

March 2021

# *Department of Communities (WA)*

## *Establishment of a new Division for Aboriginal Outcomes*



**PwC's Indigenous  
Consulting**



# *Disclaimer*

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# Version Control

Modified by	Date	Version
Draft Report developed by PIC.	31/03/2021	V1.0

# Executive Summary

The Western Australian Government's Department of Communities ('the Department') plays a critical role in the provision of services to some of Western Australia's (WA) most vulnerable people across the areas of disability services, child protection and family support, housing, and community and regional initiatives. Aboriginal people and communities, including children, are core recipients of the Department's services and are overrepresented within the Department's client base.

In December 2019, the Department undertook a review of its structure with the outcome being the establishment of seven new divisions:

1. **Governance, Integrity and Reform**
2. **Aboriginal Outcomes**
3. **Strategy and Partnerships (includes the establishment of a Specialist Child Protection Unit, office of disability and centre for housing and homelessness to provide a more focused and coordinated approach to addressing systemic issues)**
4. **Community Services**
5. **Assets**
6. **Finance**
7. **People.**

The proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division is the last of these new divisions to be formally established. It should be noted that while the name proposed for the new Division is 'Aboriginal Outcomes' a recommendation of this report is to for this name to be changed. As such, the proposed 'Aboriginal Outcomes Division' has been referred to as 'the new Division' in this Report.

## Scope of this Project

PwC's Indigenous Consulting (PIC) was engaged by the Department to assist in providing professional advice in establishing the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division. Specifically, the advice sought by the Department was in relation to:

- Development of a proposed vision and purpose for the new division.
- Identification and development of proposed accountabilities of the new division, ensuring that:
  - a. The accountabilities are consistent with the organisational design principles set to guide the creation of the new divisions
  - b. Interfaces with other divisions clearly
  - c. Accountabilities of the new division do not overlap agreed accountabilities in other divisions.
- Development of a proposed organisational structure (roles and reporting lines) consistent with the organisational design principles.
- In conjunction with the Communities Leadership Adviser, development of a road map for implementation of the new division.
- Engaging with appropriate Central Government and advisory group representatives to ensure proposals are fit-for-purpose.
- Presenting recommendations to the Communities Leadership Team (CLT) for discussion and consideration with the final decision to rest with the Director General (DG).



## ***Project Methodology***

PIC applied a mixed methodology to inform the development of the findings and recommendations as outlined in this Report. This methodology helps to ensure that the findings and recommendations accurately reflect the input provided by stakeholders.

In order to develop the best outcomes for this Project, PIC conducted a range of activities including:

- Desktop research
- Consultation with key project stakeholders.

The key themes that were identified from the qualitative and quantitative data sources and the resultant findings and recommendations are provided in this Report.

The key findings and recommendations that are presented in this report reflect a contemporary approach to building a Departmental division that can guide and support the development and implementation of best practice approaches geared towards improving outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and communities across WA. The new Division will also have a key role in meeting national and state reporting requirements and guiding the implementation of recent Departmental reviews.

The establishment of the new Division will require a focussed approach, careful selection of a skilled and experienced workforce that are able to lead through influence, use their authority skilfully, and take a targeted and purposeful approach that is Department wide in order to see improved outcomes for Aboriginal people.

## ***Key Findings & Recommendations***

### ***The current state***

The Department is at a crisis point in relation to providing services, programs and initiatives to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA. This is evident in the disproportionate outcomes that Aboriginal people in WA experience in the context of the Department's portfolio of services as highlighted by the following statistics:

- 56% of children in care in WA are Aboriginal.
- 29% of people experiencing homelessness in WA are Aboriginal.
- 37% of people living in social housing in WA are Aboriginal.

The Department plays a critical role and has a responsibility to work in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities to close the gap when it comes to outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA.

The current state of the Department also provides an additional layer of complexity that impact its ability to address the needs of Aboriginal people and communities in WA. The following examples highlight the current state of the Department:

- The Department is still emerging from a significant organisational restructure.
- There is a level of bias and racism, both systemic and overt, within the Department, a view gathered through the Westerman Report and recent stakeholder interviews, that is affecting Aboriginal staff who feel disengaged, unsupported and unheard.
- In the absence of an understanding and application of Cultural Competence principles and learnings, the Department often adopts a Western-centric approach to service design and delivery that, in many instances, does not meet or address the needs of Aboriginal people and communities.
- The Department is observed to be slow in adopting and enacting change and is often not responsive enough to drive the level of transformation that is required to improve Aboriginal outcomes.

- The Department has been involved in the State-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department is also currently responsible for leading the State's social recovery initiatives following the COVID-19 pandemic (State Emergency Welfare Plan, COVID-19). A key focus of this response is in regional and remote areas.

### *A compelling case for change*

The Department is at a critical point in relation to how it is addressing the needs of Aboriginal people in WA. Outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA may remain the same, or worsen, should the Department continue to do things in the same way and, as such, there is an urgent need for transformational change. The current approach is not addressing the needs of or improving outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities in WA at an acceptable rate of change. This is highlighted by the sustained level of disadvantage that is having an intergenerational impact on Aboriginal people, families and communities. A transformational approach is necessary to positively impact outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities in WA.

A number of on-going and incremental risks have been identified should the Department delay, or not implement, the transformational required:

- reputational risks
- budget blowouts
- challenges in retaining (at a level commensurate with the broader workforce) and recruiting Aboriginal staff
- increased opportunity costs should a transformational change be delayed
- an inability to meet the high expectations of the Aboriginal community for imminent change to address their concerns
- unacceptable social-economic outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities in WA.

Additionally, a failure to enact change will jeopardise the Department's ability to achieve the WA Government's commitments to the key priorities, outcomes and targets in the National Agreement for Closing the Gap.

### *What will success look like?*

In order to achieve the transformational changes that are required to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities in WA, a number of key attributes have been identified of what the Department will look like. In a future state, the Department will:

- be an employer of choice for Aboriginal people in WA
- have a strong Aboriginal workforce with a retention rate that is comparable, if not better, than the staff retention rate of the broader Department
- recognise and respect the dual accountabilities that Aboriginal staff have to the Department and Aboriginal community
- have Aboriginal staff in leadership positions with authority and influence to drive change and be responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people
- have embedded systems and processes that incorporate Aboriginal ways of doing and being
- have an organisational culture that actively respects, includes and promotes Aboriginal perspectives in its ways of working
- will be agile and culturally responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people and communities in WA
- have a collaborative culture to work effectively across Divisions and Departments.

In this future state:

***“Everyone in the Department will be responsible for contributing to improved Aboriginal outcomes”***

### ***Purpose of the new Division***

The purpose of the new Division is proposed to be:

***“To support and enable the Department of Communities to improve Aboriginal outcomes.”***

### ***Refining and Refreshing the Department’s Values***

The key themes highlighted the opportunity for the Department to refine and refresh the Department’s values to incorporate Aboriginal perspectives.

The proposed refreshed organisational values are as follows:

- **Integrity** – We show a consistent and uncompromising adherence to honesty and strong ethical principles as set out in our Code of Conduct and consistent with the high expectations of the people we serve.
- **Courage** – We understand that doing what is right is not always what is easy. To achieve something new, we must be willing to do what we have never done before.
- **Respect** – We treat everyone with dignity and fairness. We recognise contribution and value diversity. *We will be culturally respectful and operate in a culturally capable, culturally safe and culturally competent manner that respects the influence and authority of Aboriginal leadership.*
- **Empathy** – We extend ourselves to understand the perspectives and experiences of others to actively ‘walk in their shoes’. We communicate and act in a respectful way that makes sense to others.
- **Accountability** – We are individually accountable and collectively responsible. We own our actions and see them through for the best possible outcome. *We will recognise the dual accountabilities of Aboriginal staff to the Department and to the Aboriginal community.*
- **Trust** – We say what we mean and act accordingly. We are honest in our dealings and use of resources. We keep our promises and act with integrity.
- **Empowerment** – We help our colleagues, individuals and the community to be the best they can be. *We will respect the rights of First Nations people to self-determination and autonomy.*
- **Collaboration** – *Working together to cooperatively solve problems and develop solutions.*

*Italicised text* highlights the changes that have been incorporated.

### ***Proposed functions of the new Division***

Through the synthesis and analysis of the emergent themes of the desktop review and the stakeholder consultations, four key functional roles were identified for the new Division:

- 1. Cultural Competence & Responsiveness**
- 2. Best Practice Partnerships**
- 3. Aboriginal Workforce Support**
- 4. Strategy & Reporting**

### ***Cultural Competence & Responsiveness***

The Closing the Gap National Agreement highlights that governments, their organisations and their institutions must be culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through the services they fund. The National Agreement identifies the need to improve these mainstream

institutions to be more culturally safe and responsive. In alignment with this focus to improve mainstream institutions, a key role for the new Division should be to improve the cultural capability and cultural competence of the Department. Improving the cultural capability and competence of the Department's staff underpins its ability to:

- deliver culturally appropriate and culturally responsive services
- maintain a strong Aboriginal workforce that is proportionate to the Department's Aboriginal client base
- improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA.

### *Best Practice Partnerships*

The Best Practice Partnerships functional area of the new Division will provide leadership, best practice, research and support to the Department to improve Aboriginal outcomes. The Best Practice Partnerships function will inform, guide and develop culturally responsive and fit-for-purpose ways of working with Aboriginal people through the development, evaluation and continuous improvement of practice frameworks. The new functional area would leverage evidence-based best practice (in an on-going manner), both locally in WA, and more broadly (nationally and internationally), to test and implement in WA. The Best Practice Partnerships function provides opportunities to develop innovative approaches underpinned by Aboriginal ways of working (e.g. Aboriginal Family-Led Decision Making reform agenda). In developing these new, and culturally informed, approaches the Best Practice Partnerships function would improve service design and delivery to ultimately improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.

### *Aboriginal Workforce Support*

A strong and supported Aboriginal workforce underpins the Department's capability to delivery culturally responsive services and support to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. The stakeholder consultations highlighted that the engagement of staff within the Department is poor with many Aboriginal staff feeling disengaged, dissatisfied and feeling unsupported in their roles. Several staff raised that they felt that their voices weren't being listened to.

In order to address this current state, the new Division should have a targeted focus on supporting the Department's existing Aboriginal workforce but also seeking to further strengthen and grow the Aboriginal workforce. The new Aboriginal Workforce Support functional area of the new Division, in partnership with the People Division, must co-develop an Aboriginal Workforce Strategy for the Department. Once the Aboriginal Workforce Strategy is developed, the Aboriginal Workforce Support functional area of the new Division will transition into an oversight function.

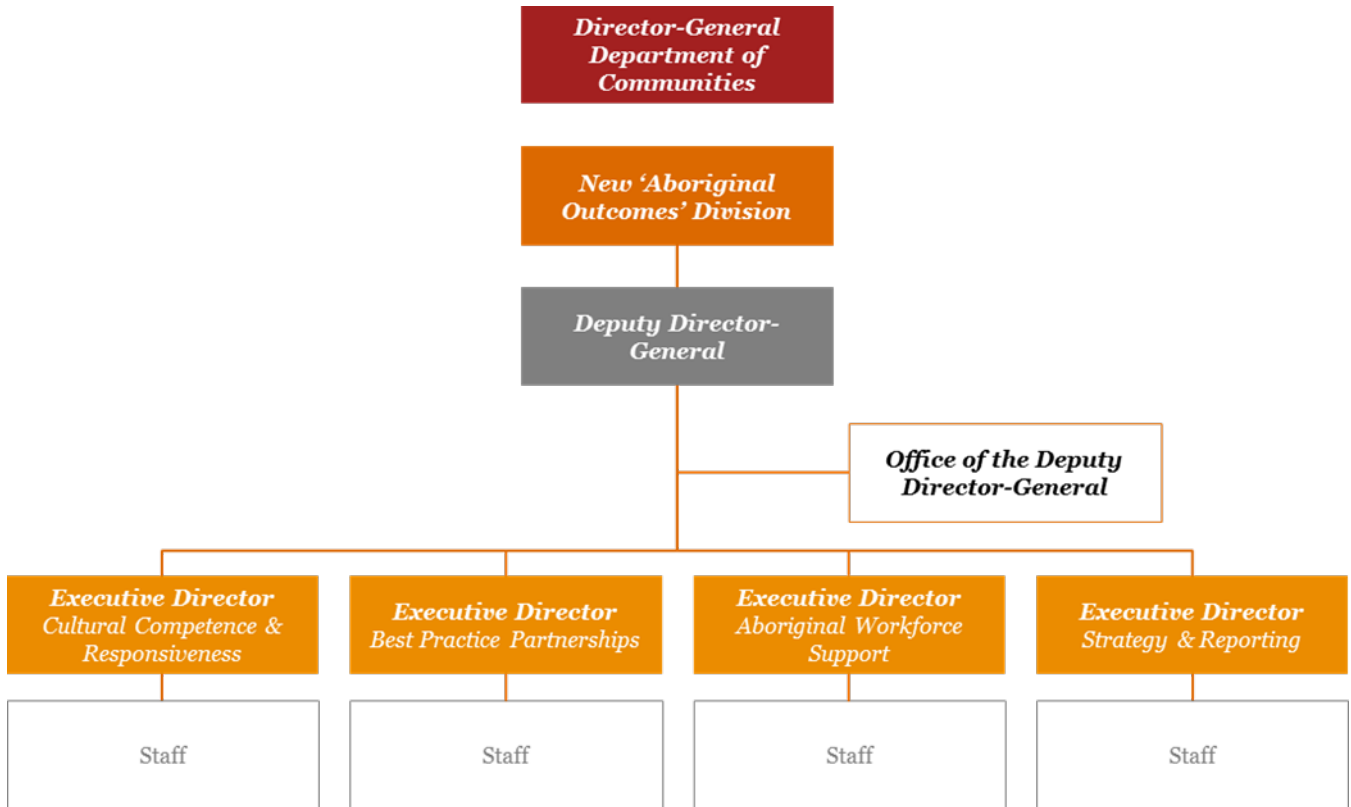
### *Strategy & Reporting*

The Strategy & Reporting function of the new Division will focus on developing strategies in alignment with the key priority areas and target outcomes outlined in the National Agreement for Closing the Gap. This functional area will develop a strategic approach to addressing these key priority areas and report on the Department's progress as it aligns to Closing the Gap and the National Agreement to DPC. Additionally, the Strategy & Reporting functional area will be responsible for coordinating the Department's Reconciliation Action Plan.



