involving cognitive and behavioural assessments. The six selected candidates are working with a coach to develop a tailored Career Development Plan that will guide their career development over the next 18 months.

As part of a sector-wide strategy to reduce annual leave liability, OSR implemented a number of initiatives to successfully reduce the number of staff with 40 or more days annual leave by 55 per cent, as of April 2008.

Our change management methodology continued to provide a sound framework for ensuring structural change priorities were effectively implemented. The methodology has been adopted to drive the structural changes associated with the abolition of several duties.

Occupational Health and Safety

In accordance with the NSW Government's Working Together 2005–08 Strategy, we have been proactively managing Occupational Health and Safety and the prevention of workplace injuries.

A commitment to early intervention, a well managed return-to-work program, working in partnership with our insurer in the review and monitoring of claims and a structured approach to injury prevention and awareness training for management has resulted in:

- 43 per cent reduction in the number of accident/incident reports
- 20 per cent reduction in days lost due to injury.

Health and Safety statistics	2007–08	2006–07	2005–06	2004–05	2003–04
Accident incident reports	144	251	225	111	69
Workers compensation claims	44	43	34	42	32
Working days lost to compensation claims	996.7	1 252.6	527.5	378	514


Our staff health and well being programs are supported by OSR's OH&S Committee and promoted across OSR. We have organised several health initiatives during the year, including a flu vaccination program, information sessions on stress management and office ergonomics, and the purchase of ergonomic software to encourage stretches and breaks designed to reduce occupational overuse injuries.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

OSR provides a personal employee assistance program which is available to all employees and their families. The service provides assistance, support and advice regarding any work-related or personal issue.

The service is well used with a consistent number of referrals from managers and Human Resources staff. Feedback from staff continues to indicate that the EAP service has been helpful.



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Learning and development

This year our Learning and Performance Centre conducted over 700 learning and development activities. Some 200 different programs were delivered, including the development and delivery of 66 fraud awareness training workshops involving over 1000 staff across all seven office sites.

One of our major corporate initiatives this year was the implementation of customised pathways to develop the skills and capabilities of our managers, team leaders and supervisors. Developing capable managers is essential to the continuing success of OSR and is a major focus area of our People Plan. During the year, the following management programs were conducted:

- supervisor fundamentals
- managing in OSR
- Certificate IV in Frontline Management
- Diploma in Frontline Management.

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Our Reaching Your Potential program was initiated by our Spokeswomen's Group. It is designed to encourage participants to assess and evaluate their achievements and longer-term aspirations, from both a career and personal perspective. It also aims to encourage staff to develop an action plan to assist them to achieve their career and personal goals.

Staff can access e-learning programs for the Microsoft Office suite of software and GroupWise email and scheduling software. We have entered a partnership with NSW TAFE (Sydney Institute) to develop an e-learning induction program for new staff.

Recruitment and selection

OSR recruited 275 staff from 3416 applications. The majority of the applications were for frontline client contact positions which support OSR's corporate strategic goal of providing fair and accessible service to the people of NSW.

This year, we began using assessment practices to measure both behavioural and cognitive abilities of applicants. These assessment techniques proved to be particularly valuable with selections for senior roles.

Risk management and strategies

In 2007–08 we strengthened our commitment to managing our risks by implementing an improved Risk Management Framework and Policy. This approach combines the various best practice principles from organisations throughout the public and private sectors.

The framework complies with Australian and New Zealand Risk Management Standard AS/NZS 4360 and the NSW Treasury's Risk Management and Internal Control Toolkit.

This new framework and policy ensures that OSR has an effective and well governed process for managing risk across the organisation.

In addition to the new Risk Management Framework and Policy, OSR has developed a number of management tools to aid staff and managers throughout the risk management process.

All risks identified in OSR are actively monitored and reviewed and those risks assessed as impacting OSR at an enterprise level are reviewed quarterly by OSR's Executive Quality Council.

Energy Management Policy

Our energy management policies are aimed at reducing energy consumption and replacing our current reliance on fossil fuels with non-polluting, green energy sources. Some six per cent of OSR's total energy consumption is provided from renewable, non-polluting green sources.


We constantly monitor energy usage throughout our seven sites and remain committed to the principles of sustainability and reduction in greenhouse emissions. We are continually reviewing new and emerging energy-efficient technologies and educate and encourage staff to reduce energy consumption.

We are continuing the rollout of flat screen computer monitors to all staff to reduce energy consumption.

Security

We have revised our disaster recovery strategy and we are in the process of implementing it across all OSR services, systems and electronic information to protect our service delivery capability and ensure that we can continue revenue collection in the event of an emergency or disaster.

We have conducted physical security risk reviews and security risk assessments across all OSR sites. From the review, we have implemented a physical security program to address security issues identified in the reviews.

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Waste reduction and purchasing

OSR is committed to implementing the NSW Government's Waste Reduction and Purchasing Policy (WRAPP) in all our offices. The policy encourages better waste management practices and waste-friendly purchasing. In the areas of recycling paper and cardboard, IT equipment and print consumables, we achieved the following:

Paper and cardboard

OSR used 17.4 tonnes of paper and cardboard and recycled 8.6 tonnes or 64.7 per cent of the paper and cardboard used – up from our recycling rate of 50 per cent reported in 2006–07.

The NSW Government Agency Standard recycling rate for paper and cardboard is 63 per cent.

OSR uses 100 per cent recycled paper and plans to adopt a policy of using 100 per cent recycled Australian-made paper, as opposed to using imported recycled paper.

Computer and IT equipment

OSR recycles all retired IT equipment, with dangerous or hazardous material recovered so that no harmful components end up in landfill. The equipment recycled includes computer equipment and print materials. Some items are auctioned, while other items considered 'usable' are donated to local high schools.

