

# Workforce Plan, Fiscal Years 2017–2021

*This document is an excerpt from SFR-035/17,  
the TCEQ's Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2017–2021.*

## Key Factors Facing the Agency

During the next five years, the TCEQ expects challenges as it fulfills its mission and goals. Key economic and environmental factors affecting the agency's workforce include an aging workforce; retention of qualified, experienced employees; and turnover. Economic conditions and high unemployment have previously kept the TCEQ's turnover rate relatively low. Typically, during these climates, working for governmental agencies is seen as more attractive and applicant pools increase. The competition to recruit and retain highly skilled employees remains a priority. Since fiscal 2012, turnover at the TCEQ has increased by 2.3 percent. By 2021, 36.2 percent of the TCEQ's workforce will be eligible to retire. To address these factors, the agency must continuously adapt and focus on implementing attractive recruitment and retention strategies to differentiate itself in the increasingly competitive job market.

The ability to compete for highly skilled applicants, particularly in hard-to-fill occupations, will continue to prove critical in our efforts to maintain a diverse and qualified workforce necessary for the agency to carry out its mission. The attractive benefits and retirement package afforded state employees was altered in an effort to address funding shortfalls. These changes will affect our ability to recruit applicants and retain staff.

The TCEQ does not expect significant changes in its mission, strategies, or goals over the next five years, but it does recognize the need to adapt readily to any changes required by legislation. Any new state and federal requirements will be demanding in light of budget and FTE reductions and will likely point to a need to rely more heavily on program changes, process redesign, and technological advancements.

## Retirement and Attrition

The departure of employees due to retirement and other reasons is, and will continue to be, a critical issue facing the TCEQ. Within the next five years, 36.2 percent of the TCEQ's workforce will be eligible to retire, with 19.9 percent eligible to retire by the end of fiscal 2016.

Likewise, turnover is increasing. Although well below the state average of 17.5 percent for fiscal 2015, the TCEQ experienced turnover at 13 percent in fiscal 2015, with voluntary separations, excluding retirement, making up 64.1 percent of total separations. This potential loss of organizational experience and institutional knowledge poses a significant need for continued careful succession planning for key positions and leadership roles.

An ongoing focus on organizational development and training will also be required. Training and mentoring emerged as the primary strategy identified by agency offices to address skill gaps due to retirements, with hiring methods ranking second.

Table F.1 demonstrates the projected increases in the number of employees eligible to retire from fiscal 2016 through fiscal 2021. The TCEQ estimates that approximately 977 employees (36.2 percent) will become eligible to retire by the end of fiscal 2021. Retirement of the agency's workforce at this level could significantly affect the agency's ability to deliver programs and accomplish its mission.

**Table F.1. Projection of TCEQ Employees Eligible for Retirement, FYs 2016–2021**

Fiscal Year	Projected Retirements	Percent of Total Agency Headcount (2,698)
2016	538	19.9
2017	630	23.3
2018	722	26.7
2019	815	30.2
2020	891	33
2021	977	36.2

*Data Source:* Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

## **New and Changing Requirements and Initiatives**

New federal and state requirements, as well as internal initiatives, will continue to have an agency-wide impact. Offices may be required to change and modify, eliminate, or add programs, processes, and procedures. Also, as a means to provide more timely data, the agency's use of technology to report and receive information is expanding.

Among other expected program changes, mandates, and initiatives are the following:

- **Critical Technology Upgrade.** Replacing legacy applications at the core of the agency's mission with contemporary technology.
- **Central Accounting and Payroll/Personnel System (CAPPS).** Adopting a common state-wide system supporting accounting, payroll, and personnel functions.
- **Accessibility Requirements.** Agency roles and responsibilities under Section 508 are increasing and will require more time and expertise when creating documents, webpages, and learning content.
- **Oil and Gas.** The massive growth and technology advancement in the oil and gas industry has resulted in substantial workload increases for the Air Permits Division (APD). In last five years, the APD has seen a sharp increase in the number of air authorizations resulting from the growth of the industry. The APD's workload has more than doubled since 2010. Workload-planning tools include process-streamlining, all-electronic correspondence, and technology updates to allow for a more automated review (including e-Permitting).
- **New EPA Standards and Regulations.** The EPA continues to promulgate more stringent air-quality standards and rules, such as the proposed source-determination definition for the oil and gas industry, new maximum achievable control technology requirements, and lower National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

The new standards and regulations result in significant workload increases, specifically in

processing air-permit authorizations, and managing the Tax Relief for Pollution-Control Property (Prop 2) and the Emissions Banking and Trading programs. It will be necessary to increase proactive planning and ensure that staff is provided guidance on how to implement all new federal requirements. The Office of Air will continue to provide feedback and available data that demonstrates any undue regulatory burden associated with the EPA's revised or new air-quality standards and rules.

- **Expedited Permitting.** The APD began a new expedited permitting program in November 2014. Applicants may request an expedited review of an application filed under 30 TAC, chapters 106, 116, or 122. The challenge for the APD is the limitations on resources. The program requires additional resources through employee overtime or contract labor to review projects designated as expedited.
- **State Implementation Plan (SIP).** SIP revision development and coordinating is becoming more complex and the technical requirements are expanding, requiring an intimate knowledge of agency procedures and federal regulations, as well as computing and analytical abilities. This, combined with the constant changes in the air-quality field due to new regulations and new technologies, creates a high need for experienced, knowledgeable staff.