### **Proposed structure of the new Division**

A proposed organisational structure has been developed in alignment with the proposed core functions for the new Division – see figure below).

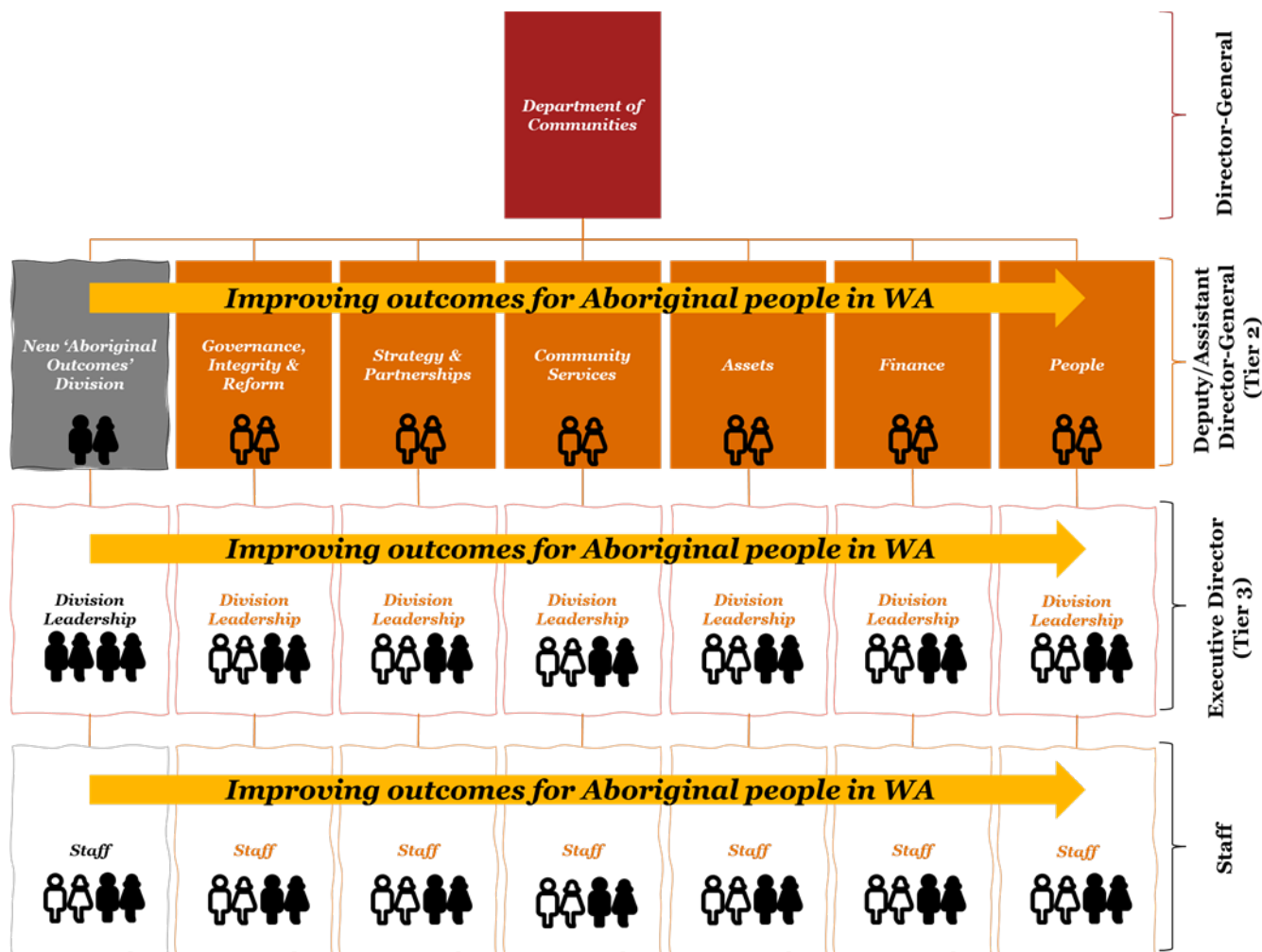


The new Division will be led by a Deputy Director-General with the necessary qualifications, skills, experience and expertise to be successful in implementing the transformational change required. This identified role must have the respect of the Aboriginal community in WA (including cultural authority) and must have a solid understanding of urban, rural, regional and remote Aboriginal communities in WA.

Four newly appointed Executive Director positions, one for each functional area, will support the Deputy Director-General to achieve the organisational transformation required and improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA. These four roles should be identified positions and should seek the appropriate technical expertise corresponding with each of the functional areas described.

## Interfaces with other Divisions

In order to enact the transformational change that is required within the Department, the new Division must effectively interface with the other Divisions within the Department – refer to figure below.



Please note – The figures in this image are not quantitative.

The new Division must work closely with the other Divisions within the Department on a range of initiatives, aligned to the Division's, and the Department's, purpose, vision and functions. In order to facilitate the transformational change that is required, it is recommended that each Division within the Department embed a senior Aboriginal person in a leadership role to support the transformational change within each Division and ensure that Aboriginal perspectives are incorporated into the functions of these Divisions. These Senior Aboriginal leadership roles will contribute to the senior leadership of the Department.

## A roadmap for implementation

### A scaffolding approach for implementation

The new Division, and more broadly the Department, will have to be able to concurrently continue to deliver its services, programs and initiatives while implementing the transformational changes proposed through establishing a new Division. Furthermore, the magnitude of the transformational change requires appropriate resourcing, coordination and planning to achieve the outcomes that are being sought. In order to achieve this, a scaffolding approach is required to support and assist the establishment of this new Division. This scaffolding

## Definitions

approach is necessary to establish the new Division, build capability, transfer skills and, ultimately, embedding new ways of working.

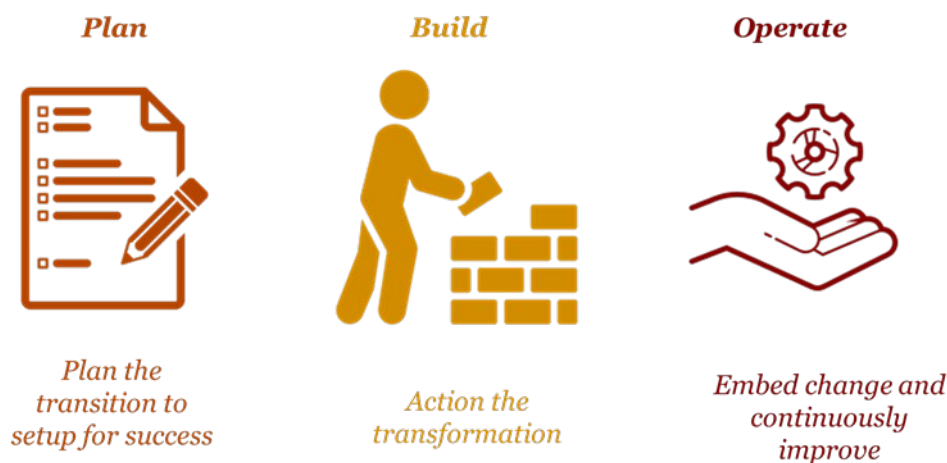
This scaffolding approach will require support from a variety of different sources including:

- other Divisions within the Department – Coordinating the Department’s programs, services and initiatives
- the Public Sector Commission – Workforce-related support
- the Department of Finance – Funding support
- Aboriginal Engagement Directorate, DPC – Whole-of-government coordination support
- An Implementation Partner to provide support and independent expertise for the transformation.

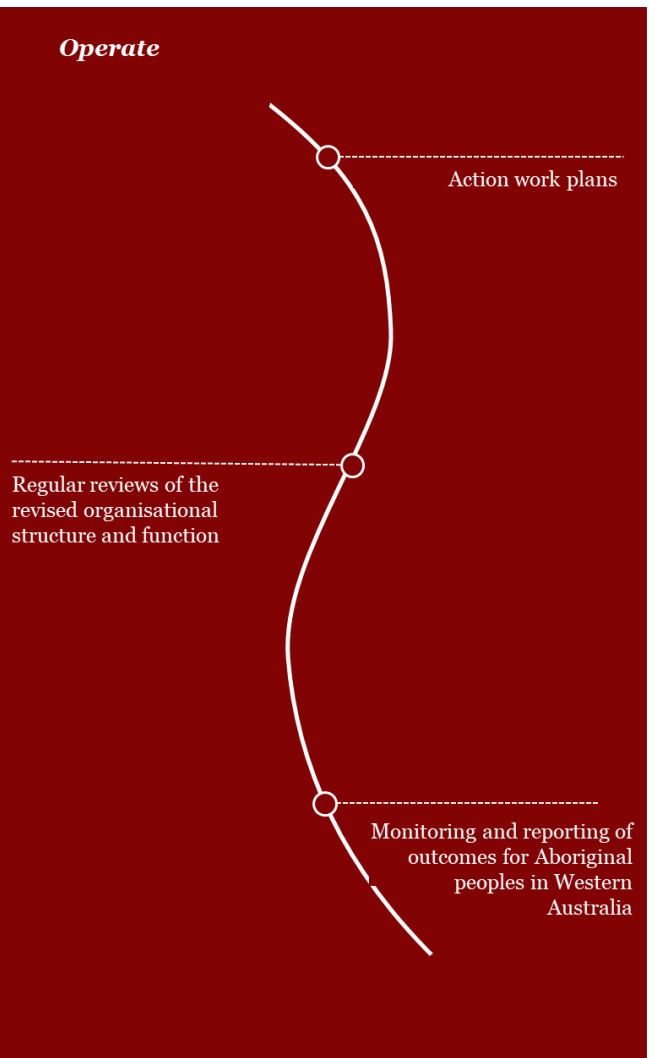
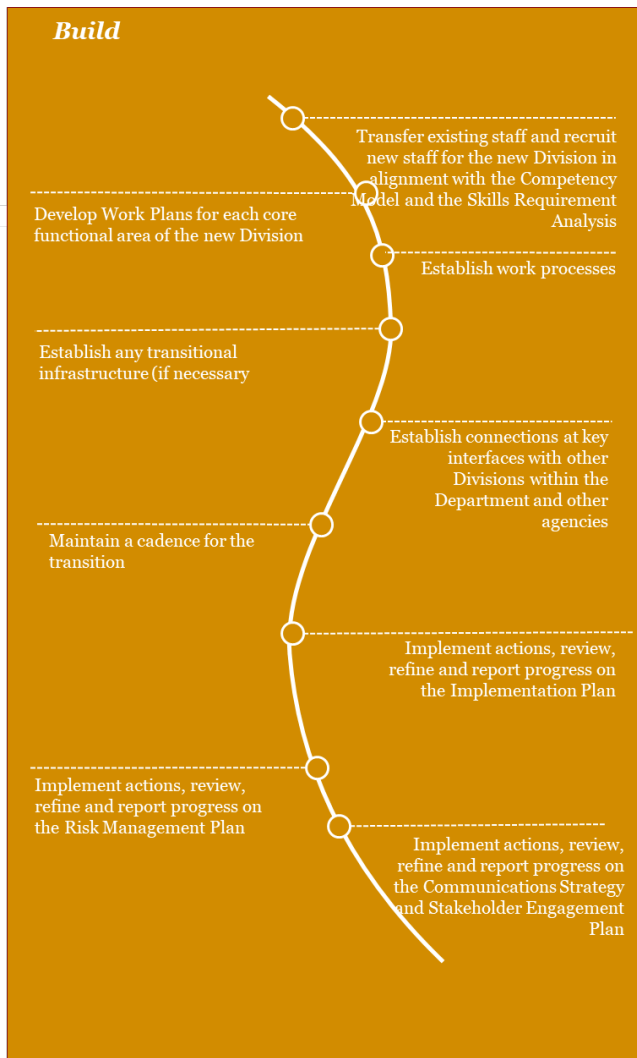
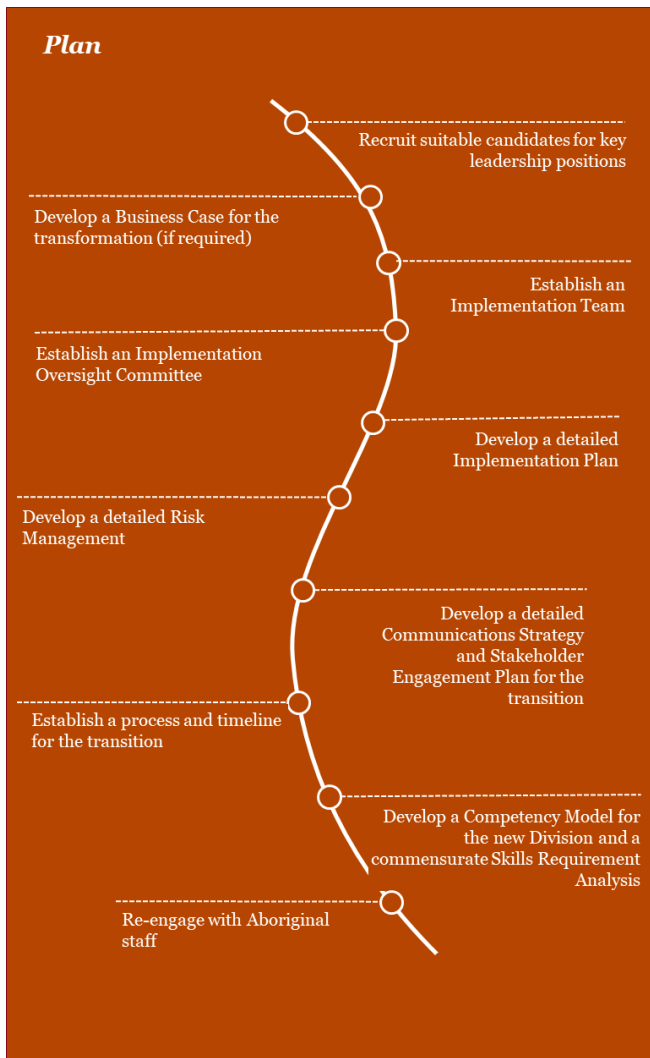
Leadership will play a critical role in the transformation and the changes that are required should commence with the Communities Leadership Team (CLT). A formal, culturally informed leadership development process to build the capability of the CLT is necessary to drive the behavioural and cultural shift needed. This process is proposed to have a series of design-based workshops to solve problems, incorporate Aboriginal perspectives and promote collaboration. This approach will seek to challenge current norms and assumptions by establishing new ways of working.

