

2010–2011 Annual Report on the 2009–2011 DEEWR Reconciliation Action Plan

Secretary's foreword

Since the launch of our 2009–2011 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) during National Reconciliation Week in 2009, and our refreshed RAP launched in 2010, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has implemented the majority of actions we set out to achieve. We are proud to report on these actions and their impact in this annual report.

I believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' business is everyone's business in DEEWR. As a department we are actively raising awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture. We do this by providing opportunities for all staff to complete cultural awareness training and participate in events for dates of significance such as National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.

As a Commonwealth agency with lead responsibility for four of the six Closing the Gap targets identified by the Council of Australian Governments, we consider our role to be unique and our potential to create positive change enormous. As part of our responsibility towards closing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander socioeconomic disadvantage, we base our policies on the best available evidence, inform best practice with engagement and community consultation, and cater our programs to our clients' specific needs. The actions and targets in the RAP have enabled us to improve these practices.

Our RAP Implementation Sub-committee has played a big role in overseeing the implementation and progress of RAP actions and measurable targets. Committee members chair working groups within their clusters that are made up of committed DEEWR people who raise awareness and promote the RAP at the cluster level. This ensures a whole-of-department effort towards achieving the goals of our RAP and promoting reconciliation.

I would like to thank the many DEEWR people who have contributed to achieving the actions in our RAP and to promoting reconciliation across the department. I would also like to thank the Elders who have warmly welcomed us to their countries across Australia and to acknowledge Reconciliation Australia for their contribution and support in implementing our 2009–2011 RAP. We look forward to working collaboratively with them into the future to launch our second RAP.

I believe achieving a reconciled Australia will take time, dedication and hard work by individuals, businesses and government. In the next 10 years I look forward to seeing the impacts our RAP has made to embedding cultural capability, responsiveness and outcomes into our core business.

Given the remarkable inroads made during the implementation of the first RAP, I eagerly anticipate our second plan. I acknowledge there is still work to do and place my confidence in our RAP 2011–2014 to again encourage and advance us as an organisation.

Lisa Paul, AO PSM

Secretary

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

13 September 2011

Warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this document may contain images and names of deceased persons.

DEEWR's RAP highlights for 2010–2011

For the purposes of this annual report, measurable targets that were achieved prior to the refresh of our RAP in 2010 have been omitted from this report. To view these achievements, including a highlights video, you can access our RAP annual report for 2009–2010 on the Reconciliation Australia website www.reconciliation.org.au or visit the Indigenous pages on DEEWR's website www.deewr.gov.au/Indigenous/Pages/default.aspx.

DEEWR has successfully implemented the majority of measurable targets outlined in our refreshed 2009–2011 Reconciliation Action Plan. While some measurable targets were not completed within the specified timeframes, significant progress has been made. Some of the reasons for not completing measurable targets within timeframes are outlined in 'Key learnings'.

Highlights of our achievements include:

- Over 1000 staff attended Cultural Awareness Training between July 2009 and June 2011.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff accounted for 5.2 per cent of DEEWR staff at 30 June 2011.
- The Indigenous Business Procurement Policy requires staff to consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses for services valued between \$10 000 and \$80 000.
- The Indigenous Onboarding module is available on DEEWR's intranet for new and existing employees to build their knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture, the RAP and the Closing the Gap agenda.
- The Indigenous Portal on the intranet provides information to staff on programs, networks, services and career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- The *Guidelines for Respecting Country and Cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* document provides guidance to staff on important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural sensitivities and protocols.
- The implementation of the Identified Positions Policy was evaluated in September 2010.
- Commitments to the RAP and Closing the Gap are built into all group business plans.
- Our programs and policies have scope for tailored strategies to meet the requirements of metropolitan, urban, regional, remote and very remote communities.

Key learnings





Some of our key learnings from the past 12 months include:



- It is important to recognise that reconciliation is about a way of working on an ongoing basis and continued focus and commitment to the RAP is needed to retain momentum.
- Recruitment, retention and development will be key focuses for our second RAP.
- The progress of some RAP actions was affected by whole-of-government activities and priorities.
- Some measureable targets have been difficult to measure, specifically whole-of-department targets due to the breadth and scope of DEEWR's portfolios. Some areas may have achieved a particular measureable target whereas another area may still be on track with the same target.
- Some actions required clarification and further investigation before being progressed to ensure the best possible outcome.

Contacts

If you have any comments you would like to share about DEEWR's RAP or would like any further information, you can email: reconciliationactionplan@deewr.gov.au.

