



## Environmental Health Practitioners

- Attraction and Retention Survey Results
- Queensland

### *Snap Shot - quotes from EH Practitioners:*

#### Likes:

- *Improving community health and the environment*
- *Variety of work, almost every day is different*
- *Diversity of challenges*
- *Opportunity to influence how health standards are set across the state*
- *Grass roots interaction with the community*
- *Ability to specialise in a particular EH field*
- *Opportunity to be involved in specific projects*
- *Ability to work both out in the field and in the office*
- *Helping people to set up a new business correctly*

#### Dislikes:

- *EHOs are expected to cover the whole range of activities involved in the profession - sometimes all at once!*
- *Lack of career progression, unless you go into management*
- *Low pay compared to other professions*
- *Lack of recognition of Environmental Health role within Local government*
- *Under resourced, lack of staff and facilities*
- *Very large workload, unrealistic expectations from council*
- *Focus on quantity not quality of work*
- *Increasing level of delegations from State government - lack of resources to deliver*
- *Not enough EHO staff to meet inspection targets*

## Acknowledgments

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The Environmental Health Practitioners that participated in this survey are also acknowledged and thanked.

### **Disclaimer:**

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Whilst care has been taken in compiling this Report, the Local Government Career Taskforce (Qld) does not warrant or guarantee that this publication is without flaws or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore shall not be held responsible or liable for any error, loss or other consequences which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

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## FOREWORD:

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Individuals and communities are entitled to live in a safe and healthy environment. The quality of life and the health of Queenslanders are underpinned by having clean water and air, safe food and liveable communities, protection from pollutants, and systems to intervene in the environment to prevent and control diseases.

Governments, particularly Local government and including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, play an essential role in the delivery of environmental health services throughout Queensland. To administer environmental health functions there needs to be an available and capable workforce to undertake environmental health interventions and maintain public health standards. Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) carry out or oversee the majority of these public health functions for Local government.

Recent reviews undertaken in Queensland and across Australia have identified shortages in the current and future EHO workforce and particularly found the shortage apparent in regional areas. Simply, based on current and anticipated future needs there will not be enough EHOs to carry out the required work. This survey is considered one tool for establishing strategies to improve the skill shortage for the environmental health workforce across Queensland. The survey has reported the breadth of duties performed by EHOs and has identified a number of resource (human and financial) and profession challenges and employment practices which require attention. A key issue identified by the survey is the legal risk accepted by the individual, employer and the State government where a person is undertaking legislative public health functions which may be above their competence level or without appropriate professional supervision.

Through the implementation of the survey, it has been identified that there are numerous positive programs and models that Local governments and other organisations are undertaking to improve access to environmental health study and the support of the profession. Particularly the resurgence of the use of cadetships to enhance a workforce and new access to external undergraduate and post graduate environmental health courses. It is expected that with the continuation of the Environmental Health Sub-Committee that many of the recommendations suggested in this document will be acted on through collaborative engagement between the education, government and association sectors to enhance the environmental health workforce.

Thanks to the 162 Environmental Health Practitioners across the State who took the time to assist with this research; to the members of the Environmental Health Sub-Committee; to our Project Manager, Gabrielle Dorward for her ongoing support; and to Environmental Health Australia (EHA) Queensland Branch and LGAQ for distributing the survey through their networks.

We also acknowledge the Queensland Department of Employment, Training & the Arts, for funding the ongoing work of this Taskforce.

**Bruce Morton**

Chair Environmental Health Sub-Committee  
Member, Local Government Career Taskforce

## SECTION 1:

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### BACKGROUND:

The Local Government Career Taskforce (Qld) is responsible for driving the Skills Formation Strategy (SFS) across the Queensland Local Government Sector.

This Strategy is a partnership between government agencies, the Local government sector and education and training providers to develop new solutions to skilling and workforce issues in the Queensland Local Government Sector. The Strategy will address skill shortage issues in the planning, building certification, engineering and environmental health areas.

The Strategy is a long term process that requires industry collaboration in aligning skills formation, workforce development and sustainable business strategy.

One of the key areas of focus for this strategy is Environmental Health (EH). Environmental health addresses all the physical, chemical, and biological factors external to a person, and all the related factors impacting behaviours. It encompasses the assessment and control of those environmental factors that can potentially affect health. It is targeted towards preventing disease and creating health-supportive environments.

In 2004 Queensland Health published a project report<sup>1</sup> which comprehensively identified issues facing the Local Government Sector surrounding the enforcement of public health legislation. A number of other reports and events have reinforced issues relating to the capacity of Local governments to administer and enforce public health legislation.

During July 2007<sup>2</sup>, the Local Government Career Taskforce conducted a survey of Councils within Queensland. Close to 45% of Councils surveyed reported a shortage of Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and of those respondents 65% reported that it was very difficult to fill positions, with 18% previously receiving no applications for advertised positions.

Because of this lack of applicants, 28% of Councils are being forced to employ less skilled persons to perform this function. Some Councils reported a 100% vacancy rate for EHOs and are being forced to outsource this function. 46% of councils surveyed believed that shortages of EHOs will be a critical issue in the future for them.

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health Workforce in Local Government - Functions, Skills, Recruitment and Retention - Project Report, July 2004 - Queensland Health

<sup>2</sup> Local Government Skill Shortage Survey, July 2007 - Local Government Skills Formation Taskforce

In March 2008, the Taskforce established an Environmental Health Sub-Committee to investigate the reasons behind the current shortages and to establish mechanisms to ensure that such a shortage does not occur in the future.

To this end the Environmental Health Sub-Committee commissioned an Attraction/Retention Survey of all private and public sector Environmental Health Practitioners in Queensland. Information gained from this survey will guide the development of key skill shortage initiatives in this occupational area.

### **AIM:**

The skills shortage across the environmental health profession has had wide implications across both the private and public sectors, however the level of data and information surrounding the current predicament, and to assist in formulating future strategies to assist this situation, is lacking.

The aim of this Survey was to establish some base line data on:

- The main reasons for and possible solutions to the current shortage of environmental health practitioners within Queensland
- The type/s of working environment confronting environmental health practitioners
- Why and how often environmental health practitioners change jobs
- What environmental health practitioners are looking for in a job and in an employer
- The future skill needs of environmental health practitioners

### **METHODOLOGY:**

The Attraction/Retention survey was uploaded onto the Environmental Health Australia (Queensland Division) website at the beginning of June 2008, and emailed via LGAQ to all councils in Queensland. Through this mechanism environmental health practitioners within both the private and public sectors were notified and given three weeks in which to respond.

All information was entered onto an Excel Spreadsheet and Pivot tables used to analyse data. Original responses have been destroyed in order to ensure the confidentiality of respondents.

The Survey Instrument is attached in **Appendix A**.

#### **1. Limitations of survey:**

This Report provides a snap shot of data as at June 2008. It collates information provided by 162 Environmental Health (EH) Practitioners within Queensland who may or may not be representative of all EH Practitioners

within the profession. As such, some caution should be applied in interpreting the observations contained within this report.

This survey was conducted following a period of Local Government Reform and Council Amalgamations.

## SECTION 2:

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### SURVEY RESULTS:

#### 1. Number of respondents:

The survey targeted persons working in or who have recently worked in the field of Environmental Health in Queensland, from technician/para professional level to post graduate level. Environmental Health Officers were specifically targeted.

162 Environmental Health Practitioners responded to the survey of which 61.1 % were male and 38.9% female.

Data supplied by Environmental Health Australia indicates that there are some 410 Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) in Queensland. No data exists on the number of para professionals employed within Queensland.

So based on these figures we received a minimum response rate of 33.0%. That is, 33.0 % of all practising EHOs in Queensland responded.

#### 2. Level of environmental health qualifications held:

The majority of respondents hold either a Degree in environmental health (64.8%) or a Post Graduate Qualification in environmental health (10.5%). 11.0% of all male respondents held a post graduate qualification in environmental health compared to 9.0% of all female respondents. That is, males held approximately 20% more post graduate qualifications than females.

At the lower levels we see equal numbers of male and female respondents holding Diploma level qualifications. This ratio changes at the Associate Diploma or old RSH Certificate level. At this level there were 26 respondents of which 88.0% of these respondents were male.

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#### Number and Percentage of Respondents with formal Environmental Health Qualifications

	Total	%	Male (n)	Female (n)
Post Graduate	17	10.5%	11	6
Degree	105	64.8%	60	45
Associate Diploma/RSH Cert	26	16.0%	23	3
Diploma	8	12.9%	4	4
Certificate IV	5	3.1%	4	1
Student/Cadet	4	2.5%	2	2

Note: some respondents hold more than 1 qualification

7.4% of respondents indicated that they held Allied Qualifications. The majority of these respondents held either Bachelor degrees in:

- Applied Science: Environmental Science, Public Health or Environmental Management
- Master Science: Environmental Management

3. If environmental health was your second degree what was your first degree?

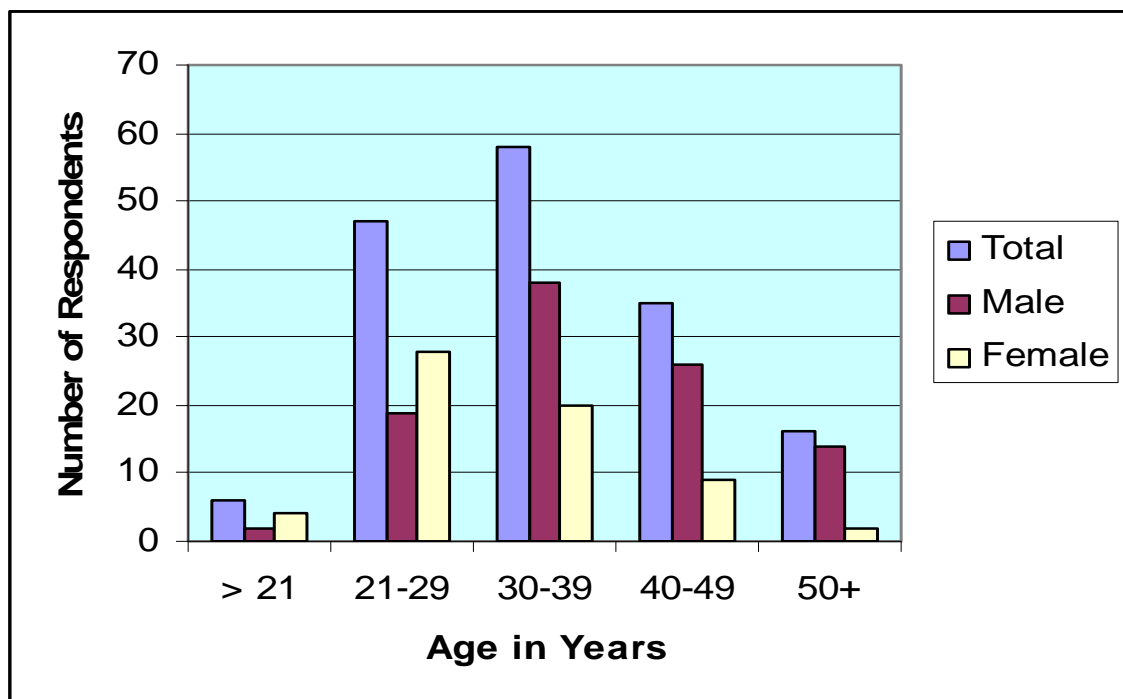
15.4% of respondents indicated that environmental health was their second degree. The majority of these respondents listed Applied Science as their first degree. Respondents listed first degrees spread across the following fields:

- Applied Science - Environmental Science 44.0%
- Applied Science - Medical Laboratory Science 8.0%
- Applied Science - Zoology 8.0%
- Arts - Resource & Environmental 8.0%
- Nursing 8.0%
- Applied Science - Food Technology 4.0%
- Applied Science - Agriculture 4.0%
- Applied Science - Biological Science 4.0%
- Environmental Engineering 4.0%

**Recommendation:**

1. Promote a career option as an Environmental Health Officer to Environmental Science and Science undergraduates and graduates

4. Age profile of respondents:



The Environmental Health workforce is a relatively young cohort with just over 30% of all respondents over 40 years of age. There appears to be a demographic shift part way through this profession with more females at the front end of the profession and more males dominating the back end. This reflects the relative age of the profession which up until the early 1990s was a male dominated occupation.

There were more females than males in the 21-29 years of age category suggesting more females than males are currently entering the profession.

Age	% of Respondents	Male (n)	Female (n)
Under 21	3.7%	2	4
21 - 29	29.0%	19	28
30-39	35.8%	38	20
40-49	21.6%	26	9
50+	9.8 %	14	2

A drop off of females occurs at the 30-39 year old mark. This could suggest that providing flexible work arrangements to the female workforce is important to enhancing their participation long term.

**Recommendation:**

2. Provide flexible work options aimed at enhancing the long term workforce participation of female environmental health professionals

Defining the generations is itself an imperfect science. Generally, Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964. Those born roughly between 1965 and 1977 is called Generation X, while people born between 1978 and 1987 fall into the broad Generation Y.

According to these definitions, the percentage of respondents within each generation is as follows:

- Gen Y respondents 29.0%
- Gen X respondents 35.8%
- Baby Boomer respondents 31.5%

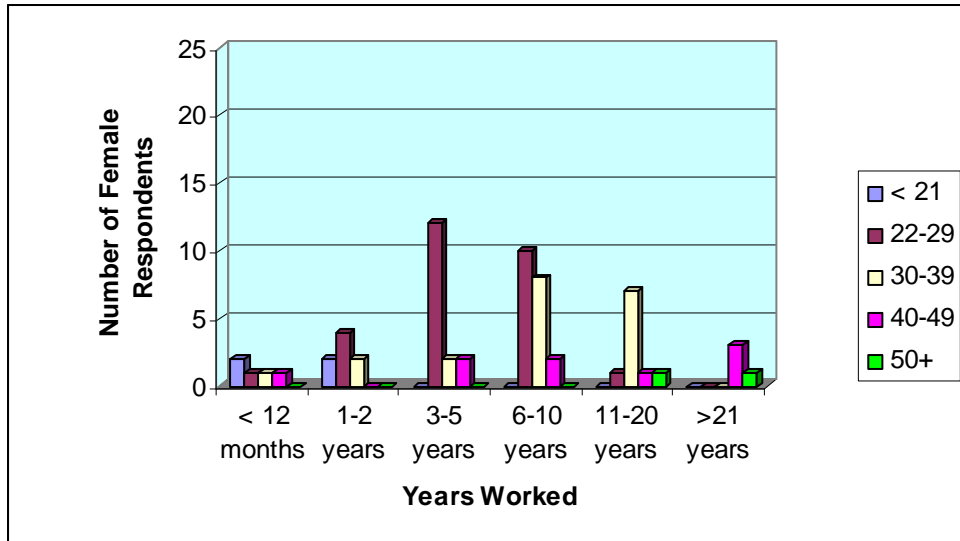
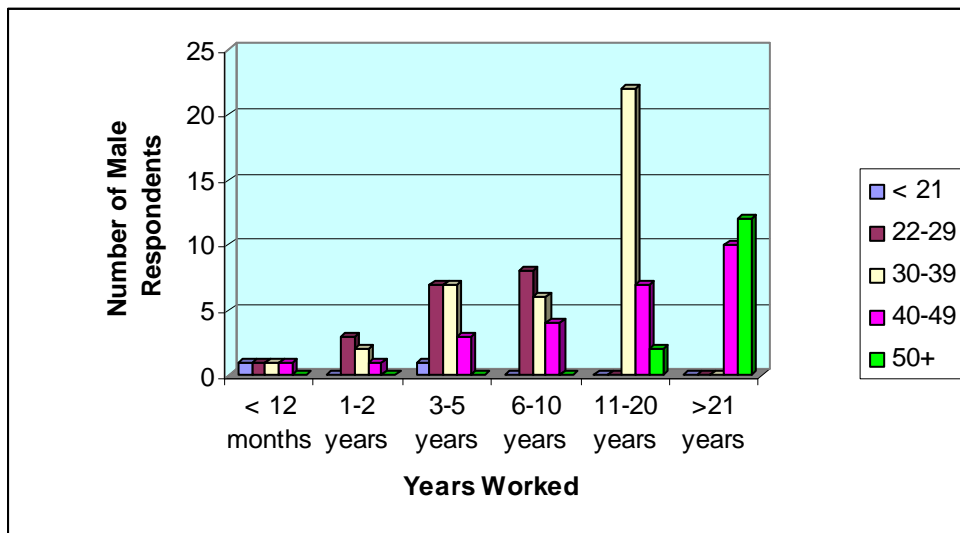
**5. Length of time worked in environmental health profession:**

Number of Years	Number of Respondents (n)	% of Respondents
<12 months	9	5.6 %
1-2 years	14	8.6%
3-5 years	34	21.0%
6-10 years	38	23.5%
11-20 years	41	25.3%
>21 years	26	16.0%

A high percentage of the Environmental Health workforce is experienced, with the majority of respondents having worked in this field for over 6 years:

- 85.8% of respondents have worked in the Environmental Health Profession for more than 3 years
- The majority of respondents (64.8%) have worked in the Environmental Health Profession for over 6 years

6. Gender of respondents and years worked in environmental health profession:



The charts above indicate a trend towards mature age entry into the workforce with 14.2% of those employed within the profession for less than 5 years being over 30 years of age.

