



Australian Government
Department of Human Services

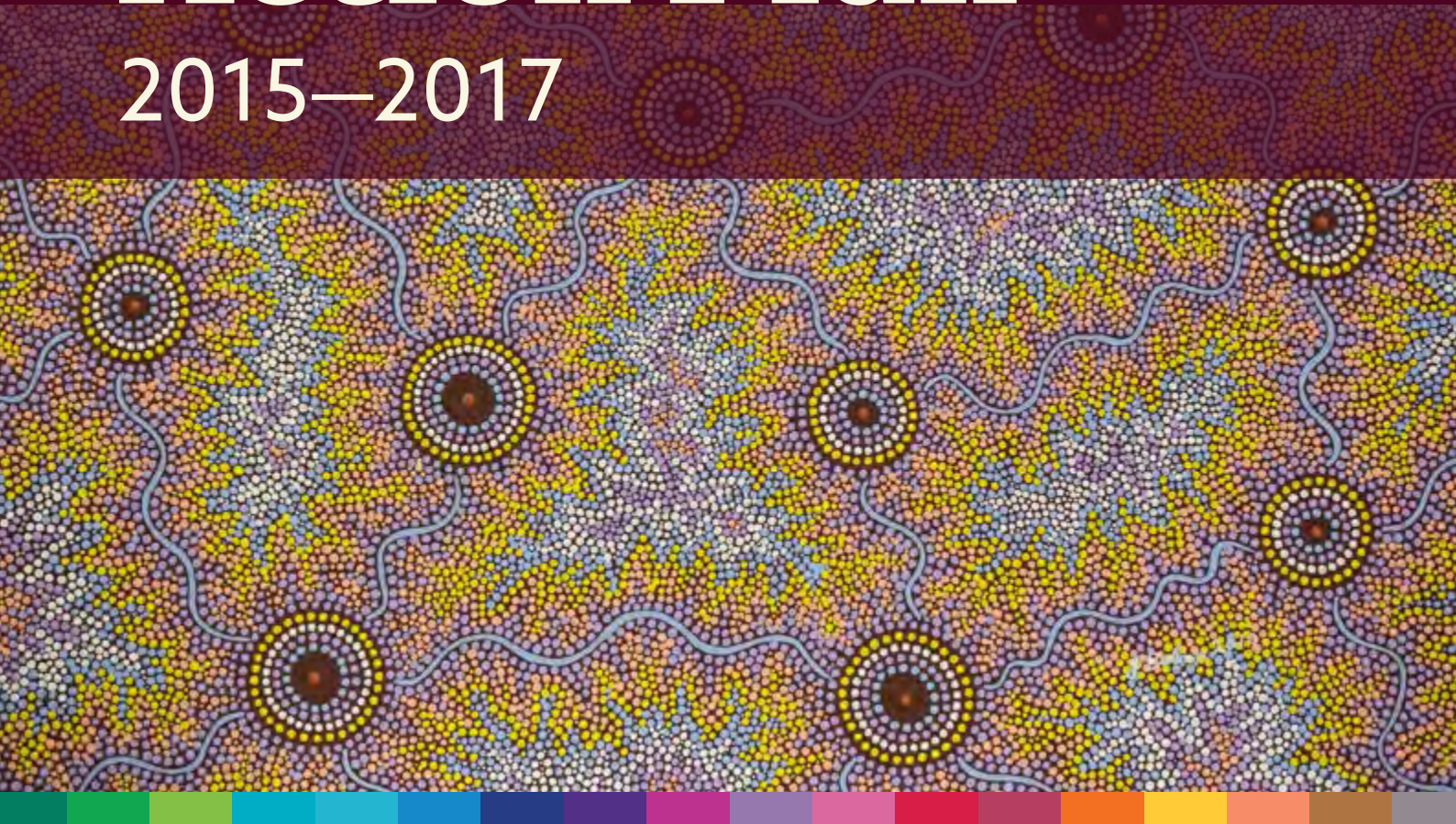


Reconciliation
ACTION PLAN
ELEVATE RAP



Reconciliation Action Plan

2015—2017



Working together

The Australian Government Department of Human Services is working towards reconciliation in Australia. We believe that by working with our customers, staff, businesses and other Australian Government agencies, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians, we can make a real difference in people's lives.

We want to build stronger relationships and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. And we want to improve the health and economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan covers what we are doing now and what we are planning to do to achieve these important goals.

Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners

The Department of Human Services shows our respect and acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land. We pay our respects to their Elders both past and present.

Acknowledgements

This document has been written by the Australian Government Department of Human Services.

Artwork by James Baban.

Editing and design by the Information Access Group.

WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are warned that this product may contain images of deceased people.

What's in this document?