Legend

	Exceeded	Targets achieved well within timeframes with further innovation and achievement on targets
	Achieved	Targets achieved within timeframes and lessons learnt documented
	On Track	No foreseen problems, progress being made. However, close monitoring to continue until targets met
	Not Achieved	Targets not met. Significant risks or unforeseen results. Intervention or specific corrective essential

Respect		Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Focus area 1.1: Creating a workforce that is responsive to and inclusive of the requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
<p>1. Ensure that staff progressively enhance their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, through a professional development framework that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Briefings on commencement of employment ▪ Cultural Training programs tailored to professional needs ▪ Ongoing Professional Learning for individual staff ▪ Specialised Briefings for staff developing new projects or policies 	<p>Lead Group People and Organisational Development Group</p> <p>Supporting Group/s All Senior Executive Staff</p> <p>Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi Committee</p>	March 2011	An Indigenous Onboarding module is developed and launched as part of DEEWR's online orientation program		<p>Achieved. DEEWR's online Indigenous Onboarding module was developed and implemented as a stand-alone module in December 2010 and is available for new and existing DEEWR staff on the intranet.</p> <p><i>Comments/lessons learned</i> The action is further progressing to integrate the module into a refreshed version of the department's interactive online orientation program. This broader project is likely to be delivered by December 2011.</p>
		June 2011	A Cultural Capability Development Framework is developed		<p>On Track. While the timeline of June 2011 was not met, significant progress has been made. A draft Cultural Capability Development Framework was workshopped with the National Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi Committee and the department's Indigenous Leader in April 2011. The draft is currently being finalised for broader consultation. Further detail on the development and implementation of the framework will be included in the department's new RAP.</p> <p><i>Comments/lessons learned</i> Existing Cultural Awareness Training is embedded as part of the ongoing training program and is complemented with local level sessions that cover key components of the RAP and the Closing the Gap agenda. A pilot of an online cultural competency module was also undertaken; the evaluation found the course content to be an excellent addition to the current Cultural Awareness Training. The course provides staff with the next level of content to develop towards cultural competency.</p>

Secretary's Excellence Award in reconciliation 2010

Dayna Lister and Sue McAvaney were presented the Secretary's Excellence Award in reconciliation for 2010 for their promotion of the principles of reconciliation in the workplace and their substantial impact in supporting Indigenous business as everyone's business. Dayna won the award for speaking at the Jobs Australia inaugural Indigenous Forces at Work Conference in Alice Springs in June 2010. At the conference, Dayna was one of 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share their journey through education and training into employment. 'For most of us, it was a soul-baring experience telling people about our personal lives, but it was also a very liberating experience,' Dayna said. 'I used the opportunity to encourage delegates to learn from our stories and to think a little differently and outside the box when it comes to Indigenous employment policies.'


In the early days of her public service career Dayna saw that programs were being delivered with a top-down focus, rather than being led by the community. She believed that ultimately such an approach was not going to work. 'My frustration led me to undertake a Bachelor of Applied Science with a major in Indigenous Community Management and Development. This helped me formulate ideas and learn how best to articulate them in a way that government would understand. 'I wanted to present a solid argument that could feed into how and why programs should be delivered in a certain way.' Having travelled extensively to remote communities in the Northern Territory for both work and family, Dayna says although remote communities share similar needs, there are also vast differences that must be considered when programs are developed. 'These differences mean one approach will not always be effective. They also highlight the need for flexible programs to enable a tailored approach for different communities and regions.'

Sue McAvaney from the South Australian state office was also awarded the Secretary's Award in reconciliation for using her knowledge of remote servicing issues, particularly in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands, to effectively develop and implement employment programs for the community. Sue also actively collaborated with key stakeholders, including Jobs Services Australia providers, Community Development and Education Providers, FaHCSIA and Centrelink to develop local partnerships that increase the capacity of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access education, employment and training services.

Highly commended awards went to Sue Saunders, Sabina Clayton and Russell Ayres. Russell's branch leads the work on delivering universal access to preschool, including work to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in remote communities with a high-quality early learning program. The branch also recently took on Partnership for Indigenous Early Childhood Development and the building of 38 Children and Family Centres.

The work is complex and challenging. Russell enjoys his role in the government's effort to meet this important national challenge. 'I have great work satisfaction from contributing to what is a huge and ongoing national effort to make a better future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is a task that seems never ending—and maybe it is—but nothing important is easy!' Russell is also an active member of the RAP Implementation Sub-committee and chairs the Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care's RAP working group. Russell has run information sessions in his cluster on the RAP and making Indigenous business everyone's business.

Respect	Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples				
Focus area 1.2: Creating an organisation that embraces reconciliation in all its activities					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
<p>1. Develop and implement Cultural Protocols* that give guidance on when, why and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practices, celebrations and images can be incorporated into DEEWR activities, events, facilities and corporate communications</p> <p>*These are intended to be high level, supporting adaptation to local circumstances.</p>	<p>Lead Group Indigenous Economic Strategy Group</p> <p>Supporting Group/s People and Organisational Development Group Communication and Parliamentary Group Mura Kaimel – Yarrangi Committee</p>	September 2010	A calendar of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events/days of significance is made available to all DEEWR staff	●	<p>Achieved. Dates of significance are marked on the DEEWR calendar on the intranet. In addition, a calendar of internal and external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events is housed on the Indigenous Portal.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned The department hosts events on significant dates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ connect with local community groups ▪ strengthen interagency relationships ▪ raise funds for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander charities ▪ enhance staff knowledge on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.
		December 2010	Cultural Protocols are launched and communicated across DEEWR	●	<p>Achieved. The department released its guidelines in December 2010 for welcome to country and acknowledgment of traditional owners in <i>DEEWR Events: Respecting Country and Cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples</i>. This is the first time DEEWR has had guidelines to ensure staff understand and give appropriate recognition to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The guidelines can be found on the Indigenous Portal on DEEWR's intranet.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned The guidelines reinforce the message that Indigenous business is everyone's business in DEEWR and assist staff to arrange a welcome to country or an acknowledgment of country when conducting departmental events.</p>