The current survey data indicates that the numbers of male to female practitioners is roughly equal up until the 6-10 year mark. But then a significant change occurs and this ratio shifts dramatically.

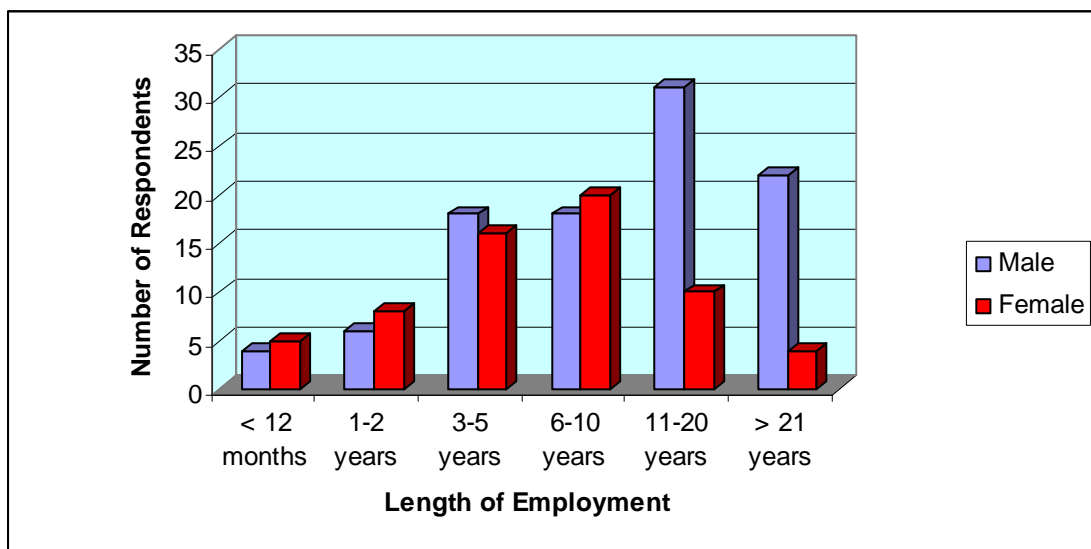
At the 11-20 year mark, males outnumber females 3 to 1, and beyond the 21 year mark males outnumber females 4 to 1.

The lack of female representation at the 15 year mark and beyond reflects the almost total male domination of this profession up until the early 1990s.

But at the 10-15 year mark this change in female:male ratio is due to a loss of women from the profession.

**Recommendation:**

3. **Develop strategies to attract qualified female environmental health professionals back into the workforce**



**7. Employment status of respondents:**

87.6% of survey respondents indicated that they were currently employed as an environmental health practitioner.

12.4% of respondents indicated that they were not currently employed as an environmental health practitioner. Of the 12.4% of respondents not currently employed as an environmental health practitioner 70% were male.

Reasons for not working in Environmental Health Field	% of respondents	Number of Respondents (n)
Working in another area of Local government	27.3%	6
Working in another area of State government	22.7%	5
Moved out of EH field to advance career	50.0%	11
Retired	0.0%	0

Of these respondents who are not currently working as an environmental health practitioner 45.4% indicated that they would consider working in an environmental health role again. These respondents indicated that the following would assist them in making the transition back to employment as an environmental health practitioner. These are listed in order of importance.

- Significantly improved pay levels
- Recognition and improved status of the profession. Recognition of the role EH plays and to be recognised by management as professionals and treated like other officers with degrees
- Job description that was appealing and incorporated a diversity of work functions - not just premise inspections every day. Less emphasis on regulatory function
- Financial support to complete required training - for example Certificate IV in Food Safety or for management training required for career progression
- Work close to home.

The main reason respondents were not working in the environmental health field was because:

- Nature of work (enforcement) does not bring job satisfaction. You are often interacting with people who do not want you to be there in the first place
- The lack of career pathways, professional development, support and management offered as an EH practitioner
- Cannot envisage EH practitioners ever having the strategic level scope that I currently have
- No money in the EH field to buy extras for staff in the field - always no budget to buy things, you are left with all the horrible jobs no one else wants
- Some Council employers will still not employ people unless they have exactly a Degree in Applied Science (EH)
- Officers are expected to know a lot of legislation which is not only frustrating to administer but is always being amended and it is difficult to keep abreast of changes.

#### **8. Are you seriously thinking about leaving the profession?**

35.6% of respondents are seriously thinking about leaving the environmental health profession altogether, to take up a different career. Of these respondents:

- 67.8% were male and 32.2% were female
- 28.8% were aged 21-29
- 39.0% were aged 30-39
- 11.9% were aged 40-49
- 20.3% were aged 50+

Number of Respondents thinking of leaving the profession by age (years)

Reasons for leaving	Total (n)	22-29 (n)	30-39 (n)	40-49 (n)	50+ (n)
Retiring	7	0	0	2	5
Another Job	44	15	19	4	6
Other	8	2	4	1	1

One third of all of the 22-39 year old practitioners who responded to the survey, are seriously thinking about leaving the profession to take up another job.

Respondents listed a wide range of jobs that interested them. They are ranked as follows:

- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Environmental Management | 6. Mines -truck driving |
| 2. Undecided                | 7. Project Management   |
| 3. Consultancy              | 8. WH&S                 |
| 4. Own business             | 9. Management           |
| 5. Training/Teaching        | 10. Policy              |

Respondents were asked to list the main reasons for wanting to leave the environmental health profession. The reasons are ranked as follows:

1. Poor pay rates
2. Limited opportunities for career progression
3. Tired and need a change
4. Lack of recognition and resourcing
5. Lack of employer support and strategic direction
6. Regulatory nature of the job

Respondents indicated that the level of devolution of responsibility from State to Local government over the last 10 years has outstripped the growth in budget allocations to the environmental health area. They also suggested that Queensland Health needs to provide better support to EHOs alternatively Local government should consider giving some of the roles back to the State.

Respondents also stated that over the past 10-15 years wages for EHOs have not kept pace with the consumer price index. Queensland Health has completed a wages benchmarking exercise which could see a further drain of EHOs out of Local government.

**Recommendation:**

4. Benchmark local government EHO wages against Queensland Health levels and within local government itself

Some indicative comments were as follows:

- I'm stuck in a regulatory role
- Disillusioned by Local government in general - not given enough recognition and resources to do the job
- Manager does not value EH staff or understand the professional skills EHOs can bring to the area. Very limited career progression under current manager
- Job prospects limited, poor pay, poor professional image, no support internally
- Too many areas of responsibility with very little resources to fulfil the requirements of the responsibility, and remuneration is far too low
- Fatigue
- Work pressures and poor pay
- Have to leave EH field to advance career

**Recommendations:**

5. **Develop a "model equipment list" outlining the typical equipment required by EHOs employed in local government**
6. **Implement a Continuous Professional Development program to assist EHOs prepare a case to management for additional resources based on a workforce capacity review**
7. **Enhance access to "Toolbox" initiative state wide and seek funding/develop mechanisms to ensure the continuation and expansion of the "Toolbox" initiative**

**9. Interested in secondment:**

25.0% of respondents listed an interest in being seconded. The main environmental health areas they were most interested in working in are as follows:

- Disaster Management
- Food Safety
- Waste
- Policy
- Vector Control

Several respondents indicated they were interested in being seconded to State government agencies such as Queensland Health or the Environmental Protection Agency.

**Recommendation:**

8. **Promote the value of secondments to local government and relevant State government agencies**

**10. Vacancies of environmental health practitioners:**

15 Local government Environmental Health Managers provided data on the level of current vacancies, current number of employees and number

needed in three years time. This represents just over 20% of all councils in Queensland and includes some but not all of the larger councils.

For this group of councils the data indicates:

- Current vacancies for 26 Environmental Health Officers
- A shortfall of 36 Environmental Health Officers predicted in 3 years time.

Vacancies reported by (15 councils) respondents:

	Current Number of Vacancies (n)	Number currently employed (n)	Number needed in 3 years time (n)
Environmental Health Technician	8	21	33
Environmental Health Officer	26	160.5	196

What is interesting about this data is that if all current vacancies for EHOs were filled today, these 15 councils collectively, are predicting a shortfall of only 10 EHOs in three years time.

This is startling on a number of levels, but particularly given the level of growth predicted for some of these key regions. It also assumes an expectation that the level of devolution of responsibilities from the State will not increase.

**Recommendation:**

9. Develop a workforce planning model for the Queensland Local Government sector - looking at least 3-5 years out.

**(a) Trouble filling vacancies:**

These Managers were also asked if they had any difficulty filling vacancies and in which category of environmental health practitioner.

The data indicated that:

- 88.0% of Managers indicated that they had trouble filling Environmental Health Officer Positions
- 28.0% had trouble filling Senior EHO positions and
- 16.0% had trouble filling Environmental Health Technician positions.

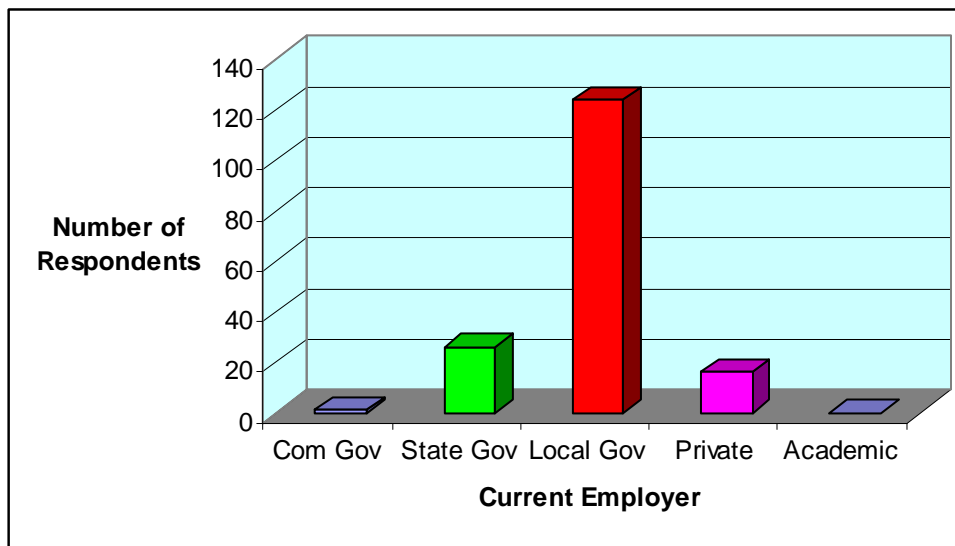
**Recommendation:**

10. That Councils in known growth areas develop a risk management framework such as "ALARMS" to manage workload given the shortages of EHOs

## EMPLOYMENT ARRANGEMENTS: CURRENT EMPLOYER

### 1. Employer distribution of environmental health practitioners:

The majority of respondents (76.5%) are employed within Local government. The other significant area of employment for environmental health practitioners is State government recording 16.0% of respondents.



The Local Government and State Government Sectors recorded a 60% male and 40% female distribution of respondents.

### 2. Employment levels of respondents:

Employment levels of survey respondents ranged from Student Environmental Health Practitioners through to Directors of Environmental Health. Of the respondents surveyed:

- 2.5 % are Student Environmental Health practitioners
- **0% are Para Professional Environmental Health practitioners**
- 3.2% are Graduate Environmental Health Officers
- 44.04% are Environmental Health Officers
- 25.5% are Senior Environmental Health Officers
- 10.2% are Managers of Environmental Health
- 2.5% are Directors of Environmental Health
- 1.9% are Environmental Health Academics
- 10.2% are listed as Other.

Significant numbers of EH para professionals have been trained in Queensland over the past few years yet none of the respondents listed this employment level. This may be because the profession does not yet recognise some functions as aligned to this technical level, such as animal/pest management and local laws.

The job titles listed under Other were as follows:

- Co-ordinator Waste
- Supervisor Environmental Health
- A06 Co-ordinator
- Pollution Policy Section Head
- Consultant/Self Employed
- Team Leader
- Pollution Officer
- Scientific Adviser
- Policy and Performance Officer
- Principal Environmental Health Officer
- Environment Officer
- Co-ordinator Environmental Health
- Senior Officer

### 3. Were you supervised by a qualified EHO whilst studying?

9 respondents indicated that they were currently studying for an EH qualification. Of these 44.5% indicated that they were/are supervised by a qualified Environmental Health Officer whilst completing their study.

The 55.6% that were not supervised by a qualified Environmental Health Officer expressed no concerns about this lack of technical supervision. These respondents were either Environmental Health Officers who were furthering their qualifications at degree or post graduate level; Environmental Health Practitioners who had worked in the field for 3-5 years and who already had qualification in environmental science; or an EHO Cadet who was studying full time.

All other EHO Cadets are currently supervised by a qualified EHO.

#### (a) If you are employed as an EHO do you hold a degree or above in Environmental Health?

5 respondents are employed as an EHO or Senior EHO and do not hold a degree or above in Environmental Health. With the exception of one of these respondents are all mature aged workers over 40 years of age who have had considerable experience working in the environmental health field - often in excess of 21 years.

Currently in Queensland the Chief Executive Officer of a Council can appoint a person to perform the role of "authorised officer" if they consider the person to have the appropriate knowledge, skills or experience. These appointees do not need to hold a degree in Environmental Health. This may place councils and the State government at risk of litigation if a member of the public should suffer an adverse health affect.

**Recommendations:**

11. Communicate to Council CEOs the risks associated with appointing inadequately qualified personnel as “authorised officers”.
12. Promote the adoption of the EHA’s Certification Scheme to ensure that all EH practitioners employed by councils in Queensland hold the appropriate skills and knowledge.

**4. What environmental health functions are you currently involved in?**

150 Respondents indicated that they are currently working as an Environmental Health Practitioner. Of these, the majority (60.7%) of respondents worked across a range of environmental health functions and had no one function that occupied more than 50.0% of their workload. That is, they were involved in a range of functions. The data indicates that:

- 39.3% of respondents had a single function that took up 50% or more of their workload
- 24.0% of respondents had a single function that took up 70% or more of their workload
- 12.7% of respondents had a single function that took up 90.0% or more of their role

Respondents who have a work function that takes up more than 70% of their workload are all based in major regional centres on or close to the east coast of Queensland.