Getting to know us	4
Message from our Secretary	5
Message from Reconciliation Australia	6
What we want to achieve	7
Sharing our knowledge	
Key Initiatives	
Key programmes	
Our achievements so far	10
What we've learned	12
Relationships	14
National Reconciliation Week	
Case study: <i>Medicare Liaison Officers—educating health services</i>	
Case study: <i>Indigenous retention</i>	
Our targets 2015–17	
Respect	21
Case study: <i>Groote Eylandt Remote Service Centre</i>	
Our targets 2015–17	
Opportunities	29
Case study: <i>Indigenous Mentoring Program</i>	
Case study: <i>Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses</i>	
Case study: <i>Providing financial education</i>	
Our targets 2015–17	
Tracking our progress	37
Internal reporting	
Working with Reconciliation Australia	
Would you like to learn more?	38
About the artist—James Baban	39

Getting to know us

Nearly every Australian comes into contact with the Department of Human Services at some point in their lives. We deliver health and welfare payments and services to around 99 per cent of Australians. In 2013–14 we made payments totalling \$159.2 billion to customers and health care providers.

We provide our services in many different ways including online, over the phone and through a network of over 400 service centres. We have around 34 000 dedicated staff working across Australia, including in rural and remote areas.

We are always looking for new and better ways to help our customers to get what they need. At the moment we are focussing on improving and modernising how we deliver our payments and services, and reducing red tape.



Message from our Secretary



Reconciliation matters.

We've achieved a lot in the past three years.

At the Department of Human Services we are proud to be building greater opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to increasing staff understanding of and respect for the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Reconciliation is an important part of the culture and goals of the department.

Our overarching goal is for our staff, businesses and customers to work together to improve the economic, health and social opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. We are working with our staff to create a culturally respectful workforce.

This Reconciliation Action Plan sets out the next steps in our journey to build opportunities for, and stronger relationships with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The plan also celebrates what we've achieved so far and looks at how we can share what we've learned with the rest of government. We are thrilled that Reconciliation Australia has awarded our plan the Elevate status, their highest level.

I am proud to share my own commitment to the department's reconciliation goals and to have taken on the role of Chair for the public service wide Indigenous Champions Network. This network, established by the Diversity Council, focuses on employment strategies and giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff a forum to raise issues.

I encourage all our staff to get involved in the Reconciliation Action Plan. I encourage staff to support and take part in these important programmes and to promote respect and appreciation of the rich culture of Australia's First Nations peoples.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathryn Campbell CSC

Secretary

Department of Human Services

Canberra

May 2015

Message from Reconciliation Australia



Reconciliation Australia congratulates the Australian Government Department of Human Services for the release of its second Reconciliation Action Plan as an integrated organisation and their first Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan. It is promising to see that the department remains firm in its unwavering commitment to sustainable employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

By delivering social and health-related payments and services across urban, regional and remote locations, the department plays an important role, and has the capacity to make a real difference to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. Both the three-tier Cultural Capability Framework and the Indigenous Mentoring Program are meaningful additions to the work the department does. The implementation of these frameworks has created a more supportive workplace. Staff have a better understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and the ability to address those cultural needs, as well as providing support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in career development and performance within the department.

It is wonderful to see the department continuing to play a leadership role across the public sector. It continues to strive to become an employer of choice, with a high percentage of staff from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, and continues to break ground in procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.

Reconciliation Australia is proud to continue its work with the department as it joins an elite group of organisations contributing to reconciliation at a national level in driving a reconciled, just and equitable Australia.

Justin Mohamed
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

What we want to achieve

Our aim is to improve economic, health and social opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities around Australia.

Over the next three years, we want to:



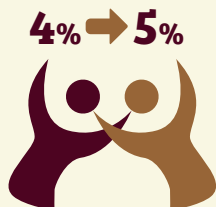
Improve the support and opportunities we give our staff and customers to make a real difference in their lives.



Share and promote our ideals of respect and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture.



Help other Australian Government departments to reach the same goals.



Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff we employ from 4 per cent to 5 per cent.

2015 → 2018
\$11.5 million

Increase the amount we spend with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, to a total of \$11.5 million between July 2015 and June 2018.

Sharing our knowledge

We want to share what we've learned with other government departments and support and encourage them to set in place their own Reconciliation Action Plans. To do this we will:

- make our Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training available to other departments
- offer recruitment advice and information sessions on ways to recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- share our guide on engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- trial delivering our Indigenous Mentoring Program in other departments
- advise and provide support to other government departments on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses
- invite staff from other government departments who are not based in major centres to join our local Indigenous Employee Networks.

KEY PROGRAMMES

Indigenous Champions

The department has two Indigenous Champions in executive roles. The Champions focus on recruitment programmes and support of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. The Champions are working towards making the department an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Indigenous Mentoring Program

We have 145 qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentors working across Australia in remote, urban and rural locations. Mentors share their professional and personal skills and support other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through change, as well as helping to reduce feelings of isolation. More mentors will begin training in 2015.



Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses

We are working with businesses, other government departments and Supply Nation to help establish strong and mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. Our aim is to increase our spending with these organisations to \$11.5 million between 2015 and 2018.



Key initiatives

Our Secretary chairs the Indigenous Champions Network, which involves senior representatives who are committed to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes across the Australian Public Service.

Members of the Network took part in the Australian Public Service Commission Indigenous Employees' Forums, held across Australia between March and May in 2015, in order to listen to the thoughts and suggestions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. The information collected at the forums will support new strategies.

The Network is committed to two key projects: the first looks at ways more Aboriginal and Torres Strait employees can be supported to become senior executives; the second focuses on recruitment, retention and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in regional areas.

Cultural awareness opportunities

All of our staff must take part in at least the first level of our comprehensive cultural awareness training. Staff also have the opportunity to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities around Australia.

These first-hand experiences, which can go for up to twelve months, give staff the chance to share their knowledge and to get a greater understanding of the rich culture and challenges found in each community. Our aim is for 50 staff to take up these opportunities each year.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment

We are leading the way in both the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff we employ and how we recruit. We have been advertising vacancies under the Special Measures (Indigenous) provisions of the Public Service Commissioner's Directions to recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff since July 2011. We also aim to fill a certain percentage of all vacancies with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants. These measures will help us to reach our target of 5 per cent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by the end of 2017.



Our achievements so far...

At 30 November 2014 the number of our staff identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was 1375 (4 per cent). This is an increase from 3.3 per cent before 2012, and well above the current Australian Public Service target of 2.7 per cent, which will increase to 3 per cent on 1 July 2015.

Achievements at 30 June 2014:

145

trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentors since July 2011

Our Departmental Secretary chairs the Indigenous Champions Network of the Australian Public Service

10 000

staff completed online Indigenous Cross Cultural Awareness training during 2013-2014

100

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants took part in the apprenticeship programme in 2014



2600

staff and senior executives took part in the face-to-face Indigenous Cross Cultural Awareness training during 2013-2014

900

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff registered for the National Indigenous Employees Network

2

Indigenous Champions in executive roles

22

staff took part in placements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities around Australia in 2014

5

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are currently participating in the department's Indigenous Scholarship Programme

What we've learned

Our first Reconciliation Action Plan spanned the three years between 2012 and 2014. Meeting the actions and targets set out in the 2012–2014 plan has taught us many valuable lessons that we can now apply over the next three years.

The importance of consultation

We realised how important talking to and connecting with people across the department was in developing our first plan and putting it into action.

The Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group was set up to provide the department with input and to focus attention on the plan. The group oversees the progress and reporting on the plan's actions and meets at least four times a year. The members of the group include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. The General Manager of the Whole of Government Coordination Division chairs the group and coordinates reports twice a year to the department's Executive Committee.

We consulted widely, including focus groups in all states, to develop the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees Plan 2011–15. The success of this consultation can be seen in the level of recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff we have achieved.

The National Indigenous Coalition is the department's peak strategic advisory forum, providing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice on effective delivery of payments, services and products for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The coalition is consulted widely by the department to ensure effective development of strategies that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.



We have a lot to offer

Working with other departments showed us that we have a lot to offer due to our work and achievements around reconciliation and supporting our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and customers.

We have shared our knowledge with other government departments and agencies in a number of ways including:

- hosting a 'meet the supplier' event at the request of Supply Nation to introduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to other government agencies
- providing recruitment advice to departments wanting to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff they employ
- offering our cultural awareness training to other departments
- networking with other agencies that are developing their own Reconciliation Action Plans.

Respectful relationships are essential

Respect has been critical to the success we have had in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and organisations such as Supply Nation.

Role models are important

We recognised that for our Reconciliation Action Plan to be successful we needed senior staff role models.

We have made it compulsory for all our senior executive staff to take part in our cultural awareness training, Exploring Culture for Senior Executives. The roles of our Indigenous Champions also show our commitment to reconciliation at the highest levels.



Relationships

We understand how important respectful relationships are when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Strong relationships are central to our goals to:

- **engage better with individuals and communities**
- **improve how we deliver our services.**

National Reconciliation Week

Every year, National Reconciliation Week gets bigger and better. It's a great time to highlight the progress made in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and celebrate our achievements.

In 2014 many offices combined Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week to hold a joint celebration. Woodridge Service Centre led the way with a Sorry Wall where all staff were given a Sorry Day hand cut-out to place on the wall and were asked to reflect on the significance of the day and write their thoughts on the hands.





“My goal is to improve the life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.”

CASE STUDY

Medicare Liaison Officers— educating health services

Medicare Liaison Officers help health professionals better support their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. The health professionals and services they assist include general practices and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical centres, along with state health officers and specialists.

Medicare Liaison Officers often travel long distances to share resources and information about our payments and services. This information gives health professionals a better understanding of the Medicare Benefits Schedule and Closing the Gap initiatives. Health professionals can then help their patients to take advantage of these services and improve their health options.