Respect		Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Focus area 1.2: Creating an organisation that embraces reconciliation in all its activities					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
		June 2011	A system for monitoring is developed on how Cultural Protocols are being used and implemented and what further support is needed		<p>On track. While this target was not achieved by June 2011, significant progress has been made. Indigenous Economic Strategy Group has been monitoring use of the cultural protocols at DEEWR events. Areas have been encouraged to report back on whether a welcome to country or an acknowledgement of country was conducted.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned In addition to providing guidelines around cultural protocols, the department is also developing an acknowledgement of country card for distribution throughout the department. It is designed to assist DEEWR staff in delivering and responding to an acknowledgement of country when opening departmental events or meetings.</p>

RAP communications

DEEWR uses various communications initiatives to increase staff engagement and cultivate understanding and awareness of reconciliation. The DEEWR RAP team, in collaboration with the Corporate Communications team, develops a refreshed communication strategy every six months to promote the RAP. Some of the initiatives are below.

RAP posters

During 2009 and 2010 RAP posters were created featuring DEEWR staff describing what reconciliation means to them personally and in relation to their work. These posters were displayed throughout DEEWR offices across the country.

RAP Fast Facts postcards

The RAP Fast Facts postcards were released in May 2011 to commemorate National Reconciliation Week 2011. The photograph featured on one of the postcards was chosen through an internal photography competition, and the artworks were provided by an Aboriginal staff member. One postcard lists eight ways staff can promote reconciliation in their workplace and the other postcard promotes key achievements from our RAP annual report 2009–2010. The postcards are distributed at various internal events.

RAP banners

RAP banners were produced for National Reconciliation Week 2011 and these banners will continue to be used at internal and external events to promote the message that in DEEWR Indigenous business is everyone's business.

d'Vine

Our RAP is regularly promoted in DEEWR's monthly staff newsletter *d'Vine*. To commemorate National Reconciliation Week, *d'Vine* dedicated the June 2011 issue to the theme of reconciliation. The newsletter highlighted the programs and initiatives DEEWR delivers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The RAP team was also profiled in this issue.

Respect		Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Focus area 1.2: Creating an organisation that embraces reconciliation in all its activities					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
<p>2. Strengthen people management policies and processes which support DEEWR reconciliation objectives</p>	<p>Lead Group People and Organisational Development Group</p> <p>Supporting Group/s People and Leadership Committee</p>	<p>July 2009 and each subsequent year</p>	<p>Information is gathered on the experience and job satisfaction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, including on entry, in annual job satisfaction surveys and, where relevant, on exit from the organisation</p>	<p>●</p>	<p>Achieved. Information is gathered through the DEEWR staff survey, the Australian Public Service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Census, entry surveys and exit interviews. The last DEEWR staff survey occurred in September 2010 and demonstrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have higher levels of engagement (40 per cent) than the overall workforce (37 per cent). Entry surveys conducted during the reporting period reported an overall engagement level of 46 per cent which was higher than that of all entry survey respondents (40 per cent). The majority of respondents were participants on the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program which may have impacted the result.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned The last exit survey analysis (October 2010 to April 2011) drew an insufficient sample size of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents to be valid. However the main reasons indicated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees were in line with the broader agency response.</p> <p>A review of the exit interview methodology is being undertaken with a view to seeking responses from all exiting employees as opposed to the current approach of interviewing a random sample of exiting employees. This should provide a sufficient sample size to allow more accurate measure and reporting on exiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffs' experiences and perspectives.</p>

Respect		Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Focus area 1.2: Creating an organisation that embraces reconciliation in all its activities					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
		September 2010	Evaluate the implementation of the Identified Positions Policy (IPP)	●	<p>Achieved. The IPP implementation evaluation was completed in September 2010.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned Overall the evaluation illustrated a successful implementation of the IPP through positive survey responses, compliance with policy and increase in the number of roles advertised with Identified Position status. The evaluation resulted in seven recommendations to strengthen understanding of the IPP and better support and provide guidance on its practical application. At June 2011 four recommendations had been implemented, with the remaining three intended to be finalised by the end of August 2011.</p>

'We recognise the importance of the RAP to DEEWR's outcomes; that is why the Katherine Regional Team has embedded the RAP in their Individual Performance and Development Plans.'