Regions	% of respondents with more than 70% of their workload in any one EH function
Brisbane/Ipswich Region	31.4%
Gold Coast/Redland Region	37.2%
Moreton/Sunshine Coast Region	11.4%
Bundaberg/Whitsunday Region	8.6%
Ayr/Townsville/Cairns Region	11.4%

Respondents in rural/regional areas are required to operate across a broad range of environmental health functions, with over one third of respondents working across 11 to 23 key functional areas.

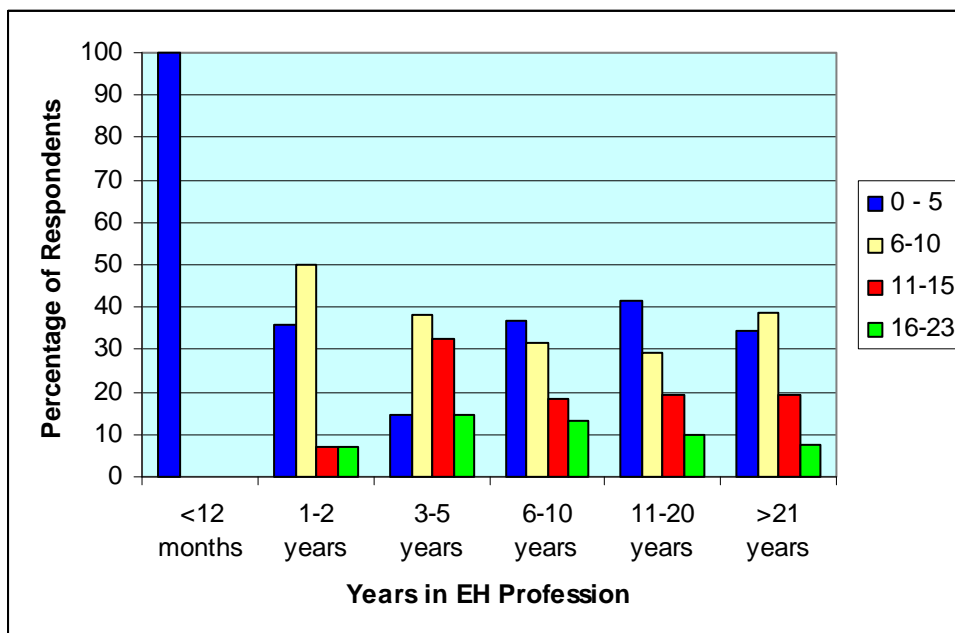
**(a) Range of Functions undertaken:**

33.3% of respondents are required to work across more than 11 environmental health functions, whilst 11.3% are required to work across 16-23 functions.

Number of functions involved in workload	% of respondents
0 to 5	30.7%
6 to 10	36.0%
11 to 15	22.0%
16 to 23	11.3%

The number of functions worked by EH practitioners appears to be linked to the number of years employed within the profession.

- All respondents employed less than 12 months reported only being involved in 0-5 functions
- At the 1-2 year mark respondents are being exposed to a wide variety of tasks, with 50.0% working across 6-10 functions, and just over 14.0% working across 11-23 functions
- At the 3-5 year mark the percentage of respondents working 11-15 job functions peaks at the 32.4%, as does those working 16-23 job functions at 14.7%
- At the 6-10 year mark we see respondents beginning to specialise with 36.8% only operating across 0-5 job functions
- This specialisation continues into the 11-20 and > 21 year brackets



(b) Percentage of EHO respondents working in each job function:

EH Function	Mean time spent	Range time spent	Number Respondents (n)	% of Respondents
Academic	4.7%	1-10%	19	12.6%
Animal Management	9.5%	1-50%	31	20.7%
Community Education	5.9%	1-25%	63	42.0%
Dangerous Goods	10.3%	1-75%	82	54.7%
Development Assessment & Control	9.6%	1-70%	66	44.0%
Disaster Management	7.5%	1-100%	52	34.7%
Drugs/Poisons	17.6%	1-100%	20	13.3%
Environmental Protection	16.0%	1-90%	98	65.3%
Environmental Health Planning	15.7%	1-70%	17	11.3%
Food Safety	30.9%	2-100%	114	76.0%
Health Surveillance & Investigation	7.3%	1-20%	49	32.7%
Immunisation	13.5%	1-100%	29	19.3%
Local Laws	6.1%	1-20%	72	48.0%
Management (Admin/financial)	16.9%	2-100%	64	26.7%
Mentoring	8.8%	1-50%	49	32.7%
Municipal Public Health Planning	6.0%	1-40%	10	6.7%
Noise Management	5.0%	1-30%	61	40.7%
Non EH Related	11.8%	1-100%	37	24.7%
Personal Appearances	3.1%	1-10%	63	42.0%
Policy Development	15.2%	1-100%	52	34.7%
Regulated Parking	3.75%	1-5%	8	5.3%
Tobacco	20.9%	5-99%	17	11.3%
Vector Control	5.1%	1-70%	45	30.0%
Waste Management	15.3%	1-100%	54	36.0%
Water Quality Management	5.2%	1-31%	61	40.7%
Other	11.2%	1-30%	29	19.3%

*Note: No para professional level respondents information was included in this table*

Some of these roles, for example Regulated Parking, Pest Management, Animal Management, Local Laws could be competently performed by EH para professionals, easing the workload at the professional level. Maximising the use of para professionals on low risk functions would free up EHOs to concentrate on the medium-high risk functions, policy and strategic work.

**Recommendation:**

13. Provide advice to councils identifying through a skills matrix which of the LG public health functions currently completed by EHOs can be allocated to EH para professionals

**(c) Non EH Related Functions:**

Almost one quarter (24.7%) of respondents indicated that their work involved Non Environmental Health Related Functions, which on average made up 11.8% of their workload - or just over one day a fortnight.

Of these respondents 13.5% indicated that Non Environmental Health Related Functions made up more than 30% of their workload - that is equivalent to three days a fortnight spent on Non EH related work. All these respondents were located between Brisbane and Bundaberg.

The following question naturally arises. *Given the current shortage of EHOs and recent increases in workload why load them up with non EH related work functions?* EHOs should be "working at level", and where possible lower level administrative functions should be re-allocated to appropriate level personnel.

**Recommendation:**

- 14. Identify what Non EH Related work can be deployed to administrative staff**

**(d) Maintaining Currency of Skill and Knowledge:**

Given the large number of job roles that EHOs are required to perform, employers need to be aware of the level of training required simply to maintain the currency of their skills and knowledge. This should not be viewed as Professional Development but rather as training required to enable them to continue to perform their day to day job functions.

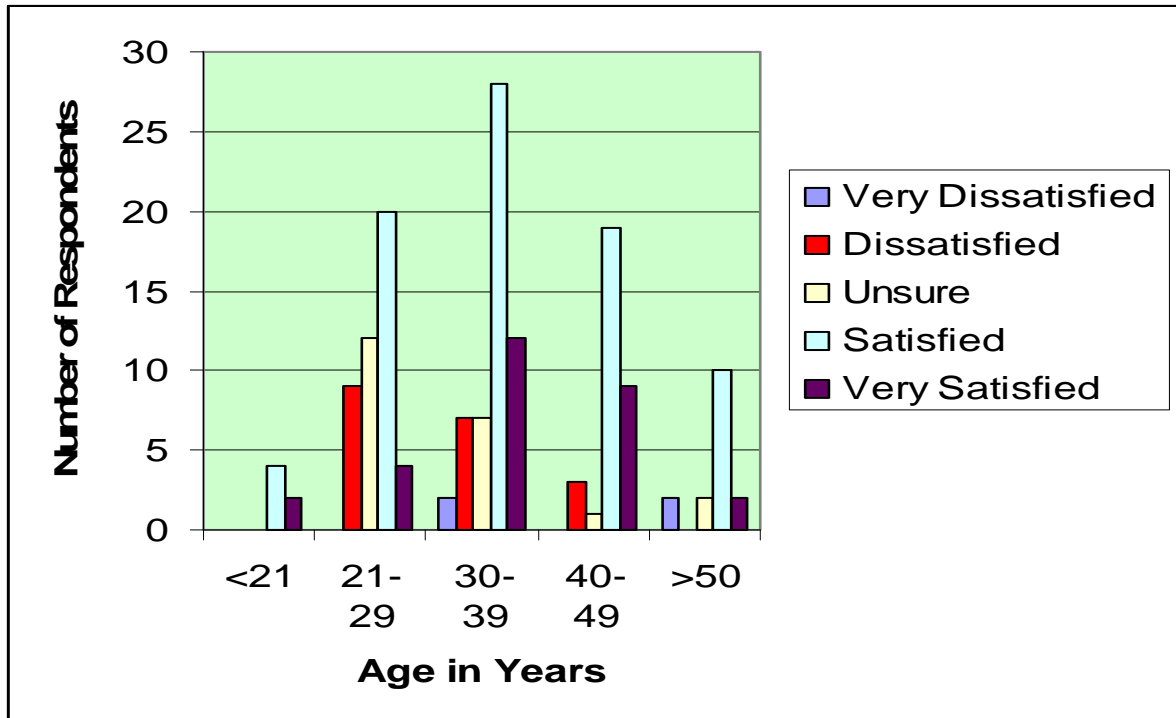
The State government given the level of devolution of responsibilities to the Local Government Sector also has a responsibility to provide information about any changes or amendments to legislation.

**Recommendations:**

- 15. Councils to allocate adequate funding within their budget for maintaining the currency of EHOs skills and knowledge**
- 16. State Government to establish mechanism/s for briefing councils on any changes, or proposed changes to Environmental Health related legislation - and to adopt an ongoing commitment to both training and capacity building of EH professionals in Queensland**
- 17. Embrace the Continuous Professional Development Program as part of the new certification requirements developed by EHA**

## 5. Level of Job Satisfaction:

Of those respondents currently working in the Environmental Health field 70.9% indicated that they were Satisfied or Very Satisfied with their current job.



Only 15.0% of respondents indicated that they were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied with their current job.

The majority of Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied respondents were in the 21-29 year age bracket and were equally distributed between male and females. This reflects the high expectation placed on new entrants and the amount of additional on-the-job training required. It may also reflect a gap between what the job actually entails and the expectation of EH graduates.

### Recommendations:

18. Establish a mentoring program for 21-29 year old graduates to help them through the first few years of working life
19. Increase the number of job placement positions for graduates across State and local government sector

The level of job satisfaction may be related to the wide variety of environmental functions, mix of indoor and outdoor work, and the high level of autonomy associated with this job function.

## 6. Stress Levels:

Over 88.6% of respondents recorded a stress level at or above moderate levels. Almost half (48.7%) of the respondents currently working as an environmental health practitioner in Queensland reported High to Very High Stress levels.

### Stress Levels of Environmental Health Practitioners in Queensland

Job Stress Level	% of Respondents
Low	11.4%
Medium	39.9%
High	38.6%
Very High	10.1%

#### (a) Stress levels by gender:

Both male and female respondents recorded equivalent levels of stress at the Medium to Very High ranges.

The only significant difference between males and female stress levels occurred at the High stress level, where 43.5% of females compared to 35.4% of males reporting a High level of stress.

#### Stress Levels by Employer Category:

Employer Category	Low	Medium	High	Very High
State government	11.5%	42.3%	42.3%	3.8%
Local government	11.7%	38.3%	38.3%	11.7%

Note: Insufficient numbers in Commonwealth Government and Private Sector responses to accurately list stress levels

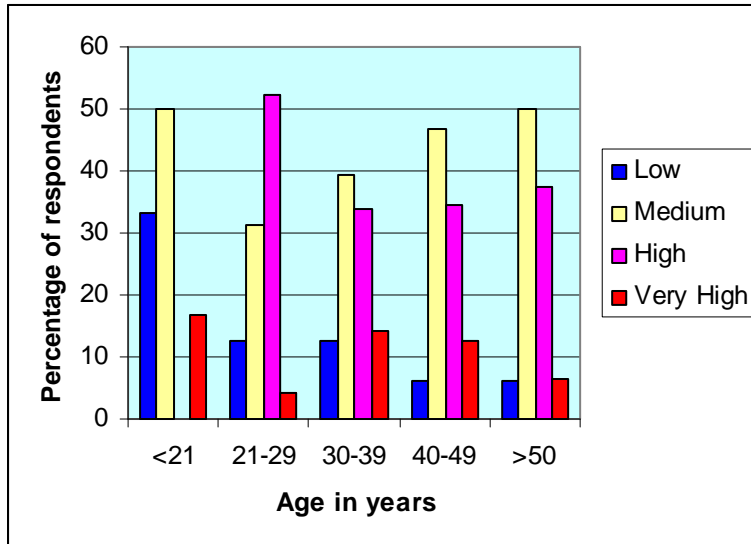
The proportion of environmental health practitioners recording Medium or High stress levels was highest (42.3%) for those employed in the State government.

The proportion of environmental health practitioners recording Very High stress levels was highest (11.7%) for those employed in Local government.

#### (b) Stress levels by age:

The percentage of respondents within a given age bracket recording high or very high stress levels were:

- <21 years of age 0%
- 21-29 years of age 56.2%
- 30-39 years of age 48.2%
- 40-49 years of age 46.9%
- 50+ years of age 43.7%

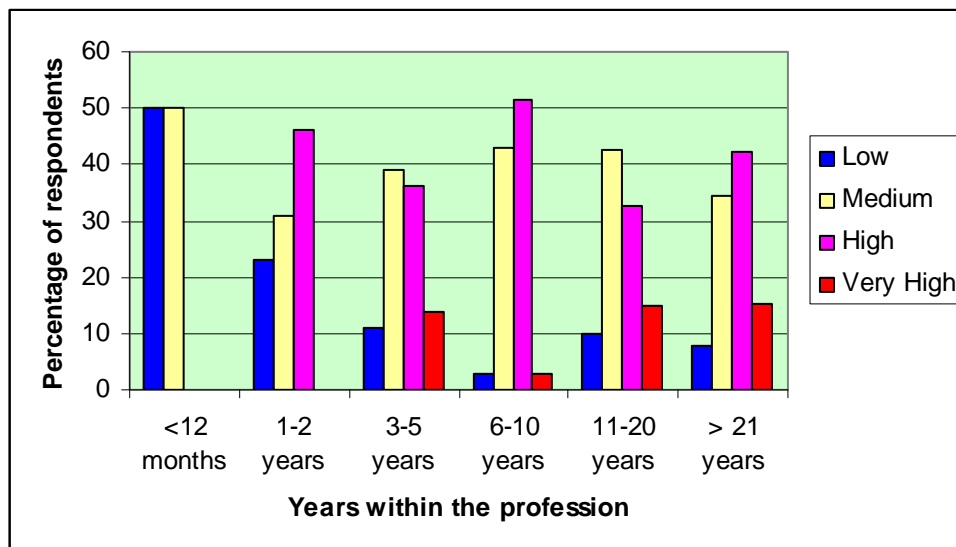


It is in the 21-29 year age bracket where one third of all respondents were seriously thinking about leaving the profession. This supports the need for the introduction of a mentoring/support program for the 21-29 year age bracket, as previously recommended.

(c) Stress levels by years employed:

The percentage of respondents within any given category (time employed in the EH profession) recording high or very high stress level was:

- < 12 months 0%
- 1-2 years 46.1%
- 3-5 years 50.0%
- 6-10 years 54.3%
- 11-20 years 47.5%
- >21 years 57.7%



Once employed as an EHO it appears as if there are 3 key periods where stress levels jump.

