DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2015‑18

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# Acknowledgement

The Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which we work and live as Australia’s first peoples, including their deep and spiritual connection to the land.

The fabric of Australia is strengthened and enriched with Aboriginal people’s varied customs and cultures.

DTF‘s vision is for a prosperous future for all Victorians. To fulfil this vision, we provide economic and financial policy advice to the Government with the aim of increasing the living standards of all Victorians.

1 Throughout this document, the term Aboriginal refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous is retained when it is part of the title of a report or program.

# Message from the Secretary

On behalf of the Department of Treasury and Finance, I’m pleased to introduce the *Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan 2015‑2018*. The plan reflects DTF’s commitment to supporting Aboriginal participation and will promote a greater understanding and awareness of Aboriginal culture as well as create a more inclusive and accessible workplace.

The plan focuses on three key goals: increasing employment opportunities, raising awareness and DTF’s role in the community. We’ve created flagship initiatives for each of these goals, where DTF as a central agency can have the greatest impact: building pathways between education and DTF employment, increasing awareness of Aboriginal culture within DTF and reviewing whole of Victorian Government (WoVG) procurement practices to raise Aboriginal participation.

Achievement of these goals will require all staff to be involved in its implementation and I encourage everyone to contribute. I look forward to working together to achieve our vision.

**David Martine** Secretary, DTF

# Executive summary

While this plan runs for three years, DTF has highlighted three flagship items for action as a priority. These will have an immediate and substantial impact.

### Pathways between education and DTF employment

* Request Aboriginal candidates are on shortlists for Youth Employment Scheme (YES) trainees from graduate training providers.
* Build relationships with higher education providers to promote DTF graduate opportunities for Aboriginal students, utilising the Aboriginal Pathway to the Graduate Program.
* Build relationships with higher education providers to promote DTF internship opportunities to Aboriginal students.
* Begin feasibility assessment of an Aboriginal scholarship/internship. Establish if doing this in conjunction with other departments would be more viable/attractive.
* Engage with the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation and other relevant bodies to promote work experience opportunities.

### Increased awareness of Aboriginal culture and eﬀective internal relationships

* Include Acknowledgement of Country at all formal DTF events (such as staﬀ forums, executive forums, budget addresses).
* The Senior Executive Group, Directors, and People, Culture and Innovation (PCI) teams to undertake cultural safety training.
* Any DTF staﬀ working on and assessing Expenditure Review Sub‑Committee bids related to Aboriginal policy issues to undergo cultural safety training.
* Opportunities to attend cultural safety training promoted to all DTF employees.

### Aboriginal jobs and business growth in Victoria are facilitated utilising procurement. Reduced barriers in accessing goods, services and facilities

* Start working with other departments to deﬁne what it is to be an Aboriginal Business for procurement purposes for WoVG.
* Explore options for DTF to create a state purchasing contract (SPC) to become a member of Supply Nation, or other organisations, on behalf of all departments. This information will then be provided on the procurement website, publishing links to the current Supply Nation providers and providing quarterly notifications via eNews.
* Provide DTF with information on Aboriginal suppliers and services to use when coordinating local events or requirements (e.g. catering, stationery etc.).

# Introduction

## Departmental Aboriginal inclusion action plans

Improvements in delivery and access to services are critical to government efforts to close the gap between Aboriginal and non‑Aboriginal Australians.

While eﬀ orts have been made to close the gap, overall Aboriginal people are still considered one of the most disadvantaged demographic groups in Australia. In general, Aboriginal people still experience lower income and associated economic disadvantages as well as higher unemployment rates.

Recognising this broader context and strengthening the Department’s commitment for change, the plan is strategic for DTF in building an inclusive workforce for the future.

## DTF’s commitment

DTF’s Aboriginal Inclusion and Employment Action Plan has been developed based on the ﬁve key focus areas that are identified in the Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework. In consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, the chosen areas of focus are based on those most applicable to the Department. Underpinning all the actions, is a solid communication platform which assists in raising awareness and promoting positive changes across the Department.

This action plan forms part of a wider Victorian State Government initiative, Karreeta Yirramboi, which aims to increase Aboriginal participation in the Victorian Public Service workforce.

The action plan also expresses DTF’s commitment to the recruitment, capability development and career advancement of Aboriginal Australians and reinforces DTF’s commitment to diversity in the workplace. Further, DTF recognises the positive eﬀect that its Aboriginal Employment Strategy can have on inﬂuencing the Department’s every day practices.

