

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2022-2025







## About the Artist and Artwork

The artist Jordan Lovegrove, a Ngarrindjeri man of Dreamtime Creative, shows the journey of the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) towards reconciliation. The large, combined meeting place in the middle represents the FWO, and the large pathway going through the artwork represents our reconciliation journey. The pathway increases in width to represent growth. The smaller meeting places represent different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people, while the pathways leading out to them show the agency building stronger connections. The patterned areas represent the different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander regions and places around Australia that the agency is reaching.







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

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### **Acknowledgment of Country and Traditional Custodians**

The FWO acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters, skies, and community. We pay our respects to them, their cultures, and Elders, past, present, and future.

We also respectfully acknowledge the FWO's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, customers, partners, stakeholders, and visitors.

### **The terms we have used in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2022-2025**

The FWO respectfully use the terminologies 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' and 'Indigenous' in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2022-2025, to refer to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia. We acknowledge that other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural names may be preferred.

By the Commonwealth's definition, a person is Indigenous if they:

- i. are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent *and*
- ii. identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander *and*
- iii. are accepted by the Indigenous community in which they live.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Australian Law Reform Commission](#)





## Fair Work Ombudsman/ CEO Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the FWO Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2022-2025 (the Strategy).

This Strategy represents our genuine commitment to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career opportunities within the FWO. Increasing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across classification levels and business areas is vital to building a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities in which we operate.

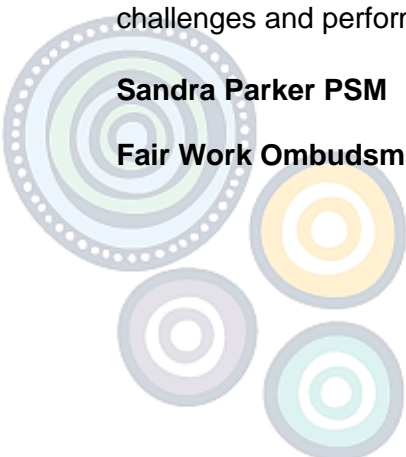
The FWO strives to create a welcoming, inclusive and culturally safe work environment that is responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Every manager shares the responsibility for helping the FWO to deliver on this commitment.

The Strategy supports the Commonwealth-wide approach outlined in the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024 and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reform Three - Transforming Government Organisations. Together with our *Reconciliation Action Plan* it reflects our focus on building partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the enrichment of the workplace through cultural diversity.

The greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the FWO supports my commitment to building a regulator that is culturally capable and responsive to community expectations. Implementing the initiatives in the Strategy will assist the agency to respond to future challenges and perform our role to the highest standard.

**Sandra Parker PSM**

**Fair Work Ombudsman**





## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion

I am pleased to support the FWO Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2022-2025.

Like all Australian Public Service agencies, we have a responsibility to expand the range of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, develop capability, increase representation in senior roles, and improve awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in the workplace.

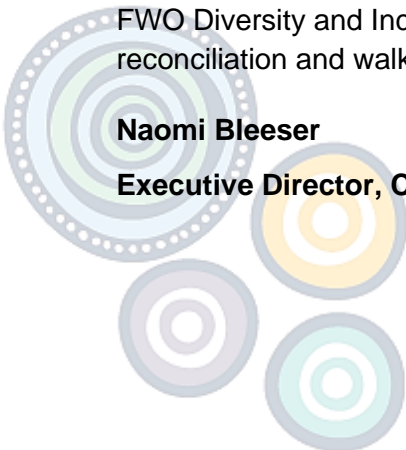
It is important that the FWO increase our representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and provide a positive working environment for all. We are committed to a culture where people feel included and know their diversity is valued.

There are many talented Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who possess unique skills and experiences. Increasing our representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will benefit the agency and assist us to better meet the needs of the community.

The Strategy establishes clear and effective actions to be implemented across the agency over the next four years which I am committed to. To achieve the objectives of the Strategy it is vital that we provide a culturally appropriate environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people thrive. It is incumbent on everyone at FWO to ensure we are culturally capable to achieve this.

The successful implementation of this strategy will also assist us in achieving the objectives of the FWO Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Reconciliation Action Plan, in the hopes of advancing reconciliation and walking together in genuine unison.

**Naomi Bleaser**  
**Executive Director, Customer Services Branch**







## Our Commitment

We strive to build a diverse workforce that delivers inclusive services to our community. We are committed to working towards an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce target of 2.7% by 2025.

Cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is crucial for our new strategy's success. We commit to creating a culturally inclusive and safe workplace for all employees.

Our leaders will empower and support our workforce, take action to do things differently, embrace innovative practices that enable us to reach our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment targets and lead by example to create a culturally safe environment where Indigenous staff can develop, progress and succeed.

## Evaluation and Monitoring Progress

The Strategy will operate until December 2025 and will be reviewed annually to ensure that objectives and initiatives are aligned with the current employment environment and the FWO Corporate Plan.

The Strategy's outcomes will be reported annually to the FWO's Corporate Board through the People Branch and to staff via the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion.

Feedback and updates on the implementation of the Strategy will occur through the People Branch to ensure continued progress and success of the Strategy.

## Contributors' Acknowledgement

The Strategy acknowledges the efforts of the following teams and individuals who contributed to the development of this Strategy: our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Senior Champion, People Branch Leadership Team, Diversity and Inclusion Team, Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and other contributing FWO employees.





# Background

## Who Are We?

The FWO is Australia's workplace regulator, and our purpose is to promote harmonious, productive, cooperative, and compliant workplace relations. We regulate around 12 million workers and 2 million workplaces around Australia. The community expects the FWO, as the national workplace regulator, to uphold Australian workplace standards and protect the most vulnerable workers in our community. We are here to help all workers and employers in Australia to understand their rights and responsibilities at work.

We have a workforce of over 900 employees nationally, with offices located in all capital cities and 15 regional locations.

The FWO's functions are set out by the Fair Work Act and require us to:

- Provide education, assistance, advice and guidance to employers, employees, outworkers, outworker entities and organisations.
- Promote and monitor compliance with workplace laws.
- Inquire into and investigate breaches of the Fair Work Act.
- Take appropriate enforcement action.
- Perform our statutory functions efficiently, effectively, economically, and ethically.

## Diversity and inclusion

We respect and value the diversity of our workforce. We are committed to creating an environment that values a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences and uses these to maximise our service delivery.

Our vision for diversity includes:

- creating employment and career opportunities that are free from barriers
- promoting our commitment to sustainable and flexible careers
- supporting and maintaining open and transparent communication channels
- making the best use of the diverse talents of our people through robust workforce planning and talent management initiatives
- actively supporting the careers and cultural needs of our employees.





# Introduction

The FWO is committed to increasing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across its workforce to better represent the community we serve. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees provide different perspectives, experience, and knowledge. They also contribute to cross-cultural awareness in the workplace, which is important when communicating with people from diverse backgrounds and engaging with local communities.

The FWO aims to provide employees with the tools, resources, and capabilities to retain and develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, and to ensure managers and peers are culturally competent.

There is a considerable gap in employment rates between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. Halving the gap in employment outcomes is one of the six targets in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.<sup>2</sup>

As an Agency, we need to identify, acknowledge, and take action to alleviate the challenges faced by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and colleagues.

## Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to detail a plan of actions that FWO will carry out over the next four years. These actions aim to increase our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce towards 2.7%. These actions will also assist us in achieving the related targets in the FWO Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-2022 and the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024, which are reproduced below.

### **FWO Reconciliation Action Plan:**<sup>3</sup>

- **Relationships** - We will foster positive, respectful, and consultative relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to enhance our understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customs and traditions. This will ensure our approach to delivering workplace relations services and advice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, registered organisations, employers, and employees will be culturally relevant, respectful, and inclusive.
- **Respect** - We acknowledge and value the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we operate. We are committed to fostering a supportive, respectful, and inclusive workplace environment where all employees have an opportunity to gain an understanding of and celebrate the heritage, values, and beliefs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In doing this, we can improve our service delivery and contribute to the reconciliation objectives of the broader APS.

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<sup>2</sup> [Closing the Gap Targets and Outcomes](#)

<sup>3</sup> [FWO Reconciliation Action Plan 2020-2022](#)





- **Opportunities** - Creating opportunities to recruit, retain and support the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees enables us to build a culturally diverse workforce and enhance employee capability. We will also create opportunities to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through our procurement processes and seek opportunities to increase awareness of the services we provide to redress adverse employment outcomes experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