The first appears when working as an EHO for 1-2 years, the second at the 6-10 year mark and the third at the greater than 21 year mark.

The jumps in stress levels at the 1-2 and 6-10 mark are related mainly to increasing job functions. At the 21 year mark respondents indicated that increases in stress levels are a direct result of the **amalgamation process** resulting in:

- Increasing workloads
- Increasing hours worked

Stress management programs specifically targeting the 1-2 and 6-10 year brackets should be considered. At the 6-10 year mark as EHOs begin to be given management functions they should be supported with management training.

**(d) Reasons for high and very high stress levels:**

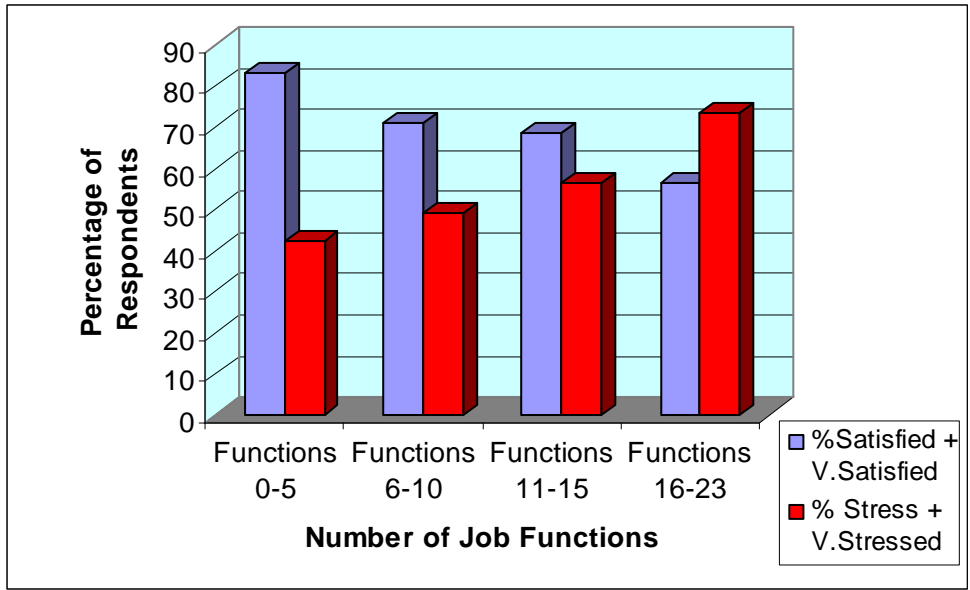
Respondents listed the following factors as the cause of their High and Very High Stress levels:

- 43.9% listed increasing workloads
- 25.8% listed council amalgamations
- 21.1% listed work relationships
- 20.0% listed lack of professional support
- 14.8% listed political interference
- 14.8% listed the number of hours required to work
- 14.2% listed the environmental health function itself
- 13.5% listed ambiguity of role
- 12.3% listed poor work/life balance

**(e) Stress level by number of environmental health functions:**

As the number of environmental health functions that an individual is required to perform increases the level of job satisfaction declines.

Above the 6-10 job function range stress levels begin to significantly increase and job satisfaction levels decrease.



This seems to indicate that variety of job functions is desirable up to a point and that the point at which satisfaction declines and stress increases seems to be above the 6-10 job function range.

## 7. Workload increases since 2005:

Respondents were asked to indicate the level of increase in workload experienced since 2005. 95.6% of respondents to this question, recorded increases in workload.

Respondents indicated workload increase as follows:

- 4.4 % recorded no increase
- 43.1% recorded 1-25% increase
- 38.7% recorded 26-50% increase
- 10.2% recorded 51-75% increase
- 3.6% recorded greater than 76% increase

As the number of job functions increases so too does the level of workload reported by respondents over the past three years. For example

- 21.3% of respondents with 0-5 job functions reported workload increases of 26-50%
- 62.5% of respondents with 11-15 job functions reported workload increases of 26-50%

The top 5 reasons reported by respondents for an increase in workload are:

- Lack of experienced staff
- Amalgamations - increase in geographic region covered, acting as manager as well as doing normal role (doing two jobs for past 12 months)
- Legislation - new and complex, increasing levels of delegation from State government
- Growth in both population and the number of licensed businesses
- Change of job role/increased levels of responsibilities

The key comments listed below from respondents indicate that workload increases are caused by a number of factors, for example:

- Increase in population with little/no increase in resources
- New and more complex legislation, population increases and increasing customer knowledge and expectation about health issues
- More legislative obligations, more matters to deal with, less officers to assist, less resources to assist
- Staff shortages, increase in population, increases in Local government area, legislation changes
- Workloads increase but no additional resources allocated and staff shortages
- Increasing levels of delegation from State government, decreasing staff levels, increasing range of roles and responsibilities with on additional support resources

When respondents mentioned “Lack of staff” they did so in different contexts as follows:

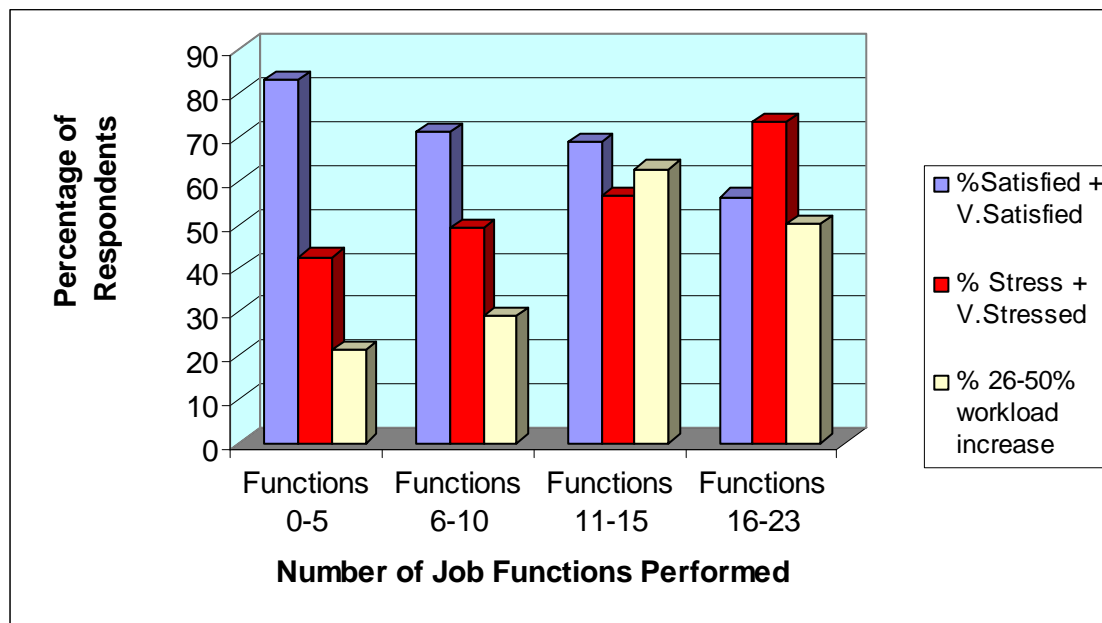
- Reduced staffing levels/low staffing levels
- Lack of experienced staff/staff shortages
- One person down in a team of three
- Loss of staff during amalgamation process

Respondents clearly indicated that in the main staffing levels are inadequate to cover the workloads brought on by changes to legislation, increasing levels of state delegation, and regional growth and that the problem has been exacerbated by the amalgamation process.

#### Percentage of respondents by job functions and workload

Number Job Functions	0% workload increase	1-25% workload increase	26-50% workload increase	51-75% workload increase	>76% workload increase
0-5	4.3%	36.2%	21.3 %	8.5%	6.4%
6-10	3.6%	54.5%	29.1%	7.3%	1.8%
11-15	3.1%	28.1%	62.5%	6.3%	0.0%
16-23	0.0%	12.5%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%

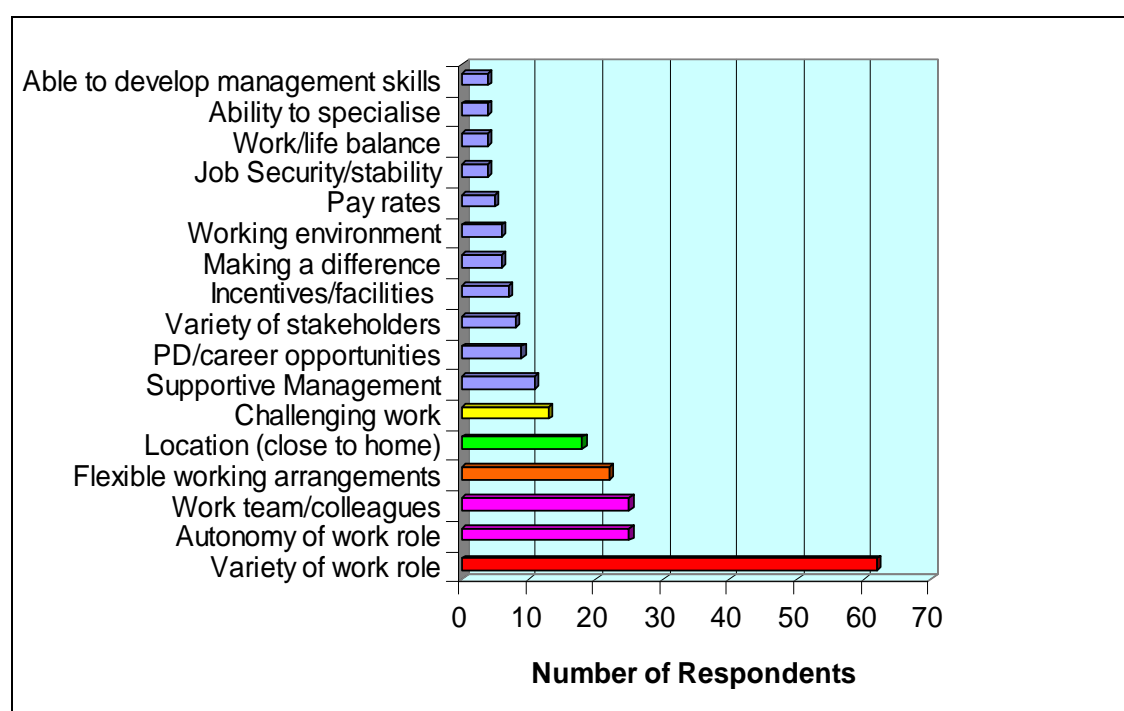
#### Relationship between the number of job functions, stress levels, job satisfaction levels and workload levels



Significant increases in the number of job functions performed by any individual is linked to decreasing levels of job satisfaction, increasing levels of stress and increasing workload levels.

## 8. What do you like most about your current job?

Features most liked:



The feature that respondents most liked about their jobs was **Variety**. That is, a mix of both indoor and outdoor functions, range of environmental health functions, ever changing work environment, and that every day is different.

The second most important feature was **Flexibility/Autonomy**. That is, the freedom to plan, schedule and manage work tasks and to be relatively independent in terms of decision making. Equal second was **Work Team/colleagues**, followed by **Flexible Working Arrangements** that included, flexi time, flexibility in working hours, flexible leave arrangements, flex days and 9 day fortnights.

### Recommendation:

20. Promote these two key features (1) Variety of working role and (2) Autonomy of work role when promoting the profession as a career of choice

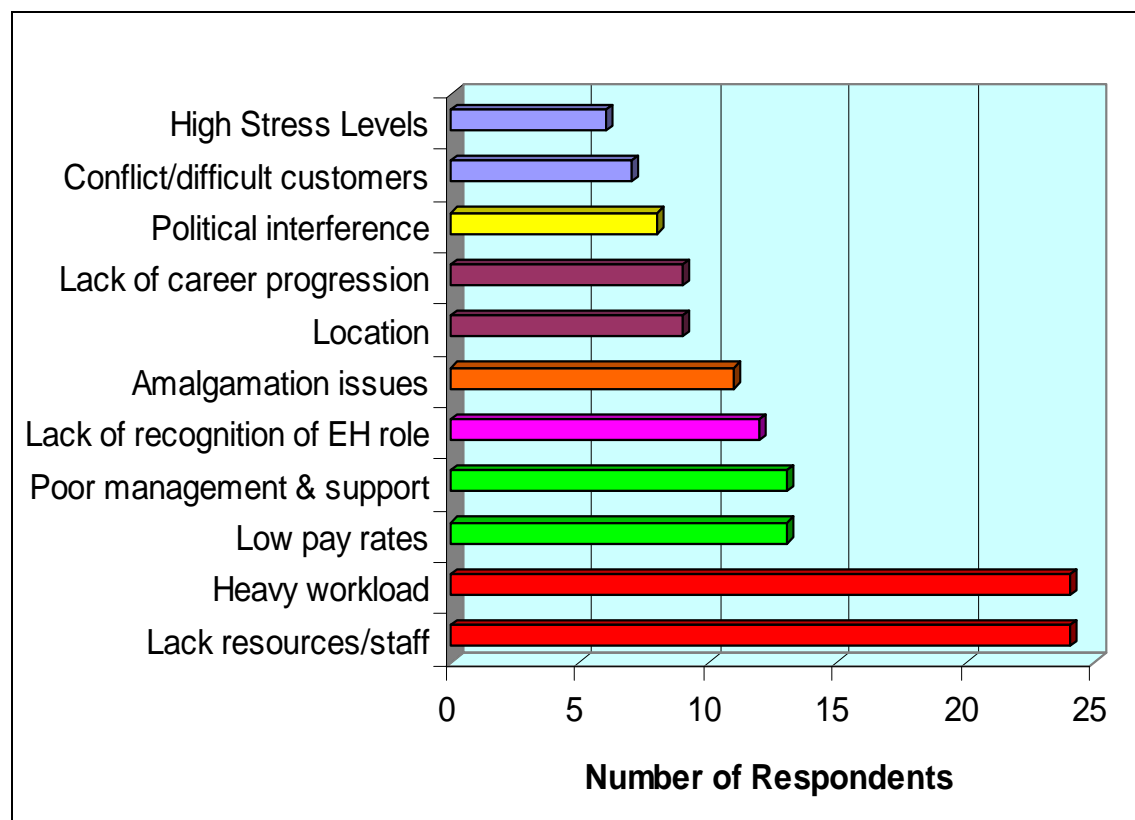
## 9. What don't you like about your current job?

The five features the respondents most disliked about their current jobs were:

1. Under resourced/staffed
2. Heavy Workload
3. Poor management and support
4. Lack of recognition and understanding of the Environmental Health role
5. Issues surrounding council amalgamations

These features are not related to the environmental health function itself but rather to poor management practices, and low resourcing levels particularly within councils.

#### Job Features Most Disliked:



**Lack of Resources and facilities** combined with *a lack of staff* was the feature most respondents disliked about their current job. On a par and linked with Lack of Resources was **Heavy Workload**.

**Low Pay Rates** came in second. Respondents mentioned points such as:

- Low pay levels when starting out in the profession
- Required to work outside of Environmental Health job role with no compensation
- Discrepancy in pay rates when compared to professions
- No added benefits/incentives offered if you work harder

**Poor Management and Support** came in equal second place with the key issues raised as follows:

- Too many levels of management
- No direction/leadership
- Poor management increases as back log of work increases
- Manager does not have any management or leadership skills
- Focus on numbers, quantity over quality of work
- Lack of support from very senior management

Respondents raised a range of issues under some of the other features most disliked as follows:

**Amalgamation issues raised:**

- Cultural issues need sorting out
- Uncertainty due to amalgamation
- Ambiguity over structure and responsibilities
- Procedural uncertainties

**Location issues raised:**

- Spend a lot of time away from home
- Long travel hours are a feature of the job
- Cost of housing high

**10. Job titles used by respondents:**

When asked to specify their Job Title, respondents listed *almost 50 different job titles*. Job Titles reflect the enormous diversity of job functions and specialisations possible under the banner of Environmental Health.