## Consultation

To ensure our strategy is relevant and responsive, DTF has consulted a wide range of people in the development of the *Aboriginal Inclusion and Employment Action Plan 2015–2018*. The people and groups involved include: Aboriginal staﬀ within DTF and from other departments, the Oﬃce of Aboriginal Aﬀairs (OAAV), the staﬀ at the Aboriginal Economic Development Unit and the Aboriginal Partnership Group.

## Implementation and delivery

DTF is committed to implementing the actions identiﬁed. While People, Culture and Innovation will manage action items and assume overall responsibility for implementation, all groups will take an active role in implementing the actions. In this way, DTF intends to develop a culture which recognises that a public sector that reﬂects the diverse community it serves will provide better and more responsive services.

The actions which are highlighted in the Executive Summary are considered to have the greatest impact and would result in a signiﬁcant and immediate diﬀerence.

The goals presented in this action plan are intended to evolve and be ﬂuid, dependent on advice and information gathered through consultations with various stakeholders during the course of its implementation. Priorities may also shift in the broader community or as the action items are being worked through. Regular monitoring of progress and a ﬂexible approach will be critical for the Department to be successful in its aims.

## Monitoring and evaluation

To ensure that the Department is eﬀectively managing the actions in this plan a working group will be established. This group will review and report on progress regularly to the People and Culture Committee which will feed through to the Board. This group will liaise with key stakeholders, both across the department and externally as appropriate and required.

# Areas of focus and key references

## Inclusion Plan

To ensure consistency across all departments, the Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework proposed that all Action Plans cover the following ﬁve areas of focus:

1. leadership and governance;
2. policy development;
3. programs and services;
4. workplace diversity; and
5. communication.

This last point of communication is critical for the success and as such will underpin every item in this plan.

These focus areas have been addressed in our goals (as detailed in DTF’s Action Plan matrix on page 10). DTF has also taken into account the Close the Gap action areas and Kareeta Yirramboi’s objectives as part of the plan to ensure these are addressed.

## Close the Gap

In an important speech, marking National Close the Gap Day on 24 March 2011, the whole of Victorian Government’s approach to closing the gap between Aboriginal and non‑Aboriginal Victorians was outlined. Our action plan will seek to close the gap in the following key areas:

1. Aboriginal public sector employment;
2. Aboriginal procurement;
3. Aboriginal representation on government boards and committees; and
4. mainstream services.

## Karreeta Yirramboi

Karreeta Yirramboi is the Victorian Aboriginal Public Sector Employment and Career Development Action Plan 2010‑2015, which aims to increase Aboriginal participation in the Victorian Public Service workforce. Our action plan aligns with Kareeta Yirramboi in the following key areas:

1. building pathways between education and employment;
2. making DTF an employer of choice for Aboriginal people;
3. creating an inclusive workplace;
4. supporting DTF to recruit, develop and retain Aboriginal employees; and
5. providing leadership and accountability.

## Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy

The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy, 2013–2020 states that ‘Economic prosperity is central to Victoria’s Aboriginal aﬀairs agenda. The vision is building opportunity for all Aboriginal Victorians’. The Economic Strategy has three goals:

1. build foundations and aspirations for jobs and business throughout life;
2. more job opportunities across the economy; and
3. grow Aboriginal enterprise and investment.

## Victorian Aboriginal Aﬀairs Framework

The Victorian Aboriginal Aﬀairs Framework, 2013‑2018 measures progress on a number of strategic action areas to close the gap between Aboriginal and non‑Aboriginal Victorians including:

1. maternal health and early childhood health and development;
2. education and training;
3. economic participation;
4. health, housing and wellbeing;
5. safe families and communities and equitable justice outcomes; and
6. strong culture, engaged people and conﬁdent communities.