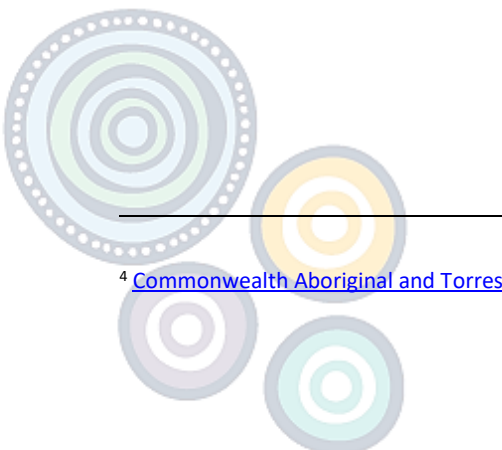
#### **Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy.**<sup>4</sup>

- **Cultural Integrity** – improving and embedding the understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in the workplace to support the development of culturally-safe workspaces and services and creating a more inclusive Commonwealth Public Sector.
- **Career Pathways** – diversify and strengthen the pathways into and across the Commonwealth Public Sector.
- **Career Development and Advancement** – individual career development and advancement plans supported by targeted development initiatives and advancement opportunities.

#### *Priority Actions for Agencies*

The outcome is for the Commonwealth public sector to have inclusive workplaces with a greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce representation at all classification levels and in all business areas.

A strategic focus on all elements of this strategy will contribute to its success.



<sup>4</sup> [Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024](#)

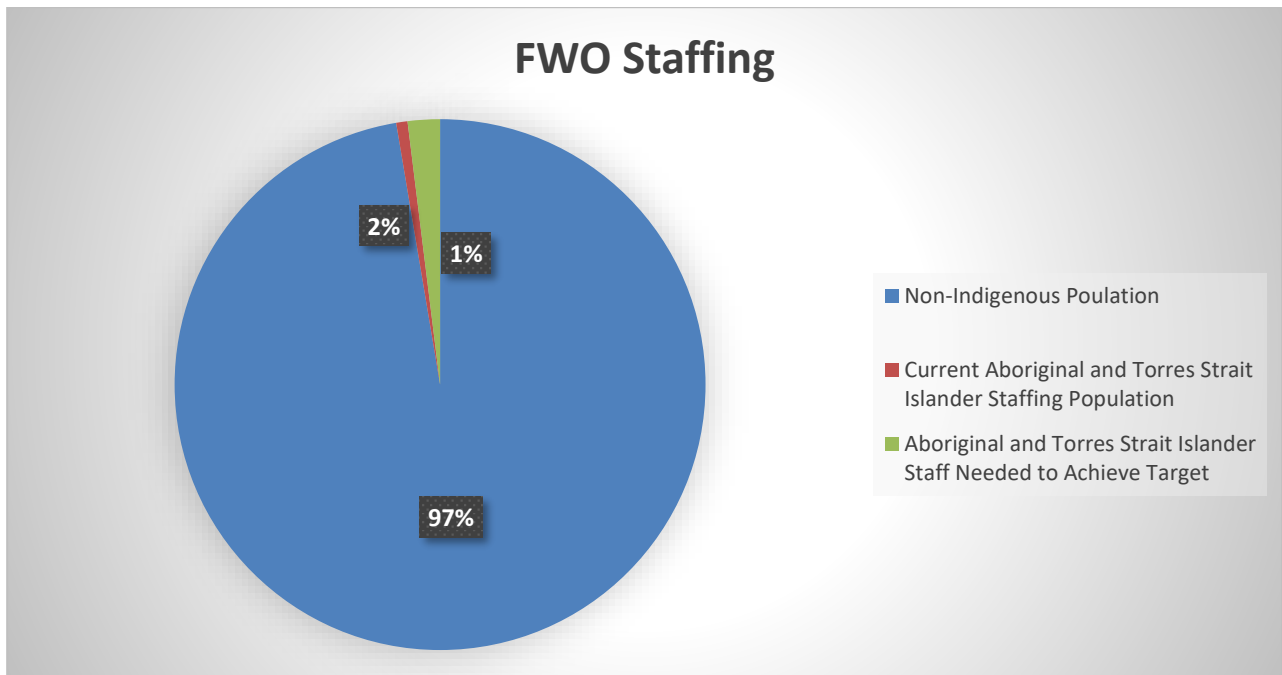


## Staffing Profile

As of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the FWO employed 8 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff. This equates to 0.7% of total staffing numbers, remaining well below both the FWO and the Australian Public Service (APS) targets.