A quote from Andrea Kelly, Director Northern Territory Office

Respect		Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Focus area 1.3: Playing our part in heightening community understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
<p>1. Proactively support the placement of positive stories about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including outcomes of DEEWR's programs, in internal publications and promote possible uptake of information in external media</p>	<p>Lead Group Communication and Parliamentary Group</p> <p>Supporting Group/s State and Regional Services Strategy Group All Senior Executive Staff</p>	July 2010	A strategy to promote wider media uptake and exposure of our successes (including television, radio and print) is developed, implemented and evaluated. As part of this strategy, mainstream media trends for coverage of relevant positive stories relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are monitored	●	<p>Achieved. A strategy to promote broader media uptake and exposure of success was developed in 2010. Stories of positive experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff working in DEEWR were published in the <i>National Indigenous Times</i>. Positive stories about DEEWR's programs for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have also been published in <i>Deadly Vibe magazine</i>.</p> <p>This is an ongoing process that will undergo continued improvement.</p>

Journey Room—national office

People and Organisational Development Group opened a room in DEEWR's 16 Mort Street office in the ACT to share the journey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through culture, history, artwork, literature and reconciliation. On Friday 29 October 2010, staff from People and Organisational Development Group officially opened their *RAP Journey Room*. The Journey Room is a commitment to sharing information within the group and supporting a deeper awareness of reconciliation. The Journey Room houses a range of history and culture fact sheets, the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and a selection of artwork and artefacts. Resource materials such as DVDs and literature are available for people to borrow and use in their personal time. Particular mention was made of the Reflections Board and the Journey Calendar during the official opening of the room. The Reflections Board is a way for people to express and share their own personal insights into reconciliation. The Journey Calendar is a way of recording what People and Organisational Development Group do along the way to explore reconciliation—from group, branch and team events to activities undertaken to strengthen understanding. Staff are encouraged to continue adding new items to the room to enable them to share experiences and continue their journey. Meetings are also able to be held in this room, showcasing DEEWR's commitment to reconciliation to visitors.

'Reconciliation to me is... All Australians recognising the history of Indigenous Australians and taking part in improving opportunities and living standards.'

A quote from staff member James Kennedy.

'Reconciliation for me is a learning journey that has given me an insight and understanding of the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. An eye opening experience and an appreciation of what people have faced in their journey.'

A quote from staff member Margaret Leggett.



The Journey Room

'We were amazed by the efforts of DEEWR staff towards creating their Journey Room. We were so impressed that staff made time out of their busy schedules to attend the jewellery workshop we ran and we felt very welcome when we visited. We are proud to see DEEWR make such a commitment to reconciliation.'

Duncan Smith, Wiradjuri Echoes



Wiradjuri Echoes

Respect		Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Focus area 1.3: Playing our part in heightening community understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
2. Ensure easy and ready access to information about DEEWR's programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Lead Group Communication and Parliamentary Group Supporting Group/s State and Regional Services Strategy Group Indigenous Economic Strategy Group Technology Solutions Group All Senior Executive Staff	July 2009 and each subsequent year	There is a single entry point on DEEWR's external website that provides information on all services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including links to other departments, and consideration is given to how to provide this information to people without internet access	●	Achieved. The single entry point was launched on 31 May 2010 and is continuously updated with good news stories, videos and new content. People without internet access have key information available to them through a range of alternative media sources. Brochures are distributed at expos and other events through the links the DEEWR state network has established. Information is also distributed by Centrelink via their agencies and when visiting remote communities, schools and service providers. Information is provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific media as appropriate.
		December 2010	Information on DEEWR's programs, networks, services and career opportunities for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is consolidated and made easily accessible through a single entry point on DEEWR's external website	●	Achieved. The Indigenous Portal was launched on 31 May 2010.

Respect		Valuing the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Focus area 1.3: Playing our part in heightening community understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
		July 2009 and each subsequent year	Review and update the Indigenous website on deewr.gov.au using plain English, clearer navigation and more engaging content including audio and visual	●	Achieved. The website is continuously updated with corporate documents, events, contact details and more. Reviewing and updating the Indigenous site is an ongoing process.
		June 2011	Develop an overarching Indigenous visual identity for all DEEWR communication materials	●	Achieved. A number of areas are using the existing Indigenous visual identity, including Indigenous Employment Projects, Australian Indigenous Minority Supplier Council, the Public Sector Employment team and the Indigenous Youth Mobility team. Comments/lessons learned The visual identity will inform the new DEEWR branding policies.

Sailing towards reconciliation

223 years after the original *HMB Endeavour* sailed into Sydney Cove, an exact replica of Captain Cook's ship left Darling Harbour on Friday 15 April 2011 on a journey of discovery and reconciliation as it circumnavigates Australia over the next 13 months. In a moving welcome to country, Aunty Norma Ingram told of the Gadigal people's reaction to the strange vessel that sailed into the harbour all those years ago. Hope for the future lies with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth on board who are expected to communicate the message of reconciliation to others on the ship and those they encounter at each port along their journey. The project is a partnership between DEEWR, the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM) and Job Futures. Senator the Hon Mark Arbib, Minister for Indigenous Employment and Economic Development, said, 'This fantastic project will give 39 young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders the opportunity to gain valuable skills in the maritime industry'. Her Excellency, the Governor of New South Wales, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, along with representatives from DEEWR, ANMM, the Tribal Warrior Association, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, family and friends farewelled the young people. As the ship prepared to sail, Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Max Eulo, performed the smoking ceremony and presented Captain Ross with a decorated message stick.





The replica of the HMB Endeavour sails out of Sydney Harbour.



Captain Ross watches on as Uncle Max Eulo performs the smoking ceremony.