# Our actions

## Employment and retention

Aim: Pathways built with education providers and tools created to develop and retain Aboriginal staﬀ.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Action** | **Who** | **Timeframe** |
| Pathways between education and DTF employment | Request Aboriginal candidates are on shortlists for YES trainees from graduate training providers. | PCI | Feb 2015 then ongoing |
| Build relationships with higher education providers to promote DTF graduate opportunities to Aboriginal students utilising the Aboriginal Pathway to the Graduate Program. | PCI | Mar 2015 then January |
| Build relationships with higher education providers to promote DTF internship opportunities to Aboriginal students. | PCI | Aug 2015 then annually |
| Begin feasibility assessment of an Aboriginal scholarship/internship. Establish if doing this in conjunction with other departments would be more viable/attractive. | PCI | Sep 2015 |
| Engage with the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation and other relevant bodies to promote work experience opportunities. | PCI | Sep 2015 |
| Reduced barriers for Aboriginal people to obtain employment | Promote DTF as the department of choice for Aboriginal secondments from other departments. | PCI | May 2015 |
| Review recruitment processes with Aboriginal staﬀ members to ensure they are inclusive. | PCI | May 2015 |
| Investigate the use of Aboriginal media (e.g. the Koori Mail, jobsgatheringplace.com.au, indigenousjobsaustralia.com.au, National Indigenous Times and the Torres News) to be used as standard rather than optional. | PCI | Sep 2015 |
| DTF managers and Aboriginal staﬀ are provided tools for development and retention | Develop a career support package for all Aboriginal employees in collaboration with other departments. | PCI | Jul 2016 |
| 100 per cent studies assistance will be made available to self‑identiﬁed Aboriginal employees. | PCI | As required |

## Inclusion and awareness

Aim: DTF is an inclusive environment that is considerate and respectful of Aboriginal culture and people.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome | Action | Who | Timeframe |
| Increased awareness of Aboriginal culture and effective internal relationships | Include Acknowledgement of Country at all formal DTF events (e.g. all staﬀ forums, executive forums, budget addresses). | Corporate Comms | Commencing Feb 2015 |
| SEG, Directors, and PCI teams to undertake cultural safety training. | All staff | By Dec 2015 |
| Any DTF staﬀ working on and assessing Expenditure Review Sub‑Committee bids related to Aboriginal issues or dealing with Aboriginal policy issues to have undergone cultural safety training. | PCI | Commencing Jul 2015 |
| Opportunities to attend cultural safety training promoted to all DTF employees. | PCI | Commencing Jul 2015 |
| Established inclusive behaviour, culture and values | Ensure managers are aware of and adhere to support that is available to Aboriginal employees. Managers briefed on support available (e.g. ﬂexible work practices, cultural leave to attend funerals/community activities or cultural awareness training). Understand and accommodate the needs through promotion of ceremonial leave. This will be advertised on the TreasuryNet. | PCI/ Corporate Comms | Dec 2015 then ongoing |
| Aboriginal cultural awareness to be included in compliance training for new staﬀ. | PCI | Jul 2015 then ongoing |
| Staﬀ have a requirement to understand the actions within this plan included PCI in their performance and development plans. | PCI | Jul 2015 then ongoing |
| Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan to be highlighted at every corporate induction. | PCI | Quarterly |
| Days of signiﬁcance and reconciliation events are supported and promoted | Initiatives promoted during NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) and reconciliation week (such as an Aboriginal movie screening at Treasury Theatre). | PCI/SEG | Annually |
| Promoting inclusion and participation in the community. Advertise volunteering leave on TreasuryNet as a way to engage with Aboriginal supporting organisations. | Corp Services | Jul 2015 then annually |
| Increased Aboriginal representation on boards and committees in DTF | Consultation with the Oﬃce of Aboriginal Aﬀairs Victoria (OAAV) on potential opportunities to increase Aboriginal participation on DTF portfolio boards. | FAL | Mar 2015 |
| DTF to engage with OAAV to provide DTF’s contract consultant (Amrop Cordiner King) with access to the Aboriginal Participation on Boards Register for when they are conducting a search for potential candidates. | Corp Services | Apr 2015 |

## Role in government and community

Aim: whole of government procurement policies conscious of Aboriginal businesses.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Action** | **Who** | **Timeframe** |
| Aboriginal jobs and business growth in Victoria are facilitated utilising procurement. Reduced barriers in accessing goods, services and facilities | Start working with other departments to deﬁne what it is to be an Aboriginal Business for procurement purposes for WoVG. | FTS | June 2015 |
| Explore options for DTF to act as a communication channel to promote the release of new initiatives that encourage greater participation of Aboriginal businesses in Victorian Government Oﬃcer/Corporate procurement opportunities. This includes promotion of information via the Victorian Government Purchasing Board website, the Chief Procurement Oﬃcer forum and internal quarterly notiﬁcations via eNews. | PCI/Chief Procurement Oﬃcer/ Corporate Communications | Dec 2015 |
| Provide DTF with information on Aboriginal suppliers and services to use when coordinating local events or requirements (e.g. catering, stationery etc.). | CPO | Ongoing |
| Policies are available and accessible to Aboriginal stakeholders and communities | Create a speciﬁc page on DTF’s external webpage which will provide information on DTF’s Diversity and Aboriginal Plans. | PCI/ Corporate Communications | Jan 2015 |
| Create a speciﬁc section on DTF’s LinkedIn page which will provide information on DTF’s Diversity and Aboriginal Plans. | PCI | Ongoing |
| DTF’s policies and guides regularly monitored to ensure they are responsive to Aboriginal issues | Review HR policies to ensure adherence with this plan and engage with DTF staﬀ as required. | PCI | Ongoing |
| Consult on DTF strategies and activities with Aboriginal staﬀ within the VPS as required. | PCI | Ongoing |

