

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander cultural capability
strategy 2016–2020**



Cover artwork for this publication is entitled *Connecting Communities and Government* and has been created by Fiona Hill of the Waluwarra and Yirendall people in Queensland.

The artwork reflects the Department of Natural Resources and Mines' continued efforts in connecting to cities, communities (both rural and remote) and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their discrete communities.

The story of the painting is one of connectedness, with the middle circle representing the Queensland Government and the eight star point representing the different spokes or sections of government. The different regions of Central Queensland; North Queensland; Far North Queensland; Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday; Wide Bay Burnett; Darling Downs South West; and South East Queensland are represented by the seven circles.

The theme of connectedness is continued with the circles around the green dots representing the cities and towns, and the four outer circles representing rural and remote communities. The dots represent continued connection.



1. Introduction

This strategy represents a conscious and committed attempt to improve the opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in obtaining employment and professional development within the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM). It is designed to ensure that the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed throughout the agency at all levels reflects their importance to the business of the department.

We have developed this strategy because we:

- value an inclusive and diverse workforce
- value the diverse knowledge, skills, history, traditions and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- seek to maximise the employment and career development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- want the department to be a culturally capable employer and service provider.

This strategy has been developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in DNRM, and annual implementation plans will also be developed.

2. Objectives

This cultural capability strategy has three objectives:

- DNRM will be the Queensland public sector employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- DNRM will increase the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at all levels
- DNRM will ensure its organisational culture creates and maintains an environment in which its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees thrive, and that we provide culturally capable services.

3. Achieving our objectives

The following sections outline how DNRM will achieve its objectives. Each objective has a number of strategies that will be implemented. Annual implementation plans will identify the specific actions that will be undertaken each year to support the strategies and, in turn, achieve our objectives.



3.1 DNRM will be the Queensland public sector employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

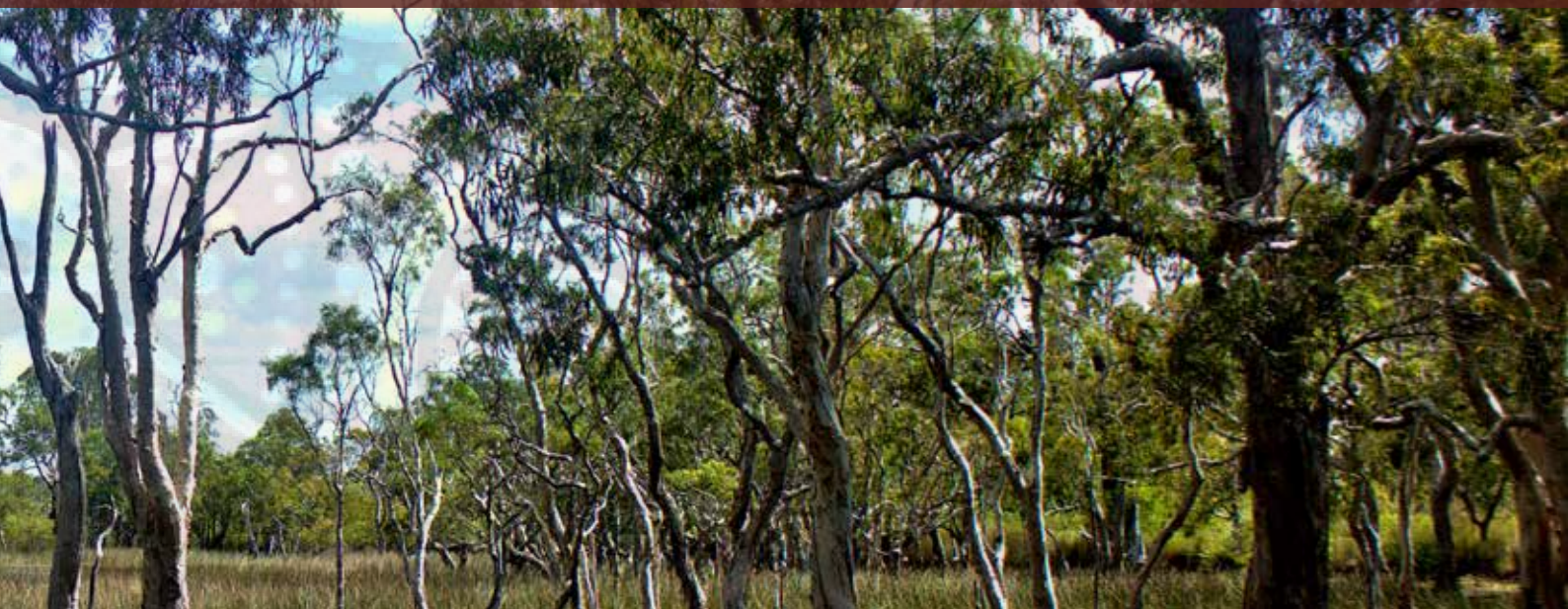
The strategies outlined in this section seek to build DNRM as the employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through culturally appropriate selection and recruitment practices, targeted marketing, the success of our existing staff and their careers within DNRM, and investment in the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The department is committed to creating a diverse workforce, which requires that workers are selected, promoted and trained on the basis of their individual talents and capabilities.

DNRM recognises that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have considerable knowledge of land, natural resources and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, and that this knowledge should be properly and fairly recognised in the employment and career development process.

DNRM will commit to culturally appropriate recruitment and selection procedures, including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on selection panels when the position requires working with and engaging customary and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities
- development of role descriptions and capabilities to fully reflect any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and cross-cultural skill requirements
- improvement of tools and mechanisms to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants (e.g. how to address capabilities, interview techniques)
- support for traineeship, cadetship, pre-employment, skills development and bridging programs to achieve permanent employment.



3.2 DNRM will increase the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at all levels

DNRM will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to compete for positions on merit and to gain promotion within the organisation through training, education and career development measures. We will focus not only on our existing staff, but on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff of the future, through strategic investment in learning and development. We will commit to representation at all classification levels.

DNRM will:

- dedicate resources specifically to guide career development and the broader implementation of this strategy
- encourage mentoring and networking amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- develop education and training programs that enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to advance their careers in all areas and levels within DNRM

- assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff with career development and planning, and to gain access to relevant training, work experience and relieving opportunities provided by DNRM and other government agencies
- support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to complete higher studies.

3.3 DNRM will ensure its organisational culture creates and maintains an environment in which its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees thrive, and that we provide culturally capable services

The success of employment and career development programs will depend on the organisation establishing a positive, supportive and credible relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities. This will also require a supportive environment for staff working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This is what we call cultural capability.



DNRM will:

- ensure the implementation of this strategy is supported by all levels of leadership within the department
- provide the resources necessary to successfully implement actions to achieve our objectives
- ensure that our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is an integral part of our attraction and recruitment processes
- ensure that events and commemorations of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are recognised and celebrated in DNRM.

4. Implementation

Regular implementation plans will be developed to articulate the goals, targets and reporting regimes that focus on the three main objectives and related actions under this strategy.