Relationships		Indigenous and other Australians working together for positive outcomes			
Focus area 2.1: Building strong, mutually respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and individuals					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
1. Continue to identify and build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a core component of our work	Lead Group Indigenous Economic Strategy Group (IESG) Supporting Group/s All DEEWR Staff	June 2011	Develop consultation guidelines that provide a framework about how and when to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in policy, program design and delivery	●	Achieved. A framework for engagement called <i>Engaging Today, Building Tomorrow</i> has been developed in conjunction with FaHCSIA. A link from FaHCSIA to DEEWR's Indigenous internet site has been endorsed by the Executive Coordination Forum on Indigenous Affairs to enable all Australian Public Service agencies to access the framework. Comments/lessons learned Implementation of the engagement strategy will require support from key areas to highlight the importance of applying the framework within DEEWR.

Relationships	Indigenous and other Australians working together for positive outcomes				
Focus area 2.1: Building strong, mutually respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and individuals					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
		July 2009 and each subsequent year	Document the diverse range of processes for collaborating and engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and individuals that are already in place at national, state, regional and local levels to assist in the development of a knowledge bank and the Consultation Guidelines		<p>Achieved. DEEWR is using <i>Engaging Today, Building Tomorrow</i> which is part of a whole-of-government engagement framework to assist with the documentation of the diverse range of processes for collaborating and engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned In addition, DEEWR's national and state offices have close and effective links and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and individuals. There are a range of forms of consultation and collaboration including formal mechanisms such as taskforces and Indigenous Economic Development Strategy community consultations. Informal mechanisms include community meetings.</p>
		June 2011	Progress in building relationships is evaluated, including through feedback on stakeholder surveys		<p>On track. While this target was not achieved by June 2011, significant progress has been made. The original action has been overtaken by the development of a whole-of-government engagement framework facilitated by the Executive Coordination Forum on Indigenous Affairs.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned As a next step DEEWR will actively engage in embedding the principles and localise the guidelines into business practice. Upcoming Contract Managers Reference Group meetings will be used to identify how <i>Engaging Today, Building Tomorrow</i> has been used on a practical day to day basis.</p>

Our reconciliation journey in the State Network

Nowhere in DEEWR are the principles of reconciliation demonstrated more than in the State Network. Many staff members in these regions engage and consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on a daily basis, and as such, they have been putting into practice the three themes of respect, relationships and opportunities long before the launch of the first DEEWR RAP in 2009.



John Allison with his daughter Junisa Allison (left) and niece Jada Allison (right) during a NSW State Office Family Day NAIDOC Week 2010 celebration. John works as Indigenous Business Manager in the Indigenous Education and Employment branch in the NSW State Office.



Alan Holten is the son of one of the NSW State Office staff members who also visited on Family Day.

Representation and support

Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is high in the State Network. In the Northern Territory, for example, 33 per cent of staff identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The involvement of non-Indigenous staff is also reported to be increasing on steering committees for activities like Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. There are local Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi committees in all states and territories who provide support and encouragement to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and advice on issues pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Good news stories

The State Network provides frequent and innovative good news stories that focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Good news stories are used by the ministers, internal and external publications and websites, and media outlets. Many states also produce monthly staff newsletters that showcase their work around RAP and Closing the Gap initiatives.

Building relationships

Staff in the State Network are passionate about making a difference. They know meaningful engagement is essential to maintaining productive working relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. An example of this is the Yarning Circle attended by Orange District Office staff. The circle is held at a local primary school that has a high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and family population. The circle provides an opportunity for staff to network with teachers, parents and other community members and agency representatives while developing an appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, history and contemporary issues.

The Mareeba Parental and Community Engagement project in Queensland will work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to assist 100 parents and caregivers and over 100 community members. The project builds the capacity and skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents by delivering workshops on budgeting, family quality time, self development and health and nutrition.

Access to information

State and territory staff continue to work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities to disseminate information on DEEWR programs with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus. Broome Office staff attended a Jobs and Career Expo held at the Broome Regional Prison in May 2011 to promote DEEWR programs for soon to be released prisoners.

In March 2011 the Victorian Koori Parenting Expo was held at the Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre in Preston. Victoria State Office's Indigenous Education team had a stall featuring several Aboriginal controlled community organisations that deliver services to Victorian Aboriginal communities.

In the Queensland Office, staff are designing and implementing a protocol for engaging with Traditional Owners on native title issues. Over the coming months, the protocol will be tested through a live project within the Indigenous Employment Program space.

Events

State and territory staff regularly attend graduation and awards ceremonies for DEEWR funded programs, including the Indigenous Employment Program. State offices are also active in celebrating significant events such as NAIDOC Week, the Anniversary of the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples and National Reconciliation Week. For example, in Western Australia, staff were involved in an Indigenous Heritage Walking Tour, which informed them about the cultural importance of the land near to where they work as well as highlighting the traditional tools that Aboriginal people have used for centuries.

The Tasmanian State Office invited the Acting Manager of the Tasmanian Department of Education's Aboriginal Educational Services to run a workshop with staff on how best to work with Aboriginal children and young people.