The EPA reviews all NAAQS criteria pollutants on a five-year cycle. It is possible and expected that Texas will also be designated non-attainment for pollutants other than ozone and SO<sub>2</sub> within the 2017 through 2021 timeframe, as well as potential further ozone nonattainment area designations. Each nonattainment area will require SIP revision development, along with potential control strategies specific to the pollutant. For example, with the recent SO<sub>2</sub> standard changes and additional requirements per the Data Requirements Rule, the Office of Air will be required to complete four SIP

revisions and three attainment demonstrations. Also, transport and infrastructure SIP revisions specific to each revised criteria pollutant will be due within three years of promulgation of the revised NAAQS.

In addition to these SIP revisions, Texas is expected to continue to develop maintenance plans for certain criteria pollutants to show how an area will maintain its attainment status. The EPA's current review schedule for criteria pollutants is: lead in 2016, primary and secondary nitrogen dioxide and secondary SO<sub>2</sub> in 2017, and primary sulfur dioxide in 2019. The next review dates for carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulate matter are not known at this time.

- **Regional Haze SIP.** The agency will also be developing a Regional Haze SIP for the Guadalupe Mountains and Big Bend national parks for visibility protection. In Texas, the pollutants influencing visibility are primarily NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and PM. Regional Haze program requirements include progress reports due to the EPA every five years to demonstrate progress toward the visibility goal, in addition to another Regional Haze SIP in 2018.
- **EPA's Clean Power Plan (CPP).** The U.S. Supreme Court placed a stay on the CPP on Feb. 8, 2016. If the stay is lifted, this could become a work-force issue during this planning period.
- **Texas Emission Reduction Plan (TERP) Program.** The workload demands for TERP continue to increase due to the additional 1,000 to 1,500 contracts that enter into the monitoring portion of the program each biennium. These contracts are added to the over 10,000 contracts that are currently being monitored by the program.
- **Drought Issues.** Drought may continue to affect water resources and increase the cost of water to consumers, which in turn leads to: an increase in the number of consumer-assistance requests received from the public; an increase in technical assistance; an increase in the need for emergency approvals, including bond approvals; and an increase in requests for emergency authorizations and exceptions that require staff to perform expedited technical and engineering reviews.
- **Database Development.** Developing new enterprise databases for entire programs, such as the Surface Water Rights Database, using existing program staff that is already fully tasked.
- **Public Interest Counsel Support.** Texas Water Code 5.274(b) provides that the agency's public-interest counsel may obtain and use outside technical support to carry out its functions under this code. Use of outside technical assistance allows the office to carry out its statutory responsibilities in a more effective manner. Additional funding to provide for outside technical support could assist the office in implementing its statutory obligations without increasing the number of employees.
- **Ongoing Water Issues.** Water rights and public-drinking-water demands, as well as increased dust complaints have continued due to recurring drought conditions.
- **Population Growth.** Areas of the state experiencing tremendous growth leads to an increased regulatory universe in the form of business, water and wastewater infrastructure, waste generation, and air emissions, in addition to urban areas encroaching on previously rural areas. Increased issues and complexity of issues associated with heavy growth areas create challenges in providing adequate responses to citizen complaints; investigations to determine compliance with applicable air, waste, and water regulations; and education of regulated entities.
- **Monitoring Surface Water Quality.** Expand and enhance the continuous monitoring of surface water quality to provide the real-time and integrated evaluation of the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of affected segments.
- **Access to Information.** Maintaining a balance between the public's access to information through the Emergency Planning and

Community Right to Know Act and protection of confidential information due to homeland-security concerns for the Tier II Chemical Reporting Program.

- **Reductions in Federal Funding.** Expansion of federal grant commitments and performance measures (Government Performance and Results Act) with decreases to funding. The EPA reduced Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) funding to Texas from \$8,500,000 to \$7,280,350 per year (14.35%), with the reduction phased in over a five-year period. The grant reduction affects several programs in the Office of Waste and the agency at large.
- **Program Changes.** The Dry Cleaner Remediation Program is set to expire in 2021.
- **Waste Reduction and Recycling.** The TCEQ continues to promote waste-reduction and recycling programs, with ongoing implementation of the computer and television recycling programs, and potentially, other legislative mandates related to electronics recycling and product stewardship.
- **Travel in Rural Areas.** Increased industrial activity in rural areas of the state has affected daily travel requirements to conduct investigations and respond to complaints.
- **Communication with Elected Officials.** Agency staff strives to effectively communicate technical and complex environmental-quality and natural-resource issues of the agency to the state's leadership, elected officials, and stakeholders. Developing effective working relationships with new members of the state legislature during a time of significant turnover in office-holders is vital to the TCEQ and its executive management, as is providing timely and accurate analysis of legislation affecting the agency.

## Information Technology

To maintain and enhance the agency's level of service, respond to increasing customer demands and expectations, and implement legislative changes, the TCEQ

must prepare for a number of issues in the area of information technology (IT). They include:

- **Accessibility Requirements.** Agency roles and responsibilities under Section 508 are increasing and will require more time and expertise when creating documents, webpages, and learning content.
- **New regulatory programs routinely require IT components to be developed and supported;** the agency is providing more data and expanding the use of technology for reporting information and receiving authorizations. In order to implement the flow of electronic information between the regulated community and the public, business processes must be analyzed and documented. The program areas will need to develop proficiency in analysis and design in order to facilitate implementation. The challenge will be to ensure that staff is capable of building and using these tools effectively and efficiently.
- **Modifying, maintaining, expanding, and/or automating existing database, reporting, and storage capabilities,** as well as new initiatives to allow greater public access to agency records, will require large commitments in funding and manpower resources.
- **Keeping the skill levels of employees up to speed with constantly changing Web and related technology,** including advocating for increased skill-sets around the agency, remains a challenge.
- **In response to an increased demand for real-time data,** additional staff will require training on applicable technology in the areas of environmental and compliance monitoring.
- **Maintaining and improving online access and navigation (both internal and external)** allows for quick dissemination of information to large groups, both in "real time" and customized, through increasing and varied access points, such as mobile devices, collaboration tools, and social media. This includes restructuring to adequately support content management.