Print consumables

OSR recycles 100 per cent of our printer toners. We used and purchased 235 print toner cartridges and recycled them all. OSR recently transferred the recycling of these items to Planet Ark, which is the preferred NSW Government Agency print consumables recycler. Planet Ark returns all Lexmark and other branded toner cartridges to their manufacturer for remanufacture and recycling, with no material ending up in landfill.

The NSW Government Agency standard for recycling print consumables is 86 per cent.

Fleet fuel efficiency improvements and emission reduction

OSR is committed to meeting the 'Cleaner NSW Government Fleet' policy targets by increasing the environmental performance of our fleet and reducing total greenhouse gas emissions.

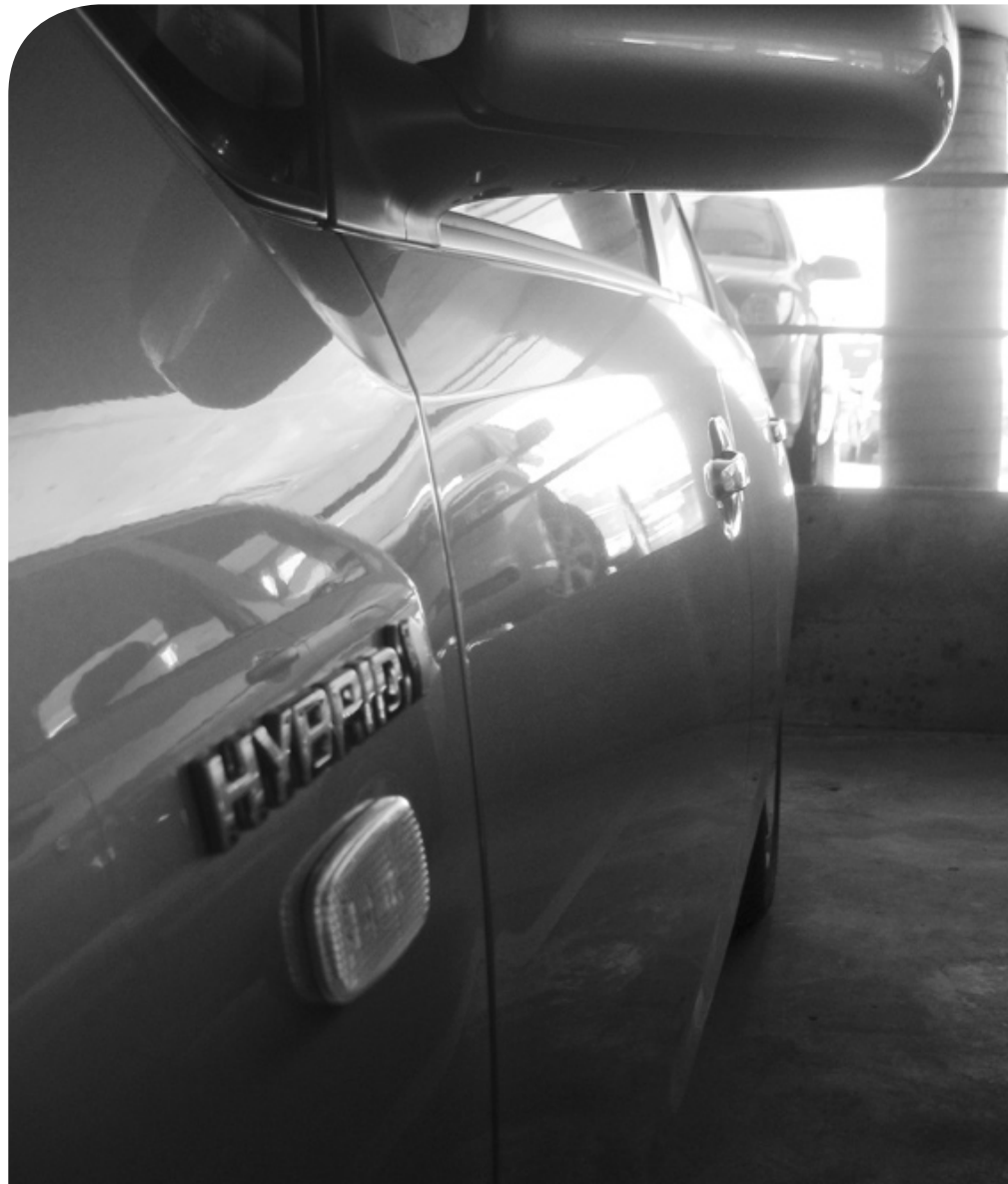
We have reduced the number of large-engined vehicles in our fleet, with the majority of vehicles now consisting of more fuel-efficient small to medium-sized vehicles. We have also recently purchased a Toyota Prius hybrid petrol-electric vehicle for our fleet.

These measures will see OSR exceed the minimum green rating required in the 'Cleaner NSW Government Fleet' policy as new small to medium vehicles are introduced and less-efficient larger vehicles are replaced.

We actively monitor and encourage staff to use ethanol blend 'E10' biofuel petrol in all fleet vehicles. E10 usage has risen from an average of 125 litres to 622 litres within our fleet of 28 vehicles and comprises 4.1 per cent of our total fuel usage and complies with the NSW State guidelines of 2 per cent. We expect our entire fleet will be predominantly using E10 petrol next financial year.

We have significantly reduced our fleet running costs by implementing a rolling three-year improvement plan, which incorporates specific fleet performance targets and ensures all vehicles are regularly serviced and maintained to a basic level in-house.

We promote the use of video conferencing facilities installed in each office, which staff can use to participate in meetings remotely and avoid travelling long distances.



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