Councils also change what a job is called so that they can pay outside/above award rates. They typically do this in a bid to retain staff in skill shortage areas.

Job Titles used by respondents are listed below with the most commonly used listed in bold script, as follows:

- **Environmental Health Officer Cadet**
- **Environmental Health Officer**
- Area/Regional Environmental Health Officer
- Team Leader Environmental Health
- **Co-ordinator Environmental Health**
- Acting Senior Environmental Health Officer
- **Senior Environmental Health Officer**
- Acting Manager Environmental Health Services
- **Manager Environmental Health Services**
- Assistant Director Environmental Health Services
- **Director Environmental Health Services**

In the area of Environmental Health Policy the following job titles were listed by respondents:

- Environmental Health Policy Officer
- Environmental Health Policy Adviser
- Environmental Health Officer - Environmental Health Policy
- Senior Environmental Health Adviser
- Principal Policy Officer - Pollution Prevention
- Project Officer - Policy Integration

In the area of Project Management the following job titles were listed by respondents:

- Environmental Health Officer - Project Officer
- Environmental Health - Project Co-ordinator
- Senior Environmental Health Officer (Projects)

Respondents also listed job titles linked to functional areas, which indicates the enormous breadth of this profession. Job titles linked to functional areas are as follows:

- Pollution:
  - Pollution Assessment Officer
  - Pollution Officer - Development Assessment
- Waste:
  - Waste Services Co-ordinator
  - Waste Management Co-ordinator
  - Co-ordinator Strategic Waste
  - Environment and Waste Management Officer
  - Manager Waste and Recycling Services
- Public Health:
  - Team Leader - Public Health Management
  - Senior Environmental Health Adviser - Water
  - Principal Scientific Adviser - Water Quality
- Development Assessment:
  - Environmental Health Officer - Development Assessment
  - Senior Environmental Health Officer - Development Assessment
- Environmental:
  - Manager Environmental Services
  - Senior Manager Public and Environmental Health
  - Senior Environmental Health Officer - Environmental Health Policy Unit
  - Manager Environment and Safety
- Disaster Management:
  - Principal Environmental Health Officer - Disaster Management
  - Manager Community Response
  - Community Awareness Officer
- Regulatory:
  - Section Manager Local Laws
  - Manager Regulatory Services
  - Team Leader Enforcement
  - Co-ordinator Environmental Health and Compliance
  - Manager Environmental Health and Community Law

**Recommendation:**

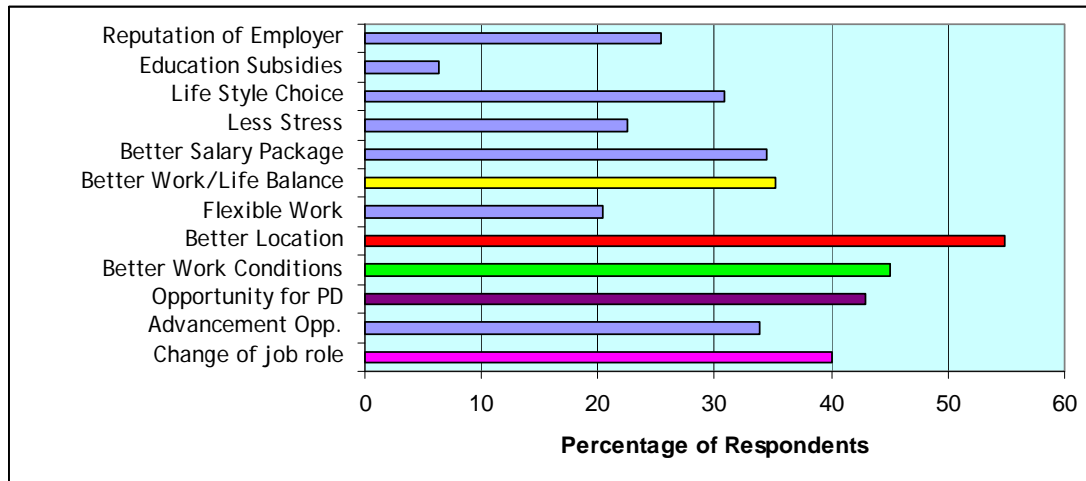
**21. Formal recognition of specialist fields within the profession to cope with increasing scope and complexity of activity encompassed by the environmental health profession. (EHA and LGAQ to work together to develop this recognition process)**

**22. Support specialist EH fields with nationally accredited training**

## 11. What attracted you to your current employer?

The key reasons environmental health practitioners were attracted to their current employer are highlighted below:

1. More suitable geographic location
2. More favourable working conditions
3. Opportunities for professional development
4. Change of job role
5. Better work/life balance



When EH practitioners list a *More suitable geographic location*, in the main they mean closer to family and home.

### Recommendation:

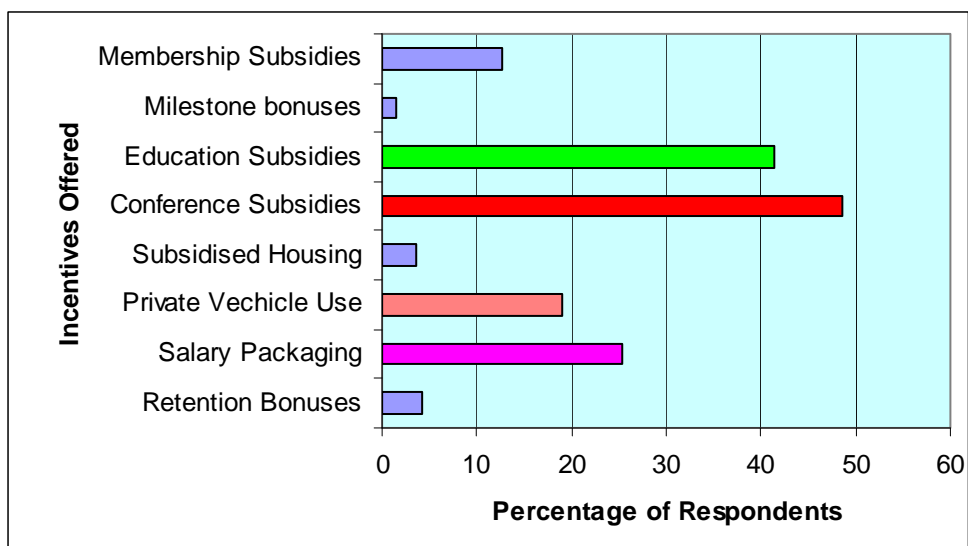
23. Increase the number of cadetships/scholarships offered to local residents by councils in a bid to "grow and retain" EH practitioners

## 12. What incentives does your employer offer?

The most common incentives currently offered to environmental health practitioners in Queensland are:

1. Conference/Seminar subsidies
2. Education subsidies
3. Salary packaging options
4. Use of private vehicle
5. Professional membership subsidies

Some respondents indicated that *Lack of Private Vehicle Use/Commuter Vehicle Use was a problem*. Respondents also noted that some employees were offered commuter vehicles and others were not, creating the basis for dissatisfaction with their employer.



A number of practitioners who responded to this question listed *Other Incentives* such as:

- Commuter use of vehicle
- Subsidised vehicle
- Flex time
- Carers Leave
- Higher superannuation contributions
- Part time work during university
- Locality allowance
- Leave paid at half pay

Respondents listed “attractive entitlements” instead of real incentives, suggesting a lack of clarity between what constitutes an entitlement and an incentive.

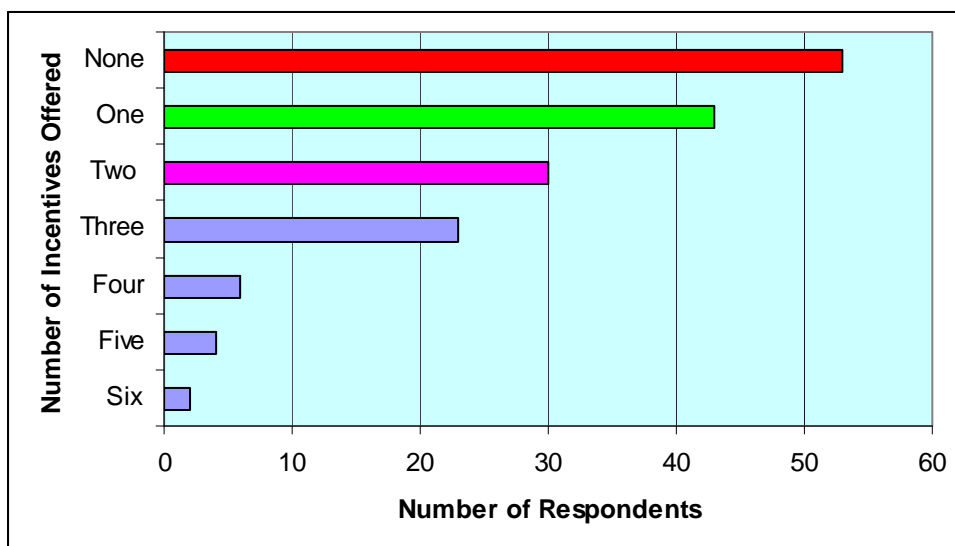
**(a) Range of incentives offered:**

One third of the 161 environmental health practitioners who responded to this question about incentives were offered no incentives by their current employer. Councils may be limited in their ability to pass on wage increases but may have flexibility in determining and allocating a range of incentives. Brisbane City Council has established a good model for valuing incentives and promoting these as a key component of the salary package on offer.

Councils need to be more creative about the types of incentives offered, and should recognise that the needs of an individual will change over time. Councils should consider offering a range of incentives tailored to meet the needs/circumstances of the individual EHO whilst recognising that the needs of the individual will change over time

**Recommendation:**

- 24. Develop case studies to identify and promote innovative ways to apply incentives in order to attract and retain EH professionals**



Incentives were offered by employers as follows:

- 33.0% offered no incentives
- 26.7% offered one incentive
- 18.6% offered two incentives
- 14.3% offered three incentives
- 7.5% offered between 4 and 6 incentives

*Almost 60.0% of respondents were receiving one or no incentives in their current position. This was true for only 40.0% of planners - highlighting a key difference in employment arrangements between the professions.*

### 13. Level of professional development support:

Environmental Health Practitioners were asked what percentage of their salary package their employer contributed towards their professional development costs. 133 practitioners responded to this question and of these respondents:

- 32.3% had no idea of the level of contribution made by their employer
- 27.8% indicated that their employer did not contribute towards their professional development

% of Salary Package	% of Respondents
Have No idea	32.3%
0%	27.8%
1%	9.0%
2%	10.5%
3%	2.2%
4%	1.0%
5%	13.5%
>5%	3.7%

Some respondents indicated that their employer contributed to their professional development in other ways such as covering half the cost of their university fees (for each subject passed).

Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that the level of Professional Development Support has reduced in real terms post amalgamations.

*One of the main reasons stated for changing employers was greater professional development opportunities yet the data indicates that over 60% of respondents were unaware of or receiving no professional development support from their current employer.*

**Recommendation:**

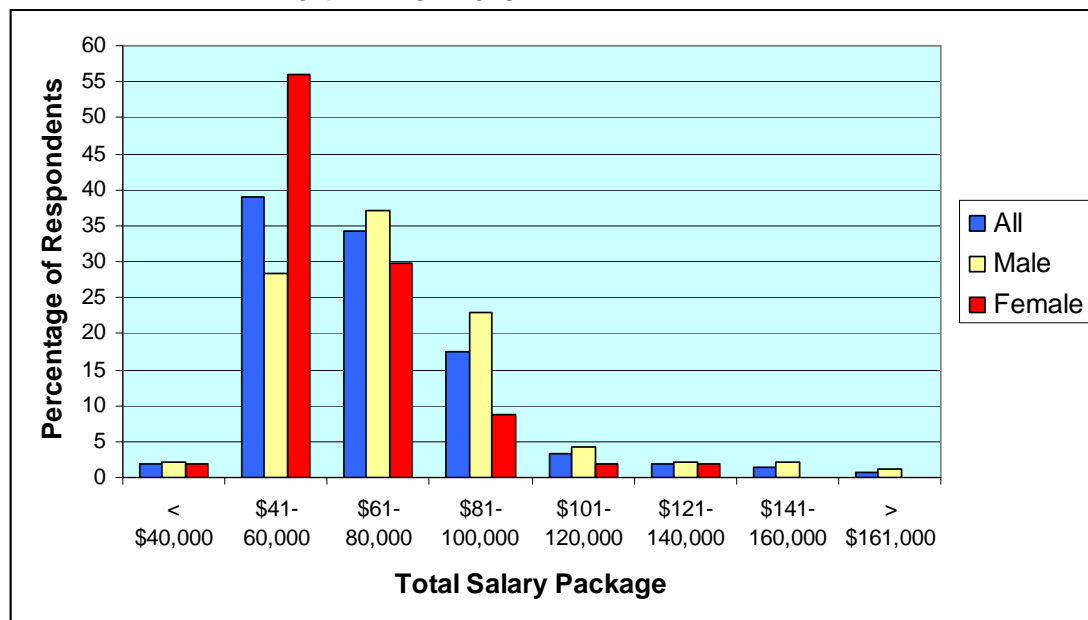
25. That Councils clearly communicate to EHOs the level of Professional Development contributions allocated and available to them.

**14. Salary packaging levels:**

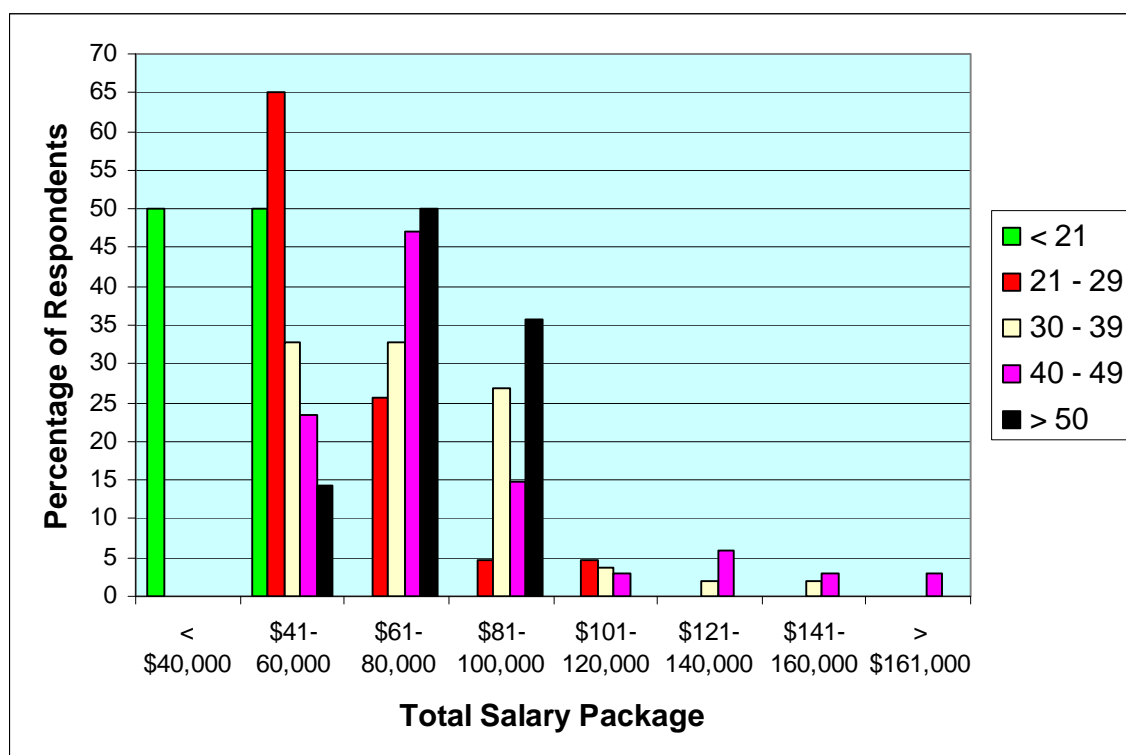
149 environmental health practitioners indicated the level of their total salary package inclusive of all benefits, vehicle, superannuation, and subsidies. Of these respondents 75.1% were employed on salary packages less than \$80,000 per annum.