The APS State of Service Report 2020-2021 shows us that:

- The APS struggles to retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees.
- Annual engagement rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees have risen.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees stay in the service for a median 4.3 years as compared to 12.9 years for non-Indigenous employees.
- Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are employed at APS 3 and 4 levels.
- Just 39 members of the 2859 Senior Executive Service (SES) APS-wide identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.<sup>5</sup>



As of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, FWO had 979 employees, 8 identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Approximately 25 Indigenous employees are needed to achieve targets.



<sup>5</sup> [State of Service Report 2020-2021](#)





# The Strategy

The Strategy provides an overarching framework, setting out how the FWO will identify and remove barriers that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities, staff retention, cultural awareness, professional development, and career progression.

We are committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can secure employment and establish a sustainable and fulfilling career within the FWO. This commitment is further supported by our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy<sup>6</sup> which details our ongoing commitment to strengthen our diverse and inclusive workplace.

The FWO aims to work towards an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment target of 2.7% by the final year of the Strategy.

To assist in accomplishing this goal, the Strategy outlines six key focus areas

1. Recruitment
2. Talent Attraction
3. Retention
4. Career Development and Progression
5. Cultural Inclusion and Competence
6. Accountability and Responsibility

The FWO acknowledges that a lot of work needs to be done to build on the focus areas to achieve quality outcomes. There are significant differences in current representation between FWO branches, with some having very low to no representation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff. The Strategy sets out a range of initiatives tailored to address these imbalances and further increase representation across all branches and levels within the agency.

We also need to recognise the challenges for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues. One of these challenges can be the pressure to be a role model and/or representative for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the form of 'cultural loading'. The Strategy aims to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, retain our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, provide tools, build on resources, and improve on the capabilities to ensure managers and peers are culturally capable to relieve this.

It is imperative that we build on our cultural capabilities across all branches and employment levels to ensure the FWO is a culturally safe workplace. This is essential to the success of the Strategy.

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<sup>6</sup> [FWO Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2021](#)





# Key Focus Areas



## 1. Recruitment

Focus - create more employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and increase representation across all branches and APS levels.



## 2. Talent Attraction

Focus - Uplift branding and reputation to position us as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



## 3. Retention

Focus - retain our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by embedding culturally appropriate workplace practices and support systems.



## 4. Career Development and Progression

Focus - support and develop our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and improve career planning and training to build capabilities, enhance opportunities and build stronger succession pipelines into senior leadership roles.



## 5. Cultural Inclusion and Competence

Focus - build a more inclusive workforce where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff feel safe, and cultures are acknowledged, valued and respected.



## 6. Accountability and Responsibility

Focus - improve accountability for the implementation of the Strategy and its initiatives and enhance reporting capabilities to measure success.





# 1. Recruitment

*Focus - create more employment opportunities and pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and increase representation across all branches and levels.*

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline
1.1 Embed Affirmative Measure Provisions as an option when considering recruiting.	People Branch	March 2023
1.2 Develop an Affirmative Measure Provision and Identified Position toolkit.	People Branch	March 2023
1.3 Promote and increase the number of Affirmative Measure positions advertised through targeted pathway programs, e.g. Indigenous Apprenticeship Program, Indigenous Graduate Pathway.	Executive Director People Branch, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion, People Branch	March 2023
1.4 Review current job descriptions to ensure cultural appropriateness.	People Branch	March 2023
1.5 Explore and educate the business on new recruitment practices for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates so they can effectively demonstrate skills and knowledge.	People Branch	December 2023
1.6 Investigate the option of recruiting positions into metropolitan and regional offices.	Executive Directors, Directors and People Branch	December 2023





## 2. Talent Attraction

*Focus - uplift branding and reputation to position us as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.*

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>2.1</b> Design and launch an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Careers landing page in FWO external website.	People Branch, Communications Branch	December 2023
<b>2.2</b> Foster University and TAFE Virtual Career Fairs networks to build branding and tertiary pipeline.	People Branch	December 2023
<b>2.3</b> Advertise and promote Affirmative Measure positions through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media channels (e.g., Koori Mail, Torres News) in addition to the usual channels.	People Branch	Ongoing
<b>2.4</b> Develop an advertising recruitment pack for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment campaigns.	People Branch	June 2023
<b>2.5</b> Enhance employee value propositions to attract prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent.	People Branch	June 2023







### 3. Retention

*Focus - retain our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by embedding culturally appropriate workplace practices and support systems.*