As part of NAIDOC Week celebrations, all of the Children, Schools and Youth team in Tasmania viewed a video published by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation which contains key messages on the importance of the early years in a child's life and the critical role parents play in setting good examples. Another key message of the video was the value of learning through exploration of nature, and that turning off the television and taking the kids outside will support their development in numerous ways.

In July 2010, 130 delegates involved in the delivery of a Queensland Parental and Community Engagement project attended a workshop on the Gold Coast. In line with the theme Our Children Our Future: The Next Step is Ours, Parental and Community Engagement providers shared the successes, challenges and experiences of their projects and later enjoyed a performance from Beenleigh State High School students.

This summary does not do the State Network justice because there is far too much activity to capture. Their hard work and commitment to reconciliation is exceptional.






Beenleigh State High School students

Relationships		Indigenous and other Australians working together for positive outcomes			
Focus area 2.1: Building strong, mutually respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and individuals					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
2. Scope and plan an internal knowledge bank of information on communities and programs, issues, risks and solutions, principles and methodologies drawn from experience, previous consultations, evaluations and reviews	Lead Group Strategic Policy and Economic Strategy Group Supporting Group/s Technology Solutions Group Communication and Parliamentary Group Indigenous Economic Strategy Group	July 2011	A pilot program for a knowledge bank component is established, with protocols developed for adding and accessing information at all levels of the organisation, from those working in the field to those setting national strategy	●	Achieved. The DEEWR Closing the Gap Committee has considered the knowledge bank and recommended the department implement an expanded Indigenous Portal. The expanded portal will include links to external websites such as the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse for research on overcoming disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

'Reconciliation is about seizing the opportunities that we have to work in partnership, whether that be at government, community or at an individual level; seizing those opportunities to actually make real progress and move forward and create a stronger society for Australia.'

A quote from Sue Saunders, Branch Manager People and Organisational Development Group

Relationships		Indigenous and other Australians working together for positive outcomes			
Focus area 2.2: Embedding consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as core to successful outcomes					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
2. Establish clear processes for engaging effectively with DEEWR Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and committees	Lead Group/s Finance and Business Services Group People and Organisational Development Group Supporting Group/s Indigenous Economic Strategy Group State and Regional Services Strategy Group	July 2009 and each subsequent year	Key decisions that may potentially impact upon DEEWR staff will include consultation that ensures the appropriate level of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Consultation will occur with either the Indigenous Leader; Senior Indigenous Adviser; the Closing the Gap Committee; Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi Committee; Indigenous staff networks; or other DEEWR Indigenous representative positions and committees		Achieved. People and Organisational Development Group actively seeks the views, input and involvement of various sources of expertise such as the Indigenous Human Resources Adviser, the Indigenous Leader, the National Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi Committee and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff network when developing or implementing human resource initiatives. All human resource policies are endorsed through our National Consultative Committee which has a Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi Committee member to represent the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Relationships	Indigenous and other Australians working together for positive outcomes				
Focus area 2.2: Embedding consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as core to successful outcomes					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
3. Encourage external service providers working with DEEWR to demonstrate how they are working towards reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Lead Group Finance and Business Services Group Supporting Group/s All Senior Executive Staff	January 2011	Redevelopment of DEEWR's online procurement system to capture and report Indigenous businesses' activity on all procurements between \$10 000 to \$80 000		Achieved. Online system changes to inform and report on staff activities occurred on 10 December 2010.
		June 2011	Develop a best procurement practices guide (based on learnings from implementation within DEEWR) for buying from accredited Indigenous businesses; that may be promoted for use by all agencies across the Australian Public Service		On track. While this target was not achieved by June 2011, significant progress has been made. On 19 May 2011 an additional Commonwealth Procurement Guideline <i>Exemption from Mandatory Procurement Procedures</i> was released to create more direct opportunities for businesses owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This change has delayed the implementation of the guide. It is now expected for release in the last quarter of 2011 and will be included in the new RAP.

National Reconciliation Week 2011

The theme for National Reconciliation Week 2011 was *Let's talk recognition*. DEEWR staff around the country came together to mark the week with activities including seminars, bush tucker lunches and practical workshops. National Office held a range of events including a reconciliation seminar hosted by DEEWR's Indigenous Leader Kevin Brahim. The seminar included talks from Dr Chris Sarra from the Stronger Smarter Institute and Ara Cresswell from Reconciliation Australia. There was also a jewellery workshop, a dance and didgeridoo performance and screening of *One Night the Moon*.

Staff from Sydney enjoyed Aboriginal guided tours of the Royal Botanic Gardens and attended a morning tea, which included a history of reconciliation presentation and a performance of *Solid Rock* by the office choir. ACT staff held an event where they were inspired by the words of the first Indigenous Australian Rhodes scholar, Rebecca Richards.

Former West Coast Eagles AFL footballer David Wirrpanda visited the Western Australian State Office and spoke about what reconciliation means to him and the work that his foundation does. The David Wirrpanda Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their families. The foundation helps deliver a number of DEEWR programs, including the Solid Futures project to provide training places and jobs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Northern Territory Office sent out quiz questions each day and showed movies including *Rabbit Proof Fence* and *Ten Canoes*. The main attraction of the week was the Batji Tour, with many staff taking a walk along the Darwin Esplanade with traditional owner Robert Mills.