- TCEQ's Authorization and Remediation Tracking System (ARTS) database, CCEDs, Central Registry, and PARIS are being tapped to flow data electronically to the EPA National Environmental Information Enterprise Network (NEIEN). The EPA is seeking changes to rules implementing the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and Clean Water Act (CWA), as well as revising guidelines for the implementation of those programs.
- Skills are needed to implement the four primary IT goals in the Information Strategic Plan:
  - Improve internal and external access to information.
  - Promote effective and efficient service delivery.
  - Enable strategic management of information.
  - Support a high-performing, next-generation workforce.

Equipment, technology, and training resources are not sufficient to maintain competencies and improve efficiencies. The agency will continue to monitor funding and examine program efficiencies, monitor and manage staff workloads, and evaluate the need for projects as funding reductions affect the agency.

## Current Workforce Profile (Supply Analysis)

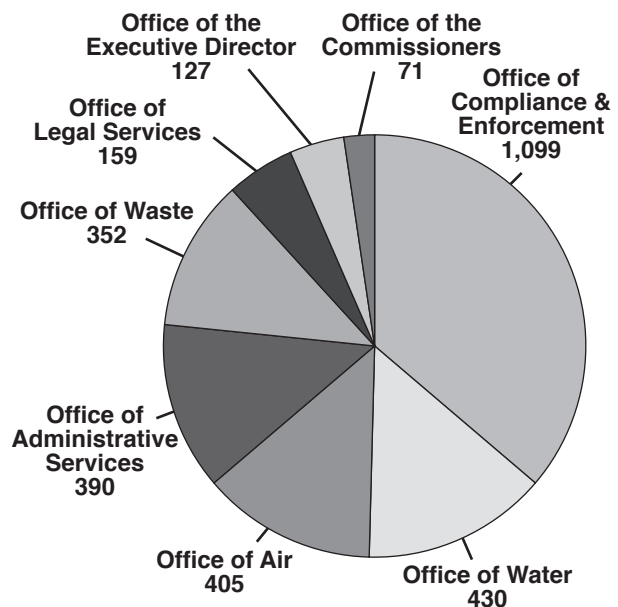
In fiscal 2015, the TCEQ employed a cumulative total of 2,698 employees, which includes 360 separated employees. The following chart (Figure F.1) summarizes the agency workforce by office. The totals indicate an actual head count of employees, not full-time equivalents (FTEs), and do not include contractors or temporary personnel.

### Location of Employees

As of Aug. 31, 2015, 685 employees—or 25.4 percent of the total workforce—were located throughout the 16 regional offices (see Figure F.2). In an effort to facilitate delivery of the agency's services at the point of contact and to increase efficiencies, 134 employees (5%)

were matrix-managed staff who worked in regional offices, but were supervised from the Central Office.

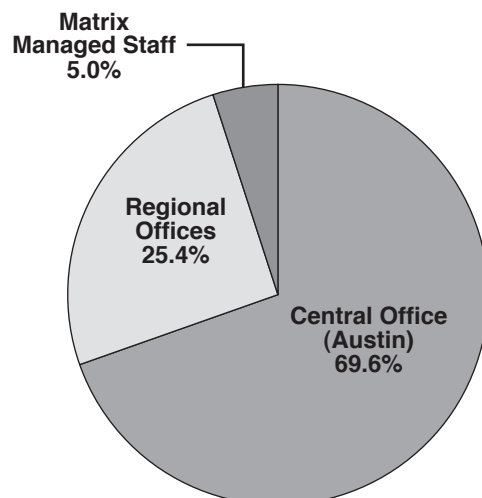
**Figure F.1.**  
**TCEQ Employees by Office, FY 2015**



*Note:* Data includes separations.

*Data Source:* Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

**Figure F.2.**  
**TCEQ Employees by Location, FY 2015**



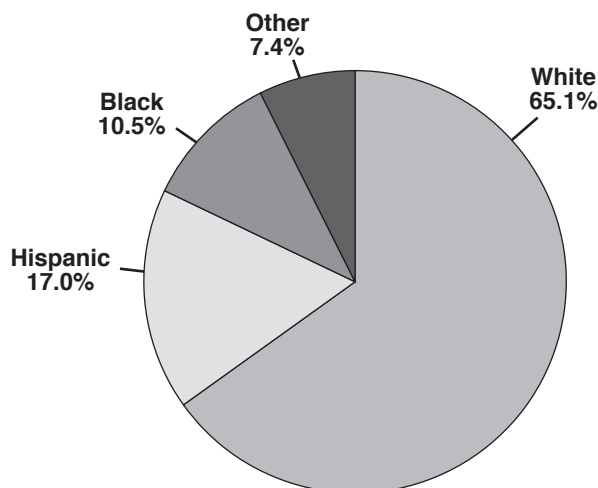
*Data Source:* Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

## Workforce Demographics

Figures F.3 and F.4 illustrate the agency's workforce during fiscal 2015. Blacks and Hispanics constituted 27.5 percent of the agency's workforce, with other ethnic groups representing over 7 percent. The available Texas labor force for Blacks is 11.2 percent; for Hispanics, it's 35.9 percent. This reveals an under-utilization of over 18 percent for Hispanics.

