

Director-General's message

The Department of Commerce continues to support, connect and deliver value to its primary client – the New South Wales Government. The financial year 2007/08 was no different.

The Office of Public Works and Services delivered approximately 3,000 public infrastructure projects across New South Wales worth almost \$1 billion. Key projects included:

- the co-ordination of facilities at Randwick to support World Youth Day, including extensive turf protection at Royal Randwick Racecourse
- the completion of the Attorney General's office building and the trial courts building as part of the Parramatta Justice Precinct, completed five months ahead of schedule
- the Prospect Raw Water Pumping Station, the largest submersible water supply pumping station in Australia, delivered ahead of time and within budget.

The Facilities Management unit administered 20 cleaning contracts and two facilities management contracts, and assisted the Department of Education and Training to manage 19 asset maintenance contracts valued at \$124 million. These contracts create employment opportunities for some 1,594 sub contractors and employment opportunities for 3,944 people.

NSW Water Solutions was competitively selected to design Tillegra Dam, a new 450,000 megalitre project in the Hunter Valley. This project is part of the Government's commitment to drought proof the Hunter and Central Coast Regions.

The Government Architect's Office undertook a commission to help the Architects Registration Board become carbon neutral and to provide a template for small consultancy practices wanting to reduce their carbon footprint.

The financial year also saw NSW Procurement deliver \$330 million in savings to the NSW Government by achieving greater economies of scale. In all, expenditure through State Contracts Control Board contracts was \$3.64 billion in 2007/08.

NSW eTendering, which provides a complete electronic tendering process for all government organisations, grew by 178 per cent on the last year. The use of *smartbuy@* also increased significantly with more than 67,000 purchase orders valued at \$359 million placed through the system. This was up from 44,000 orders valued at \$224 million in 2006/07.

In November 2007 three separate shared service businesses were integrated to form ServiceFirst, the largest shared services group in the NSW public sector. ServiceFirst looks after the corporate shared services, finance, human resources, IT and business support for over 80 clients in the New South Wales public sector. With over 550 staff, ServiceFirst brings together an enormous wealth of experience and knowledge in shared services to support its clients.

The Office of Fair Trading implemented regulatory changes that brought significant improvements for the community and business in the areas of consumer credit, consumer claims, motor dealers, retirement villages, strata schemes and home building.

Fair Trading continued to respond to a vast number of requests from business and the community for service – there were almost seven million in 2007/08. These were handled through phone, counter and electronic channels. More than 34,000 disputes between consumers and traders were handled and over 39,000 compliance related activities were carried out.

The Office of Industrial Relations continued to improve its services to employers and employees in New South Wales. The Office's innovative workplace compliance campaigns are proving to be an effective and efficient way to assist large numbers of employers and employees to understand their employment rights and responsibilities.

The Office also provided critical assistance to eminent constitutional expert Professor George Williams, who reported to the New South Wales Government on models for a cooperative national industrial relations system. Discussions with the Commonwealth about the emerging national system have been a major focus of the Office in 2008.

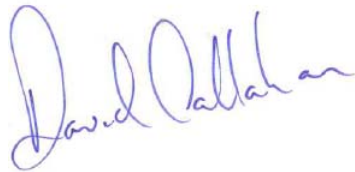
The Chief Information Officer Executive Council took a new approach in February 2008 to better implement the Government ICT Strategy People First, by establishing agreed areas of priority.

Operating as a management board supporting People First initiatives, the Council is a working partnership - thinking, deciding and operating as a single voice representing NSW Government agencies.

The Council has already delivered savings and modernised the way government works by taking a coordinated approach to ICT investment, planning and expenditure with a priority given to frontline services during 2007/08.

As strong as our performance was in 2007/08, the current financial year is likely to prove the most challenging in Commerce's five-year history. The need to improve outcomes for the NSW economy, coupled with the global economic outlook will make Commerce's role even more important in driving whole-of-government savings and improved government efficiencies.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all Commerce's employees for their efforts and their commitment to improving outcomes for the New South Wales community.



David Callahan
Acting Director-General

About Commerce

Who we are

The NSW Department of Commerce (Commerce) is a service provider and regulator, dedicated to delivering better services to our customers and the New South Wales community.

What we do

Commerce provides commercial services to government agencies to help them maximise value, minimise cost and manage risks in the services they provide to the community.

The Office of Public Works and Services helps develop and maintain public infrastructure by assisting government agencies to plan, design and deliver building and engineering projects.

Its services include managing projects and programs, resolving disputes and finding sustainable solutions to the problems of capturing, treating and distributing water. It is also called on to help government mitigate the consequences of natural disasters and possible terrorism.

NSW Procurement is a centre of expertise in goods and services procurement for the Government and provides tools, advice and professional services to enable agencies to plan and undertake successful procurement and manage supply chains.

Commerce improves access to government services for customers and suppliers by minimising red tape and supporting different methods of delivering services, including electronic means. The Government Chief Information Office also plays a leadership role in developing and driving whole of government initiatives for the use and management of information and communications technology within government, industry and the community.

Office of Fair Trading services safeguard consumer rights and advise traders on fair, ethical practice. It administers legislation, which sets ground rules for interactions between consumers and traders throughout New South Wales, in areas including consumer goods and services, residential accommodation, home building, cooperatives and associations. Fair Trading informs the community of rights and obligations, we mediate consumer complaints and enforce compliance through licensing, inspections, investigation, prosecution, civil proceedings and other disciplinary action.

The Office of Industrial Relations ensures that workplace legislation and the regulatory framework meet the requirements of today's commercial environment. Workplace standards are communicated through targeted programs, workplace information and advisory services. Where standards are not being applied, effective enforcement services through fair workplace regulation and industrial policy ensure that the rights of workers and employers are protected.

Our goals

Commerce has five major goals:

- Maximise value for government agencies in delivering services to clients, customers and the community
- Simplify processes for dealing with government
- Promote a fair marketplace for consumers and traders
- Promote fair and productive workplaces
- Contribute to a credible, efficient and effective organisation.

<p>Goal 1 Maximise value for government agencies in delivering services to clients, customers and the community</p>	<p>We achieve this goal by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helping to plan, design and deliver public infrastructure, including information and communications technology • being a centre of excellence in procurement and providing government with support to undertake successful procurement and manage supply chains • helping to mitigate the consequences of natural disasters and possible terrorism • providing office and corporate services to government.
<p>Goal 2 Simplify processes for dealing with government</p>	<p>We achieve this goal by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing, using and promoting best practice methods and tools to help government successfully procure goods and services and public infrastructure, and manage supply chains • developing appropriate Fair Trading and Industrial Relations regulations and services.
<p>Goal 3 Promote a fair marketplace for consumers and traders</p>	<p>We achieve this goal by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting ground rules for interactions between consumers and traders in NSW • informing the community of rights, obligations and good practice • mediating consumer complaints and enforcing compliance through investigation, prosecution, civil proceedings and other disciplinary action.
<p>Goal 4 Promote fair and productive workplaces</p>	<p>We achieve this goal by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting a best practice framework for interactions between employers and employees in many NSW workplaces • informing employers and employees of rights, obligations and good practice • enforcing compliance through investigation, prosecution and other disciplinary action.
<p>Goal 5 Contribute to a credible efficient and effective organisation</p>	<p>We achieve this goal by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing a framework for how we operate internally to achieve our goals • setting priorities for shared corporate services across Commerce to ensure they support the activities of our business units.