Guest speaker Brendan Fletcher, acclaimed director of the recent film *Mad Bastards*, talked to staff in Melbourne and via video-conference to Bendigo offices about his experiences working with the largely Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cast and crew, many whom contributed their own stories to the script.

To celebrate National Reconciliation Week, the Brisbane Office launched its Reconciliation Journey Wall on Friday 27 May 2011. The wall was designed by Queensland staff to demonstrate DEEWR's commitment to the RAP. Leading up to the event, each staff member was encouraged to decorate a tile for the wall to reflect their individual experiences of respect, relationships and opportunities; the core values of the RAP. The surrounding walls are decorated to represent people from different areas around Australia and the world through saltwater, freshwater, rainforest and desert colours. Excerpts from the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples are also on the walls. Norman Tyndale's Aboriginal Map and the Torres Strait Islander map is also displayed which shows the language boundaries of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples prior to settlement.

Aunty Stephanie Gollan's basket weaving workshop was a highlight of National Reconciliation Week in the South Australian Office. Aunty Stephanie is a proud Ngarrindjeri woman who specialises in intricate basket weaving and creating traditional jewellery. Participants were captivated by Aunty Stephanie's warmth and humour as she shared facts about Ngarrindjeri history with them as she taught her craft. They were surprised to learn that weaving was traditionally undertaken by Ngarrindjeri men. Alas, no DEEWR men were present to carry on the tradition. Stephanie worked the room continuously to help each of the participants with their endeavours. Novices and advanced participants were all equally proud of their creations and all agreed that the rewarding experience had been relaxing and therapeutic.

Tasmania State Office celebrated with a lunch of traditional food including kangaroo and shellfish. Staff also had the opportunity to contribute their handprints to artwork on four canvases.




Adelaide Office basket weaving workshop for Reconciliation Week. Pictured from left to right: Lily Nguyen and Krisha Brandon.

'Zenadh Kes Mari were thankful and delighted at the opportunity to perform our traditional Torres Strait Islander dances at DEEWR during Reconciliation Week 2011. I would like to personally acknowledge the work DEEWR is doing to create education and employment opportunities and inspire the next generation, including my own son, to be the best they can be.' **Masepah Banu, Zenadh Kes Mari dance group**




Zenadh Kes Mari

Opportunities		Driving results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through practical and creative solutions				
Focus area 3.1: Finding solutions and delivering results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all of DEEWR's activities						
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress	
1. Programs and policies have scope for tailored strategies to meet the requirements of metropolitan, urban, regional, remote and very remote communities	<p>Lead Group/s All National Program Managers in each cluster</p> <p>Supporting Group/s All Senior Executive Staff</p>	July 2009 and each subsequent year	Solutions are based on qualitative and quantitative evidence, including local and international best practices		This target has been difficult to measure. Based on feedback received from each cluster within the department, progress has been made and will continue to be made. Attachment A provides a brief update from each cluster within DEEWR on their progress towards achieving this target.	

'Hi, I'm Marlene and I'm a Kalkadoon woman. I work in the Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care Early Childhood Quality Group. Since starting with my group I have met some wonderful people. I have been constantly touched by their generous spirits and inclusive behaviours. I'm touched by how much interest and support they give to me and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. I'm lucky enough to be a part of positive change that has the potential to transform the lives of future generations of Australians.'

A quote from Marlene Lang, Project Officer Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care

Opportunities		Driving results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through practical and creative solutions				
Focus area 3.2: Becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples						
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress	
1. Implement whole of career strategies that increase the recruitment, retention and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees	<p>Lead Group People and Organisational Development Group</p> <p>Supporting Group/s Indigenous Leader Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi Committee</p>	July 2010	An analysis is undertaken to measure the impact of internal strategies on career advancement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees		<p>On Track. The department reviews the outcomes of targeted Indigenous programs (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cadets, graduates, the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program and the Indigenous Study Awards) at regular intervals, including the ongoing effects on participants' individual career development and aspirations.</p> <p>The department is in the planning stages for a post implementation review of the 2010–11 Indigenous Australian Government Development Program pilot which will examine participants' views on how their career trajectories have been influenced by the program.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned The department is undertaking an internal audit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff recruitment, retention and career development. A clear objective of the audit is to provide assurance</p>	

Opportunities	Driving results for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through practical and creative solutions				
Focus area 3.2: Becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples					
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target	Status	Actual Progress
					<p>on the strategies in place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander career development in DEEWR.</p> <p>On Track. In the context of a reduction in budget for 2010–11, the department has been able to maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation at an average of 5.63 per cent over the year (5.72 per cent in June 2010 and 5.21 per cent in June 2011).</p> <p>As at 30 June 2011, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Executive levels and SES levels is 24.2 per cent of the total representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within the department.</p> <p>Comments/lessons learned</p> <p>The Mura Kaimel–Yarrangi recruitment, retention and career development strategy and draft workplan 2011–12 includes a focus on development and retention.</p> <p>The outcomes of the internal audit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff recruitment, retention and career development will also be used to inform future approaches.</p>
		June 2011	<p>Staff targets have been reviewed for 2010–11 so that the following is achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increases in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation across the department to reach the Australian Public Service Commission target of 6.16% by 2015, reviewing the percentage increase on an annual basis ▪ increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Executive and Senior Executive Staff levels ▪ development of tailored approaches to support the retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff 	●	