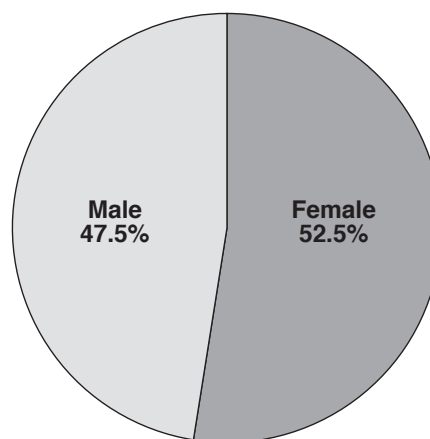
In fiscal 2015, the TCEQ workforce was 47.5 percent male and 52.5 percent female. These percentages indicate a small change from the last reporting period of fiscal 2013 (males, 47.3%; females, 52.7%). The available Texas labor force for males is 55 percent; for females, it's 45 percent. This is a 7.5 percent under- and over-utilization, respectively, in these categories.

**Figure F.3.**  
**TCEQ Employees by Ethnicity, FY 2015**



Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

**Figure F.4.**  
**TCEQ Employees by Gender, FY 2015**



Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

## The TCEQ Workforce Compared to the Available Texas Civilian Labor Force

The TCEQ workforce comprises four employee job categories, as established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). These categories are: Official/Administrator, Professional, Technical, and Administrative Support.

Table F.2 and figures F.5, F.6, and F.7 compare the agency workforce as of Aug. 31, 2015, to the available statewide civilian labor force as reported in the *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Hiring Practices Report*, a publication of the Civil Rights Division of the Texas Workforce Commission (January 2015). This table reflects the percentages of Blacks, Hispanics, and females within the available statewide labor force (SLF)

**Table F.2. TCEQ Workforce Compared to Available Statewide Labor Force, 8/31/15**

EEOC Job Category	Black		Hispanic		Female	
	SLF	TCEQ	SLF	TCEQ	SLF	TCEQ
Official/Administrator	7.1%	6.4%	20.9%	12.8%	37.5%	42.1%
Professional	11%	8%	19%	15.8%	54.9%	46.5%
Technical	13.8%	9.7%	28.8%	15.3%	51.3%	29%
Administrative Support	13.6%	21.7%	33%	24.2%	72.8%	84.4%

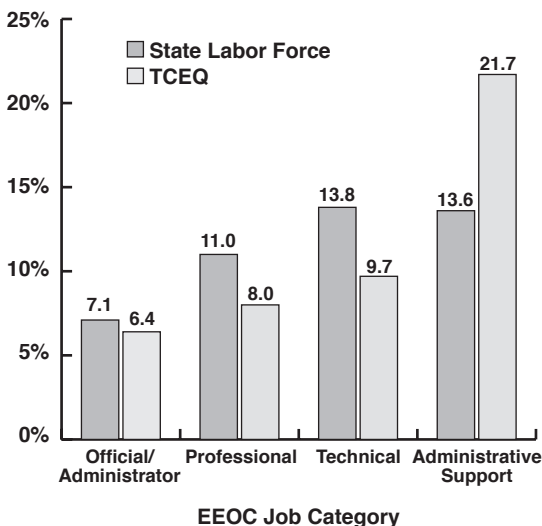
Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.



and the TCEQ workforce. Although minorities and females are generally well represented at the TCEQ, the agency's ability to mirror the available statewide labor force remains difficult.

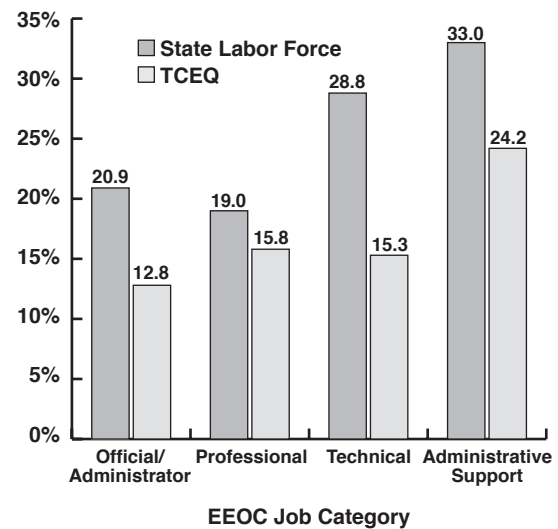
Compared to fiscal 2013, the SLF percentages decreased for Blacks in all job categories, except Administrative Support, which remained the same. The Black workforce at the TCEQ remained relatively unchanged, with slight decreases in the Official/Administrator and Professional job categories. The Black workforce is well represented in the Administrative Support job category. While the Hispanic SLF percentages increased, the TCEQ remains under-represented in all job categories for Hispanics. The female SLF percentages increased significantly in the Technical job category; however, the agency remains under-represented by 22 percent. Females within the agency are under-represented in the Professional job category, and are well represented in the Administrative Support and Official/Administrator job categories. The agency continues to strive to employ a labor force representative of the available Texas workforce.

**Figure F.5.**  
**TCEQ Black Workforce Compared to Available Statewide Black Labor Force, FY 2015**



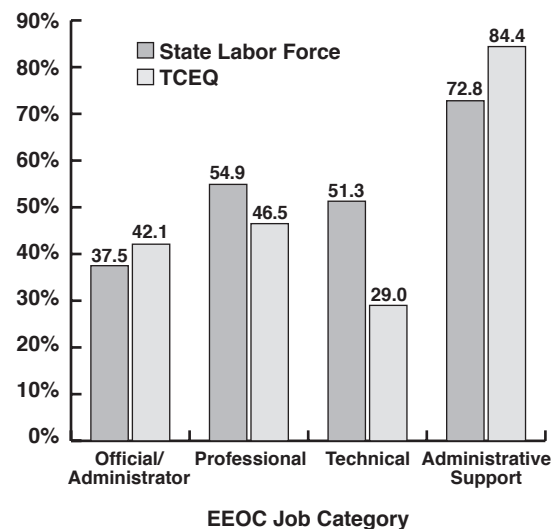
Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