### ***A roadmap to implementation***

A high-level roadmap for establishing the new Division has been prepared to assist the Department in considering how best to approach implementation – refer to figure below.



A high-level outline of the key steps that are required to implement the transformational change and establish the new Division are summarised in the figure below. It is recommended that the Department develops a more detailed, comprehensive implementation strategy in partnership with an Implementation Partner.





# Definitions

Terms, abbreviations and acronyms	Meaning
AACWA	The Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA
AACC	The Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee
AAPA Act	The <i>Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972</i>
AASC	Aboriginal Affairs Sub-Committee of Cabinet (NT)
Aboriginal	The term 'Aboriginal' refers to people who identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The term Aboriginal is used in this report to acknowledge that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia; no disrespect is intended to Torres Strait Islander people in doing so.
AbSec	NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation
ACC	Department of Communities' Aboriginal Cultural Council
ACCO	Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, including those incorporated under State and Commonwealth legislation.
ACP	Department of Communities' Agency Capability Program
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACTPSIN	Australian Capital Territory Public Service Indigenous Network
ACTSIA	Australian Capital Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028
AED	Aboriginal Engagement Directorate, Department of Premier & Cabinet (WA)
AES	Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy – DPC, WA
ASPF	Aboriginal Service and Practice Framework 2016-2018
ATSIEB	The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ACT)
BAU	Business as usual
CLT	Department of Communities' Leadership Team
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CoE	Centre of Excellence

## Executive Summary

CSD	Community Services Directorate (ACT)
CPFS	Child Protection and Family Support
DCJ	Department of Communities and Justice (NSW)
DCP	Department of Child Protection (SA)
DCSYW	Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (QLD)
Department	Department of Communities (WA)
DG	Director-General
DHS	Department of Human Services (SA)
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services (VIC)
DPC	Department of Premier & Cabinet
FDV	Family and Domestic Violence
GESB	Government Employees Superannuation Board (WA)
GTE	Government Trading Entities
IES	Indigenous Evaluation Strategy
LEED	Land Enterprise and Economic Development
MACS	Multi-functional Aboriginal Children's Services
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OAA	The Office of Aboriginal Affairs (Tas)
OCHRE	Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment (NSW)
OIPE	Office of Indigenous Policy Evaluation
PIC	PwC's Indigenous Consulting
QATSCIPP	Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QLD)
QLD	Queensland
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RASCI	Responsible Accountable Support Consulted Informed Framework

## Definitions

REAP	Respect, Early Engagement, Avoiding Assumptions, Powerful Partnership (Respect)
S&T	Department of Communities' Strategy & Transformation Division
SA	South Australia
SA4	ABS definition of Statistical Area Level 4
SAAAC	South Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council
SME	Subject Matter Expertise
SNAICC	The Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Children in Care
SOW	Scope of Work
TAS/Tas	Tasmania
The National Agreement	The National Agreement on Closing the Gap
TRACA	The Tasmanian Regional Aboriginal Communities Alliance (Tas)
UNDRIP	The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNEC	United Ngunnawal Elders Council (ACT)
VAAF	Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
VIC	Victoria
WA	Western Australia
WACHS	Western Australia Country Health Service



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Project Background

The Western Australian Government's Department of Communities ('the Department') plays a critical function in the provision of services to some of Western Australia's (WA) most vulnerable people. These services include disability services, child protection and family support, housing, and community and regional initiatives. Aboriginal people and communities, including children, are core recipients of the Department's services.

In December 2019, a review was undertaken on the Department's leadership structure. The outcome of the review, announced in May 2020, was the establishment of seven new divisions. These divisions are:

- Governance, Integrity and Reform
- Aboriginal Outcomes
- Strategy and Partnerships (includes the establishment of a Specialist Child Protection Unit, office of disability and centre for housing and homelessness to provide a more focused and coordinated approach to addressing systemic issues)
- Community Services
- Assets
- Finance
- People.

The proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division is the last of these new divisions to be formally established.

The intended purpose of the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division is to:

*'Support the Department to deliver a step change in outcomes for those Aboriginal children, families and communities with whom the Department provides services and interacts, consistent with Closing the Gap targets and other external expectations and commitments. The Aboriginal Outcomes division is also intended to support the Department, deliver improved recruitment, career development and retention of Aboriginal employees across all levels of the organisation.'*

## 1.2 Scope of the project

PwC's Indigenous Consulting (PIC) was engaged by the Department to assist in providing professional advice in establishing the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division. Specifically, the advice sought by the Department was in relation to:

- Development of a proposed vision and purpose for the new division.
- Identification and development of proposed accountabilities of the new division, ensuring that:
  - a. The accountabilities are consistent with the organisational design principles set to guide the creation of the new divisions
  - b. Interfaces with other divisions clearly
  - c. Accountabilities of the new division do not overlap agreed accountabilities in other divisions.
- Development of a proposed organisational structure (roles and reporting lines) consistent with the organisational design principles (outlined below)
- In conjunction with the Communities Leadership Adviser, development of a roadmap for implementation of the new division.
- Engaging with appropriate Central Government and advisory group representatives to ensure proposals are fit-for-purpose.
- Presenting recommendations to the Communities Leadership Team (CLT) for discussion and consideration with the final decision to rest with the Director General (DG).

The organisational design principles<sup>1</sup> underpinning the new structure are:

- The primacy of delivery of services to the Department as a whole, with integrity as the foundation.
- Delivery of services to be aggregated in one Community Services division, except where it involves a new service in prototype development / testing phase, with handover to Community Services to be planned as part of the overall program.
- Appropriate separation of standards assurance as well as program/project evaluation from service delivery.
- Demonstration that we have heard & we are taking action on Aboriginal outcomes.
- Centres of expertise to be created for Child Protection, Disability Services and Housing & Homelessness, with each of them to have appropriate embedded Aboriginal cultural expertise (referred to as co-leadership in earlier Child Protection)
- Clear accountabilities without overlaps or gaps to support a culture of efficiency, effectiveness & performance.
- Specialist functional expertise (e.g. Finance, HR, Work Health & Safety, Communications, Asset Management, Legal, Audit, Risk Management) to be aggregated (not distributed across multiple divisions).
- Management of data stewardship & architecture to reside in Governance, Integrity & Reform Division. All Divisions to use resulting data analytics & reporting to drive improvements.
- Development of operational policies & procedures to be undertaken within the Division where they will be operationalised, informed by the necessary internal (particularly w.r.t cultural safety) expertise from other Division/s.
- Greater consistency of job title naming conventions for Level 8 (Manager or Project Manager) & Level 9 (Director or Regional Director).
- Executive Managers to be assigned to Tier 2 leaders and Regional Executive Directors only.
- A structure that is intuitive & easy to navigate for both staff & external partners & stakeholders.
- Appropriate spans of managerial control (neither too narrow nor broad).
- Ensuring appropriate DG line of sight.

### 1.3 Final report

This Report outlines the findings and recommendations to establish a new proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division. The key chapters presented in this Report are presented below.



**Project approach and project methodology:** Chapter 2 provides the methodologies that were used to inform this project and provides the qualitative, quantitative and experiential data sources.

#### Desktop analysis:



- Chapter 3 provides an overview of the WA Government in the context of Aboriginal Affairs.
- Chapter 4 provides an overview of the Department of Communities.
- Chapter 5 outlines the findings of the desktop analysis that includes considering this project through a human rights framework and a jurisdictional analysis.

**Findings of the stakeholder consultations:** Chapter 6 presents the findings of the stakeholder consultations.

<sup>1</sup> As provided in the RFT document prepared by the Department for this engagement.



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**Key findings and recommendations:** Chapter 7 presents the key findings that emerged from the stakeholder consultations and desktop analysis, recommendations and a high-level roadmap for implementation.

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## 2 Project Methodology

### 2.1 Project approach

PIC applied a mixed methodology to the development of project deliverables. This approach helped to ensure that the findings and recommendations accurately reflect the input provided by stakeholders.

PIC's project methodology included:

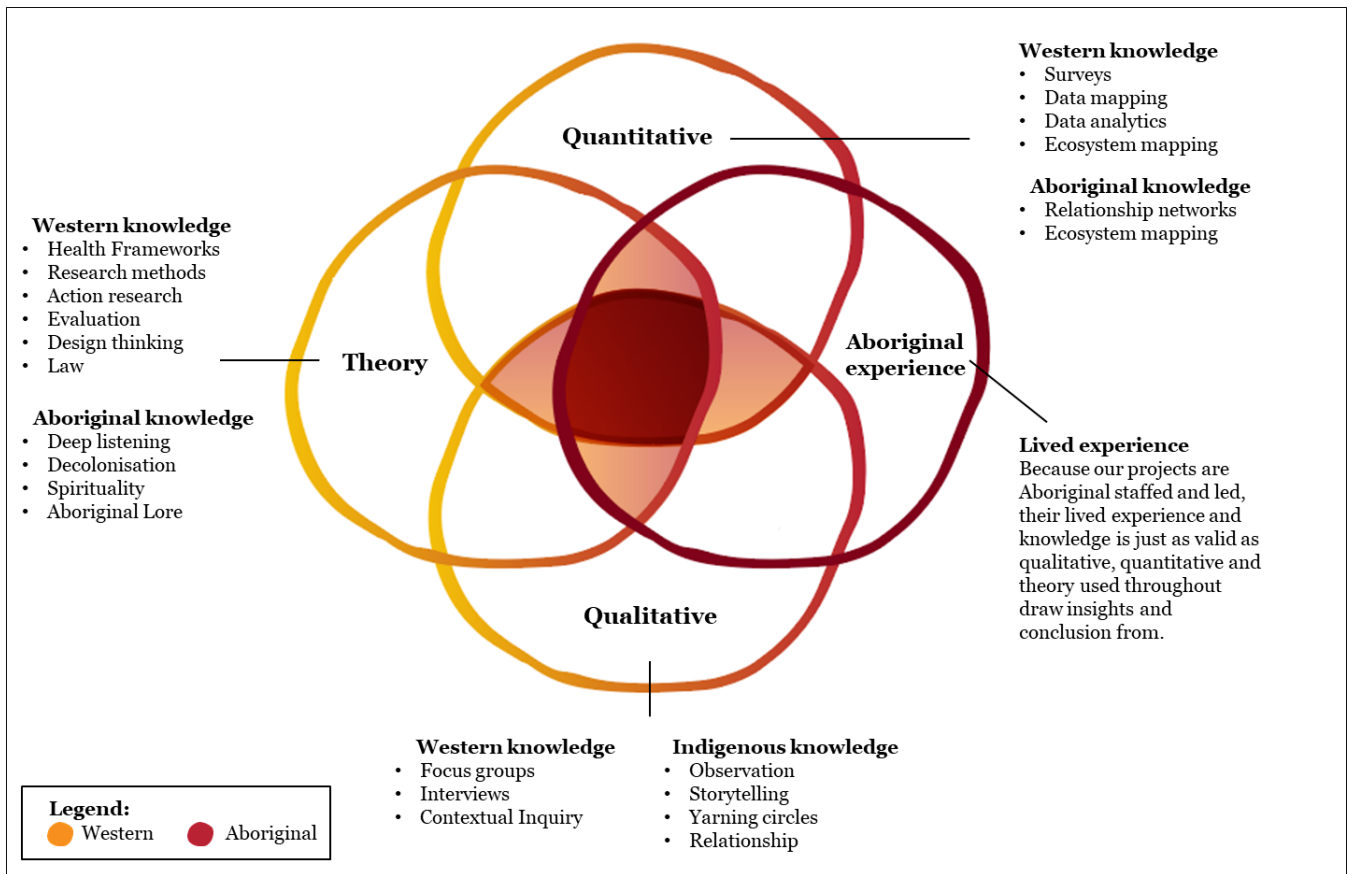
1. *Human Centred Design* – which places the human at the centre of everything we do, and it considers how a system can work for the person, then how the person fits within the system.
2. *Appreciative Inquiry* – which moves Aboriginal program design and development from a problem-focused, deficit-based approach to problem solving, to a strengths-based methodology that:
  - enables those who are directly affected by decisions and outcomes to be actively involved in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of policies and programs;
  - identifies and develops strategies to build on what is working;
  - identifies areas for improvement; and
  - facilitates a 'possibility space' to promote the development of innovative ideas that effectively respond to community needs and priorities.
3. *Participatory Action Research* - particular focus was given to ensuring that stakeholders identified in this project had their input considered across all stages of the design, development, testing and validation of the roadmap for establishing a new proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division; and appropriate internal stakeholders were engaged in assessing where further improvements could be applied and what that might looklike.