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>3.1</b> Embed the option for eligible employees to join Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Network during onboarding.	People Branch	March 2023
<b>3.2</b> Promote the Indigenous stream of EAP to our current support systems.	People Branch	December 2022
<b>3.3</b> Develop a Buddy Program for new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	People Branch	June 2023
<b>3.4</b> Pilot an annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees Network forum/workshop.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion, People Branch	June 2024
<b>3.5</b> Develop a resource guide for Managers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to develop cultural capability.	People Branch	September 2023
<b>3.6</b> Promote the use of Cultural Leave and add reminders in manager discussions.	All Managers	Ongoing
<b>3.7</b> Exit interviews encouraged upon cessation for all ongoing employees to gauge their experience at the FWO and reasons for leaving.	People Branch	Ongoing
<b>3.8</b> Develop a Welcome Guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander new starters to initiate cultural safety and support.	People Branch	September 2023
<b>3.9</b> Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have the opportunity to be representatives or participate in key agency committees.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion, People Branch	Ongoing





## 4. Career Development and Progression

*Focus - support and develop our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and improve career planning and training to build capabilities, enhance opportunities and build stronger succession pipelines into senior leadership roles.*

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>4.1</b> Investigate external leadership training opportunities for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to ensure they reach their full potential.	People Branch	December 2023
<b>4.2</b> Develop and pilot an inter/intra-agency strategic Indigenous mobility program.	People Branch	June 2024
<b>4.3</b> Develop an Indigenous Mentoring Program for existing staff.	People Branch	December 2023
<b>4.4.</b> Develop and implement formal development plans for all staff.	All Directors and Assistant Directors	Ongoing
<b>4.5</b> Investigate the option of providing a minimum of one Indigenous Scholarship for internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to seek further education or qualifications.	People Branch, Diversity and Inclusion	June 2025
<b>4.6</b> Embed practical, facilitated professional development sessions into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Employees Network forum/workshops.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion, People Branch, Diversity and Inclusion	December 2023







## 5. Cultural Inclusion and Competence

*Focus - build a more inclusive workforce where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and culture are acknowledged, valued, and respected.*

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>5.1</b> Integrate Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country into all official events, whole of agency meetings and other meetings/forums as appropriate.	CEO, DFWO's and Executive Directors	March 2023
<b>5.2</b> CORE Cultural Learning, Part 1 - mandatory for all staff, to be completed within 12 months. Part 2 – mandatory for all staff EL1 and above, to be completed within 12 months.	Executive Directors, Directors, Assistant Directors	December 2023
<b>5.3</b> Continue to commit to a minimum of one funded Jawun Program Secondee annually.	People Branch	Ongoing
<b>5.4</b> Investigate developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Principles for delivery of service.	People Branch, Engagement Branch	October 2023
<b>5.5</b> Implement the use of local Indigenous language in naming rooms in capital cities and regional office locations.	Corporate Services Branch, People Branch	December 2025
<b>5.6</b> Embedding continual cultural capability building and learning into Performance Plans.	People Branch	June 2024
<b>5.7</b> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competency Framework.	People Branch	June 2025
<b>5.8</b> All staff encouraged to participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national events.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion, RAP WG, Employee Network, All Managers	Ongoing
<b>5.9</b> Promote and encourage inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages on the agency's linguistically diverse register.	People Branch, Diversity and Inclusion	March 2023
<b>5.10</b> Investigate opportunities for Senior Leaders to complete facilitated Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training/Yarning Circles/Immersion Program.	People Branch, All Senior Executives, Directors and Assistant Directors.	June 2024





## 6. Accountability and Responsibility

*Focus - improve accountability for the implementation of the Strategy and its initiatives and enhance reporting capabilities to measure success.*

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>6.1</b> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion will promote and assist in the implementation of the Strategy, advocating across all levels.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Champion	Ongoing
<b>6.2</b> All agency Executives to take action to support the key themes and focuses of the Strategy.	CEO, All Senior Executives Service Officers, Directors and Assistant Directors	Ongoing
<b>6.3</b> Monitoring of the Strategy's progress and implementation of activities. Report to People Branch Executive twice per year.	People Branch	Ongoing (June and December)
<b>6.4</b> Report on progress to Corporate Board.	People Branch	December 2022/23/24
<b>6.5</b> Introduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment initiatives and targets into branch people planning.	All Executive Directors and People Branch	Ongoing
<b>6.6</b> Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment initiatives and targets into Executive performance agreements.	CEO and Senior Executive Service Officers	Ongoing







# Significant dates celebrated by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and their communities

The FWO respects and recognises the unique cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities and events that have helped shape Indigenous Australia. Please note that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Shires and Council Regions across Australia may have additional dates of significance relevant to their area.