92 males and 57 females responded to this question. 67.4% of the male respondents compared to 87.6% of the female respondents were employed on salary packages less than \$80,000 per annum. No female respondent reported a salary package above \$140,000 per annum.

**Distribution of salary package by gender**



## Distribution of salary package by age



### 15. Employment status:

Respondents were asked to indicate their employment status and whether or not they were working full or part time.

150 practitioners responded to this set of questions and of these:

- 90.0 % were employed on a permanent basis
- 6.0% were employed on a temporary basis
- 4.0% were employed on a casual basis
- Of those respondents working on a temporary basis, two thirds were employed on a full time basis
- Of those respondents working on a permanent basis, 94.0% were working on a full time basis
- Of those respondents working on a casual basis, 20.0% were working on a full time basis

The majority of temporary (77.8%) positions were held by females with a degree in environmental health. One of the reasons respondents listed for changing employers was because of the temporary nature of the work, and they wanted more job security.

The majority of casual (60.0%) positions were held by females who held a degree or diploma in, or were studying towards a qualification in environmental health.

**16. Who do Environmental Health Technicians go to for advice and support?**

Environmental Health Technicians were asked to identify who they went to for technical advice and support. In most cases they indicated that they went first to their supervisor, then to the relevant State government department and then to a mentor in another council or organisation. A number of EHTs indicated that they would seek assistance from a number of these support groups.

Responses are ranked in order of importance below:

1. Supervisor who was a qualified EHO
2. State government Staff (EPA/Dept of Health)
3. Mentor - EHO from another council/organisation
4. LGAQ staff
5. EHA staff
6. Academic staff

When asked what additional support mechanisms they would like to see put into place, the following ideas were suggested:

- Establish a professional mentoring program
- Establish system of visits from Queensland Health to provide advice on specific components of the Food Act
- *“Anything would be good”*
- Establish better working relationships and networking arrangements between Local government and State government agencies
- Very experienced EHOs that are available as a resource to EHOs for info/advice.
- Environmental Health Support officers located at LGAQ would help.
- Environmental Health newsletters distributed by Environmental Health Australia to be distributed to each EHO discussing common problems, solutions, technical information and relevant changes that impact on our work
- Environmental Health Australia needs to be more lenient with student membership - particularly in Qld. In NSW part time students such as Cadets are entitled to a "Student Fee". In Qld they are required to pay a full membership fee which can be difficult to afford as salary is not as high as a qualified EHO
- Greater use of the collaboration site in Toolbox (I believe people are too shy/embarrassed to use it)

**Recommendations:**

26. EHA Qld to consider the introduction of a “Student Fee” for part time students
27. EHA to establish an on-line EH newsletter discussing current issues/problems and proposed changes to legislation.
28. Promote greater use of Toolbox site by EH practitioners

17. Career progression:

Almost 70.0% of respondents thought that 3-5 years is an acceptable length of time to stay in the one job role.

Acceptable time to stay in one job role	% Respondents
1-2 years	6.5%
3-5 years	66.5%
>5 years	27.0%

Just over 15.0% of the 21-29 year old respondents thought that 1-2 years is an acceptable length to stay in the one job role.

Acceptable time to stay in one job role	% of respondents within each Age Grouping				
	<21	21-29	30-39	40-49	50+
1-2 years	0%	15.2%	1.8%	5.9%	0%
3-5 years	83.3%	65.2%	80.0%	50.0%	50.0%
>5 years	16.4%	19.6%	18.2%	44.1%	50.0%

Slightly more females (70%) than males (64%) thought that 1-2 years was an acceptable length of time to stay in the one job role.

More males (30%) than females (22%) thought that >5 years was an acceptable length of time to stay in the one job role.

Acceptable time to stay in one job role	% Male Respondents	% Female Respondents
1-2 years	5.3%	8.3%
3-5 years	64.2%	70.0%
>5 years	30.5%	21.7%

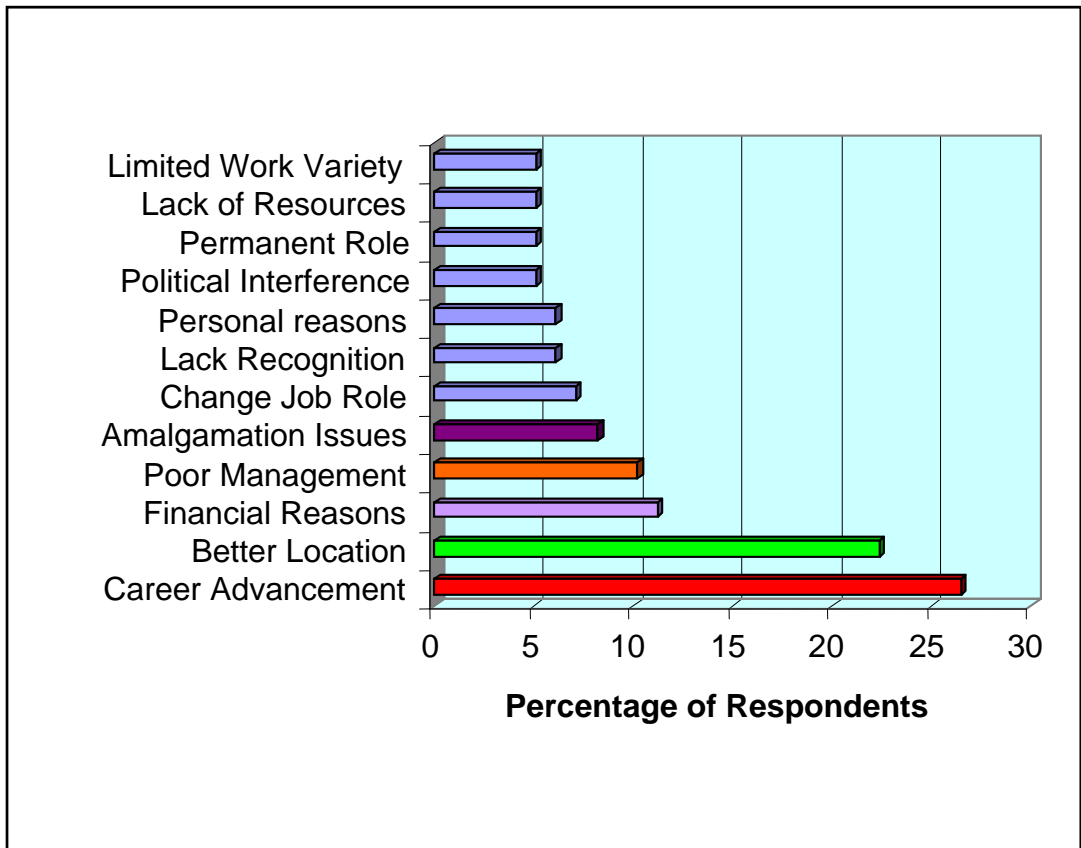
From this data it appears the female environmental health practitioners may be more likely to seek a change job role within the first 1-5 years of employment. *The three main reasons they change jobs is to move closer to home/family, for better working conditions, and for more professional development opportunities.*

**Recommendation:**  
 29. Develop retention strategies targeting female EHOs in their first 1-5 years of employment



- 11.2% listed *Financial Reasons* for leaving their last employer. That is looking for better pay rates and conditions
- 10.2% listed *Poor Management* for leaving their last employer Respondents were either not happy with lack of strategic direction, or simply unhappy with manager or their management style
- 8.2% listed *Amalgamation Issues* for leaving their last employer Respondents listed being made redundant due to restructuring or contracts not being renewed

### Main Reasons for Leaving Last Employer

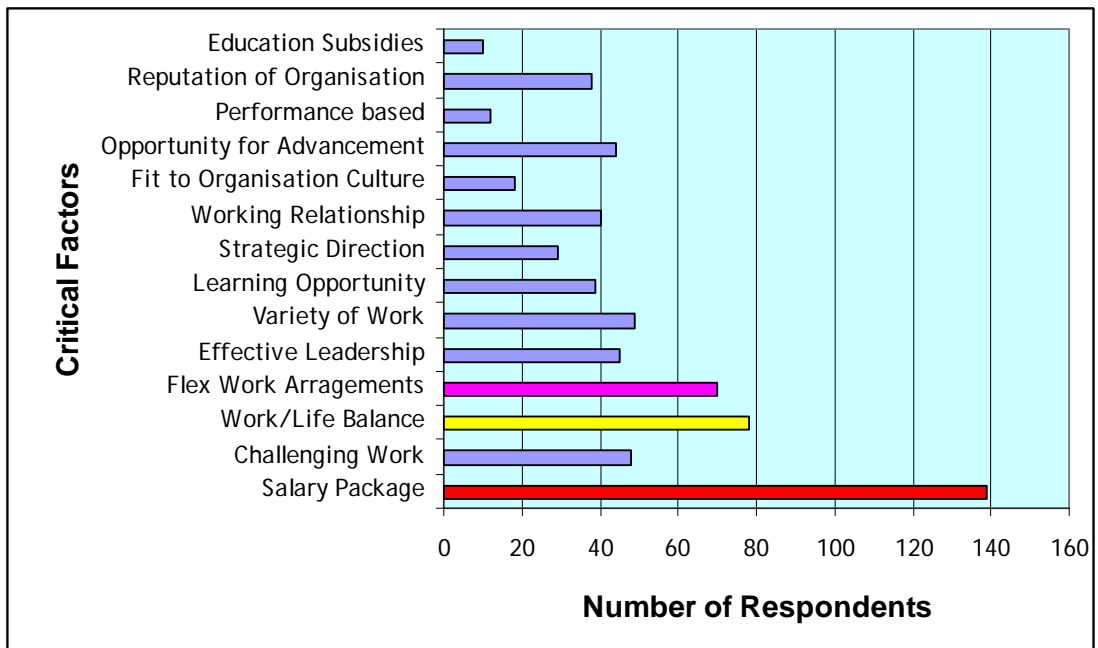


## EMPLOYMENT ARRANGEMENTS: FUTURE EMPLOYER

### 1. Critical factors in determining whether or not to change jobs:

Respondents indicated that the most critical factor in determining whether or not they will change jobs was by far the offer of a *better salary package*.

The next most critical factor for environmental health practitioners was a better *work/life balance* closely followed by more *flexible working arrangements*.



Respondents in general thought that *wage rates* were below what comparable professionals are currently being paid, and in some cases administration staff without degree level qualifications, are being paid more.

A handful of respondents also listed *location* as critical, in particular moving closer to home and family.

## SECTION 3:

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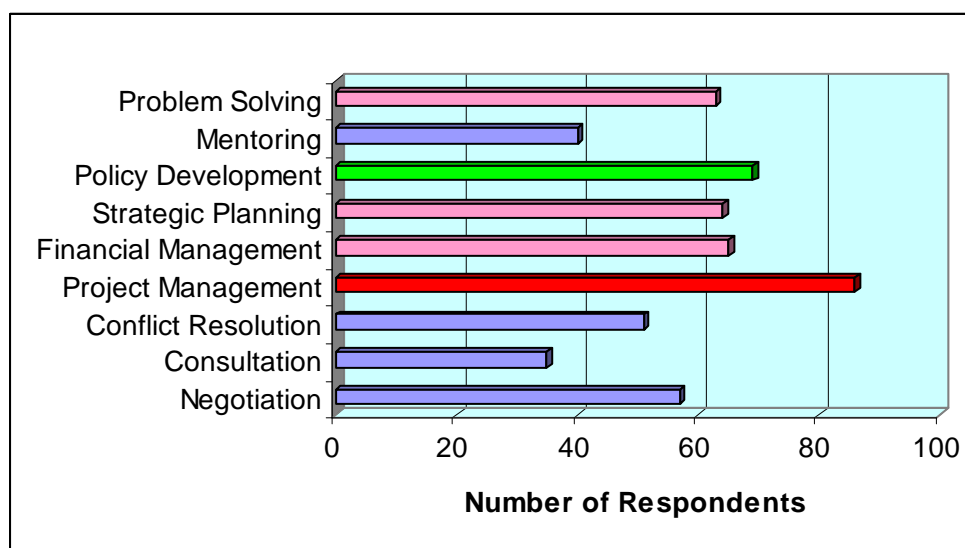
### CHANGING SKILL NEEDS:

#### 1. Areas for further training:

Respondents were asked to nominate which skills would assist them in their work role and which of these skills they would like further training in.