PIC has adopted a four-framed approach to conducting research through a human-centred design lens. We consider data from different sources: quantitative (what we can measure), qualitative (what we can observe), theoretical (from Western and Aboriginal sources) and experiential (what we can do).

Figure 1 demonstrates how these different sources of data interact.



**Figure 1 – A blended qualitative, quantitative, and experiential research approach**



By combining data, from multiple sources in these four frames, insights are gained that would not be available if considered from only one lens. The combination of the insights gained through this methodology delivered by a team of Aboriginal people has enabled unique insights into developing the recommended approach for establishing a new proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division.

PIC has applied a mixed methodology to the development of this Final report. This approach helped to ensure that the findings and recommendations accurately reflect the input provided by stakeholders at various stages throughout the project.

### 2.1.1 Qualitative, quantitative and experiential data

In order to develop a robust framework for the establishment of a new proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division, PIC conducted a range of activities including:

- Desktop research; and
- Consultation with key internal and external project stakeholders (individuals and agencies).

The type of qualitative and quantitative information considered and analysed relevant to this project is summarised below in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Qualitative and quantitative data sources**

Stage	Qualitative and Quantitative Data Sources
<b>Desktop Research</b>	This project report was informed by desktop research, centred around publicly available information on the current WA Government, WA Department of Premier and Cabinet, and Department of Communities structures, and their current policies and commitments at a whole-of-government or whole-of-department level in relation to Aboriginal Affairs. Information from a national jurisdictional scan has also been reviewed and learnings incorporated.
<b>Project Inception Meeting</b>	Project Inception Meeting was held with the Departmental project team on 18 December 2020.
<b>Consultation with key Departmental stakeholders</b>	<p>A series of consultations were conducted with key project stakeholders to design, validate, test and review the approach for establishment of a new proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division. The project implementation roadmap was informed by these consultations.</p> <p>A detailed list of the stakeholders consulted is provided at Appendix A.</p>

PIC analysed the inputs provided from the qualitative and quantitative data sources and the key findings and analysis are provided in this report.

## 2.2 Project methodology

The project team proposed a three phased approach; discover, develop and embed, each of these phases are outlined in more detail below. The focus of the work was on the Discovery and Develop phases. The final phase of Embed was informed by the Department’s requirements with regard to the roadmap for implementation.

### 2.2.1 Phase1: Discovery

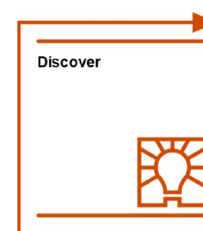
#### Purpose

The discovery phase was about creating a deeper understanding of the context and specific needs for the formal establishment of the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division. This work will be informed by the design principles included in the Scope of Work.

#### Key Activities

To develop a deeper understanding there were a number of key activities that occurred in this phase, these included:

- Inception meeting with Communities Leadership Adviser and other internal participants as advised.
- High level desktop review of selected jurisdictions.
- Development of relationships with the Strategy and Transformation (S&T) and Leadership Team (to become the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division).
- Individual 1:1 sessions (with each S&T Leadership Team member).
- Individual 1:1 sessions (with Leadership Team members from other divisions).
- Focus Groups x 3 (broader Strategy and Transformation Division staff, Regional Executive Directors from the Service Delivery Division and a follow up group interview with the Aboriginal Regional Executive Managers).
- Further stakeholder engagement as identified through the Inception meeting.



- Mapping of appropriate external and Central Government representatives to engage.

### Key outputs

The outputs of this phase were:

- Project delivery plan
- Key learnings and insights to inform actions required to address the Scope of Work (SOW). The key deliverables are outlined in Phase 2 - Develop.

## 2.2.2 Phase 2: Develop

### Purpose

The develop phase was focused on ensuring what was captured during Phase 1 – Discover - is reflected in the deliverables.

### Key Activities

1. Drafting of key deliverables identified in the scope of work. These included:
  - Vision and purpose
  - Proposed accountabilities of the new division
  - Organisational structure (roles and reporting lines consistent with the organisational design principles).
2. In conjunction with the Communities Leadership Adviser, development of a roadmap for implementation of the new division.
3. Engaged appropriate Central Government and advisory group representatives to ensure proposals were fit-for-purpose.
4. Presentation of recommendations to the Communities Leadership Team for discussion and consideration, with the final decision to rest with the Director General.



### Key outputs

The outputs of this phase were:

- Vision and purpose of the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division
- Proposed accountabilities of the new division
- Organisational structure (roles and reporting lines) consistent with the organisational design principles
- Implementation roadmap “Development of roadmap”
- Presentation of recommendations to the Communities Leadership Team.

## 2.2.3 Phase 3: Embed (excluded from the current scope of work for this engagement)

### Purpose

The embed phase allows for what has been developed in phase one and two to be embedded and supports the transition from the S&T Division to the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division. This will be done in conjunction with the Communities Leadership Adviser and will need some additional resourcing in order to ‘stand up’ the new Division.

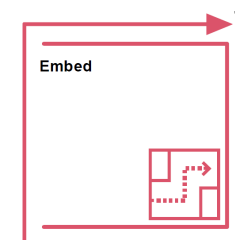
### Key Activities

- Provision of coaching and Subject Matter Expertise (SME) support during the implementation phase of the roadmap.
- Over the course of 12 months it was recommended that support be provided to assist in embedding the agreed functions and structure within the Department.

### Key outputs

The outputs of this phase included:

- 12 months of support and implementation partnering (Scaffolding).



## 3 *The WA Government in the context of Aboriginal Affairs*

### 3.1 *Minister for Aboriginal Affairs*

The WA Government's Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has recently changed with the State election. It was previously Hon Ben Wyatt MLA who was also the State Treasurer and the Minister for Finance and Minister for Lands. Hon Ben Wyatt MLA is Australia's first Indigenous Australian Treasurer and was appointed in March 2017. The recently sworn in Aboriginal Affairs Minister is Hon Stephen Dawson MLC.

### 3.2 *The Aboriginal Engagement Directorate – Policy and coordination – Department of Premier & Cabinet*

The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) provides central government strategic policy and administrative advice and support to enable the Premier, Ministers and Government to serve the WA community.<sup>2</sup> Specifically in relation to Aboriginal affairs, the Department provides quality policy advice and support to the Premier, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Cabinet to serve the Western Australian community. A key strategic priority for the department is to support Aboriginal Economic and Social Development by supporting the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs through the provision of leadership and advice on Aboriginal policy and delivering Native Title and other recognition outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

The DPC is comprised of four key areas:

1. Inter-governmental relations and COVID-19
2. Policy and Coordination
3. Office of Digital Government
4. State Services.

The policy and coordination/reform division of the DPC leads the public sector in collaborative and innovative whole-of-government policy initiatives. One key focus area within this Division is the Aboriginal Engagement Directorate (AED).

#### 3.2.1 *The Aboriginal Engagement Directorate*

The AED, following the abolition of the WA State Government Department of Aboriginal Affairs, assumed many of the functions of this abolished agency, including the responsibility for the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972* ('the AAPA Act'). The AED works to build positive relationships between Aboriginal people and the WA Government to deliver mutual and lasting benefits through:

- developing a whole-of-government Aboriginal affairs strategy focusing on engagement, leveraging economic opportunity and systems reform
- shaping the State's approach and engagement with Native Title groups and Aboriginal communities to resolve claims and leverage community defined opportunities
- partnering and building relationships with communities to deliver positive outcomes, through implementation of agreements and projects.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet-functions>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-12/DPC00158\\_Annual%20Report%202019-20\\_Final\\_FS\\_web.pdf](https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-12/DPC00158_Annual%20Report%202019-20_Final_FS_web.pdf)



The DPC also provides administrative support for Cabinet and its sub-committees as well as the coordination functions for the Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA (AACWA) and the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee (AACC), both legislated under the AAPA Act. The AED is leading the work, under the direction of the AACWA, on the establishment of a WA Office of Accountability that is focussed on supporting and holding agencies, and government more broadly, accountable for improving outcomes for West Australian Aboriginal people and communities.

### 3.3 Established cultural governance mechanisms

The Western Australian Government, through the DPC, has also established additional mechanisms to provide cultural governance.

#### 3.3.1 Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA

As outlined, the AACWA is established under Section 18 (1) of the AAPA Act to advise the WA Government. The Council provides advice on matters relating to the interests and wellbeing of people of Aboriginal descent. The Council, as defined through the AAPA Act, provides a unique opportunity to build genuine, respectful and reciprocal relationships between Aboriginal people and the WA Government to achieve better life outcomes for Aboriginal men, women and children. The AACWA meets up to six times per year to provide advice on a range of policy matters.

The role of the Council, as described in its Charter, includes<sup>4</sup>:

- co-designing a community engagement framework – that is consistent with WA Aboriginal cultural governance systems and practices – for developing an enduring partnership mechanism, developed and constituted by Aboriginal people
- providing stewardship and direction to the Government of Australia, and the Government of Western Australia, regarding the Closing the Gap Refresh including its objectives, work plan, and the development of future outcomes, indicators and targets
- undertaking dialogue between Aboriginal communities and the State Government regarding Aboriginal recognition, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal reconciliation, and future settlement/s regarding Aboriginal interests in Western Australia.

The Council is guided by the following principles:<sup>5</sup>

- **Recognition** – respect the prior and continuous occupation of Aboriginal people, their ongoing role as custodians of the lands and seas of Western Australia, and the uniqueness of their culture.
- **Culture, country and heritage** – respect the diversity of culture, language, country and history of its members and Aboriginal communities across Western Australia.
- **Aboriginal-controlled and led** – recognise Aboriginal people as key decision makers in issues that affect their rights, prosperity and wellbeing.
- **Integrity** – demonstrate honesty, fairness and transparency, and expect the same from its partners.
- **Accountability** – make and keep agreements internally, be accountable to Aboriginal communities, and hold our partners, including service providers and policymakers, to account.
- **Positive outcomes** – commitment to taking action that achieves outcomes and solutions, which advance the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal people.
- **Knowledge-based** – driven by Aboriginal expertise including lived experience, traditional law and culture, and scientific evidence and best practices.
- **Collaboration** – work collaboratively with partners and peers, including other relevant coordination and governance mechanisms.
- **Place-based** – represent and engage with Aboriginal communities across Western Australia.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/AAC%20WA%20-%20Charter.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



### 3.3.2 Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee

The AACCC<sup>6</sup>, established under section 19 of the AAPAA Act, has the following roles:

- enable whole-of-government coordination on strategic government initiatives and policies that affect the cultural, health, social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.
  - work with the AACWA to develop a whole-of-government Aboriginal affairs strategy for WA, including a more representative structure for regional engagement and decision-making
  - provide stewardship and direction to the Government of Australia, and the Government of Western Australia, regarding the Closing the Gap Refresh including its objectives, work plan, and the development of future outcomes, indicators and targets.<sup>7</sup>

The committee is guided by the following principles:<sup>8</sup>

- respect the prior and continuous occupation of Aboriginal people, their ongoing role as custodians of the lands and seas of Western Australia, and the uniqueness of their culture
- respect the diversity of culture, language, country and history of Aboriginal people and communities across Western Australia
- include Aboriginal people as key decision-makers in co-designing programs and services that affect their rights, prosperity and wellbeing
- demonstrate honesty, fairness and transparency, and expect the same from our partners
- make and keep agreements internally, be accountable to Aboriginal communities, and hold our partners, including service providers and policymakers, to account
- commit to taking action that achieves outcomes and solutions, which advance the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal people
- respect Aboriginal expertise including lived experience, traditional law and culture, scientific evidence and best practices
- work collaboratively with partners and peers, including other relevant coordination and governance mechanisms.