Getting to know Medicare Liaison Officer Lexie McPhee

Based in Cairns, Lexie McPhee covers an area that reaches from Cardwell to the Torres Strait Islands in the north, across to the Gulf of Carpentaria and west to Mount Isa.

“My goal is to improve the life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I get great satisfaction from working with staff in mainstream practices and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and medical services.”

The department presents awards in NAIDOC week and in 2014 I received a ‘Highly Commended’ award for individual achievement in Indigenous Servicing. It was an unexpected pleasure to be recognised for my work in this way. I feel very blessed to be given an opportunity to enjoy the work I do every week as a Liaison Officer and to see the difference I make.”



CASE STUDY

Indigenous retention

A key reason for the department's success with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment is the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees have with our retention officer. The aim of the role is to bridge the employment gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

Getting to know the retention officer

The retention officer ensures that the ideas and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are at the forefront of the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment policy and direction. Who better to identify employment barriers and develop practical, inclusive and innovative solutions than Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees?

Capturing information and feeding it into the relevant areas is another key to success. In an effective example of this, the retention officer consulted with over 500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to identify areas of focus aimed at improving the employment circumstances and future prospects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the department. The involvement of the employees not only created a sense of ownership over the plan but as a result increased commitment to helping the department by promoting job opportunities, participating on selection panels and supporting new employees in the workplace.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees often manage a range of complex issues. Many of these relate to continued disadvantage and need a range of strategies to meet each employee's need, for example the impact of ongoing grief and loss; poor health outcomes including mental health; education and housing. The retention officer works on prevention and early intervention by engaging the employee early, creating a conversation that is safe, non-judgmental and confidential and encouraging and supporting the employee to raise and discuss their needs with their team leader. The employee's health and wellbeing is always the primary concern.



Our targets 2015–2017

Improve how we deliver our services

What we want to do	Continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to improve how we deliver our services.
How we will do this	<p>Hold two National Indigenous Coalition Conferences and a minimum of nine teleconferences per year.</p> <p>Develop a guide to <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Principles</i> to support staff working with communities. We will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consult with other government agencies to develop the principles for the guide make the guide available to other government departments.
When we will do this	<p>The conferences will run in April and October each year while the teleconferences will be spaced out over the year.</p> <p>Our engagement guide will be available by December 2015.</p>
Who is responsible	General Manager Indigenous, Regional and Intensive Services

Develop educational resources for health services

What we want to do	<p>Develop and promote educational resources to support health providers and staff.</p> <p>These resources will target areas that need more work and will help improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>
How we will do this	<p>Increase the awareness of the Medicare Benefits Schedule items available for the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>Provide information to medical practices on the process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to voluntarily identify so they can be registered for Closing the Gap benefits.</p> <p>Promote resources that support the Medicare Liaison Officers in their visits to primary health care providers and staff.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will include information about the resources in a newsletter to practices in June each year.</p> <p>We will hold a teleconference with Medicare Liaison Officers in March each year.</p>
Who is responsible	General Manager Health Support and Business Services General Manager Health Programmes



Our targets 2015–2017

Build connections

What we want to do	Continue to work across the department and with other organisations to build connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
How we will do this	<p>We will establish networks through groups such as the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to build connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>We will work across the department and with other organisations to share information and support the process of reconciliation.</p> <p>Where appropriate, representatives will attend funerals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will report twice a year on how we are working together and with other organisations.</p> <p>Attendance at funerals will be as required.</p>
Who is responsible	General Manager Whole of Government Coordination

National Reconciliation Week

What we want to do	Promote National Reconciliation Week across the department.
How we will do this	<p>Hold a registered National Reconciliation Week event in Canberra each year.</p> <p>Provide information to all staff on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the significance of National Reconciliation Week • key events • ways they can get involved. <p>Encourage all our sites to hold a National Reconciliation Week event (5% 2015, 10% 2016, 15% 2017).</p> <p>Where possible, invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and other stakeholders to our National Reconciliation Week events.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will provide information about National Reconciliation Week by 27 April each year.</p> <p>We will report on the number of NRW events each year.</p>
Who is responsible	<p>General Manager Whole of Government Coordination</p> <p>General Manager Communication</p> <p>General Manager Service Information</p> <p>General Manager Face to Face Service Delivery</p> <p>General Manager Smart Centres</p> <p>General Manager Indigenous, Regional and Intensive Services</p>



Our targets 2015–2017

Promote and support reconciliation

What we want to do	Promote and support reconciliation in the wider community and across the Australian Government.
How we will do this	Partner with Reconciliation Australia to support its vision and objectives by providing at least one staff member to work with them for 12 months. Promote Reconciliation Action Plans across Australian Government departments and agencies.
When we will do this	We will identify a suitable staff member by April 2015.
Who is responsible	General Manager Whole of Government Coordination

