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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER GRADE 3 - BENCHMARK

DESCRIPTION

An example of a position which undertakes particularly complex public affairs work as a public affairs specialist is the position carrying out a range of activities associated with the public awareness program(s) of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. The Public Affairs Officer Grade 3 is a lone position located in the Commission's Central Office Public Relations Section and is required to exercise highly developed Public Affairs Officer skills.

The occupant develops and implements information projects with the objective of advancing the Commission's sensitive and complex program(s) to foster harmonious race relations. Specific tasks include:

- preparing a marketing plan for publications and other means of dissemination;
- devising, and advising on, means of achieving on the ground, and in remote/difficult to access areas, acceptance of the Commission's programs;
- preparing correspondence and speeches for the Minister and Chairperson;
- liaising with other authorities relevant to the implementation of the program(s); and
- assisting in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the public awareness program(s).

SENIOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER GRADE 1 - BENCHMARK

DESCRIPTION

An example of a position which, as a public affairs director, directs the information activities of an agency with limited public information programmes is the Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1 which heads the Media and Public Relations Section of the Australian Capital Territory Community and Health Service.

The Service has some 1250 staff and limited regional or outposted establishment.

Features of the Section are:

- Establishment of 7 positions
 - 1 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
 - 2 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
 - 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 2
 - 2 x Administrative Service Officer Class 3
 - 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 1

Functions

- liaise with media and prepare written media releases;
- develop the agency's programme of public relations activities, including major exhibitions and display activities, as well as assist with public functions;
- coordinate and supervise the preparation of publications or promotional material relating to the agency's activities.
- General direction only is given to two outpointed Public Affairs Officers (Grade 3 in hospitals functional area; Grade 2 in community services functional area) who work closely with the line management of the relevant areas.
- The work of the Section is both reactive and proactive; the agency has a major commitment to public relations activities which involves the Section in public relations campaigns within the limited area of the Australian Capital Territory and immediate environs.

SENIOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER GRADE 1 - BENCHMARK

DESCRIPTION

An example of a position which, as a public affairs director, directs the information activities for a significant geographical area at an overseas post of an agency with extensive public information programmes where those activities are well developed is the Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1, Australian Overseas Information Service, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, London. The position has responsibility for managing the Information Branch in the Australian High Commission, including supervising 11 locally-engaged staff. The position services the geographical area comprising the United Kingdom and Ireland, an area of traditional and continuing significance to Australia.

The Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1 maintains liaison at a high level with international and Australian specialist media representatives who are concentrated in London. The position also provides a wide range of media liaison support and advice on public affairs for visiting Ministers, and Heads of Mission in London and Dublin, as well as senior Australian Government staff.

SENIOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER GRADE 1 - BENCHMARK

DESCRIPTION

Examples of positions which assist a Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 2 in the direction of information activities in an agency are the three Senior Public Affairs Officers Grade 1 which are in the Public Information Section of the Department of Transport and Communications. In May 1988 this agency had some 10,000 staff, and dealt with the following principal matters - land transport (including road safety), shipping and marine navigation, civil aviation, air navigation, and postal, telegraphic, telephonic and other like services, including television and radio.

Significant features of this Department with a major public relations role affecting the workload of the Public Information Section are the three Ministers associated with the portfolio, three Associate Secretaries in addition to the Secretary and the Department's association with a number of Government business enterprises.

The Section has 25 positions:

- 2 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 2
- 3 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
- 4 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 3 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 2
- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
- 2 x Administrative Service Officer Class 7
- 2 x Administrative Service Officer Class 6
- 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 5
- 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 4
- 2 x Administrative Service Officer Class 2
- 2 x Administrative Service Officer Class 1
- 2 x Technical Officer Level 3

There are public information units in the States.

The functions of the Public Information Section are to conduct public information campaigns, to project the Department's corporate image, to promote the favourable reception of the Department's programs, and to provide advice to the Ministers, Secretary

and senior departmental staff on information requirements, activities and strategies. Each of the three Senior Public Affairs Officers Grade 1 has responsibility for public information activities for a major 'stream' of the Department's functions, ie. surface transport, aviation and communications. They draw their subordinate Public Affairs Officers from a pool of positions. A typical establishment for effecting the programmes of a 'stream' is:

- 1 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 2
- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
- 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 1

Typical duties of these Senior Public Affairs Officers Grade 1 are:

- directing the preparation and presentation of public relations projects for his/her agency 'stream', including brochures, media releases, feature articles for the print media, audio-visual scripts and conferences and programme launches involving the Minister and others;
- developing draft strategies and plans to raise the agency's public profile within the community by means of public awareness and education campaigns; and
- maintaining close liaison with line divisions in the agency, and with specialised and general media organisations, as appropriate to the 'stream'.

SENIOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER GRADE 2 - BENCHMARK

DESCRIPTION

An example of a position which, as a public affairs director, directs the information activities of an agency with large public information programmes is the Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 2 which heads the Public Relations Section of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. This Commission, which has a particularly complex and sensitive programme of public relations with the Aboriginal people and other Australians, has some 700 staff and extensive regional operations.

Features of the Section are:

- Establishment of 16 positions located in Central Office (Canberra)
 - 1 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 2
 - 1 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
 - 3 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
 - 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
 - 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 7
 - 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 6
 - 2 x Administrative Service Officer Class 5
 - 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 4
 - 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 3
 - 4 x Administrative Service Officer Class 1
- Establishment of 22 positions in regions for which the Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 2 has functional responsibility

New South Wales

- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 3 x Administrative Service Officer

Victoria/Tasmania

- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 2 x Administrative Service Officer

Queensland

- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 3 x Administrative Service Officer

South Australia

- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 2 x Administrative Service Officer

Western Australia

- 1 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 2 x Administrative Service Officer

Northern Territory

- 2 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3
- 3 x Administrative Service Officer

Functions

- provide Commission information and public relations strategies to meet national initiatives for the Aboriginal people;
- maintain and facilitate communication between the Commission, the Minister, the media and the Aboriginal people;
- provide high level public relations advice to the Minister and senior management on issues of major policy;
- advise staff of State Offices on the implementation of public relations and public information strategies.
- Has a high profile in that operational and policy areas involve it frequently in promoting and developing their activities.
- Is active in public awareness activities, including specific target groups.
- Is important in educating both the Aboriginal people and other Australians on matters affecting Aboriginals - including improving their self esteem, informing them of the Commission's work and achieving recognition of Aboriginal needs and aspirations.

Although a relatively small commission, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission has its regional Public Affairs Officers in all States classified as Public Affairs Officer Grade 3 because this is a particularly complex and sensitive portfolio. The Public Affairs Officers are required to be prominent in fostering harmonious race relations, to show considerable initiative in promoting media contacts (eg. devising means of disseminating, and maximising the impact of, information to a variety of Aboriginal groups), and to maintain close liaison with Aboriginals and other Australians.

SENIOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER GRADE 2 - BENCHMARK

DESCRIPTION

An example of a position which, as a public affairs director, directs the information activities of an agency with public information programmes of extensive scope and complexity is the Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 2 which heads the Public Relations Directorate of the Department of Defence. The Department has some 30,000 civilian and some 40,000 Service personnel and extensive regional operations. Features of the Directorate are:

- Establishment of 47 positions in Central Office (including 14 Services positions)
 - 1 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 2
 - 3 x Journalist, Grade A3 (1 Service)
 - 5 x Senior Public Affairs Officer Grade 1 (1 Service)
 - 10 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 3 (3 Service)

- 8 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 2 (4 Service)
 - 2 x Public Affairs Officer Grade 1
 - 2 x Technical Officer Level 3
 - 1 x Technical Officer Level 2
 - 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 6
 - 3 x Administrative Service Officer Class 5 (2 Service)
 - 1 x Administrative Service Officer Class 4
 - 7 x Administrative Service Officer Class 2 (3 Service)
 - 3 x Administrative Service Officer Class 1
- Establishment of 33 positions in Regional/Military Districts
 - NSW - 4 APS, 7 Service
 - Vic - 4 APS, 2 Service
 - Qld - 3 APS, 5 Service
 - SA - 2 Service
 - WA - 1 APS, 3 Service
 - Tas - 1 Service
 - NT - 1 APS
 - Plans and implements the public relations programmes for the Department, including an official news service, media liaison service and publications programmes for the Department, the RAAF, the Army, the RAN, the Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the Office of Defence Production.
 - Public relations is both proactive and reactive; there is a detailed strategy for each year's activities; frequent advice is given on relevant Defence initiatives, including the mounting of public awareness projects to combat volatile public opinion mounted against Defence initiatives.
 - Frequent liaison with the staff of the Minister for Defence and the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel.
 - Detailed briefings for media writers specialising in the reporting of Defence topics.
 - Is largely self-sufficient through its in-house capability for film, video and publications production (some technical staff are hired as required).
 - Staff in the Directorate provide an extensive network throughout Australia which is available to the two Ministers, the Department and the Defence Forces.