## 3.4 Key whole-of-government policies in Aboriginal Affairs

A number of key, whole-of-government policies in relation to Aboriginal Affairs relevant to this project were identified and are summarised below in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Summary of key whole-of-government policies in Aboriginal Affairs relevant to this Project**

Policy	Overview
<b>Aboriginal Procurement Policy<sup>9</sup></b>	The Aboriginal Procurement Policy, administered by the Department of Finance, was established in July 2018 and requires Government agencies to award contracts to registered Aboriginal businesses. The policy outlines progressive targets with a target of 3% of the number of government contracts being awarded to Aboriginal businesses by the end of June 2021. The targets apply to all contracts for goods, services, community services and works.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/the-aboriginal-affairs-coordinating-committee>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-10/AACC%20-%20Charter%20-%2027%20May%202020.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/aboriginal-procurement-policy>

Policy	Overview
<p><b>Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy<sup>10</sup></b></p>	<p>The Western Australian Government is developing a strategy to guide how it works with Aboriginal people towards better social, economic, health and cultural outcomes. The whole-of-government strategy will provide all Government agencies with a clear, common direction, consistent logic and shared vision for the future. This strategy aims to improve the manner by which Government agencies work for Aboriginal people and will strengthen accountability to the WA Aboriginal community. Currently, the Government is working with the Aboriginal Advisory Council of Western Australia to develop a final version of the strategy.</p>
<p><b>National Peak Agreement on Closing the Gap<sup>11</sup></b></p>	<p>The objective of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.</p>
<p><b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Action Plan 2020-2025<sup>12</sup></b></p>	<p>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Action Plan 2020-2025 is part of the Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025. The policy has two goals: 1. to increase the representation of people from different backgrounds at all levels across the sector; and 2. to ensure all staff in the sector experience a sense of belonging and inclusion in the work environment. This action plan aims to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the public sector to 3.7% and support inclusive work environments.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing<sup>13</sup></b></p>	<p>The Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing is the Government’s response to the State Coroner’s recommendations on the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley, and the 2016 Parliamentary Inquiry into Aboriginal youth suicide, Learnings from the Message Stick. It represents a long-term commitment to Aboriginal children and young people, not just in the Kimberley, but across the state, and will be delivered in partnership with the Aboriginal community.</p>
<p><b>Native Title</b></p>	<p>The Aboriginal Policy and Coordination Unit co-ordinates WA Government agencies operating under the Native Title and Aboriginal Heritage acts. The WA Government adopted a whole-of-government approach to Native Title to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure compliance with legislation</li> <li>• increase consistency in policy, work practices and expenditure</li> <li>• reduce duplication between Government agencies</li> <li>• increase public sector accountability and effectiveness.</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments/premier-and-cabinet/developing-aboriginal-empowerment-strategy>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement-closing-gap-glance>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people-action-plan-improve-wa-public-sector-employment-outcomes-2020-2025>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/commitment-aboriginal-youth-wellbeing>

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Policy	Overview
<b>Aboriginal Traineeship Program</b> <sup>14</sup>	The Aboriginal Traineeship Program provides an employment opportunity for motivated young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to kick-start a career in the WA government sector. The program aims to build a more diverse, talented and inclusive government sector by increasing the representation of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workforce. Aboriginal trainees receive paid employment, work experience in a government agency, prospective employment opportunities and support to complete a nationally recognised qualification (Certificate III in Government).
<b>A new statutory office to focus on Aboriginal people and the issues that matter to them.</b>	The WA Government is currently seeking feedback from the WA community on a proposal for a proposal for a new statutory office to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• strengthen Government accountability to Aboriginal Western Australians</li><li>• advocate for Aboriginal people's interests in Government policy and performance.</li></ul> The office would be independent from the government of the day, have statutory powers and work with a specific focus on Aboriginal people and the issues that matter to them.
<b>Land Enterprise and Economic Development (LEED)</b>	LEED aims to assist, coordinate and facilitate the provision of Aboriginal land enterprise and economic development advice across Government. LEED's scope is to coordinate and facilitate Government planning and decision making about Aboriginal Economic Development in the context of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• native title agreement-making</li><li>• the implementation of native title agreements</li><li>• developing or implementing Government policies/strategies/programs/projects (e.g. business cases, Cabinet submissions)</li><li>• assessing proposals by Aboriginal groups.</li></ul>
<b>COVID Response</b>	The Department is now responsible for leading the State's social recovery initiatives, which have a strong focus on the needs of specific cohorts, including Aboriginal people, children in care, women experiencing family and domestic violence, people with disability, seniors and young people. Communities will lead the social domain of the WA Recovery Plan, which will help drive WA's economic and social recovery from the pandemic, and be accountable for the delivery of initiatives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• stimulus focussed on capital expenditure</li><li>• recovery-focussed community services</li><li>• existing initiatives that are critical to recovery.</li></ul>

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/aboriginal-traineeship-program-promotional-pack>

## 4 The Department of Communities

### 4.1 Overview

The Department of Communities is Western Australia's major human services department delivering disability services, child protection and family support, housing, and community and regional initiatives. It works collaboratively with its partners across government and the community services sector to deliver vital services to support individual, family and community wellbeing.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Services

The key services the Department is responsible for includes:

- **Child Protection and Family Support** – Child Protection and Family Support protects and cares for Western Australian children and young people who are in need and supports families and individuals who are at risk or in crisis.
- **Community Grants, Funding and Initiatives** – The Department works in collaboration with Western Australia's community services sector to oversee the delivery of programs and services that support and strengthen the State's diverse communities.
- **Disability Services** – The Disability Services team continues to work to advance opportunities, community participation and quality of life of people with disability, to provide services and supports, and to fund non-government agencies to provide services to people with disability, their families and carers.
- **Housing** – The Department operates across the land, housing, property finance and human services sectors to facilitate affordable housing opportunities for people who would otherwise be unable to access housing through the private market.
- **Regional Services Reform** – The Regional Services Reform team is working to address the significant and historic gap between the life outcomes of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Western Australians in regional and remote areas, with a particular focus on the Kimberley and Pilbara. The reform concentrates on three concerns:
  1. Improved living conditions that enable families to prosper and don't hold them back.
  2. Supporting families to build their skills, and overcome any barriers to doing so, through improved service redesign and delivery.
  3. Education, employment and housing opportunities, and support for families to take them up.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/media/2995/department-of-communities-annual-report-2019-20.pdf>



## 4.2 Purpose, values, outcomes

**Purpose:** The Agency’s purpose is “collaborating to create pathways that enable individual, family and community wellbeing.”

**Values:** The Agency’s values are Integrity, Courage, Respect, Empathy, Accountability, Trust and Empowerment (iCREATE).

**Key Outcomes:** Alongside the Agency’s governance and financial frameworks and accountabilities, the key outcomes the Agency seeks are safe children, empowered people, inclusive and accessible communities, a place to call home, and strong families and kin.



## 4.3 Strategic Plan

The Department’s Strategic Plan 2019-2023 outlines a three-tiered strategy – summarised below in Table 3.

**Table 3 – The Department’s Strategic Priorities**

We will support individuals and families to lead their best life by...	Focusing on their specific circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New service delivery models that create flexible ways for people to identify and access the support they need, when and where they need it.</li> <li>• Systems and information sharing within and across agencies that enable us to better respond to individual and family needs.</li> </ul>
	Tackling problems earlier, building on people’s strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives and policy responses that have a greater emphasis on prevention, earlier intervention and strengths.</li> <li>• Services that are co-designed with and for the people we serve.</li> </ul>
	Navigating, collaborating and partnering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are better supported to navigate the human services system.</li> <li>• The human services system better supports the people we serve.</li> </ul>
We will mobilise local solutions by...	Driving place-based thinking, actions and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local engagement and circumstances shape our actions.</li> <li>• District Leadership Groups across the State that are empowered and equipped to deliver on local priorities.</li> </ul>
	Adapting ourselves and what we do to urban, regional and remote contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our regions make decisions and deliver supports that make sense for that region.</li> <li>• Our staff understand the dynamics of the places in which they work.</li> </ul>
	Harnessing the strengths of local organisations, families and kin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local people and entities have the capacity to determine, design and deliver the supports they need.</li> <li>• Community development and collective impact approaches are commonplace.</li> </ul>
We will iCREATE and transform by...	Being a catalyst for change, guided always by our values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passionate, high-performing leaders transform our agency and the human services system.</li> <li>• Our values guide our decisions and actions, every time, and create cultural security and inclusion.</li> </ul>
	Targeting our resources to deliver government priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expenditure that delivers high-impact results for the people and communities we serve.</li> </ul>



and achieve great outcomes

- Property development and asset management that respond to people’s circumstances, enable thriving and connected communities, and support our economic viability.

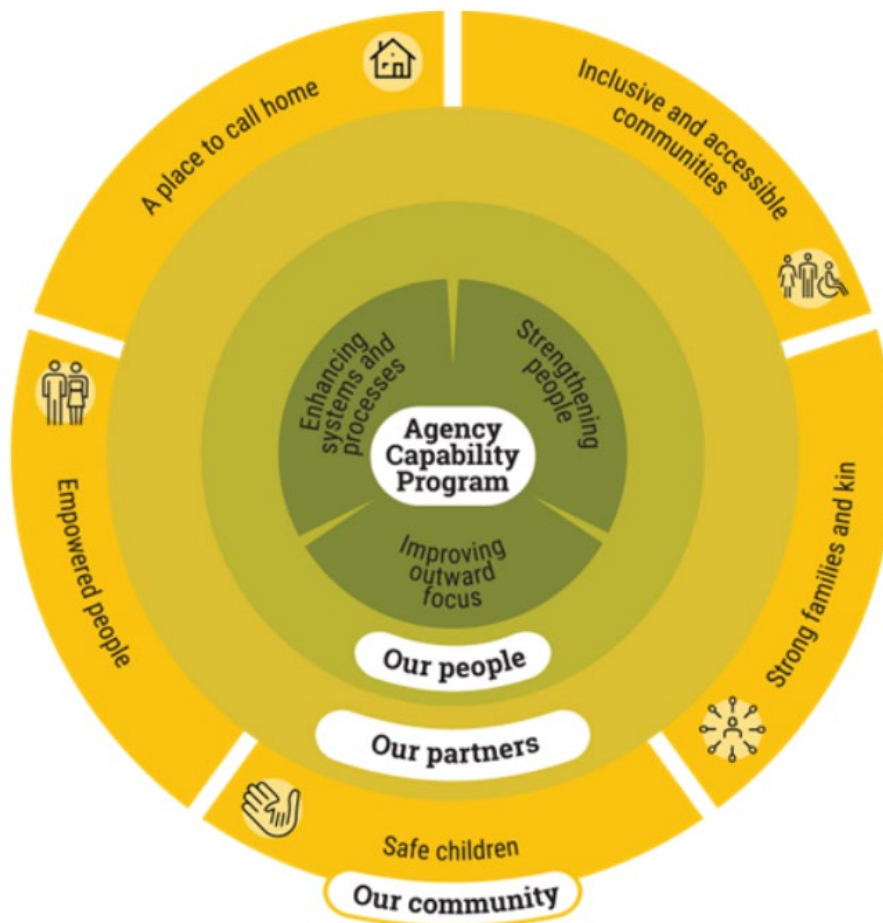
Executing our work in the right way, at the right time and place, for the right people, and for the right reasons

- A skilled, committed and diverse workforce that makes a big difference for the people and communities we serve.
- An effective, efficient and responsive agency that is supported by an integrated set of business systems, and an appropriate governance and performance framework.

### 4.4 Agency Capability Program (ACP)

The ACP will strengthen the Department’s capability so it can better deliver services to, and restore the trust and confidence of, the Western Australian community – see Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Agency Capability Program



The Department of Communities

The ACP has three capability streams:

- **Improving the Department's Outward Focus:** An outward focus is intrinsic to the work of the agency. The Department's purpose '*to collaborate to create pathways to enable individual, family and community wellbeing*', especially in the COVID-19 recovery phase, can only be realised through engaging and working with partners effectively.
- **Strengthening the Department's People:** The Department's outcomes and relationships are delivered by its workforce. Well-managed, supported and developed staff are critical to the delivery of the Department's services.
- **Enhancing the Department's Systems and Processes:** An organisation as large as Communities cannot function effectively without adequate systems and processes that support leaders and teams to make robust, evidence-based decisions, and ensure the consistent delivery of services.

It is important to note that the ACP is not an Aboriginal culturally informed or nuanced program and the ACP Advisory Board comprises only one Aboriginal person who, it is noted, has a background in business development and capability.