Build local relationships

What we want to do	Assist all department sites to host at least one local relationship building activity or cultural celebration per year. Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations will be invited where appropriate.
How we will do this	We will review and distribute the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander National Events calendar. We will send a reminder and a link to our Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country Guidelines. Each branch and zone to include a description of their local relationship building events as part of their yearly reporting.
When we will do this	We will send the events calendar and the link to the acknowledgement guidelines twice a year. We will report twice a year on each branch's local events.
Who is responsible	General Manager Indigenous, Regional and Intensive Services General Manager Face to Face Service Delivery General Manager Communication General Manager Service Information General Manager People Capability



Our targets 2015–2017

Support the implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan

What we want to do Support and properly resource the development and implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

How we will do this Consult the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group in developing, launching and implementing the plan.

Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the Working Group.

The Working Group will meet at least four times a year to monitor and report on the action plan.

When we will do this We will report annually on the membership and meetings of the Working Group.

Who is responsible General Manager Whole of Government Coordination






Respect

Respect for the diversity of our staff and customers is one of our central values. We want our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to feel valued and supported and we want to share opportunities to learn more about the culture and values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





Being able to build the networks I have and provide a consistent message to a remote community makes this job so rewarding.

CASE STUDY

Groote Eylandt Remote Service Centre

The Groote Eylandt Remote Service Centre is located off the Northern Territory coast and services a number of communities on the island. It is a small community of approximately 1,500 residents, the majority of whom are Indigenous.

Getting to know Service Centre Manager Fred Masters

Fred Masters has been working as the manager of the Groote Eylandt Remote Service Centre since 2014. Fred considers his biggest achievement in the role has been recruiting and retaining local staff, and that the best thing about working with his team, who are a really close knit unit, is the local knowledge they have and the fantastic friendships they have formed.

"While we are a remote service centre and some might think it's pretty quiet, we are still a service centre, which means managing competing demands and priorities. The biggest difference between working in Angurugu and a bigger city would have to be the support; there is only so much support that can be given over the phone. That being said, the positives of working in a remote service centre definitely outweigh any negatives."

A typical day at the service centre focuses on providing quality service to their customers. As a manager, Fred ensures his staff have everything they need to do their job, as well as making time for engaging with the community.

"Being able to build the networks I have and provide a consistent message to a remote community makes this job so rewarding."



Our targets 2015–2017

Provide opportunities to improve awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture

What we want to do

Continue to give all our staff the opportunity to improve their understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and values.

How we will do this

Make our cultural awareness training available to staff at all levels by ensuring:

- we aim for 95 per cent of staff to have completed the eLearning Cross Cultural course
- we aim for one third of all staff to have completed the face-to-face Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training
- all our senior executives complete the Exploring Our Culture: Senior Executives programme
- all staff who take part in our Talent Development Program complete the Exploring Our Culture: Senior Executives programme.

Continue to lead government departments in developing and delivering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training courses and activities by:

- providing advice to other departments and agencies wishing to develop cultural awareness training
- sharing information about our programmes
- taking part in whole-of-government working groups
- offering our Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training on a fee-for-service basis with a target of at least 10 sessions each year.

Ensure the Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training remains in our priority learning report to reflect its importance.

Give staff first-hand experience working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities around Australia. Each year 50 staff will get the opportunity to work in communities through:

- short-term secondments
- long-term secondments
- executive visits
- three-month placements for staff in the National Graduate Program
- a pilot secondment programme with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
- a three-month secondment with Empowered Communities.

When we will do this

We will report on the statistics for these activities as at 30 June each year.

Who is responsible

General Manager People Capability



Christine D’Rozario’s time in a remote placement as a graduate continues to positively affect her work:

“

Living in Broome and remote communities in northern Western Australia provided me a fantastic opportunity to see how the department works to provide crucial face-to-face services to some of our most vulnerable customers. I brought these experiences back to Canberra where I worked in the Basics Card and Third Party Organisation management team, and the Indigenous Services Policy team.

My remote placement experience continues to inform my decision-making and the direction my work has taken, and no doubt will continue to do so throughout my career in the public service.

”



Our targets 2015–2017

Promote and support our Indigenous Champions

What we want to do Promote the role of the Indigenous Champions to staff and support the Champions to implement programmes that raise the profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across the department.

How we will do this Support our Indigenous Champions and promote their role through internal communications.

Increase the number of Champions from two to three.

The Champions will:

- host or attend a minimum of five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events per year
- work to resolve issues raised at the Indigenous Champions Network meetings.

The department will lead working groups to answer any issues raised at the Indigenous Champions Network meetings and develop better strategies to recruit, retain and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

The department will continue to provide the secretariat for the Indigenous Champions Network and support the Secretary as Chair of this network.

When we will do this We will report on the statistics for the promotion and completed duties of the Champions as at 30 June each year.

