



Australian Government

Attorney-General's Department

Reconciliation Action Plan

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT



Introduction

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department is committed to reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people for the benefit of all Australians.

This document outlines the Department's Reconciliation Action Plan and identifies the steps the Department will take to achieve improved economic and social outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

Our vision for reconciliation

The vision of the Attorney-General's Department is *Achieving a just and secure society*. To realise this aim, the Department has implemented an extensive social justice agenda, founded on the principles of access and equity and the right of all citizens to live in a just and secure society.

The Department acknowledges that more needs to be done to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy the same advantages and opportunities as all other Australians.

Reconciliation is a long-term goal that involves recognition of the first Australians and the provision of practical and effective measures to address the economic and social disadvantage experienced by many of them.



Our business

The Department administers a range of programs, initiatives and activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders including:

- Legal Aid for Indigenous Australians Program
- Prevention, Diversion, Rehabilitation and Restorative Justice Program
- Law and Justice Advocacy Program
- Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program
- Northern Territory Indigenous Interpreter Service
- Indigenous Women's Outreach Program, and
- Petrol Sniffing Strategy.

The Department also administers mainstream programs that assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. These programs include:

- Legal Aid Program
- Community Legal Services Program
- National Community Crime Prevention Programme.
- Family Relationships Services Program, including Family Relationship Centres and Family Relationship Advice Line
- Emergency Management Australia's Local Grants Scheme, and
- National Emergency Volunteer Support Fund.

Our approach to reconciliation

The Department is working towards improving economic and social outcomes for Indigenous people, both within the Department and throughout the Australian community.

The Department places high importance on its internal processes to employ and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. The Department recognises the importance of cultural activities in communities and all employees are encouraged to participate and achieve a greater understanding of Indigenous cultural diversity.

The Department is committed to attaining the following objectives:

- To deliver high quality and culturally inclusive services
- To provide opportunities for employment and foster a culturally inclusive workplace, and
- To promote an understanding of Indigenous culture.

Coordinating our approach

As part of our commitment to reconciliation, the Department has established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation Committee.

The Committee promotes the Reconciliation Action Plan across the Department. Committee members are representatives from key areas of the Department who are responsible for implementation of the Plan.

The Plan, including updates as required, will be available on the Reconciliation Australia web site at www.reconciliation.org.au/i-cms.jsp

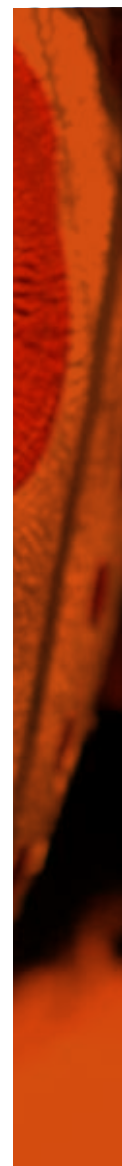


Attorney-General's Department Reconciliation Action Plan

Tasks	Key Responsibility*	Timeline	Performance Indicator
1. Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation Committee to advise on the development, implementation and periodic revision of the Reconciliation Action Plan	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	27 May 2007	Committee established; initial review December 2007. Report quarterly to the Executive Committee and oversee contribution to Annual Report
<p>Australian Government's law and justice programs for Indigenous people Objective: To deliver high quality and culturally inclusive services</p>			
2. Deliver agreed programs for Indigenous legal assistance through appointed agencies across Australia	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Ongoing Review June 2008	Successful delivery of culturally inclusive legal services as identified by external review, internal audits and stakeholder consultation
3. Deliver agreed programs for Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Legal Services across Australia	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Ongoing Review before 2010	Improved access to services through engagement with Indigenous communities as identified through internal review and regular stakeholder consultation
4. Deliver agreed projects for Prevention, Diversion, Rehabilitation and Restorative Justice across Australia	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Ongoing Review August 2007	Successful delivery of activities to reduce Indigenous peoples' adverse contact with the justice system as identified through internal review and regular stakeholder consultation
5. Maximise number of restorative justice initiatives operating across Australia	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Annual report to Secretary	Increase by 10% the number of activities focused on Indigenous restorative justice measures
6. Participation in Shared Responsibility Agreements and Regional Partnership Agreements as appropriate	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Annually	Appropriate delivery of programs where community needs have been identified through a process of mutual responsibility as determined by internal review and regular stakeholder consultation
7. Implement a program of law and justice activities agreed with the National Indigenous Council	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Commence May 2007	Biannual consultations with National Indigenous Council reported to Secretary
8. Participation by the Department in activities designed to improve law and justice outcomes for Indigenous people as opportunities arise	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Annually	Number of activities conducted and feedback of participants

