

# Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan 2026–2030

Department of Treasury and Finance



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of Australia, and the oldest continuing culture in human history. We proudly acknowledge Victoria's Aboriginal communities and recognise the value and ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and emerging.

As we work to ensure Victorian Aboriginal communities continue to thrive, the Government acknowledges the invaluable contributions of generations that have come before us, who have fought tirelessly for the rights of their people and communities towards self-determination. We reflect on the continuing impact of government policies and practices and recognise our responsibility to work together with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples towards improved cultural, social and economic outcomes.



*'lim-ba nindee thana warn-ga-ilee'*  
(Preserve our Dreaming Lore) – Gunnai Language

*Bitja (Dixon Patten Jnr) Yorta Yorta, Gunnai,  
Gunditjmara and Dhudhuroa of Bayila Creative*

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## Secretary's foreword

I am very pleased to present the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF)'s new Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan.

As part of supporting Truth, Treaty and Self-determination for First Peoples, it is important to continue to elevate First Peoples' voices across all of DTF's work and to reflect on the expertise and insights of the community.

As part of this journey, DTF is committed to improving First Nations representation. This begins with steps to achieve greater employee representation. Our workforce needs to reflect the community we serve, and support the incorporation of First Peoples' invaluable perspectives and contributions in financial and economic policy. But it is also about fostering an environment where First Nations employees feel included and have opportunities to grow. We all have a responsibility to make DTF a more culturally safe place to work and ensure it is a place that values and celebrates Aboriginal cultures, knowledge, and perspectives.

This Action Plan commits us all at DTF to take shared responsibility across the Department. It presents tangible actions that actively promote recruitment of First Peoples across all levels and support the growth and development of First Peoples' staff, from entry level programs to ongoing employment and leadership opportunities.

This will complement our important, continuing engagement and collaboration with our First Nations partners on key priorities spanning Truth, Treaty and Self-determination.

DTF's work is at the heart of government decision making. I am optimistic that this new plan will open opportunities for First Nations people to join DTF and have a meaningful career.

I am excited to see this work grow and develop over time and I look forward to working with staff across DTF to implement these important initiatives.



Chris Barrett  
**Secretary**

## Statement of purpose

DTF is committed to improving First Nations representation across all areas of the Department, to help incorporate the invaluable perspectives and contributions that First Peoples provide to work in the Victorian public service.

The Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan provides tangible actions to not only support this commitment, but also to ensure that First Nations Employees feel culturally safe and are supported to pursue meaningful career development opportunities at DTF.

Through the actions in this plan, DTF has three key objectives:

1. A workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves – we will seek to **increase First Nations representation amongst DTF employees.**
2. Equal opportunity and genuine inclusion for First Nations employees at all levels of the Department – we will seek to **provide great opportunities for First Nations employees at DTF to stay and grow.**
3. A workplace that values and celebrates Aboriginal cultures, knowledge, and perspectives – this will help to **make DTF a more culturally safe place to work to attract and retain First Nations employees.**

The commitments below outline specific actions that will contribute to the delivery of each of these statements.

## How we developed the Plan

In August 2024, the DTF Self-Determination and Treaty Taskforce (The Taskforce) endorsed development of an updated DTF Action Plan, including actions focused on attraction and retention of First Nations employees.

DTF's plan has been designed to reflect and complement the Victorian Public Sector Commission's (VPSC) new Barring Djinang 2024–2028 strategy and build on the work completed through the previous DTF Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Plan. The plan also leverages successful strategies and actions that are used across the broader Victorian public service.

## Consultation

DTF consulted with the Department of Government Services and the VPSC's First Peoples Workforce Development branch, and attended the Barring Djinang Community of Practice (a VPSC-run forum with representation from across the VPS which meets to discuss broader Aboriginal employment and engagement) to explore options for the updated Action Plan.

The First Peoples Workforce Development branch provided input on the scoping and feasibility of DTF actions, as well as alignment with the broader Barring Djinang 2024-2028 strategy. The Barring Djinang Community of Practice shared experiences of successful initiatives from across the broader VPS to help inform the development of this action plan.

Internal consultation was also undertaken with responsible implementation teams across the Department and the DTF People Committee, to ensure alignment with other work being undertaken within DTF.

## Scoping of actions

The work in this Action Plan is grounded in the Barring Djinang Framework, which includes six focus areas developed by the VPSC based on learnings from the previous framework and consultation with departments across the VPS.

DTF developed a range of options that reflect the six focus areas within the refreshed Barring Djinang Framework.