We will meet the timelines set by the Indigenous Champions Network to work through any issues raised at meetings.

Who is responsible General Manager People Capability



Our targets 2015–2017

Raise the profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

What we want to do	Raise the visibility and profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and issues, in our workplace and across other organisations.
How we will do this	<p>Promote the achievements of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through our internal and external publications, with a target of 5 per cent of all content published about our staff.</p> <p>Make sure each Indigenous Services Newsletter contains a minimum of four stories about the achievements of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p> <p>Supply department sites with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and Traditional Owner plaques to display front of house.</p> <p>Continue to actively participate in events across a number of government agencies.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will report on the statistics for the number of stories about our staff as at 30 June each year.</p> <p>Twice a year we will include information about our departmental sites and an audit of flags and plaques in our Service Centre Administrative Review reports.</p>
Who is responsible	<p>General Manager Indigenous, Regional and Intensive Services</p> <p>General Manager People Capability</p> <p>General Manager Corporate Operations</p>



Our targets 2015–2017

Support the cultural needs of staff

What we want to do	Continue to celebrate NAIDOC Week and provide opportunities for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with culture and community, to attend events and meet their cultural needs.
How we will do this	<p>Continue to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to attend at least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events each year.</p> <p>Encourage all sites to hold a NAIDOC Week event and report annually.</p> <p>Continue to annually promote and support our staff NAIDOC Week Awards.</p> <p>Where possible, invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and other stakeholders to NAIDOC Week events.</p> <p>Give all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff the opportunity to include their individual and cultural development needs in their learning plans.</p> <p>Send two targeted messages each year reminding managers of our commitment to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who wish to attend cultural events and to include cultural development in learning plans.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will send messages to all staff in April and October each year.</p> <p>We will include details about cultural needs in annual performance agreements in July/August.</p>
Who is responsible	<p>General Manager People Capability</p> <p>General Manager Indigenous, Regional and Intensive Services</p> <p>General Manager Face to Face Service Delivery</p> <p>General Manager Smart Centres</p> <p>General Manager Service Information</p>



Our targets 2015–2017

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols


What we want to do	Ensure Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols are used at appropriate events.
How we will do this	<p>Review our current Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols.</p> <p>Ensure protocols are available on the Intranet with examples of when they should be used and who to contact for advice.</p> <p>Provide every senior executive with a card that outlines these protocols.</p> <p>Include protocols in our Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training.</p> <p>All significant departmental events each year will include a Welcome to Country from a Traditional Elder and this opportunity will be published on the department's Intranet news site each year.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will complete our review of protocols by December 2015.</p> <p>Protocol cards will be available by June 2016.</p> <p>We will report on the use of protocols at major events as at 30 June each year.</p>
Who is responsible	<p>General Manager People Capability</p> <p>General Manager Indigenous, Regional and Intensive Services</p>



Opportunities

We want to create more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to work and learn with us. We are also creating more opportunities to work together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and new ways to support and promote our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.





I recommend the mentoring program to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee going through change.

CASE STUDY

Indigenous Mentoring Program

Our Indigenous Mentoring Program is a success thanks to the commitment of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentors. Our mentors share their professional and personal skills with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to help them manage their community and cultural roles at the same time as succeeding in their departmental role, dealing with change and reducing any feelings of isolation.

Mentors complete formal training in over the phone, group and face-to-face mentoring, in partnership with NSW TAFE.


We have 145 qualified mentors working across Australia and more mentors will begin training in 2015.

Distance is not an issue for Sue and Mike

Sue Allengame is working closely with mentor Mike Wragge as she manages the changes of a new role. Sue is in Victoria and Mike is in Queensland but distance has not been an issue.

Sue explains: "When I started acting in a new role, I wanted a mentor to assist me to adjust to the changes. When I put in a request for a mentor I didn't care if they were male or female, close by or the other side of the country, they just needed to have the right experience and temperament.

I couldn't be happier working with Mike. He has all the experience and qualities I wanted, and I can see the results already. We make sure we schedule time to catch up and discuss what is happening and how I am managing. I recommend the mentoring program to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee going through change."



Our people are relishing the challenge of rolling out a consistent service to all 52 department sites.

CASE STUDY

Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses

We want to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses we work with and increase our spending with them. This has enormous benefits for both the department and the businesses.

We have been working with Supply Nation, an organisation that certifies and helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to find business opportunities and work with government and corporate organisations. Supply Nation has helped to increase our understanding of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and we have helped Supply Nation understand the government procurement environment.

We are also looking into subcontracting opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that are not yet large enough to supply the department directly.

Our overall aim is to increase our spending with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to \$11.5 million between 2015 and 2018.

Getting to know Pacific Services Group Holdings

In December 2014, Pacific Services Group Holdings (PSGH) received a significant contract with the department to deliver cleaning services to 52 sites across Western Australia.

