



Ms Rebecca Brown
Acting Director General
Department of the Premier and Cabinet
Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6004

Attention: Mr Nicholas Duff, Principal Policy Officer

Dear Ms Brown

DEVELOPING THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S ABORIGINAL EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY

Thank you for your letter received 16 January 2020 inviting feedback on the main ideas set out in the "A Path Forward – Developing the Western Australian Government's Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy" discussion paper, together with any information on current or potential implementation within DMIRS.

DMIRS has reviewed the discussion paper and provides the following feedback to the three questions posed:

- 1. Are the main ideas right? Do you agree with the description of the overall goal, principles, strategic elements and framework? Would you change or add anything?**

DMIRS agrees with the overall goal, principles and framework of the discussion paper.

DMIRS suggests amending the wording of the overall goal. The current wording is as follows - *Aboriginal people, families and communities being empowered to live good lives and choose their own futures from a secure foundation.*

Please consider rewording the overall goal as suggested below:

*Aboriginal people, families and communities **are empowered** to live good lives and choose their own futures from a secure foundation.*

- 2. Are we using the right words? You might broadly agree with the main ideas, but want to see them expressed using different language. We welcome your recommendations. In particular, we are interested in whether the term “Aboriginal people” should be used or whether other terms such as “First Nations” would be more appropriate.**

The language being used throughout the document is appropriate. DMIRS has previously consulted with its Aboriginal employees regarding the language used in internal corporate documents. Our Aboriginal employees supported the term ‘First Nations’. It is a term being used more frequently within Aboriginal communities.

It is also recommended that the language of the document is aligned with the language recommended by Reconciliation Australia.

- 3. What else should we be thinking about? You may have a view on how the strategy should be implemented in a particular region or subject area, or examples of current good practice. Your ideas are valuable to us.**

A key opportunity exists here to translate the process of implementing this strategy effectively and appropriately on the ground with key Aboriginal organisations, communities and peoples. An example of good practice is to listen to what is being said and asked for. Aboriginal peoples and communities have the solutions, and as a government mechanism driving policy change we need to ensure this strategy provides the right change to support Aboriginal empowerment.

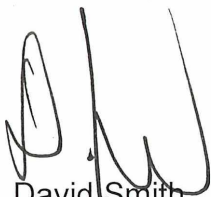
With respect to further information on current or potential implementation of this strategy within DMIRS, the department has developed a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2020 – 2022 which soon will be launched. The RAP has achievable actions and deliverables that will be embedded as part of our standard business practices. Below are listed some of the initiatives that DMIRS has implemented or will be in the near future.

- Respectfully acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, histories and rights.
 - Provide staff with the opportunity to learn in-depth knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures through cultural training and immersion programs.
 - Engage with Aboriginal artists and communities to incorporate authentic and appropriate content in DMIRS publications, including engaging experts to advise and assist with producing DMIRS content and publications to promote Aboriginal initiatives to internal and external stakeholders.
 - Develop and implement guidelines for cultural protocols when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- Creating real opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career development.
 - Improve workforce representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the implementation of the Aboriginal Employment Strategy.

- Implement the Aboriginal Employment Program (AEP) and recruit a minimum of six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees each year through the program.
- Increasing engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses by:
 - Ensuring procurement and policies and procedure are inclusive, free of barriers and promote the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.
 - Becoming a Supply Nation member to support diversity in suppliers and the achievement of annual target set out in the State Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy.
 - Working towards awarding three per cent of departmental contracts to registered Aboriginal businesses as per the Western Australian Aboriginal Procurement Policy.

DMIRS is committed to Aboriginal engagement to empower, support and develop our people by respecting individuality and diversity both internal and external to the organisation.

Yours sincerely



David Smith
Director General

3 March 2020