**Figure F.6.**  
**TCEQ Hispanic Workforce Compared to Available Statewide Hispanic Labor Force, FY 2015**



Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

**Figure F.7.**  
**TCEQ Female Workforce Compared to Available Statewide Female Labor Force, FY 2015**



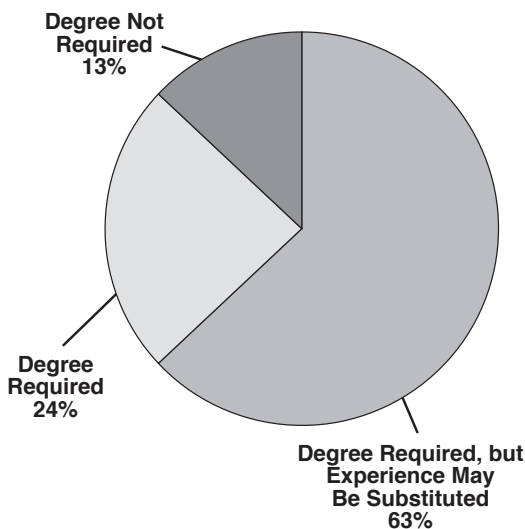
Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

## Workforce Qualifications

The TCEQ employs a highly qualified workforce in a variety of program areas, performing complex and diverse duties. Strong employee competencies are critical to meet program objectives and goals.

Over 24 percent of the TCEQ's job classifications require a bachelor's degree (see Figure F.8). Another 63 percent require a degree; however, related experience may substitute for this requirement. The remaining positions not requiring a degree constitute 13 percent of the agency's workforce.

**Figure F.8.  
Education Requirements of  
TCEQ Employees, FY 2015**

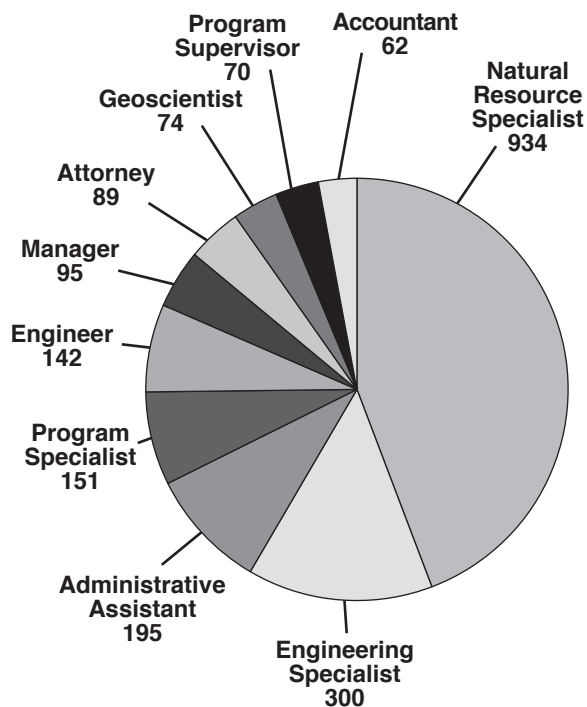


*Data Source:* Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

## Workforce Profile by Job Classification

Although over 75 percent of the agency's employees are categorized as Officials/Administrators and Professionals, the work fulfilled by TCEQ employees is diverse, requiring the use of over 300 job classifications and sub-specifications. Figure F.9 represents the ten most frequently used job classification series in fiscal 2015.

**Figure F.9.  
TCEQ Employees by Job Classification Series,  
FY 2015**



*Data Source:* Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

In fiscal 2015, the TCEQ supplemented its workforce with 43 contracted staff to provide vital program support, manage workloads, and perform various information technology functions as a means of meeting agency goals and objectives.

## Employee Turnover

Turnover has increased to its highest level since 2013. Although the agency's turnover has increased (see Figure F.10), it consistently remains below statewide turnover. For example, in fiscal 2015, the statewide turnover rate was 17.5 percent, in comparison to the TCEQ's turnover rate of 13 percent. While this rate is higher than the fiscal 2014 turnover rate of 11.9 percent,

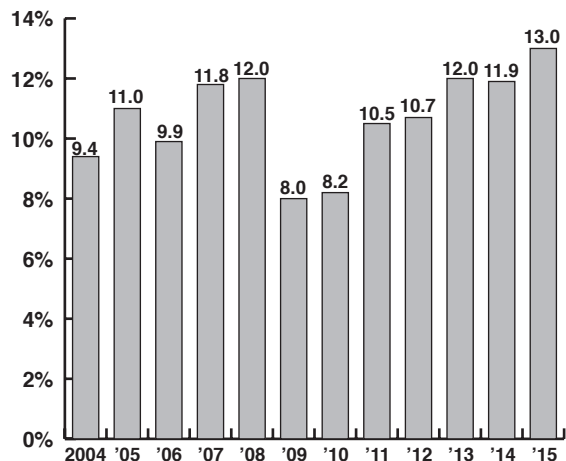


the agency continues to enjoy a lower turnover than the reported statewide turnover. This can be attributed to the agency's retention efforts, as well as to the current economic climate. It is incumbent that the agency use strategies to attract and retain highly skilled staff.

Another key concern is ensuring that agency salaries keep pace with the cost of living and that increases and salaries are competitive. Recruitment and retention of qualified staff is critical to the ability of the agency to effectively carry out its objectives. It is imperative that quality replacements be found, trained, and retained. Certified and licensed staff are highly marketable outside of the agency, which results in turnover and lower experience levels in the remaining staff. Ensuring that agency salaries are competitive with other organizations using similar skill sets continues to be a challenge.