The five areas most frequently listed by respondents for further training were:

1. Project Management
2. Policy Development
3. Budgeting/Financial Management
4. Strategic Planning
5. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving



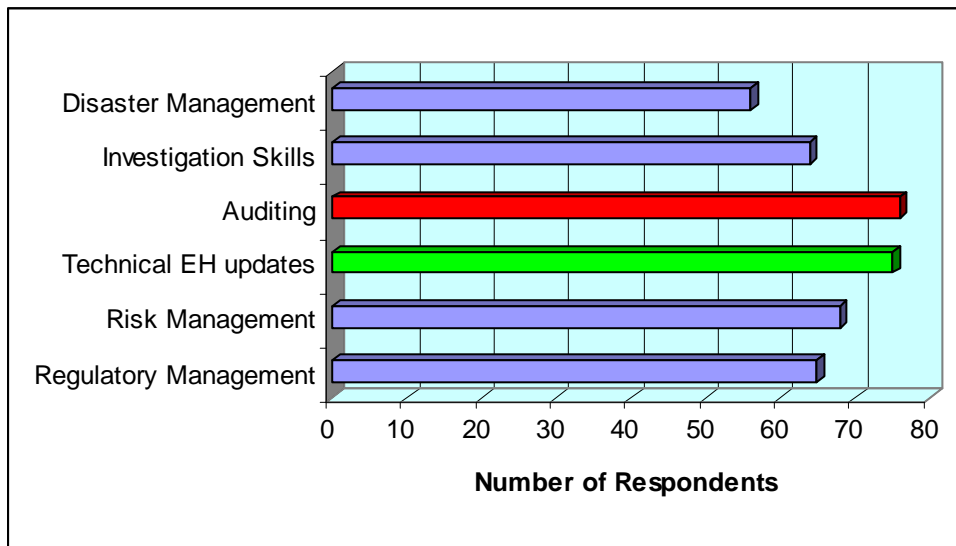
Respondents also nominated the following additional areas that they would like further training in:

- Management
- Human Resource Management
- People and Performance Management
- Communication and Relationship Building
- Public Speaking/presenting
- Planning and Development Assessment
- Training and Public Education
- Anger and Frustration Management
- Collaborative Solutions
- Leadership Development Programs
- Personal Development
- Dispute Resolution and Mediation Skills

## 2. Professional development programs:

Respondents were also asked what Environmental Health areas they would like to see more professional development programs run in and they listed the following areas as their top three:

1. Auditing
2. Technical Environmental Health Updates
3. Risk Management



Respondents also expressed a need for professional development programs in the following additional areas:

- Climate Change
- Climate Change Mitigation
- Planning for Climate Change Impacts
- Contaminated Land
- Waste Management
- Noise
- Formal Enforcement Procedures
- Law and Legislation
- Environmental Protection Act
- Media Training

### Recommendation:

30. Environmental Health Australia to collaborate with key stakeholders in order to conduct regular CPD Programs across the state, focusing initially on:
  - Auditing
  - Risk Management
  - Technical Updates
31. The establishment of formal national educational programs in the area of climate change

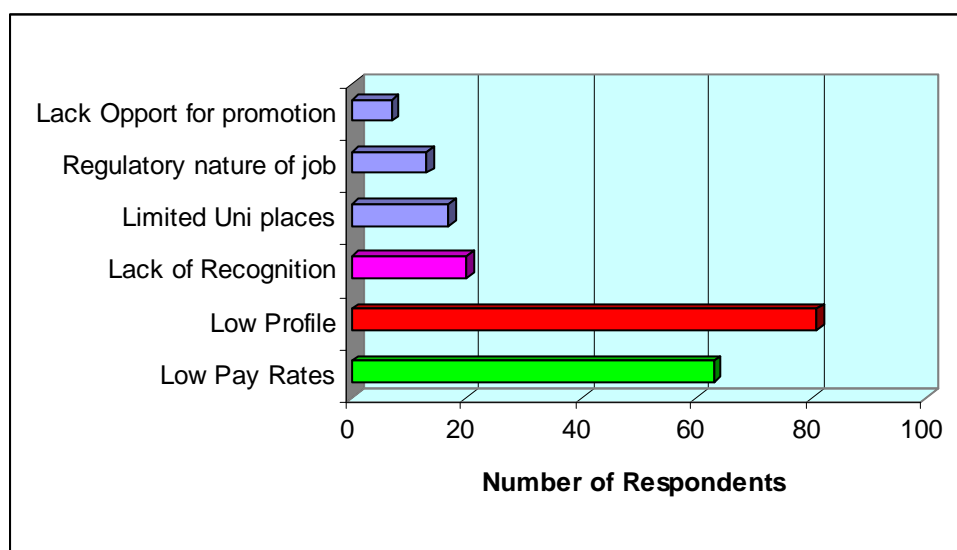
## SECTION 4:

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### REASON FOR THE SHORTAGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS:

#### 1. Reasons for current shortage:

Respondents were asked to list the main reasons for the current shortage of Environmental Health Officers in Queensland. The factor most listed by respondents was the *Lack of a Professional Profile*.



Respondents defined *Lack of a Professional Profile* as:

- Lack of awareness by general public/school kids of the profession
- Poor professional profile - people don't aspire to become something if they don't know it exists
- Poor professional recognition and branding
- Lack of professional identity
- No one knows who we are or what we do
- It is not clear what our job entails
- Lack of community knowledge and awareness of the profession, resulting in low numbers of students entering into university
- Profession not widely recognised or advertised
- Lack of promotion of the profession - every day I meet people who have never heard of an EHO
- I can count on the one hand the number of people I have met who know what an EHO is and does

*Low Pay Rates* was ranked second on the list of main causes for the current shortage. Respondents defined low pay rates as follows:

- Low salary compared to other tertiary professions

- Salary not indicative of the qualification or workload and skills required
- In Local government some administrative roles are on the same pay band as EH professionals
- Why work a stressful job for \$60K when you can drive a truck in the mine for \$120K
- Not enough pay/incentives given workload increases over last few years
- Poor salary relative to similar roles
- Pay rates locked into Local government awards
- Local Laws and Development Control Officers without tertiary qualifications are being employed on the same level as EHOs
- The remuneration of EHOs relative to other occupations has declined over the last 20 years
- Erosion of professional status over time has occurred

*Lack of Recognition* was ranked third on the list of main causes for the current shortage. Respondents defined lack of recognition as follows:

- Local government no longer sees Environmental Health as important - no one making sure that Local government is actually meeting their EH requirements
- Very little recognition and support by employers of EH staff
- Not perceived as "crucial" officers within Local government, nor are EHOs held in the same esteem as planners or engineers
- Lack of understanding of the scope and technical aspects EHOs are required to cover
- Not considered a main role in Local government
- Undervaluing of the EH profession by local and State government, councillors and management - lack of recognition of the contribution made by the EH profession
- People in charge of EHOs are all EH content free and they don't value EH outcomes

*Limited University Places* was ranked fourth with respondents raising the following issues:

- Limited university places and limited options for study location
- Not enough graduates to replace those who are leaving the profession
- Not enough undergraduate EH courses available - particularly in North Queensland
- Decreasing profile of EH courses offered
- Lack of awareness of EH profession by uni students
- Some courses offered by universities do not reflect the actual work carried out by an EHO in the field
- No universities in North Queensland offer EH as a degree
- Limited opportunity to study externally - cost implication to enrol in university in another state

*Regulatory Nature of the Job* was ranked fifth with respondents raising the following issues:

- Emphasis now on conducting premise inspections

- EHOs slotted in as “regulators” only, and this work burns people out
- The drive is towards more regulatory/policing style functionality rather than educational
- Job has become primarily enforcement and has lost educational/health promotion focus
- The nice aspects of EH work are now going to other people such as environmental planners
- The job has largely been reduced to a policeman role focussed on compliance.

*Lack of Opportunity for Promotion or Career Advancement* was ranked sixth with respondents raising the following issues:

- Lack of career paths available
- Forced to move out of EH field to advance your career - waste of good knowledge and experience
- Not enough scope for promotion within the profession

## 2. Ideas for addressing the shortage:

Respondents listed a range of solutions to the current shortage of environmental health practitioners in Queensland. A multi pronged approach to address the shortage is needed including:

- **Lifting profile of the profession within the community**
  - Newspaper articles
  - More media coverage of the importance of EH (aspects, issues and responses) - reality TV program like Animal Rescue/Bondi Rescue
  - Increase profile by linking to current issue like climate change, water crisis, energy crisis, transport problems and obesity. EHA to provide spokesperson/build media presence on key issues
  - EHA needs to lead the professionalism and profiling of EHOs
  - EHA should begin a leader incubator program and ongoing Professional Development for leaders
  - Highlight the wide range of activities (especially in Local government) covered by an EHO
  - Must get aggressive about the lack of focus/priority that EH has been given and make the issues we face (like climate change and water) relevant to the community - EH provides the practical aspects to address these issues at local level
  - Active lobbying by EHA - see model by CIEH in the United Kingdom
  - Sell the notion that this profession does and can make a difference
  - Change the name to make it more self explanatory - change image

**Recommendation:**

32. Develop strategies for lifting the profile of the profession within the community by linking to current issues such as climate change

**Recommendation:**

**33. EHA to consider the establishment of a leader incubator program**

- **Promote EH as a professional field to Local government employers**
  - Educate Local government managers/Councillors on importance of the role performed by EHOs/value and benefits of EH profession
  - Highlight the preventative role played by EHOs
  - Ensure EHOs are paid wage rates and offered incentives in line with other professions
  - Offer stable/secure positions/flexible working arrangements
  - Provide opportunities for career progression without having to leave the profession
  - Ensure the manager of EHOs is suitably qualified and understands the importance of EH to the community
  - Need more EHOs in senior/executive positions to lift the profile of the profession
  - Offer Short Term Project Management roles to EHOs that offer rewards in terms of challenge and incentives
  - Tailor incentives to meet the needs of individual EHOs - such as more leave for remote location and more flexibility in working arrangements
  - Offer job share arrangements so don't have to work full time

**Recommendations:**

**34. Include an overview of the roles/functions played by EHOs in councillor induction training programs**

**35. Promote the benefit of flexible working arrangements such as job share, short term project work to attract/retain EH professionals**

- **Promote environmental health to high school students**
  - Organise work experience programs for school students
  - EHA to provide information packs to local councils so they can go to schools during open days
  - Outline study options/cadetship arrangements available
  - Sell the positives of the job
  - Encourage high school students to consider Environmental Health as a career option
  - EHA members to provide information packs at career days, provide someone kids can talk to about the profession, hand out promotional material to remind people about EH profession
  - Encourage stories on kids shows
  - Advertise on billboards along train lines
  - Work with Education Queensland to lift profile of profession for high school students

**Recommendations:**

36. Target local high schools for work experience students
37. Establish costing models associated with full range of career path options - identifying subsidies available for work experience, traineeships and cadetships

- Promote environmental health to university students
  - Promote profession to other related fields (food technology/applied science/...)
  - Actively seek out students to do work experience in councils
  - Sell the benefits of working in Local government

**Recommendations:**

38. Promote the use of cadetships within councils
39. Establish a model EHO Cadetship template for use across councils

- Source EHOs from industry - ie chefs, environmental scientists
  - Target science qualified people or mature people who might be looking for a career change

**Recommendation:**

40. Promote mature age EHO Cadetships targeting people seeking a career change

- Increase number of undergraduate places for EH
  - Lobby universities to offer undergraduate courses in EH - particularly needed in North Queensland, ideally at James Cook University
  - Make sure university courses reflect what EHOs actually do in both local and State government
  - More practically based university courses
  - Undergraduate courses to reflect the specialist nature of jobs that EHOs do - covering the legislation and skills needed to carry out the job.
  - Expose university students to work experience early on in the course

**Recommendations:**

41. Promote external undergraduate EH programs in North Queensland
42. Review university enrolment numbers over past 5 years
43. EHA to continue its role of review and endorsement of all EHO graduate programs offered by universities in Queensland

- **Promote post graduate courses to upskill the profession**
  - Support better career structures for advanced professionals
  - Recognition needed of advanced professionals
  - Provide support/subsidies for post graduate study
- **Establish a mentoring program for undergraduates for their first two years on the job**
- **Establish and promote cadetship arrangements**
  - Contribute to course fees
  - Increase number of cadetships offered in state and Local government
  - Promote the concept of a ratio cadets : EHO to ensure profession is sustainable into the future
  - Offer on-line training option
  - Foster cadetships that have an accelerated degree learning - eg work one semester with part time study, next semester study full time etc - maximum of a four year cadetship

**Recommendations:**

- 44. **Develop and promote an accelerated cadetship model**
- 45. **Promote the notion of a minimum ratio of Cadets:EHOs to ensure that the profession is self sustaining - linked to a workforce planning model**

- **Refocus the profession on more contemporary and future environmental health issues**
- **Encourage/promote specialisation within the profession**
  - Split the job up into different fields
  - Reduce the number of jobs/functions performed by EHOs to a manageable level
  - Identify which job functions can be managed by technical assistants/para professionals

**Recommendation:**

- 46. **Promote post graduate programs to support specialisation**

- **Promote the para professional level**
  - Promote it as an important entry mechanism into the profession
  - Increase the number of technical assistants with opportunity to do further paid study - assistance with HECS debt etc
  - Identify which functions (local law enforcement, routine inspections etc) can be performed by technical assistants to reduce workload on EHOs

**Recommendations:**

47. Promote the role that para professionals can play during periods of skill shortages and as an integral part of a sustainable EH workforce
48. Identify funding sources to assist councils to train EH para professionals

- Increase resources available to EHOs
  - Push for increased resources from authorities such as Queensland Health, EPA/DES etc

**Recommendation:**

49. LGAQ and EHA to work with State Government Agencies to identify mechanisms to provide ongoing support for Council EHOs

- Establish legislative requirement for EHO
  - Establish a requirement for an EHO to sign off as the Authorised Officer in EH programs
  - Reinstate the mandatory legislative appointment of EHOs - that is under the Food Act and the Public Health Act
  - Providing recognition of the skills of EHOs similar to other health practitioners such as nurses and doctors
  - Mandatory Local government annual reporting on specific Public Health and other EH functions to State government and local community

**Recommendation:**

50. LGAQ to support and promote the introduction of the national EHA certification program

- Increase access/level of professional development available
  - More sessions in Waste Management
  - Environmental Protection Act

**Recommendation:**

51. Encourage EHA to provide CPD training in both metropolitan and regional areas

## SECTION 5:

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Promote a career option as an Environmental Health Officer to Environmental Science and Science undergraduates and graduates
2. Provide flexible work options aimed at enhancing the long term workforce participation of female environmental health professionals
3. Develop strategies to attract qualified female environmental health professionals back into the workforce
4. Benchmark Local government EHO wages against Queensland Health levels and within Local government itself
5. Develop a "model equipment list" outlining the typical equipment required by EHOs employed in Local government
6. Implement a Continuous Professional Development program to assist EHOs prepare a case to management for additional resources based on a workforce capacity review
7. Enhance access to "Toolbox" initiative state wide and seek funding /develop mechanisms to ensure the continuation and expansion of the "Toolbox" initiative
8. Promote the value of secondments to Local government and relevant State government agencies
9. Develop a workforce planning model for the Queensland Local Government Sector - looking at least 3-5 years out.
10. That Councils in known growth areas develop a risk management framework such as "ALARMS" to manage workload given the shortages of EHOs
11. Communicate to Council CEOs the risks associated with appointing inadequately qualified personnel as "authorised officers"
12. Promote the adoption of the EHA's Certification Scheme to ensure that all EH practitioners employed by councils in Queensland hold the appropriate skills and knowledge
13. Provide advice to councils identifying through a skills matrix which of the LG public health functions currently completed by EHOs can be allocated to EH para professionals

14. Identify what Non EH Related work can be deployed to administrative staff
15. Councils to allocate adequate funding within their budget for maintaining the currency of EHOs skills and knowledge
16. State government to establish mechanism/s for briefing councils on any changes, or proposed changes to Environmental Health related legislation - and to adopt an ongoing commitment to both training and capacity building of EH professionals within Queensland
17. Embrace the Continuous Professional Development Program as part of the new certification requirements developed by EHA
18. Establish a mentoring program for 21-29 year old graduates to help them through the first few years of working life
19. Increase the number of job placement positions for undergraduates across State and Local Government Sector
20. Promote these two key features (1) Variety of working role and (2) Autonomy of work role when promoting the profession as a career of choice
21. Formal recognition of specialist fields within the profession to cope with increasing scope and complexity of activity encompassed by the environmental health profession. (EHA and LGAQ to work together to develop this recognition process)
22. Support specialist fields with nationally accredited training
23. Increase the number of cadetships/scholarships offered to local residents by councils in a bid to "grow and retain" EH practitioners
24. Develop case studies to identify and promote innovative ways to apply incentives in order to attract and retain EH professionals
25. That Councils clearly communicate to EHOs the level of Professional Development contributions allocated and available to them
26. EHA Qld to consider the introduction of a "Student Fee" for part time students
27. EHA to establish an on-line EH newsletter discussing current issues/problems and proposed changes to legislation
28. Promote greater use of Toolbox site by EH practitioners
29. Develop retention strategies targeting female EHOs in their first 1-5 years of employment

30. Environmental Health Australia to collaborate with key stakeholders in order to conduct regular CPD Programs across the state, focusing initially on:
  - Auditing
  - Risk Management
  - Technical Updates
31. The establishment of formal national educational programs in the area of climate change
32. Develop strategies for lifting the profile of the EH profession within the community by linking to current issues such as climate change
33. EHA to consider the establishment of a leader incubator program
34. Include an overview of the role/functions played by EHOs in councillor induction training programs
35. Promote the benefit of flexible working arrangements such as job share, short term project work to attract/retain EH professionals
36. Target local high schools for work experience students
37. Establish costing models associated with the full range of career path options - identifying subsidies available for work experience, traineeships, and cadetships for para professionals
38. Promote the use of cadetships within councils
39. Establish a model EHO Cadetship template for use across councils
40. Promote mature age EHO Cadetships targeting people seeking a career change
41. Promote external undergraduate EH programs in North Queensland
42. Review university enrolment numbers over past 5 years
43. EHA to continue its role of review and endorsement of all EHO graduate programs offered by universities in Queensland
44. Develop and promote an accelerated cadetship model
45. Promote the notion of a minimum ratio of Cadets : EHOs to ensure that the profession is self sustaining - linked to a workforce planning model
46. Promote post graduate programs to support specialisation

47. Promote the role that para professionals can play during periods of skill shortages and as an integral part of a sustainable EH workforce
48. Identify funding sources to assist councils to train EH para professionals
49. LGAQ and EHA to work with State Government Agencies to identify mechanisms to provide ongoing support for Council EHOs
50. LGAQ to support and promote the introduction of the national EHA certification program
51. Encourage EHA to provide CPD training in both metropolitan and regional areas

## Appendix A: Survey Instrument



**ENVIRONMENTAL  
HEALTH  
AUSTRALIA**

6 June, 2008

Dear Environmental Health Colleague,

### **ATTRACTION & RETENTION SURVEY 2008 PERSONS WORKING IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - IN BOTH THE PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTORS**

The Environmental Health profession is one of a number of professions that is currently experiencing skills shortages nationally, however the level of data and information surrounding the current predicament, and to assist in formulating future strategies to assist this situation, is lacking.