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Tasks	Key Responsibility*	Timeline	Performance Indicator
Recruitment and career development strategy Objective: To provide opportunities for employment and foster a culturally inclusive workplace			
9. Facilitate secondments and transfers for existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff into the wider Departmental workplace to gain more mainstream experience and skills	Corporate Services Group	Ongoing – initial evaluation after 12 months	10% of requests/applications for secondment or transfer facilitated within the first 12 months
10. Facilitate employment for up to three or six months on specific projects for representatives from organisations funded through Departmental programs to work at the Department	Corporate Services Group	Ongoing – initial evaluation after 18 months	Following initial evaluation and assessment of feasibility, consider the setting of performance indicators
11. Seek increased involvement in the Australian Public Service Commission's APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees	Corporate Services Group	Ongoing – initial evaluation after 12 months	APSC training opportunities undertaken in line with the strategy and campaign. Feedback from participants
12. Further promote employment through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traineeships and graduate programs	Corporate Services Group	Ongoing – as soon as practicable following each campaign	<p>Traineeships: At least three placement opportunities identified for each program and offers made to fill placements</p> <p>Graduates: At least two offers of employment made to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates for each intake</p>
13. Provide funding for Departmental Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and representatives from organisations funded through Departmental programs to undertake training, for example the Certificate II in Indigenous Leadership training through the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Ongoing	<p>Number of staff and program representatives involved</p> <p>Number of staff and program representatives successfully completing training courses</p>
14. Better target recruitment with employment opportunities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media such as the <i>Koori Mail</i> and the <i>National Indigenous Times</i>	Corporate Services Group	Ongoing – initial evaluation after 12 months	Changes made to Departmental advertising policy - 5% increase in attracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants
15. Adapt the induction program to include particular provision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander new starters	Corporate Services Group	By end of 2007	New starter feedback



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Tasks	Key Responsibility*	Timeline	Performance Indicator
16. Develop a mentoring program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff	Corporate Services Group	Ongoing – initial evaluation after 12 months	Number of mentor relationships created – 10% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff participating in mentoring program Participant feedback
17. Establish a Departmental policy on Indigenous representation on interview panels to promote diversity of membership on such panels (where appropriate) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific selection criteria for identified positions	Corporate Services Group	July 2007	Publication of the revised policy on Intranet
18. Develop further opportunities for employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Monitor attraction and retention, identify any issues that arise and develop strategies to address issues	Corporate Services Group	Ongoing – initial evaluation after 12 months	5% increase in attracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants Monitor turnover rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees with view to setting performance indicators Strategies developed and implemented where necessary

Cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity

Objective: To promote an understanding of Indigenous culture

19. Establish welcome-to-country protocol to be used at public events	Corporate Services Group	2007	New protocol established
20. Recognise the significant contribution made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and promote an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the new Department building. Activities may include holding a smoking ceremony at the opening, obtaining specific artwork and naming of meeting rooms	Corporate Services Group	May 2009	Number of proposals implemented
21. Cultural awareness training is available to all staff and required for staff working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	Corporate Services Group **	By end of 2007 – initial evaluation 12 months after implementation	Number of staff attending training and staff feedback on training
22. Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in the workplace giving program	Corporate Services Group	As part of review of workplace giving program – mid 2008	Workplace giving program options updated Level of staff donations

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Tasks	Key Responsibility*	Timeline	Performance Indicator
23. Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Section in the Department's library	Information and Knowledge Services Group	2007	Section established in library
24. Establish an agreement between the Department's library and the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to enable shared resources	Information and Knowledge Services Group	2007	Inter-library loan agreement established
25. Improve awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues in the Department through intranet site and e-mail communications	Information and Knowledge Services Group	2007	New communications mechanisms established
26. Conduct an information session regarding the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the 1967 referendum	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	2007	Information session held, staff attendance and feedback
27. Increase the profile of the Department in the community, including events to celebrate NAIDOC Week	Indigenous Justice and Legal Assistance Division	Ongoing	Increase staff participation and attendance at NAIDOC and other community events Review Certified Agreement leave provisions

* While the Reconciliation Action Plan is a Department-wide responsibility, the table identifies key responsibilities for implementation at Divisional level.

** Relevant Managers are responsible for ensuring staff attend training.



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