## 4.5 Governance Structure

The Department of Communities is responsible to six different Ministers as follows:

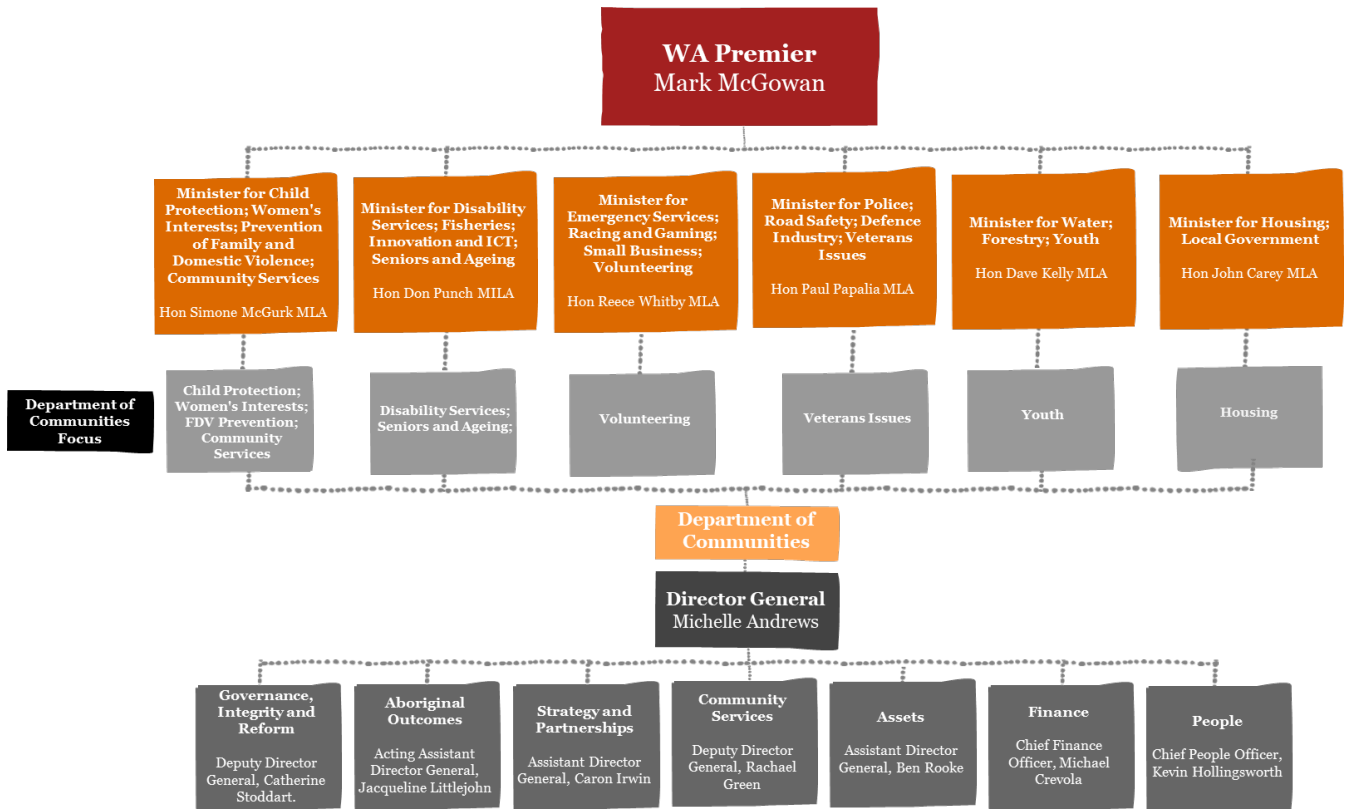
- Hon Simone McGurk MLA, Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services.
- Hon Don Punch MLA - Minister for Disability Services; Fisheries; Innovation and ICT; Seniors and Ageing.
- Hon Reece Whitby MLA - Minister for Emergency Services; Racing and Gaming; Small Business; Volunteering.
- Hon Paul Papalia MLA - Minister for Police; Road Safety; Defence Industry; Veterans Issues.
- Hon John Carey MLA - Minister for Housing; Local Government.
- Hon Dave Kelly MLA, Minister for Water; Forestry; Youth.

The Department is led by Director-General, Michelle Andrews. The Department has recently been restructured into seven divisions to "*enable the delivery of frontline services to Western Australians*". The divisions of the Department of Communities include:

- Governance, Integrity and Reform
- *Aboriginal Outcomes* (the subject of this Report)
- Strategy and Partnerships
- Community Services
- Assets
- Finance
- People

The Department's service accountabilities include disability services, child protection and family support, housing, and community and regional initiatives. The Department's governance structure is summarised below in Figure 3.

**Figure 3 – Department of Communities Governance Structure**



## 4.6 Established cultural governance mechanisms

### 4.6.1 Aboriginal Cultural Council

The Aboriginal Cultural Council (ACC) has been established to support the Department’s existing governance, strategy and responsibilities within a culturally secure framework. The Council’s role is to provide advice to the Communities Leadership Team.

The Council is responsible for:

- Providing cultural advice and information that supports Aboriginal inclusion and reconciliation to create better outcomes for Aboriginal people.
- Offering advice from an Aboriginal perspective, ensuring policy and practice development is informed with a cultural viewpoint.
- Advising on Aboriginal inclusion initiatives to produce a range of services and programs that build on and factor in cultural capability and cultural competency.
- Guiding the Department to build cultural capabilities in attitudes, behaviours, skills and knowledge, by offering cultural advice.
- Identifying emerging trends for the Aboriginal community, to enable the co-development of responsive, innovative and practical programs that deliver optimal outcomes for Aboriginal people.

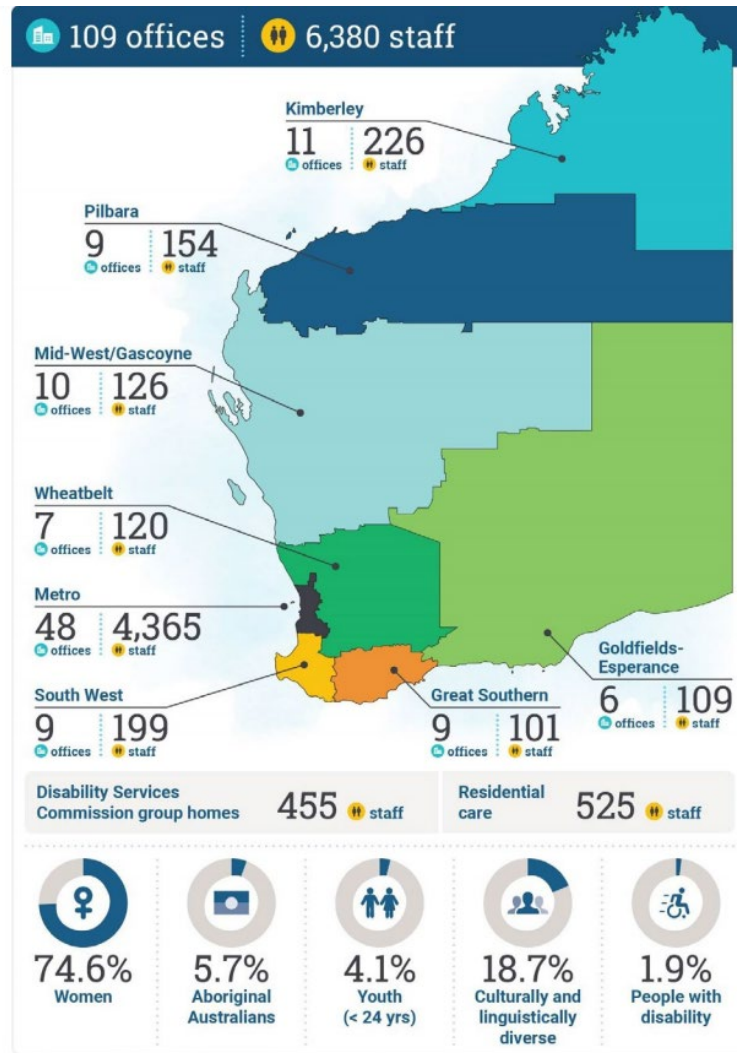
- Providing information and cultural intelligence to the Department's Reconciliation Action Plan working group with a focus on race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity and historical acceptance.
- Supporting the Department to gain a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture and society and deliver reforms through Aboriginal Services and Sector Improvement Initiatives.
- Identifying opportunities to ensure that the Department create a culturally cohesive working environment, enabling the practice of contemporary and traditional customs pertinent to:
  - Aboriginal family, kinships and skin groups
  - Aboriginal culture and traditional practices
  - Country for Aboriginal people, that is local, and place-based.

## 4.7 Workforce

As at 30 June 2020, the Department employed 6,380 staff across 109 offices across WA – refer to Figure 4. Some key statistics in relation to the Department include:

- 61 offices outside of the metropolitan region.
- 2,015 people that were employed outside of the metropolitan region.
- 364 people that identified as Aboriginal (5.7% of the Department's total workforce).

**Figure 4 – Department of Communities Workforce**



## 4.8 Key policies that impact on Aboriginal people through Departmental portfolio functions

A number of key policies were identified that impact upon Aboriginal people through Departmental portfolio functions. These key Departmental policies are summarised below in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Key Departmental Policies**

Policy	Overview
<b>WA Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People</b>	The WA Government is committed to preventing and addressing elder abuse and has set a goal to ensure that all older Western Australians live free from elder abuse, and are safe, respected and valued. The WA Strategy to Respond to the Abuse of Older People will drive the delivery of this commitment by guiding government agencies and



Policy	Overview
<b>(Elder Abuse)<sup>16</sup></b>	the community towards greater awareness and understanding of the causes, signs and consequences of elder abuse.
<b>Family and Domestic Violence Reduction Strategy<sup>17</sup></b>	<p>Path to Safety: Western Australia’s Strategy to Reduce Family and Domestic Violence 2020 – 2030 sets out a clear whole-of-government and community plan for reducing and responding to this issue over the next decade. The framework has four focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work with Aboriginal people to strengthen Aboriginal family safety</li> <li>• act immediately to keep people safe and hold perpetrators to account</li> <li>• grow primary prevention to stop family and domestic violence</li> <li>• reform systems to prioritise safety, accountability and collaboration.</li> </ul>
<b>Homelessness Strategy<sup>18</sup></b>	All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia’s 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030 is a whole-of-community plan, setting the direction for all levels of government, business and the community sector in responding to and preventing homelessness in Western Australia.
<b>Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy to 2022<sup>19</sup></b>	<p>The Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) Strategy is intended to increase opportunities for ACCOs to deliver contracted child protection and earlier intervention and family support services to their communities. It aims to facilitate innovation in the community services sector by investing in services that support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACCO capacity building</li> <li>• collaboration and partnership between existing ACCOs</li> <li>• collaboration and partnership between ACCOs and mainstream community sector organisations.</li> </ul> <p>The ACCO Strategy focusses on three objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Co-design – Co-design is prioritised and utilised when developing services to be delivered to Aboriginal children, families and communities.</li> <li>2. ACCO procurement – Utilise restrictive procurement processes that prioritise ACCOs when tendering for services to be delivered to Aboriginal children, families and communities.</li> <li>3. ACCO capacity building - Facilitate greater opportunities for ACCOs to deliver contracted child protection and family support services to their communities.</li> </ol>
<b>Aboriginal Services &amp; Practices Framework 2016-2018<sup>20</sup></b>	While not a current Framework and having only applied to the previous Department of Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS), the Aboriginal Service and Practice Framework 2016-2018 (ASPF) has been included as it was significantly referenced throughout consultations and has not been replaced by a similar strategy that encompasses the new Department. The ASPF was designed to support and sustain the Government’s commitment to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/media/2120/elder-abuse-strategy-nov19.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/strategies/family-and-domestic-violence-reduction-strategy/>.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/strategies/homelessness-strategy/>.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/media/1902/acco-strategy-to-2022.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/media/1768/aboriginal-services-practice-frameworks.pdf>.

Policy	Overview
	<p>communities that come into contact with the child protection system. It comprised several focus areas that were considered to be transferrable to the current Department and, as such, was considered a contemporary reference to include.</p>
<b>State Disability Strategy 2020-2030</b>	<p>A Western Australia for Everyone: State Disability Strategy 2020-2030 sets the foundation for building a more inclusive Western Australia, empowering people with disability to participate meaningfully in all parts of society and to have the resources to do so. The strategy provides a 10-year whole-of-community vision to protect, uphold and advance the rights of people with disability living in Western Australia.</p>
<b>WA Housing Strategy</b>	<p>The WA Housing Strategy 2020-2030 was launched on 14 October 2020. The strategy will connect 150,000 WA households to safe, stable and sustainable homes by 2030. The strategy is a call to action for all sectors to work together to improve housing choices and access to suitable and affordable homes – particularly for the most vulnerable.</p> <p>The Strategy sets clear targets to create a more agile housing system that can respond to current and future need. It commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a 6% net increase in social homes over the next 10 years (2,600 homes)</li><li>• diversifying the rental sector</li><li>• continuing to responsibly support home ownership opportunities for people on low to moderate incomes</li><li>• improving the availability of liveable designed housing</li><li>• building liveable, inclusive and connected communities that improve social and economic participation</li><li>• improving outcomes through a more integrated approach to housing and service assistance</li><li>• creating jobs and contributing to the State's economy.</li></ul>


## 4.9 Relationship with the Central DPC agency

The relationship between the Department and DPC, as Western Australia's Central Agency, is critical. In relation to improving outcomes for Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal Engagement Directorate (AED) of the DPC works to build positive relationships between Aboriginal people and the WA Government to deliver mutual and lasting benefits by:

- developing a whole-of-government Aboriginal affairs strategy focusing on engagement, leveraging economic opportunity and systems reform
- shaping the State's approach and engagement with Native Title groups and Aboriginal communities to resolve claims and leverage community defined opportunities
- partnering and building relationships with communities to deliver positive outcomes, through implementation of agreements and projects.

There are a number of key areas of interface between the AED and the Department, including through the AACC, and the AAC WA. The AED also has the State coordination function for the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, through which the Department has responsibility for a number of the target areas, both primarily and as a partner.

The DPC also published a draft Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy (AES) in December 2019 that articulated a set of Principles including:



The Department of Communities

- Empowerment and self-determination
- Culture and Country
- Diversity of people and places
- Services
- Evidence

The Strategic Elements of the AES included:

- Putting **Culture** at the centre.
- Bringing decisions **closer to communities** through empowered engagement and agreement making.
- Investing more in **preventative initiatives**.
- Building **cultural understanding and respect**.
- Boosting **economic opportunities** across all areas of Government activity.
- Enabling **Aboriginal-led solutions** through better service commissioning.