PSGH is a rapidly expanding organisation that focuses on property and facility management, asset management and project management services.

Through this contract with the department, PSGH has engaged with local Aboriginal communities to employ over 20 local staff, plus subcontractors, across Western Australia.

Mark Coleman, the CEO of PSGH says: *"We're so pleased to have this opportunity. The department's Supplier Diversity Strategy provides great outcomes for engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. The strategy is based on capacity and capability, together with excellent value for money for the government."*

Our people are relishing the challenge of rolling out a consistent service to all 52 department sites."

A decorative border at the top of the page features a repeating pattern of colorful dots in shades of yellow, green, and blue, arranged in circular and linear motifs. Below this border is a dark brown horizontal band containing a quote in white text. The quote is enclosed in large, stylized quotation marks on either side.

How can I assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in my current situation?

CASE STUDY

Providing financial education

Financial Information Services Officer Phil Usher is developing opportunities to educate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about financial matters.

Getting to know Financial Information Services Officer Phil Usher

In each of his roles Phil has always asked himself “How can I assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in my current situation?”

“With employment a major focus of the Closing the Gap initiative, I saw an opportunity where many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would be first generation career employees. This means they’ll be earning an income that isn’t just making ends meet but gives them the opportunity to build sustainability for future generations.

Managing money and building a stable financial future is something that is learnt and passed down from generation to generation. Personally, I grew up seeing my family and friends living payday to payday. The opportunity to invest has not been available and is not commonly discussed among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. So there is an opportunity for Financial Information Services (FIS) to provide education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees who are earning a good wage, have superannuation and are looking to be the first home owners in their family.

Working with the Sydney Indigenous Services team, we have launched the IndigiFIS project aimed at providing financial education to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The idea is to establish a model for the rest of Australia where the Financial Information Services Officer and the Indigenous Service Officer can deliver financial seminars to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.”



Our targets 2015–2017

Increase spending with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses

What we want to do	Increase our spending with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, directly and through subcontracting arrangements.
How we will do this	<p>We aim to spend \$11.5 million or more between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2018 with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015–16 financial year \$3.5 million • 2016–17 financial year \$3.7 million • 2017–18 financial year \$4.3 million. <p>Target business opportunities that have a good match with the capabilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</p> <p>Promote the benefits of using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses across the department.</p> <p>Identify business opportunities to encourage our suppliers to consider sub-contracting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</p>
When we will do this	We will report annually on our spending to our Executive Committee by 1 August each year.
Who is responsible	General Manager Corporate Operations

Share our knowledge of business relationships

What we want to do	Share what we have learned from working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses with other government agencies.
How we will do this	<p>Present at, or host, at least one forum attended by procurement staff from other government agencies.</p> <p>Offer one-on-one mentoring to other government agencies to help them engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</p>
When we will do this	We will take opportunities to share our knowledge as they come up.
Who is responsible	General Manager Corporate Operations



Our targets 2015–2017

Increase our number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

What we want to do	Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to 5 per cent by the end of 2017.
How we will do this	<p>Develop and promote processes that support our recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• continuing to use Special Measures (Indigenous) provisions when recruiting staff. Only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can apply for roles advertised using Special Measures (Indigenous) provisions. Our target for all large recruitments is to offer at least 5 per cent of positions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants• training all staff in workforce planning and recruitment roles in using Special Measures (Indigenous) provisions for recruitment• ensuring staff on recruitment selection panels have completed our Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training• developing a document looking at what we have learned about using Special Measures (Indigenous) provisions when recruiting• continuing to develop strategies and processes to reduce barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples applying for work with the department• supporting our target to recruit a minimum of 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entry-level employees per year, including apprentices (subject to agreement with the Australian Public Service Commission)• developing a document on what a 'culturally safe workplace' looks like.
When we will do this	<p>We will report on the statistics for staff numbers and recruitment processes as at 30 June each year in the department's Annual Report.</p> <p>We will make our document on the use of Special Measures provisions available by December 2015.</p> <p>We will make our document on culturally safe workplaces available by December 2016.</p>
Who is responsible	General Manager People Capability



Our targets 2015–2017

Share our knowledge about recruiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

What we want to do	Share our knowledge about recruiting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff with other government departments and agencies.
How we will do this	<p>Host an information session every year for other government agencies to help them in recruiting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p> <p>Share our document looking at what we have learned about using Special Measures (Indigenous) provisions when recruiting with other government departments.</p> <p>Invite staff from smaller government agencies to take part in our training sessions on using Special Measures (Indigenous) provisions when recruiting.</p> <p>Continue to share our documents on reducing barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples applying for work with the government with other government departments.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will make our document on the use of Special Measures provisions available by December 2015.</p> <p>We will hold our information session and training sessions on recruitment by December 2016, and report on outcomes.</p>
Who is responsible	General Manager People Capability

Support the promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff into senior roles