Attachment A—National Program Managers

Action 3.1.2: Programs and policies have scope for tailored strategies to meet the requirements of metropolitan, urban, regional, remote and very remote communities

Measurable Target: Solutions are based on qualitative and quantitative evidence, including local and international best practices (Due July 2009 and each subsequent year)

Schools and Youth

All programs, initiatives and new policy proposals are based on analysis of the best available evidence which is drawn from local, state and territory, national and international sources. In keeping with the need for evidence-based policy, transparency and public accountability, Schools and Youth cluster has developed the Data Management Strategy as a framework to improve data management practices and protocols to facilitate the best possible use of data resources. In May 2011, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010–2014. The plan identifies national, systemic and local level actions in six evidence-based priority domains which will guide effort over the life of the plan. The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs will publish the first annual report on the plan which will be available in late 2011.

Comments/lessons learned

With regards to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Schooling Branch has been working with mainstream areas of the department to support the National Collaborative Actions. This will involve building capacity and understanding in mainstream areas to assist in the successful fulfilment of these roles.

Employment

\$6.1 million has been allocated to pilot culturally appropriate mentoring via Job Services Australia and Disability Employment Service to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers. \$3.3 million has been allocated to Innovation Fund projects to assist more than 1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers. Online cultural awareness training with specific relevance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues is scheduled to be developed late 2011 or early 2012 for Job Services Australia and Disability Employment Service staff. Regular performance advice is delivered to assist the department to manage remote Job Services Australia and Disability Employment Services providers with specific measures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Comments/lessons learned

The department will continue to work with Indigenous Employment Program panel members, employers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure the program operates effectively and addresses the needs of stakeholders.

Tertiary, Skills, International and Indigenous Strategy

All foundation skills programs have inbuilt flexibility that allows for responsiveness to requirements in different catchment areas and enables contextualised training to be delivered. Quality assurance and feedback processes allow the collection of qualitative evidence relating to program outcomes. Foundation skills policy development specifically considers both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and place-based delivery at all stages of the development process.

The International Scholarships and Mobility Section continues to offer, annually through the Endeavour Awards Program, Endeavour Research Fellowships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These awards provide financial support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows to undertake short-term research (four to six months) towards an Australian Masters or PhD; or postdoctoral research in any field of study within a participating country.

The Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council provides independent policy advice to Government on enhancing participation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff in higher education across Australia. The Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People will identify key priorities for consideration, based on evidence and best practice, by government and the higher education sector in a final report to Government in March 2012.

Measurable Target: Solutions are based on qualitative and quantitative evidence, including local and international best practices (Due July 2009 and each subsequent year)

Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

The Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy cluster, through its engagement with the International Labour Organization (ILO), has an important role in advancing rights, protection and support for the most vulnerable workers. Part of our work with the ILO involves contributing to and advocating for the creation, promotion and implementation of international labour standards designed to enshrine minimum rights and protections for workers worldwide, especially for those most vulnerable. ILO Convention 169 concerning the *Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples 1989* states Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and tribal peoples enjoy, without discrimination, the full measure of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Special measures are in place to safeguard the persons, institutions, property, labour, cultures and environment of the peoples concerned.

Comments/lessons learned

Ratification of Convention 169 would strengthen Australia's credentials within the international community by committing to effectively protecting the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples.

Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care

In 2010 the *National Preschool Census* and the *Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Census* gathered key data about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschoolers and early childhood staff. The 2009 Australian Early Development Index was also an important source of community-level data on children's development. This evidence supports the integration of elements concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in several mainstream programs including:

- preparation for a new National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care
- release of *An Educators' Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework*, distributed in February 2011 to support early childhood educators implement the Early Years Learning Framework
- support of universal access to early childhood education, with a lift in both the national and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolment rates in 2010
- development of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program to promote high quality care for all children, in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- provision of 38 integrated Children and Family Centres with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (the first Children and Family Centre opened in May 2011).

Comments/lessons learned

Experience in implementing early childhood services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children suggests it is important to maximise engagement of experienced service providers.

New Children and Family Centre for the Belconnen community

In May 2011 a new Children and Family Centre funded through the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development opened in the ACT. The centre, located in West Belconnen, offers a range of services to families to support their child's health, learning and development, with a particular focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children from birth to eight years of age. The centre offers access to early learning activities, playgroups and parental courses, as well as other child and family services such as maternal and child health and allied health services. The centre also supports access to appropriate childcare services in the area. Trained professionals are available at the centre to assist families with questions about parenting, health, education and child development.

The West Belconnen Child and Family Centre is the product of partnerships between the Australian Government, ACT Government and the local community. Working through these partnerships, the centre is making a real difference to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families by setting children on the path to ongoing success in school and later life. Through the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development, the Australian Government is providing \$292.62 million in funding to establish 38 Children and Family Centres across Australia by June 2014. The West Belconnen centre is the first to be opened and fully operational.