The attached survey is targeted at persons working in or who have recently worked in, the field of Environmental Health within Queensland, from technician/para professional level to the post graduate level.

It is an initiative of the Local Government Skills Formation Strategy and is fully supported by the Environmental Health Australia, Queensland Health and the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ).

Data from across the State is sought to assist in informing future strategies to address current and emerging issues facing our profession.

The survey will take approximately **15 minutes** to complete. Most questions simply require you to click on the appropriate box.

Results of the survey will be reported for the State and for broad regional areas. Individual results will not be reported to maintain complete confidentiality.

The survey is designed to be completed electronically. Once you have completed the survey (word document), simply save it to your computer and send it as an attachment via email to:

**Gabrielle Dorward, Project Manager, Skills Formation Strategy, at  
[Gabrielle\\_Dorward@lgaq.asn.au](mailto:Gabrielle_Dorward@lgaq.asn.au)**

by close of business **Monday, 30 June 2008**.

The survey may also be downloaded from the EHA (Queensland Branch) website at [www.eh.org.au/qld](http://www.eh.org.au/qld) to ensure that it is accessible to persons working in the EH field.

If you have work colleagues or employees that are not EHA members, and may not have received this survey, I encourage you to pass on this survey and information on in order that they may have an opportunity to have their say and assist with addressing this State-wide skill shortage.

On behalf of the Local Government Skill Formation Taskforce, the Environmental Health Sub Committee, and supporter organisations, I thank you in advance for your support and input into this initiative.

With thanks

***Bruce Morton***

Chair, EHO Sub Committee &  
Member, Local Government Skill Formation Taskforce

**Instructions for electronic completion:**

*To complete the survey electronically, left click on relevant box and an X will appear. If you wish to remove an X placed in error, simply left click on box again. Some questions require you to enter TEXT, simply left click on shaded area and insert text.*

**Q1. In what city/town are you based:**

**Q2. Where applicable – please indicate what population base you cover in your EH role? Please specify**

(a) population number

**Q3. What level of Environmental Health Qualification do you hold:  
(or equivalent such as RSH certificate)**

- (a) Post graduate(environmental health)
- (b) Degree (environmental health)
- (c) Associate Diploma/RSH Certificarte (environmental health)
- (d) Diploma (environmental health)
- (e) Certificate IV (environmental health)
- (f) Student/Cadet
- (g) Other including Allied Degrees– please specify

**Q4. If Environmental Health (EH) is your second degree, please list what your first degree was:**

**Q5. If you have completed or are working towards a non EH undergraduate / post graduate degree, SINCE completing your EH degree, please specify the type of non EH degree:**

- (a) MBA
- (b) Other – please specify

**Q6. How old are you:**

- (a) Under 21 years
- (b) 22-29 years
- (c) 30-39 years
- (d) 40-49 years
- (h) 50+ years

**Q7. Are you Male  Female**

**Q8. In total how many years have you worked as an EH practitioner:**

- (a) < 12 months
- (b) 1-2 years
- (c) 3-5 years
- (d) 6-10 years
- (e) 11-20 years
- (f) > 21 years

**Q9. Are you currently employed as an EH practitioner:**

Yes  No  *If you answered YES to Q9 please go to Q12.*

**Q10. Please specify the main reason why you are not currently working in the EH field:**

- (a) Currently working in another area of local government
- (b) Currently working in another area of state government
- (c) Needed to move out of EH field to progress my career
- (d) Retired
- (e) Other – please specify

**Q11. Please indicate if you would consider working as an EH practitioner again in future** Yes  No

**If you answered YES please indicate what would assist you to make this transition possible:**

(a)

**If you answered NO please state why not:**

(a)

*IF you are not currently employed as an EH practitioner please go to Q32*

**CURRENT EMPLOYER:**

**Q12. Where are you currently employed:**

- (a) Commonwealth Government
- (b) State Government
- (c) Local Government
- (d) Private Sector
- (e) Academic Field
- (f) Other – please specify

**Q13. If you are currently a manager employed in local government with responsibility for the environmental section/staff please indicate, within your council the:**

Number of Current Vacancies of	EH Technicians	<input type="checkbox"/>
	EHOs & above	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number Currently Employed as:	EH Technicians	<input type="checkbox"/>
	EHOs & above	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total Number needed in 3 years time:	EH Technicians	<input type="checkbox"/>
	EHOs & above	<input type="checkbox"/>

*(Note: For the purpose of this survey **EH Technicians** refer to EH personnel holding qualifications below degree level- or if not qualified performing para professional functions; **EHOs & above** refer to EH personnel holding qualifications at degree level or above and typically employed as EHO/EH Managers/Specialist EHO/EH Managers etc)*

**Q14. If you are currently a manager employed in local government with responsibility for the environmental health section, please indicate which of the following EH levels you have had the trouble filling during the past 12 month period:**

- (a) Senior EH Managers
- (b) EHOs
- (c) EH Technicians

**Q15. In your current position please indicate what % of your job is allocated to each of these functions. Please specify %:**

- |   | <b>Responsible For % of Job</b>                        |
|---|--|
| (a) Academic                            |  |
| (b) Animal Management                   |  |
| (c) Community Education                 |  |
| (d) Dangerous Goods                     |  |
| (e) Development Assessment & Control    |  |
| (f) Disaster Management                 |  |
| (g) Drugs/Poisons                       |  |
| (h) Environmental Protection            |  |
| (i) Environmental Health Planning       |  |
| (j) Food Safety                         |  |
| (k) Health Surveillance & Investigation |  |
| (l) Immunisation                        |  |
| (m) Local Laws                          |  |
| (n) Management (admin/financial)        |  |
| (o) Mentoring                           |  |
| (p) Municipal Public Health Planning    |  |
| (q) Noise Management                    |  |
| (r) Non EH related                      |  |
| (s) Personal Appearances                |  |
| (t) Policy Development                  |  |
| (u) Regulated Parking                   |  |
| (v) Tobacco                             |  |
| (w) Vector Control                      |  |
| (x) Waste Management                    |  |
| (y) Water Quality Management            |  |
| (z) Other                               |  |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>100%</b>  |
|   | <i>(Please check your additions – must equal 100%)</i> |

**Q16. At what level are you currently employed:**

- (a) Student/cadet
- (b) Para professional EH practitioner
- (c) Graduate EHO
- (d) EHO
- (e) Senior EHO
- (f) Manager EH
- (g) Director
- (h) Academic Field
- (i) Other – please specify

**Q17. What is your job title:** please specify

**Q18. If you are studying for an EH qualification (below degree or degree level), are you supervised on a day to day basis by a qualified EHO (*that is someone who holds an EH degree as a minimum*).**

Yes  No

**Q19. If you answered No to Q18, is this a cause of concern to you:**

Yes  No

**Q20. If you answered No to Q18, what arrangement/solution could be adopted:** please specify

**Q21. How long have you been with your current employer:**

- (a) < 12 months
- (b) 1-2 years
- (c) 3-5 years
- (d) 6-10 years
- (e) 11-20 years
- (f) >20 years

**Q22. How would you rate your job satisfaction level:**

- (a) Very Dissatisfied
- (b) Dissatisfied
- (c) Unsure
- (d) Satisfied
- (e) Very Satisfied

**Q23. How would you rate your job stress level:**

- (a) Low
- (b) Medium
- (c) High
- (d) Very High

**Q24. If you listed High/Very High in response to Q21, please indicate the main reasons for your stress levels:**

- (a) Amalgamations
- (b) EH function itself
- (c) Increases in workload
- (d) Political Interference
- (e) Lack of professional support
- (f) Number of hours worked
- (g) Poor work life/balance
- (h) Ambiguity of role
- (i) Work relationships/management style
- (j) Other – please specify

**Q25. Please indicate what level of increase in workload you have experienced since 2005:**

- (a) 0%
- (b) 1-25%
- (c) 26-50%
- (d) 51-75%
- (e) > 76%

**Q26. Where applicable please list the main reason for your increase in workload:**

(a)

**Q27. Are you currently seriously thinking about leaving the EH profession to take up a different career:**

YES  NO

**Q28. If you answered Yes to Q27 please indicate your main reason for wanting to leave the EH profession**

(a)

**Q29. If you answered Yes to Q27 please indicate what you are thinking about doing:**

- (a) Retiring
- (b) Another Job
- (c) Other

**Q30. If you ticked Q29(b) Another Job, please indicate what type of job you are interested in:**

**Q31. If you are interested in a secondment to another EH organisation for a specified period of time, please specify in what areas of EH are you most interested in working during a secondment**

(a)

### **LAST EMPLOYER**

**Q32. In the past, have you been employed in EH roles with another employer:**

**YES**  **NO**

**If you answered NO please go to Q46**

**Q33. Where were you last employed:**

- (a) Commonwealth Government
- (b) State Government
- (c) Local Government
- (d) Private Sector
- (e) Academic Field
- (f) Other – please specify

**Q34. In your old job role, which of the following functions were you responsible for and what % of your old job was allocated to each of these functions. Please specify %:**

**% of job**

- (a) Academic
- (b) Animal Management
- (c) Community Education
- (d) Dangerous Goods
- (e) Development Assessment & Control
- (f) Disaster Management
- (g) Drugs/Poisons
- (h) Environmental Protection
- (i) Environmental Health Planning
- (j) Food Safety
- (k) Health Surveillance & Investigation
- (l) Immunisation
- (m) Local Laws
- (n) Management (Admin/Financial)
- (o) Mentoring
- (p) Municipal Public Health Planning
- (q) Noise Management
- (r) Non EH related
- (s) Personal Appearances
- (t) Policy Development
- (u) Regulated Parking
- (v) Tobacco

- (w) Vector Control
- (x) Waste Management
- (y) Water Quality Management
- (z) Other – please specify

**100% job**

*(Please check your additions – must equal 100%)*

**Q35. What were your main reasons for leaving your last employer – please specify:**

- (a)
- (b)

*If you are not currently working in the EH field go to Q46*

**CURRENT EMPLOYER:**

**Q36. What attracted you to your current employer:**

*(you can tick more than one box)*

- (a) Change of job role
- (b) Opportunities for advancement
- (c) Opportunities for Professional development
- (d) More favourable working conditions
- (e) More suitable geographic location
- (f) More Flexible Working Arrangements
- (g) Better Work/life balance
- (h) Better salary package
- (i) Less Stress/Work Pressure
- (j) Life Style Choice
- (k) Education Subsidies
- (l) Positive Reputation of Employer
- (m) Other – please specify

i.

**Q37. Does your current employer offer you any of the following incentives: (you can tick more than one box)**

- (a) Retention bonuses
- (b) Salary Packaging Options
- (c) Use of Private Vehicle
- (d) Subsidised Housing
- (e) Conference/Seminar subsidies
- (f) Education Subsidies
- (g) Project Completion/Milestone bonuses
- (h) Professional Membership Subsidies
- (i) Other Incentives – please specify

i.

**Q38. When considering your career progression - what do you feel is an acceptable length of time to stay in the one job role/function:**

- (a) 1-2 years
- (b) 3-5 years
- (c) > 5 years

**Q39. What do you like most about your current job – please specify**

- (a)
- (b)

**Q40. What don't you like about your current job – please specify**

- (a)
- (b)

**Q41. What percentage of your salary package does your employer contribute towards your professional development:**

- (a) % of salary package

**Q42. Please indicate the level of your total salary package inclusive of all benefits/vehicle/super/subsidies – please ensure calculation is based on full time equivalent arrangement.**

- (a) < \$40,000
- (b) \$41,000 - \$60,000
- (c) \$61,000 - \$80,000
- (d) \$81,000 - \$100,000
- (e) \$101,000 - \$120,000
- (f) \$121,000 - \$140,000
- (g) \$141,000 - \$160,000
- (h) > \$161,000

**Q43. Please indicate your employment status:**

- (a) Temporary
- (b) Permanent
- (c) Casual

And are you working on a Part Time/Full Time basis:

- Part Time  Full Time

**Q44. If you are an EH Technician to whom do you go to for technical advice and support: (you can tick more than one box)**

- (a) Supervisor –a qualified EHO within my own council
- (b) Mentor – a qualified EHO from another council
- (c) LGAQ staff
- (d) State Government staff - (EPA/Dept Health)
- (e) EHA staff
- (f) Academic Staff
- (g) Other – please specify

**Q45. What other technical support mechanisms would you like to see put into place:**

Please Specify:

**FUTURE EMPLOYER:**

**Q46. When next considering a change of employer please list the 3 most critical factors in determining whether or not you will change jobs:**

- |     |  |                          |
|-----|--|--------------------------|
| (a) | Salary/Benefits Package                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) | Challenging Work                               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) | Balanced Work life                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) | Flexible Work Arrangements/Hours etc           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) | Effective Leadership                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) | Variety of Work Functions                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) | Learning Opportunities                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) | Clearly defined goals and strategic direction  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) | Effective working relationship with colleagues | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (j) | Fit of employee and organisation culture       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (k) | Opportunities for Advancement                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (l) | Performance based compensation                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (m) | Positive reputation of organisation            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (n) | Education Subsidies                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (o) | Other – specify                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|     | i.   |                          |

**CHANGING SKILL NEEDS OF EH PRACTITIONERS**

**Q47. Please indicate which of the following skills would be of value to you in your work role, and that you would like further training in:**

- |     |                                       |                          |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) | Negotiation                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) | Consultation                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) | Dispute / Conflict Resolution         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) | Project Management                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) | Budgeting/Financial management        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) | Strategic Planning                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) | Policy Development                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) | Mentoring                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) | Critical Thinking and Problem Solving | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (j) | Other – please specify                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|     | i.                                    |                          |

**Q48. What EH areas would you like to see more professional development programs run in:**

- (a) Regulatory Management
- (b) Risk Management
- (c) Technical EH updates
- (d) Auditing
- (e) Investigation Skills
- (f) Disaster Management
- (g) Other: Please Specify

**Q49. What do you think are the main reasons for the current shortage of EHOs in Queensland**

- (a)
- (b)

**Q50. Any additional thoughts/comments on how we might address the current shortage of EHOs in Queensland.**

- (a)
- (b)