While the TCEQ has been very fortunate to retain a highly qualified workforce, changes to the state's retirement and benefits plan, as well as a recovering economy, may affect future retirement decisions, as well as our ability to recruit.

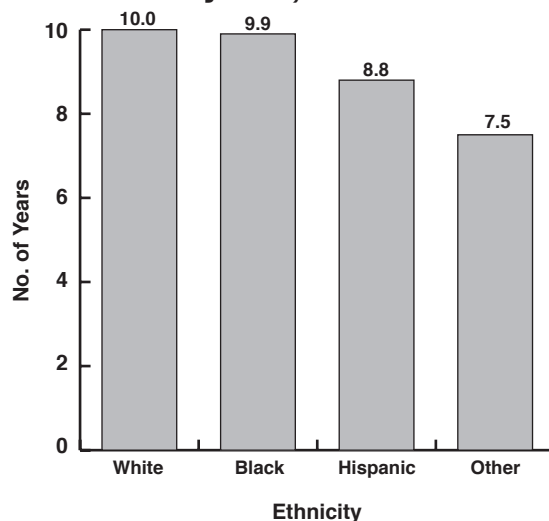
**Figure F.10.**  
**TCEQ Employee Turnover Rate, FYs 2004–2015**



Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

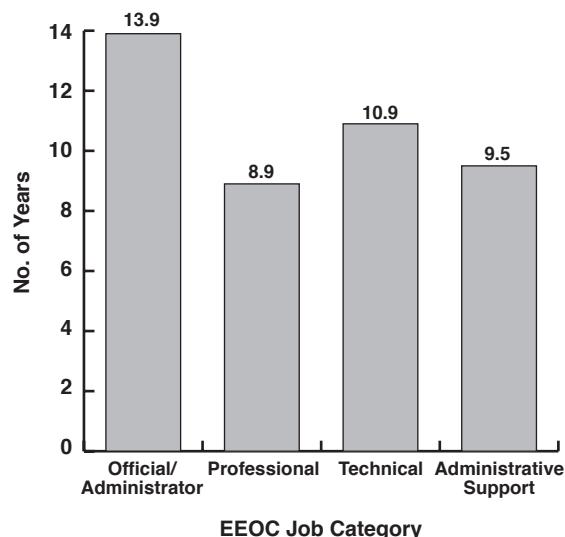
See Figures F.11 and F.12 for additional information about the average tenure of the TCEQ workforce.

**Figure F.11.**  
**TCEQ Employee Average Tenure by Race, FY 2015**



Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

**Figure F.12.**  
**TCEQ Employee Average Tenure by EEOC Job Category, FY 2015**



Data Source: Texas Uniform Statewide Accounting System, as of 8/31/15.

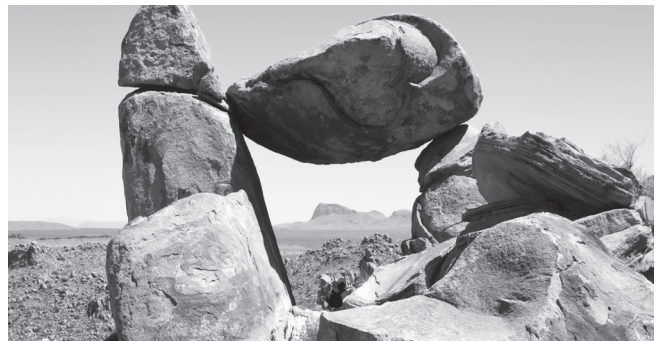
## Future Workforce Profile (Demand Analysis)

The TCEQ carries out its mission through broad and diverse activities. These activities require that

employees demonstrate a high level of proficiency in a variety of critical skills, also referred to as competencies. Table F.3 is a listing of sets of critical “competencies” that have been identified as the skill sets necessary to accomplish the agency’s mission.

**Table F.3. Critical Workforce Competencies within the TCEQ Offices**

<b>Administrative Support</b>	<b>Problem Solving</b>
Computer skills Mail processing Record keeping	Analysis Critical thinking Decision making Innovation
<b>Communication</b>	<b>Project Management</b>
Customer service Cultural awareness Marketing and public relations Teamwork Translating technical information into layperson’s terms Oral – public speaking and presentation Written – composition and editing	Coordination Managing multiple priorities Organizing Planning Quality analysis and process improvement
<b>Financial Management</b>	<b>Technical Knowledge</b> <i>(may be unique to a certain program area)</i>
Contract management Financial administration Grant management	Agency policies, procedures, and programs Auditing skills Litigation skills Local, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations Inventory management Policy analysis and development Regulation analysis and development Research Specialized technical knowledge Statistical analysis Technical analysis
<b>Information Development &amp; Management</b>	
Accessibility Computer-assisted tools Database development, management, and integration Electronic reporting Graphic design Software proficiency Web development and maintenance	
<b>Management/Leadership</b>	
Building effective teams Delegation Facilitation Interpersonal skills Managerial courage Mentoring Performance management Strategic planning	



The agency continues to emphasize and support workforce and succession planning. This process involves building a viable talent pool that contributes to the current and future success of the agency, including the need for experienced employees to mentor and impart knowledge to their potential successors. Such initiatives will enable the agency to identify the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to maintain our organizational excellence and to strengthen the skills of up-and-coming staff.

The agency strives to compete in the marketplace for certain disciplines, such as science and engineering. The predominant occupations used at the TCEQ—such as, for example, environmental engineer, scientist, and geoscientist—require STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) degrees. The Texas Workforce Investment Council reported that there is a growing divide between the number of qualified, technically skilled, and available job applicants and the number needed by Texas employers. The number of applicants is getting smaller relative to the number of positions that need to be filled.