What we want to do	Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to move into senior roles.
How we will do this	<p>Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to take part in the Public Sector Management Programme.</p> <p>Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior executives to take part in leadership and talent development opportunities.</p> <p>Ensure 5 per cent of all participants in our Future Leaders Today Programme are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p> <p>Support at least 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to attend an external leadership programme annually such as Social Leadership Australia, Indigenous Youth Parliament and Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre.</p>
When we will do this	We will report on the statistics for opportunities and leadership support as at 30 June each year.
Who is responsible	General Manager People Capability



Our targets 2015–2017

**Support staff
to achieve
their career
potential**

What we want to do	Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to achieve their full career potential.
How we will do this	<p>Ensure at least 10 per cent of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are active mentors.</p> <p>Start a pilot programme to deliver our Indigenous Mentoring Program to other government departments.</p> <p>Ensure at least 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members take part in internal development programs such as the Talent Development Programme, Indigenous Scholarship Program and on key internal committees and working groups per year.</p> <p>Develop an annual internal report about the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at each level.</p> <p>Continue to support our National Indigenous Employees Network, including local networks in regional areas. Invite staff from other government departments to join these local networks.</p> <p>Provide leadership opportunities for over 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through roles as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• mentors• Indigenous Cultural Awareness Facilitators• recruitment panel members within and external to the department.
When we will do this	<p>We will report on the statistics for staff mentoring, promotion and leadership opportunities as at 30 June each year.</p> <p>Our mentoring program pilot with other government departments will start by December 2015.</p> <p>We will provide information and statistics on our staff networks as at 30 June each year.</p>
Who is responsible	<p>General Manager People Capability</p> <p>Service Zone Leaders for Indigenous Employee Networks in their Zones</p>

Tracking our progress

Internal reporting

What we want to do	Monitor the progress of our Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-17 and report our results.
How we will do this	<p>Provide progress reports to our Executive Committee twice a year.</p> <p>Include progress in the department's Annual Report.</p> <p>Participate in Reconciliation Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan Barometer on a biennial basis.</p> <p>Organise an external review of the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will provide progress reports to our Executive Committee twice a year.</p> <p>Our Annual Report is made available on our website each year.</p> <p>External review of our implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan to be completed by 2017.</p>
Who is responsible	<p>General Manager Whole of Government Coordination</p> <p>Supported by all responsible business areas and the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.</p>

Working with Reconciliation Australia

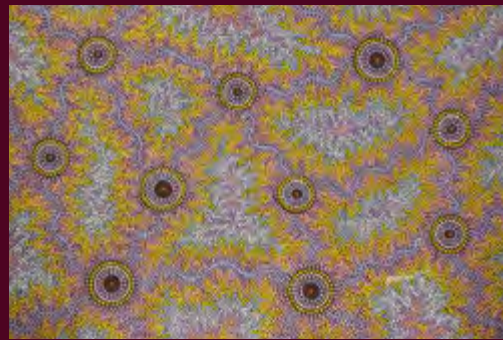
What we want to do	Work with Reconciliation Australia to report on and refresh our Reconciliation Action Plan.
How we will do this	<p>Refresh and update the Reconciliation Action Plan as needed and publish it on the Reconciliation Australia website.</p> <p>Meet Reconciliation Australia's annual reporting requirements by completing the impact measurement questionnaire.</p>
When we will do this	<p>We will update our Reconciliation Action Plan as required.</p> <p>We will complete our reporting with Reconciliation Australia when requested.</p>
Who is responsible	General Manager Whole of Government Coordination

Would you like to learn more?

This Reconciliation Action Plan 2015–17 and our Reconciliation Action Plan 2012–14 are available on our website: humanservices.gov.au

Our Reconciliation Action Plan, as well as information about creating your own Reconciliation Action Plan, is also available on Reconciliation Australia's website: reconciliation.org.au

If you would like more information about our plan and the programmes we are making available to other Australian Government agencies please email us at: recon.action.plan@humanservices.gov.au



About the artist – James Baban

James Baban's artwork featured in this document is titled *Unity and Oneness*.

James explains:

"The circles represent people, plants, animals and all of creation.

The circles are all interconnected, nothing is separate, and we are all interlinked and part of all that is.

Everything is sacred, nothing is above or below another, and everything is equal.

This is the story of unity and oneness; we are our brother's keeper.

This is the story of walking together in love, peace and harmony, respecting all of creation and moving forward as one."

James was born in Darwin. His mother's country is Mutburra/Tjingili and his father's country is Limingan.

James has been walking his spiritual and artistic path since 1986 and predominantly paints using the dot style of painting, which he inherited from his mother's country. His artwork often displays a one-dimensional painting with three-dimensional animals.

He gets his inspiration for his art from insights and experiences from his personal spiritual journey, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and the many wonderful plants and animals in nature.

All of his art emanates healing energies as each painting has been blessed by his totem animals, spirit helpers and the Creator.