After developing an extensive list of actions, DTF shortlisted 18 actions that it assessed as having the greatest potential for immediate and near-term impact on attraction and retention of First Nations employees.

This Plan represents the first phase of actions before the mid-cycle refresh in 2028.

## Barring Djinang Framework

This Plan is designed to align with the [Barring Djinang First Peoples Workforce Development Framework for the Victorian Public Sector 2024–2028](#) (the Framework), including alignment of activities and focus areas to leverage the best-practice guidance and resources of the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) and other Victorian public sector (VPS) Departments.

The Framework includes initiatives aimed to increase entry-level career pathways, such as through the First Peoples Vocational Education and Training graduate program and through the First Peoples pathway to the Victorian Government graduate program. Other goals include fostering career growth for First Peoples through career coaching and reciprocal pathways with community, as well as supporting the leadership pipeline through the Barring Djinang First Peoples Leadership Program and development support for emerging leaders.

For further information, visit [Barring Djinang: First Peoples Workforce Development Framework - VPSC](#).

## Governance and accountability

The Self-Determination and Treaty Taskforce, comprised of DTF senior leaders, have provided strategic direction for the Plan's development.

The DTF People Committee will be responsible for implementation oversight and monitoring. Progress against actions will be reported to the Committee biannually.

DTF will incorporate reporting on the Plan's targets in its annual report. This multi-layered approach ensures accountability and promotes transparency in our efforts to achieve genuine inclusion for First Nations employees.

## Our commitments

DTF's new Aboriginal Employment and inclusion Plan delivers on the three broad objectives, with actions under each focus area:

1. Increase First Nations representation amongst DTF employees.
2. Provide great opportunities for First Nations employees at DTF to stay and grow.
3. Make DTF a more culturally safe place to work to attract and retain First Nations employees.

## Focus Area 1: Increasing entry-level career pathways

**Outcome:** More First Peoples join DTF through entry-level programs that lead to ongoing employment.

**This will contribute to objective 1:** Increase First Nations representation amongst DTF employees.

These actions seek to improve attraction and recruitment of First Peoples through existing entry level career pathways, by improving engagement with First Peoples and developing departmental policies that enhance recruitment of Aboriginal employees to help ensure that DTF has a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves.

Action	Target	Timeline
1.1 Develop a DTF Aboriginal Special Measures – junior positions policy to improve opportunities to recruit Aboriginal employees	Greater awareness and use of DTF special measures roles by teams seeking to recruit First Peoples	Q2 2026
1.2 Engage Aboriginal student centres to promote DTF graduate and internship programs, and mentoring opportunities	Aboriginal students are aware of opportunities at DTF as a result of tailored promotional materials and events	Q1 2026 (ongoing)
1.3 Encourage DTF teams to express interest in recruiting graduates through the Aboriginal Graduate Program pathway	Increase in the number of DTF teams participating in the graduate program pathway	Q1 2026 – For 2026 Graduate Program intake (ongoing)
1.4 Develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific marketing and promotional material	Material developed and used widely to increase outreach, including through Aboriginal organisations and DTF promotional events	Q2 2026
1.5 Advertise DTF positions through Aboriginal employee networks and jobs boards	DTF Hiring managers regularly advertise positions through Aboriginal employee networks and jobs boards	Q3 2026 (ongoing)

## Focus Area 2: Fostering career growth and mobility

**Outcome:** First Nations employees develop skills and capability to progress meaningful careers and strengthen community capacity.

**This will contribute to objectives 2 and 3:** Provide greater opportunities for First Nations employees at DTF to stay and grow and make DTF a more culturally safe place to work to attract and retain First Nations employees.

These actions seek to improve retention of First Nations' employees by supporting staff connection and experience and providing access to career development opportunities, ensuring staff have genuinely equal opportunities and inclusion in the Department.

Action	Target	Timeline
2.1 Assign new junior Aboriginal employees with an informal workplace buddy to assist them to settle into the workplace more comfortably	All new Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff allocated a buddy at the same/similar classification	Q1 2026 (ongoing)
2.2 Encourage DTF staff participation in VPS-wide career development and coaching opportunities	Increased DTF staff participation in career development and coaching opportunities	Q1 2026 (ongoing)

### Focus Area 3: Supporting the leadership pipeline

**Outcome:** Emerging leaders have access to effective, impactful and culturally appropriate leadership development that supports career progression.

**This will contribute to objectives 1 and 2:**

Increase First Nations representation amongst DTF employees and provide greater opportunities for First Nations employees at DTF to stay and grow.