The Texas Economy (a website of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts) states that STEM jobs will be 5 percent of all jobs in Texas in 2018, representing a 22 percent increase. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, these occupations are projected to grow nationally by 13 percent by 2022, compared to 11 percent for non-STEM occupations. STEM occupations command higher wages, earning nearly double the average wage of their non-STEM counterparts. This makes it difficult to recruit and retain staff in the STEM job fields. The occupations with the fastest growth in upcoming years—such as operations research analysts, statisticians, and biomedical engineers—all call for degrees in STEM fields.

The ability to recruit people with information-technology skills will also be essential. The Bureau of Labor Statistics states that seven out of the 10 largest STEM occupations are related to computers. Information-security analysts are projected to have faster than average job growth, at 37 percent, with computer-systems analysts, software developers, and web developers maintaining a high profile as fast-growing occupations in Texas and elsewhere.



## Gap Analysis

Each office within the TCEQ analyzed the anticipated need for each competency and the possible risk associated with the skill being unavailable over the next five

years. Competencies that are “at risk” are indicated in Table F.4, prioritized by “low,” “medium,” or “high,” reserving the “high” designation for those gaps that will require action to address them.

**Table F.4. Competency Checklist and Gap Analysis**

LEGEND									
CO – Office of the Commissioners ED – Office of the Executive Director OAS – Office of Administrative Services OCE – Office of Compliance & Enforcement					OLS – Office of Legal Services OA – Office of Air OOW – Office of Waste OW – Office of Water				
Skill Category	Skill	CO	ED	OAS	OCE	OLS	OA	OOW	OW
<b>Administrative Support</b>	Computer skills			High					
	Mail processing								
	Record keeping								
	Other: Document reproduction services (OAS)			High					
<b>Communication</b>	Customer service								
	Cultural awareness				Med				
	Marketing and public relations						Med		
	Teamwork								
	Translating technical information into layperson’s terms			Med			Med		Med
	Oral: Public speaking and presentation			Med					Med
	Written: Composition and editing			High					
	Other: Public participation, publications (OA)						Med		
<b>Financial Management</b>	Contract management			High			Med	High	High
	Financial administration				High		Med	High	High
	Grant management						Med		High
<b>Information Development &amp; Management</b>	Accessibility	Med		High					Med
	Computer-assisted tools			Med			Med		High
	Database development, management, and integration	High		High	High		High		High
	Electronic reporting	Med		Med	High		Med	High	Med
	Graphic design								
	Software proficiency	Med		Med			Med		High
	Web development and maintenance	Med		Med					Med

*continued on next page*

**Table F.4. Competency Checklist and Gap Analysis** (continued)

Skill Category	Skill	CO	ED	OAS	OCE	OLS	OA	OOW	OW
<b>Management/Leadership</b>	Building effective teams			High					
	Delegation								
	Facilitation			Low					
	Interpersonal skills			High					
	Managerial courage	High		Low				High	
	Mentoring	Med		High	High		Med		Med
	Performance management						Med		
	Strategic planning			High			Med		
	Other: Employee recognition (OAS)			Med					
<b>Problem Solving</b>	Analysis			High			Med		
	Critical thinking						High		
	Decision making						Med		High
	Innovation	Low		Low			High		High
<b>Project Management</b>	Coordination			Med					
	Managing multiple priorities						Med		
	Organizing								
	Planning								
	Quality analysis and process improvement	Low			High		High		
<b>Technical Knowledge</b> (may be unique to a certain program area)	Agency policies, procedures, and programs	Med					Med		
	Auditing skills	High							
	Litigation skills								
	Local, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations	Med			High		Med		
	Inventory management	Low		Med					
	Policy analysis and development			Low	High		Med		
	Regulation analysis and development			Med			Med		
	Research								
	Specialized technical knowledge	Med		High	High		High	High	High
	Technical analysis								High
	Other: Strategic-plan development, fiscal-note process, performance-measure analysis and development (OAS)			High					

## Strategy Development

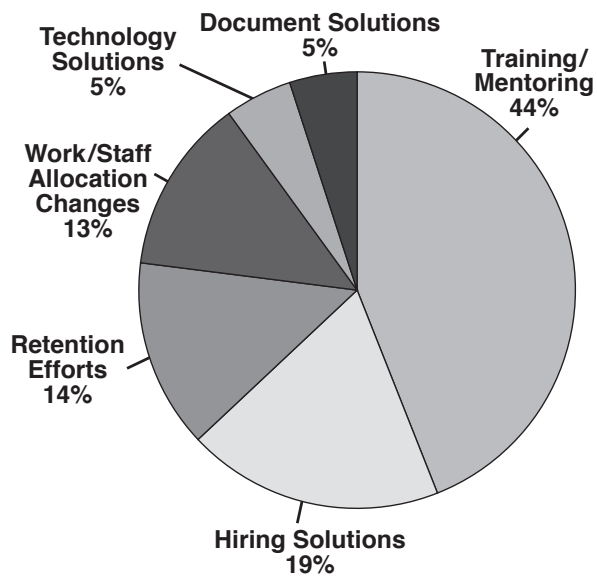
The TCEQ anticipates implementing key strategies, which are discussed in the following sections, to address expected skill gaps. Figure F.13 displays the strategies that were identified by agency offices.

As in past assessments, Training and Mentoring will be the primary focus, followed by Hiring Solutions, to ensure that the TCEQ aligns appropriate personnel with the necessary skill sets to fulfill the agency's core functions. The use of strategies as indicated below



reflects the fact that there is a critical need to continue developing current staff skills, while also developing future workforce skills.

**Figure F.13.**  
**TCEQ Strategies to Address Skill Gaps**



*Data Source:* Office Workforce Plan, TCEQ, March 2016.