This Strategy is currently under review, along with the development of the Office of Accountability that the Strategy advocates for.

# 5 Aboriginal People in WA

In order to inform the organisational design of a new Division, it is important to understand the demographic characteristics of WA's Aboriginal population.

## 5.1 A high-level demographic analysis

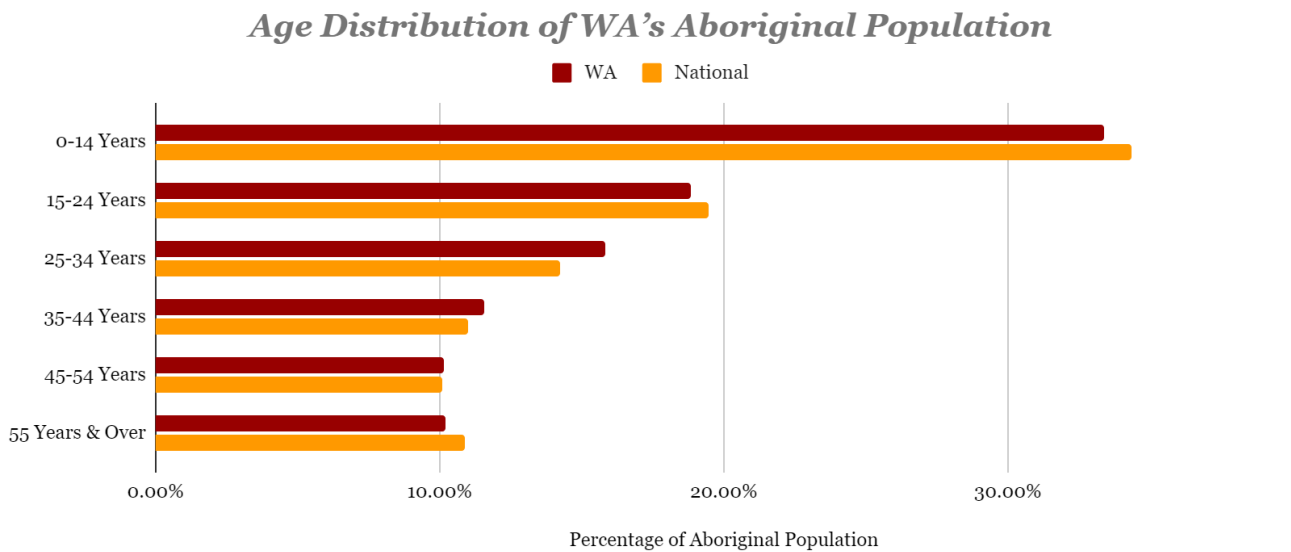
### 5.1.1 Total Population

WA's total estimated Aboriginal population, according to the most recent census by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2016, is 100,512 people.<sup>21</sup> This represents approximately 12.6% of the national estimated Aboriginal population as of 2016 (of 798,365 people). The total estimated Aboriginal population represents 3.93% of the total WA population which is higher than the same statistic for the broader population across Australia of 3.30%.

### 5.1.2 Age

The most recent census by the ABS in 2016 was further interrogated to develop a better understanding of the age distribution of WA's Aboriginal population. The summary of this analysis in comparison to the broader national context is provided in Figure 5. This figure highlights the large proportion of younger people in WA's Aboriginal population with over half of the population (~52%) being under the age of 25.

**Figure 5 – Age Distribution of WA's Aboriginal Population**



<sup>21</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/estimates-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-australians/latest-release>.

### 5.1.3 Geographic distribution

Another important lens on this demographic data is to understand the geographic distribution of WA’s Aboriginal population. Figure 6 provides a summary of the WA Aboriginal population by Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4). This figure highlights that approximately 39% of WA’s Aboriginal population resides in Perth and surrounding areas while the majority of the State’s Aboriginal population (~61%) is spread across rural and regional areas.

**Figure 6 – Geographic Aboriginal Population Distribution Across WA**

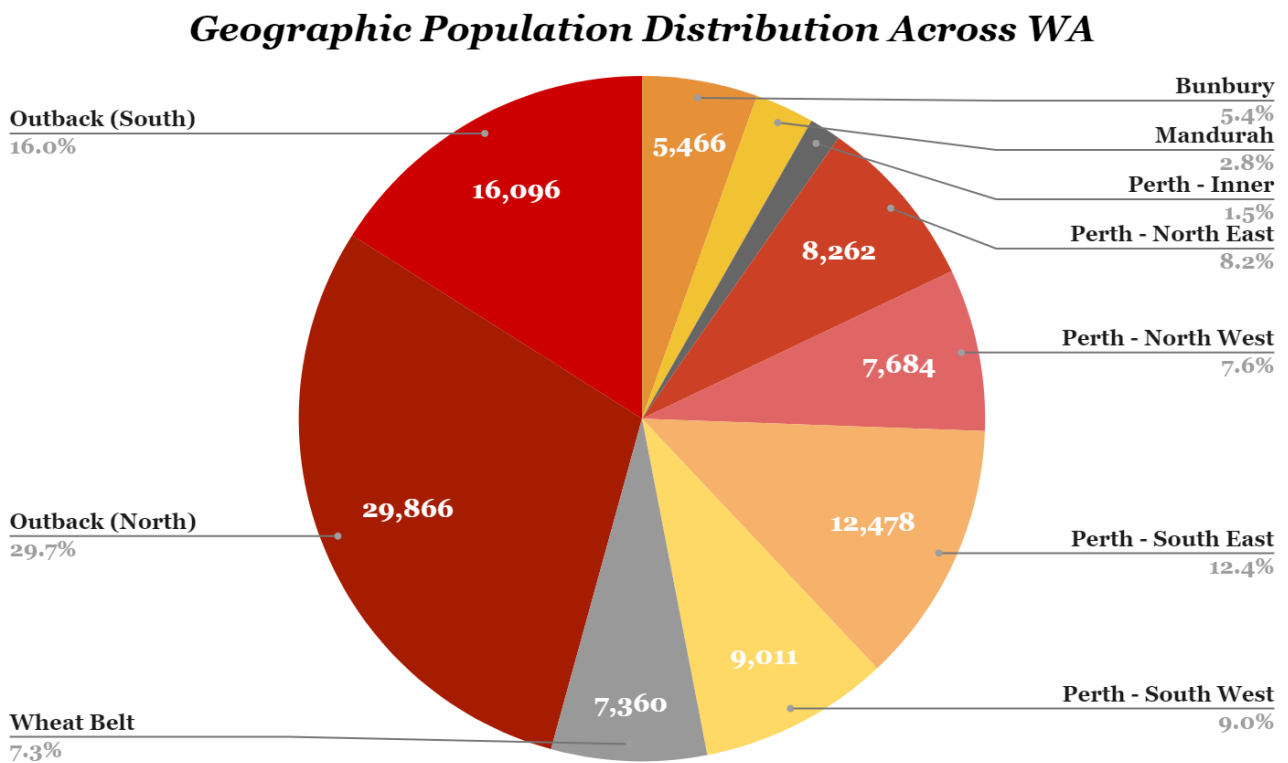
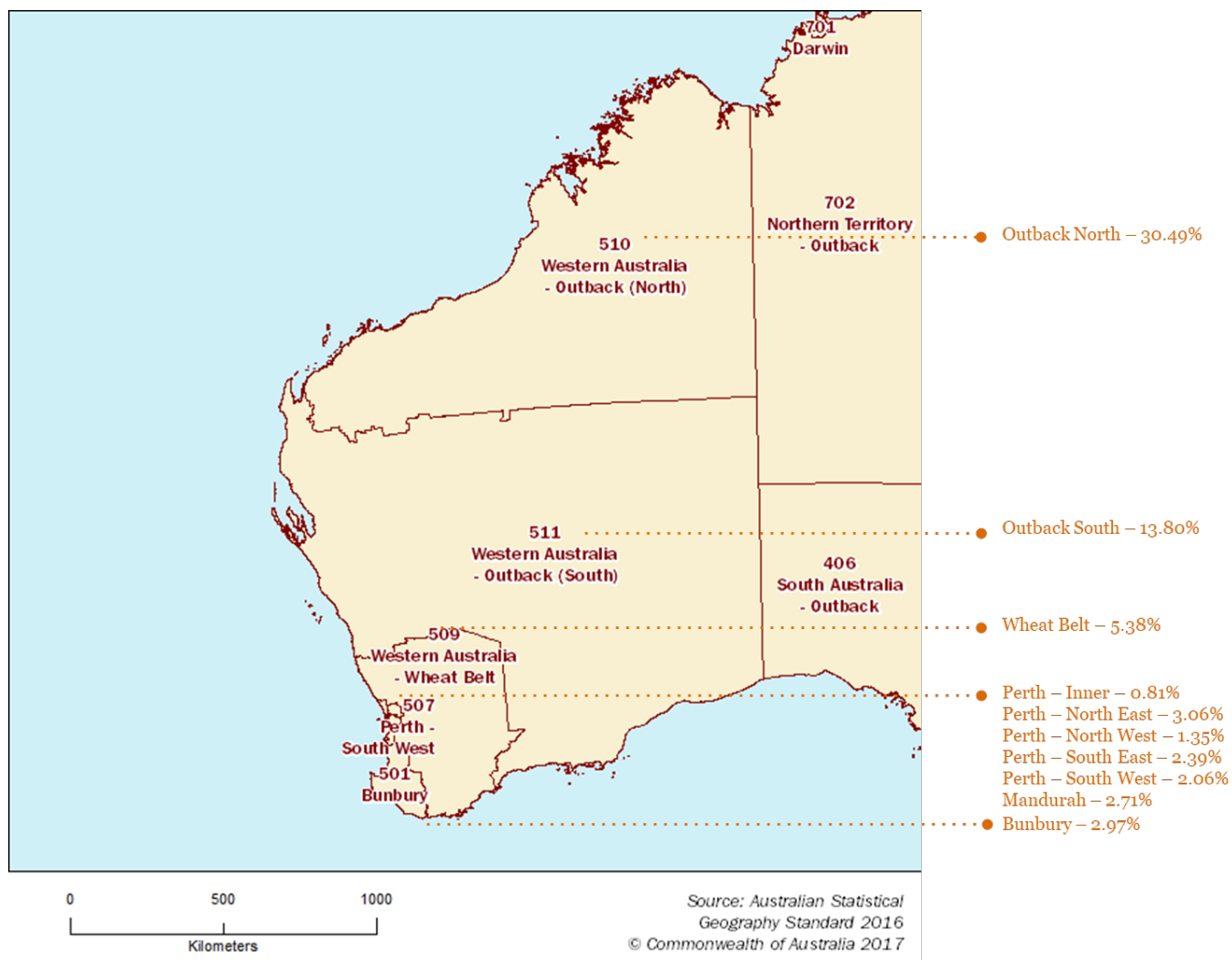


Figure 7 further illustrates the spread of the Aboriginal population across the State. This figure highlights the much higher proportion of the Aboriginal population in regional remote regions such as the Pilbara and Kimberley in the State’s north. It should also be noted that it is well documented that ABS population counts for Aboriginal people are undercounted through the census process for a variety of reasons.



**Figure 7 – Aboriginal Population Distribution – Geographic**



## 5.2 Socio-economic outcomes

In order to provide a perspective of socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA, an analysis of the 2016 ABS data was undertaken at the SA4 level. The results are summarised below in Table 5.