These actions seek to improve the leadership pipeline by supporting recruitment of First Nations’ leaders and supporting retention of emerging leaders through access to leadership development and career progression opportunities. This supports our goal of inclusion and equal opportunity of First Nations employees, and strengthening the diversity of our leadership cohort.

Action	Target	Timeline
3.1 Develop an Aboriginal special measures policy to improve opportunities to recruit Aboriginal leaders	Greater use of special measures roles by teams seeking to recruit First Peoples	Q2 2026
3.2 Support emerging leaders to participate in the Barrng Djinang Leadership Program	DTF Aboriginal employees are supported to participate in the Program	Q1 2026 (ongoing)

## Focus Area 4: Connecting and sharing

**Outcome:** First Nations employees have opportunities to connect with colleagues across the public sector. This includes increased visibility of events, learning and development opportunities and job opportunities.

**This will contribute to objective 3:** Make DTF a more culturally safe place to work to attract and retain First Nations employees.

These actions seek to continue to improve retention of First Nations' employees by supporting connection with VPS colleagues, promoting access to learning and career development and raising awareness of events of cultural significance, as well as improving the whole-of-DTF's understanding and valuing of Aboriginal cultures.

Action	Target	Timeline
<b>4.1</b> Continue to promote events of significance including Reconciliation Week, Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service and NAIDOC Week	Increased awareness of, and participation in, events of significance	Q1 2026 (ongoing)
<b>4.2</b> Encourage anyone opening forums, events and large meetings to start with a meaningful Acknowledgement of Country	Acknowledgement of Country at every DTF forum, event and large meeting	Q1 2026 (ongoing)
<b>4.3</b> Promote and support uptake of career development opportunities available through Nyanak Lotjpa - the VPS-wide Aboriginal Staff Network	Increased awareness and uptake of Nyanak Lotjpa learnings and opportunities	Q1 2026 (ongoing)
<b>4.4</b> Actively participate in the Aboriginal Employment Community of Practice to improve awareness of VPS-wide developments	DTF attendance at all Community of Practice meetings	Q1 2026 (ongoing)

## Focus Area 5: Strengthening cultural capability

**Outcome:** Increased cultural capability leads to more culturally safe workplaces and better attraction and retention of First Peoples employees.

**This will contribute to objective 3:** Make DTF a more culturally safe place to work to attract and retain First Nations employees.

These actions seek to improve retention of First Peoples through strengthened cultural capability and a more culturally safe workplace, supporting inclusion for First Nations employees. These actions also aim to support all DTF employees to value and celebrate Aboriginal culture.

Action	Target	Timeline
<b>5.1</b> Support DTF employees to undertake Cultural Safety and Self-determination training	Increased numbers of DTF employees undertake Cultural Safety and Self-determination Training	Q3 2026
<b>5.2</b> Promote volunteering opportunities within the Aboriginal community	Increased awareness/uptake of volunteering opportunities	Q1 2026 (ongoing)
<b>5.3</b> Connect First Peoples staff to existing First Peoples staff networks	Increased First Peoples staff awareness of networks, and departmental support to join networks and attend events	Q1 2026 (ongoing)
<b>5.4</b> Establish a senior champion within each DTF Group who can assist Directors/Managers with the implementation of the Action Plan	Senior champions are established in every DTF group	Q1 2026
<b>5.5</b> Develop a First Peoples Writing Style Guide for the development of all written material	DTF material uses appropriate and consistent language	Q2 2026

## Monitoring and evaluation

Consistent with the actions above and Barring Djinang Focus Area 6: Improving understanding and insights, DTF will track progress against targets and outcome measures, using both quantitative and qualitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Plan's impact.

Scheduled reporting, analysis, and review cycles will ensure transparency and enable timely adjustments to strategies. This commitment to monitoring and evaluation reflects our dedication to evidence-based decision making and a genuine desire to create a positive and diverse workplace.

Where relevant, responsible teams will establish clear baseline metrics to track progress and support reporting, which will provide a basis for future comparison of outcomes.

### Timeline

**Biannually following inception:** Reporting to DTF's People Committee on implementation, and progress towards associated targets and outcome metrics.

**Q1 2028:** Mid-term review to assess progress and make any necessary adjustments to the plan, including to review targets and consider more ambitious actions where we have met or exceeded any goals.

**Q1 2030:** Comprehensive review of the plan's overall effectiveness, including an assessment of the achievement of goals and objectives. This review will inform the development of the next iteration of the Aboriginal Employment and Inclusion Action Plan to be launched in 2030.