## Evaluation and monitoring

Aim: proven measures for reporting and accountability when measuring the effectiveness of the outcomes.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Action** | **Who** | **Timeframe** |
| The plan is monitored to ensure activities are being undertaken | Establishment of a working group across the department which will help to manage and oversee the implementation of this plan. | PCI | Feb 2015 |
| Report on progress to the Treasury and Finance board via the People and Culture Committee. | PCI | Quarterly |
| The Department’s successes regarding Aboriginal aﬀairs are published and promoted in the annual report. | PCI/Corporate Communications | Annually |
| This action plan is evaluated and reviewed to determine the relevance of the goals | Plan is reviewed every six months by People and Culture Committee and inclusion of Aboriginal employees actively sought. | PCC | Biannually |
| Meet regularly with Aboriginal groups, committees and communities as the action plan rolls out to ensure the ongoing significance and eﬀectiveness of the actions. | PCI | Ongoing |
| Outcomes of reviews and an end of plan evaluation will influence the development of the next Employment and Inclusion Action Plan. | PCC | Sep 2015 |
| Data is gathered on Aboriginal people initiatives for whole of government reporting | Review processes for recording Aboriginal staﬀ and identify options for improving the accuracy of existing information. | PCI | Ongoing |
| Baseline data is included in the DTF quarterly workforce statistic provided to the Treasury and Finance Board. | PCI | Quarterly |
| Commence reporting on procurement initiatives and establish baseline data for future reporting. | FTS | Jun 2016 |

# Appendix

## DTF’s action plan matrix

Aim: proven measures for reporting and accountability when measuring the effectiveness of the outcomes.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Goals** | **Outcomes2** |
| **Employment and retention** | **Pathways between education and DTF employment** |
| Pathways built with education providers and tools created to develop and retain Aboriginal staﬀ | Reduced barriers for Aboriginal people to obtain employment |
| DTF managers and Aboriginal staﬀ are provided tools for development and retention. |
| These outcomes are directly linked to the required deliverables: Inclusion Plan – d, Close the Gap – a and Karreeta Yirramboi – a, b & d | |
| **Inclusion and awareness** | **Increased awareness of Aboriginal culture and eﬀective internal relationships** |
| DTF is an inclusive environment that is considerate and respectful of Aboriginal culture and people | Established inclusive behaviour, culture and values |
| Days of significance and reconciliation events are supported and promoted |
| Increased Aboriginal representation on boards and committees in DTF |
| These outcomes are directly linked to the required deliverables: Inclusion Plan – a, Close the Gap – c and Karreeta Yirramboi – c | |
| **Role in government and community** | **Aboriginal jobs and business growth in Victoria are facilitated utilising procurement. Reduced barriers in accessing goods, services and facilities** |
| Whole of government procurement policies conscious of Aboriginal businesses | Policies are available and accessible to Aboriginal stakeholders and communities |
| DTF’s policies and guides regularly monitored to ensure they are responsive to Aboriginal issues |
| These outcomes are directly linked to the required deliverables: Inclusion Plan – a, Close the Gap – c and Karreeta Yirramboi – c | |
| **Evaluation and monitoring** | **The plan is monitored to ensure activities are being undertaken** |
| Proven measures for reporting and accountability when measuring the effectiveness of the outcomes | This action plan is evaluated and reviewed to determine the relevance of the goals |
| Data gathered on Aboriginal people initiatives for whole of government reporting |
| These outcomes are directly linked to the required deliverables: Inclusion Plan – c, Close the Gap – d and Karreeta Yirramboi – e | |

2 As detailed in the executive summary, the objectives highlighted in bold are DTF’s flagship objectives to be implemented first and where DTF as a central agency can have the greatest impact.

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