## **13 February - [National Apology](#)**

Anniversary of the formal apology made by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on 13 February 2008 to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – particularly to the Stolen Generations.

celebrate their unique culture, heritage, and history and to commemorate the designer the late Bernard Namok Snr from Thursday Island.

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in March – [National Close the Gap Day](#)**

Australia's largest ever campaign to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Close the Gap Day is an opportunity for organisations and community to hold events and raise awareness of the Indigenous health crisis.

## **26 May - [National Sorry Day](#)**

National Sorry Day offers the community the opportunity to acknowledge the impact of the policies spanning more than 150 years of forcible removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. The first National Sorry Day was held on 26 May 1998 following the 1997 HREOC report Bringing Them Home, which recommended that a National Day of Observance be declared.

## **21 March – [Harmony Day](#)**

Harmony Day celebrates the cohesive and inclusive nature of Australia and promotes a tolerant and culturally diverse society.

## **27 May to 3 June - [National Reconciliation Week](#) (NRW)**

National Reconciliation Week was initiated in 1996 to offer people across Australia the opportunity to focus on reconciliation, to hear about the cultures and histories of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to explore new and better ways of meeting challenges in our communities.

## **29 March – [Torres Strait Islander Flag](#)**

In June 1995 the Australian Federal Government proclaimed the Torres Strait Islander flag an official flag of Australia. Torres Strait Islanders celebrate this day to



### **27 May – [1967 Referendum](#)**

In 1967 over 90% of Australians voted in a Referendum to remove clauses from the Australian Constitution which discriminated against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Referendum also gave the Commonwealth Government the power to make laws on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

### **3 June – [Mabo Day](#)**

Mabo Day marks the anniversary of the High Court of Australia's judgement in 1992 in the Mabo case. The High Court, in an historical judgement, accepted the claim by Eddie Mabo and the other claimants that their people (the Meriam people) had occupied the Islands of Mer for hundreds of years before the arrival of the British. The decision overturned a legal fiction that Australia was terra nullius (a land belonging to no one) at the time of British colonisation.

### **1 July – [Coming of the Light](#)**

This day of significance for Torres Strait Islander Australians, marks the day the London Missionary Society first arrived in the Torres Strait. The missionaries landed at Erub Island (Darnley Island) on 1 July 1871.

Religious and cultural ceremonies are held by Torres Strait Islanders across Australia to commemorate this day.

### **First Week July - [NAIDOC Week](#)**

NAIDOC Week is observed from the first Sunday in July to the second Sunday in July each year. NAIDOC celebrations are held around Australia to celebrate the history,

culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

### **12 July – [Aboriginal Flag](#)**

The Australian Aboriginal flag was designed by Harold Thomas and first flown in Victoria Square in Adelaide, South Australia on National Aborigines Day, 12 July 1971.

### **4 August – [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day \(NAICD\)](#)**

NAICD is a time when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families celebrate the strengths and culture of their children. The day is an opportunity for all Australians to show their support for Indigenous children, as well as learn about the crucial impact community, culture and family play in the life of every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child.

### **9 August – [International Day of the World's Indigenous People](#)**

The United Nations' (UN) International Day of the World's Indigenous People is observed each year to promote and protect the rights of the world's Indigenous population. This event also recognises the achievements and contributions that Indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.





**1st September – [Indigenous Literacy Day](#)**

Indigenous Literacy Day celebrates Aboriginal culture, stories, and languages. Indigenous Literacy Day aims to help raise funds to raise literacy levels and improve the opportunities of Indigenous Australians living in remote and isolated regions. Support is given by buying books and other literacy resources for children in these communities.

**13 September – [Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#)**

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the UN General Assembly during its 61st session at the UN Headquarters in New York City on 13 September 2007.

**10 December – [Human Rights Day](#)**

Human Rights Day commemorates the day in 1948 the UN General Assembly adopts the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.





## Contact Us

The FWO welcomes feedback on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy. [Contact us](#) for more information about the development or the contents of the Strategy.



**Fair Work**  
OMBUDSMAN



Our Agency knows that our people are our greatest strength. They fuel our innovation and connect us to our customers and the communities we serve. The Diversity and Inclusion Team are committed to supporting the Agency in building an inclusive culture that encourages, supports, and celebrates diverse voices and experiences of our employees. We continuously push for better outcomes by promoting and building diversity and inclusion competency.