Some of the specific strategies mentioned by agency offices are:

- Increase recruiting efforts to attract qualified engineers and water chemists and scientists.
- Ensure that agency salary keeps up with cost-of-living increases, and is competitive with other government agencies that have similar positions (i.e., city, county, state, and federal agencies).
- Obtain the equipment, technology, and training necessary to maintain a competent workforce within budgetary constraints.
- Participate in recruiting and training efforts as turnover of staff due to retirement and economic issues creates loss of knowledge and skills in critical program areas.
- Provide opportunities for management and technical experts to mentor, train, or facilitate on a regular basis.

- Recruit and retain staff with critical skill sets to ensure quality control in managing data functions and modifying processes to meet demands.
- Develop viable options to recruit, obtain access to, contract with, or train staff in critical-needs areas.
- Seek transition positions to allow new junior, interim, or training positions until full technical positions become available through attrition or retirement.
- Continue to document processes and procedures for core functions and produce guidance documents to record the protocol used for specialized decision-making.
- Develop tools (checklists, flow diagrams, guidance documents, desktop tools) to assist staff and the regulated community.
- Assign staff to special projects to increase their knowledge base.
- Assign backups to positions where medium and high gaps are identified and include these responsibilities on the backup's performance plan.
- Hold peer-review meetings to discuss common areas of concern and to ensure consistency in the processing of approvals, applications, permits, and authorizations.

## Training and Mentoring

It is evident that mentoring, job shadowing, on-the-job training, and cross-training will continue to be critical to maintaining institutional knowledge and technical expertise as well as to developing and enhancing critical workforce competencies. This will allow less-tenured staff to work with senior subject-matter experts, with the goal of developing and sharpening specific skills. It is also vital that the TCEQ provide quality training and professional-development opportunities that focus on agency and division critical skills, competencies, and technical requirements for all employees. Staff should be afforded the opportunity and encouraged to attend training that promotes professional development.

Travel funds could affect efforts to ensure that staff remains knowledgeable of scientific and technological



changes, by limiting the ability to attend specialized technical training or to participate in national technical organizations and initiatives. As agency resources are limited, the Human Resources and Staff Services (HRSS) Division is asked to enhance technical and leadership training, while maximizing training dollars. As a means to accommodate budget constraints, the agency utilizes internally developed classes and online training, as well as subject-matter-expert (SME) offerings that are free to the agency, whenever possible. In addition, the agency has increased the use of video conferencing (VTC) when appropriate, to save travel funds.

## **Hiring Solutions**

While the agency has limitations on FTE levels, offices may address these restrictions by realignment, the elimination of unnecessary programs, and documenting and streamlining business processes to maintain a consistent level of regulatory oversight and customer service. Offices will pursue hiring above the entry level for jobs that are hard to fill due to the competitive market base. In addition, the continuation of internship programs has proven to be a successful avenue for hiring employees that have an interest and experience in environmental work.

The TCEQ has a commitment to employing a qualified and diverse workforce. The recruitment program maintains a strong diversity focus and is committed to building a quality workforce. Recruitment events are regularly planned to target qualified ethnic minority and female candidates. The increased recruitment efforts necessitate a continued presence at events, while operating within limited agency resources.

The TCEQ will continue to analyze hiring practices and determine opportunities for enhanced workforce diversity through usage of the Express Hire Program at diversity-focused events and predominantly minority colleges and universities. This program allows hiring supervisors to identify and hire qualified applicants for job vacancies on the spot at recruiting events. A final review of the applicant's qualifications, along with other hiring requirements, is conducted later.

Hiring supervisors also have the benefit of utilizing the agency's Transitions Hiring Program, which provides a diverse applicant pool to expedite hiring for entry-level positions requiring a degree. Recruiters actively recruit at colleges and universities and at professional events throughout the state. Hiring supervisors have access to a pool of graduating or recently graduated college students from diverse backgrounds for professional entry-level positions.

## **Retention Efforts**

Retention of qualified staff remains a continuing challenge in a competitive market. Offices plan to retain individuals who possess essential competencies by providing opportunities for increased responsibility (promotions) and salary enhancements to recognize and reward exceptional performance. The TCEQ will also continue to provide developmental opportunities for employees to focus on critical skills, competencies, and technical requirements needed by the agency. It is vital to develop employees to offset potential losses in staff with technical expertise, institutional knowledge, and management experience.

Other retention strategies will include the continued use of recognition, administrative-leave awards, and flextime or other alternative work-hour schedules to support a more flexible and mobile workforce. In addition, HRSS administers employee programs to promote the health, well-being, and education of employees, and to promote a sense of community throughout the TCEQ.

## **Work and Staff Allocation Changes**

Managers continue to review workforce needs and available skill sets to ensure that adequate staff are assigned to meet the business needs of the agency. Offices indicate that the strategies most utilized in this area will be to assign backups to every position, include these backup responsibilities in their performance plans, restructure jobs, revise functional job descriptions, and, in some instances, involve entry- and journey-level positions in senior decision making. Managers may also pursue process redesign

as a means to improve efficiencies and reduce the risk associated with a potential loss of specialized skill sets.

## **Documentation and Technology Solutions**

Managers understand the need for documenting processes and procedures to ensure that tools are available for training purposes and continuity of operations. Documenting processes and procedures also provides a basis for streamlining core functions and

can be used for specialized decision-making. Development of tools (checklists, flow diagrams, guidance documents, desktop tools) that can be used by both staff and the regulated community will also streamline and communicate processes and answer frequently asked questions. Technological solutions will continue to allow the agency to reallocate its human resources. Offices are encouraged to research and seek approval to purchase appropriate technology as well as utilize existing technology.