**Table 5 – Socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA**

Socio-Economic Indicator	National	WA	Bunbury	Mandurah	Perth Inner	Perth NE
Speak an Aboriginal Language at Home	10.3%	14.3%	1.5%	1.3%	4.3%	2.7%
Attained Year 12/Certificate III	63.2%	57.4%	58.8%	61.6%	84.3%	65.9%
Not in Labour Force	42.9%	48.5%	42.2%	41.1%	41.6%	50.2%
Unemployed	18.4%	22.4%	20.6%	23.6%	15.7%	21.0%
Live in Overcrowded Dwelling	21.1%	24.8%	14.5%	13.7%	11.1%	15.6%

## Aboriginal People in WA

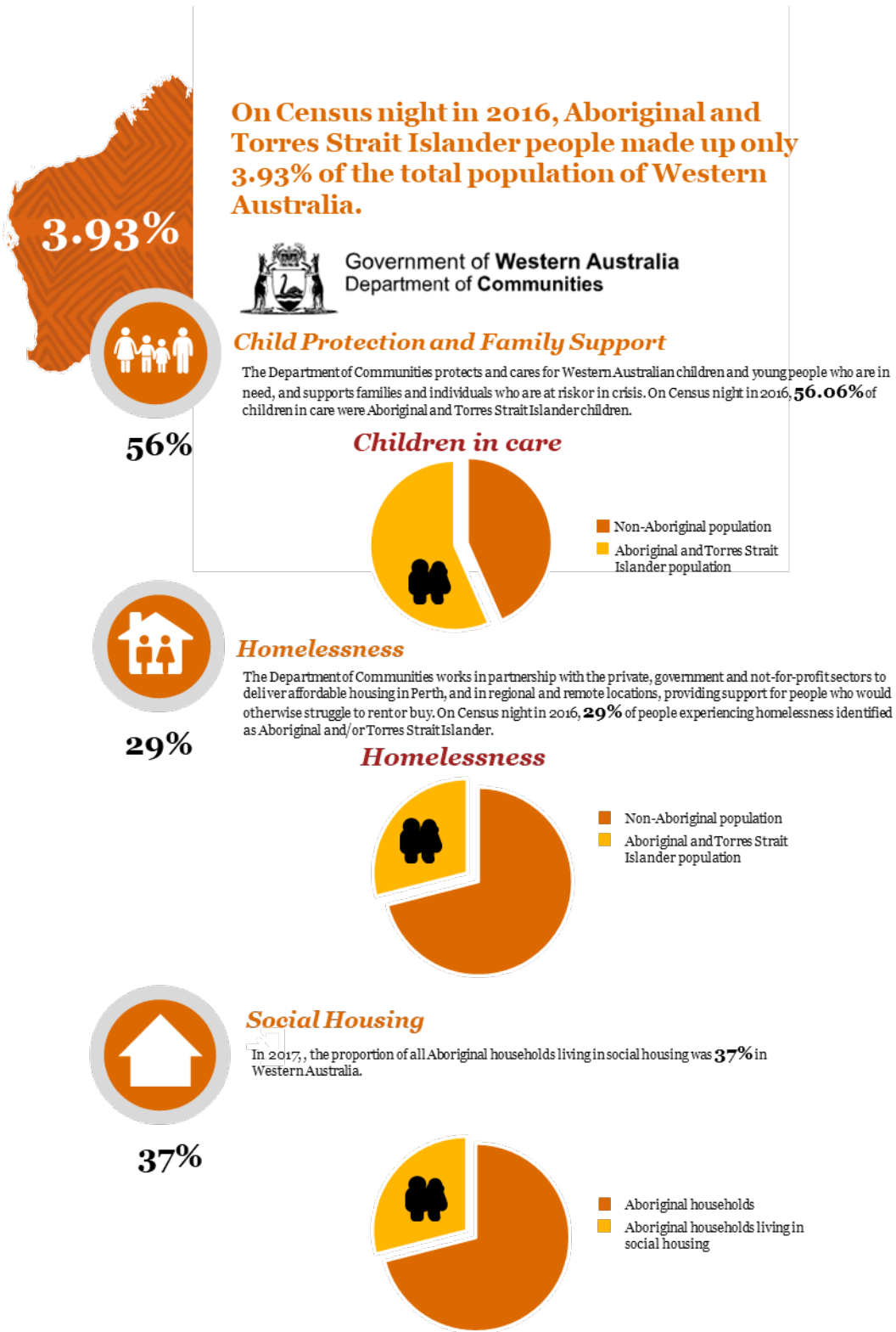
<b>Socio-Economic Indicator</b>	<b>Perth NW</b>	<b>Perth SE</b>	<b>Perth SW</b>	<b>Wheat Belt</b>	<b>Outback North</b>	<b>Outback South</b>
Speak an Aboriginal Language at Home	2.2%	3.2%	1.5%	1.9%	33.4%	20.0%
Attained Year 12/Certificate III	62.3%	64.6%	63.6%	56.4%	48.8%	49.5%
Not in Labour Force	38.7%	45.1%	43.5%	52.0%	51.7%	54.4%
Unemployed	38.7%	20.6%	20.1%	24.9%	23.0%	27.1%
Live in Overcrowded Dwelling	15.7%	17.8%	14.2%	18.2%	38.0%	30.8%

Table 5 shows the differences in the degree of disparity that exists in outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA across several key socioeconomic indicators. These metrics highlight the disproportionate disadvantage that Aboriginal people face within rural, remote and metropolitan settings across WA, and the standard of outcomes that are available to them. Furthermore, this data highlights the need for a heightened regional focus by the Department.

### **5.3 Current state of outcomes in WA aligned to the key functions of the Department's portfolios**

To illustrate the current state of outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA, an infographic was prepared in alignment with the key functions of the Department's portfolio – refer to Figure 8.

Figure 8 – Current state of Aboriginal outcomes aligned to the Department’s portfolio



## 6 Stakeholder Consultation Findings and Analysis

### 6.1 PIC's Organisational Design Framework

Following the conclusion of targeted consultations with internal Departmental stakeholders and external stakeholders, PIC undertook thematic analysis to draw out the key themes and findings from the statements provided.

Informed by a best practice approach to assessing organisational effectiveness (as provided by the '7-S Framework' developed by McKinsey & Company), PIC developed a tailored organisational design framework for this engagement. This framework incorporates key elements of the 7-S framework and incorporates Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing.



The key elements of the organisational design framework are explained below:

- **Improved Aboriginal Outcomes:** The organisational design framework places the improvement of Aboriginal outcomes at its core. The key elements of the evaluation align to this shared objective.
- **Strategy - Purpose & Vision:** The vision/s, guiding principles and strategies of the Western Australian Government, Department and its Divisions (including the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division) should provide a clear direction on the purpose for the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division and the outcomes that it seeks to lead and achieve.

- **Governance & Accountability:** Efficient governance structures and clear accountability support a culture of efficiency, effectiveness and performance and are critical aspects that will enable the Department to be effective in improving Aboriginal outcomes in Western Australia.
- **Partnerships - Collaboration & Coordination:** Effective service delivery requires collaborative relationships and strategic partnerships (both internal and external) to provide a coordinated approach to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people.
- **Cultural Considerations (Aboriginal):** The cultural capability and embedded expertise of the Department and its staff impact upon its ability to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people through the provision of culturally safe, targeted and responsive services and programs.
- **Systems & Processes:** Systems and processes that define, assure and evaluate the activities, processes and procedures of how work is to be completed will be critical factors that contribute to the effectiveness of the Division and its ability to support truly transformational change to drive positive outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.
- **Skills & Resources:** The resources, capabilities and competencies of the Department and its respective Divisions are critical to the effective delivery of services in alignment with the needs of Aboriginal people.
- **Implementation:** The implementation of the new proposed Aboriginal Outcomes division will be essential to the success and effectiveness of the Department.
- **Organisational Structure:** Establishing an appropriate organisational structure for the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division will ensure the effectiveness of the Division in addition to the Division's ability to interact, integrate and collaborate, both internally and externally, to support truly transformational change to drive positive outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.
- **Leadership (Including Attributes):** Overall leadership and leadership styles present across the Department and its Divisions, particularly the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division, will be critical to the effectiveness of the Department and to enable transformation change to drive positive outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. Additionally, the styles, attitudes and attributes of key leaders is required to influence organisation culture and mitigate against transformational fatigue.
- **Organisational Culture:** Transformational change within the organisational culture of the Department and its Divisions is required to ensure long-term success.
- **Enabling Environment:** An enabling environment will be critical to supporting the establishment of the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division and the transformational change that is sought. The enabling environment includes factors such as organisational policies, funding, government policy etc. in addition to the effective inter-relationship of all of the previous listed elements of the organisational design framework.

## 6.2 Overview of stakeholder consultations

PIC conducted a series of 27 individual stakeholder consultations with key project stakeholders to design, validate, test and inform the roadmap for establishing the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes Division. 13 of these individual consultations were with internal Departmental stakeholders and 14 were with key external stakeholders.

PIC also conducted four group interviews/focus groups, with: 7 attendees from the Regional Executive Directors Group; 10 attendees from Strategy & Transformation (Aboriginal staff); 13 attendees from Strategy & Transformation (all staff); and 2 attendees from the Regional Directors Group.



## 6.3 Key themes from stakeholder consultations

### 6.3.1 Strategy – purpose and vision

- There is a need for transformational change that provides a visible shift from the current way of doing things. This shift should seek to build on what is working and improve areas that are identified as requiring a different approach.

“

*“We don’t seem to be able to move from evolution to revolution...”*

”

- The Division needs a clear vision that is aspirational and highlights the opportunity and what is possible. The vision must set high expectations.
- Aligned to the vision, the Division requires a clear purpose. This purpose should consider:
  - What the Division does and what the Division doesn’t do?
  - What success looks like?
  - Whether the Division should adopt a whole-of-government or whole-of-Department approach?
  - What will be the operating model will be and what functions will the Division be responsible for? For example, driving a reform agenda, supporting other agencies, strategic partnerships, strategy development and leadership, practice and implementation, evaluation and monitoring, strategic engagement, service delivery, procurement etc.

“

*“Set up the Aboriginal Outcomes area to mirror the central government accountability function so that it would develop and mature in alignment over time; keeping the Department accountable....”*

”

- The Division needs a name that reflects its purpose.
- The Division should develop a clear operating model that is aligned to its Vision and Purpose.
- The Division should work with other Divisions to develop whole of Agency culturally informed strategies and policies that are aligned to its Vision and Purpose.
- The role of the Division *must not be tokenistic*, and the importance of the Division must be elevated within the Department and, more broadly, across Government.
- It is important that the Division plays an enabling role in achieving outcomes and is not seen as a gate keeper.
- The Division must align to both the WA Government’s policy views in Indigenous affairs and also Commonwealth policy (e.g. Closing the Gap).
- The Division should establish clear values and guiding principles by which to operate such as:
  - Open and respectful relationships
  - Empowering and enabling the regions through decentralised (Place-Based) decision making and service delivery
  - Clear, targeted, purposeful, meaningful and transparent community engagement
  - Strategic partnerships (e.g. with ACCOs, Indigenous businesses etc.)
  - Co-design approaches to promote self-determination
  - Sustainable change
  - Agility.
- The Division should deliver work aligned to best practice in the sector and across jurisdictions.

### 6.3.2 Governance and accountability

- An appropriate Accountability Framework *must* be developed that supports the Vision, Purpose and operating model for the Division. The framework should:
  - consider the impacts of key factors such as shared accountability (e.g. within Divisions, with community etc.), matrix reporting models, decentralised decision making, etc.
  - should ensure that accountability is clear and that lines of responsibility are transparent
  - should be aligned to the whole-of-government approach
  - should be culturally informed and responsive.
- Governance and accountability must be clearly articulated, socialised and communicated to stakeholders (internal and external).
- Transparency around decision making is essential to the success of the Division.
- Clarity around roles and responsibilities is essential to the Division's, and Department's success (i.e. Who is doing what).

“

*“If Aboriginal Outcomes is seen as responsible for ALL Aboriginal Outcomes, it will never work (it needs to be owned by everyone).”*

”

- The Division needs to have credibility both internally and externally. *“We say one thing but do another (as a Department).”*
- Processes for monitoring and evaluation are critical and should include:
  - Practice and policy should be continually audited and monitored to develop and implement best practice
  - Measuring outcomes to determine impact (e.g. reporting on Closing the Gap)
  - Reviews are important for organisational learning and continuous improvement and findings should be shared
  - Employment and procurement targets
  - Cultural capability of Government
  - Reports that outline data and key findings.
- The Division must have an authority to influence and coordinate outcomes in this domain across the Department and enact change. This authority must extend beyond the Director-General.

“

*“Currently the Aboriginal Outcomes [Division] is not seen to hold authority and external agencies all want the DG at the table – this is not tenable moving forward.”*

”

- There needs to be clear expectations of all staff.
- There needs to be governance around change management to ensure that change is implemented and to keep staff informed of the change process.
- The Division should provide a voice for Aboriginal people from a governance perspective on key Government-led forums and projects.

“

*“There needs to be an Aboriginal Terms of Reference that guides operations (Curtin University)”*

”

- The Division should provide strategic leadership for the other Divisions to follow.

- Staff should be empowered to fulfil their roles.

“

*“Staff do not seem to feel like they have the authority to make decisions or do anything- it all seems to vest with [de-identified]; they seem scared to do so- this is not functional.”*

”

- A strong, united leadership across the Department for a whole-of-department approach.
- Cultural governance should be integrated into corporate governance processes.
- Building capability in governance is important.
- The Department’s current structure requires Matrix Management expertise to navigate.
- The Cultural Council remit needs to be about the Department’s functions and limited to that.

### 6.3.3 Partnerships – collaboration and coordination

- A coordinated, whole-of-government approach is essential to achieving the transformational changes sought to Aboriginal outcomes.
- A whole-of-Department operating model to achieve Aboriginal outcomes would be beneficial, showing how the Division interacts with, integrates with, and supports other Divisions.

“

*“There is a challenge working across silos.”*

”

- A coordinated, collaborative approach is essential to delivering outcomes.
- Functions are currently split across areas making it ‘messy’ – teams need to feel empowered to drive change. Some options include:
  - Embedding staff through all of the Divisions
  - Working closely with the DPC
  - Adopting a collaborative, teams-based approach
  - Adopting regional-, or place-based approaches.
- The Division needs to be actively included in key conversations to reinforce collaboration across the Department.
- The Division should have an active role in informing the strategic direction of the Department.
- The Division should seek to implement a cooperative approach involving community in decision making using a bottom-up approach.
- The Division should play an important role in community engagement (i.e. communities, families, ACCOs, people with lived experience):
  - We REAP what we sow - Respect, Early Engagement, Avoiding Assumptions, Powerful Partnerships – these are the cornerstone of respect
  - We need to ask people what they want and not base understandings on Departmental assumptions
  - We need to be clear and purposeful about engagement (not tokenistic) and seek to leverage it to implement change.

“

*“Being able to authentically engage with the Aboriginal community to symbolise a paradigm shift... The Department needs to be open to this- and delivering on what we say we will do.”*

*“Community connection is imperative (the Cultural Council alone is not enough).”*

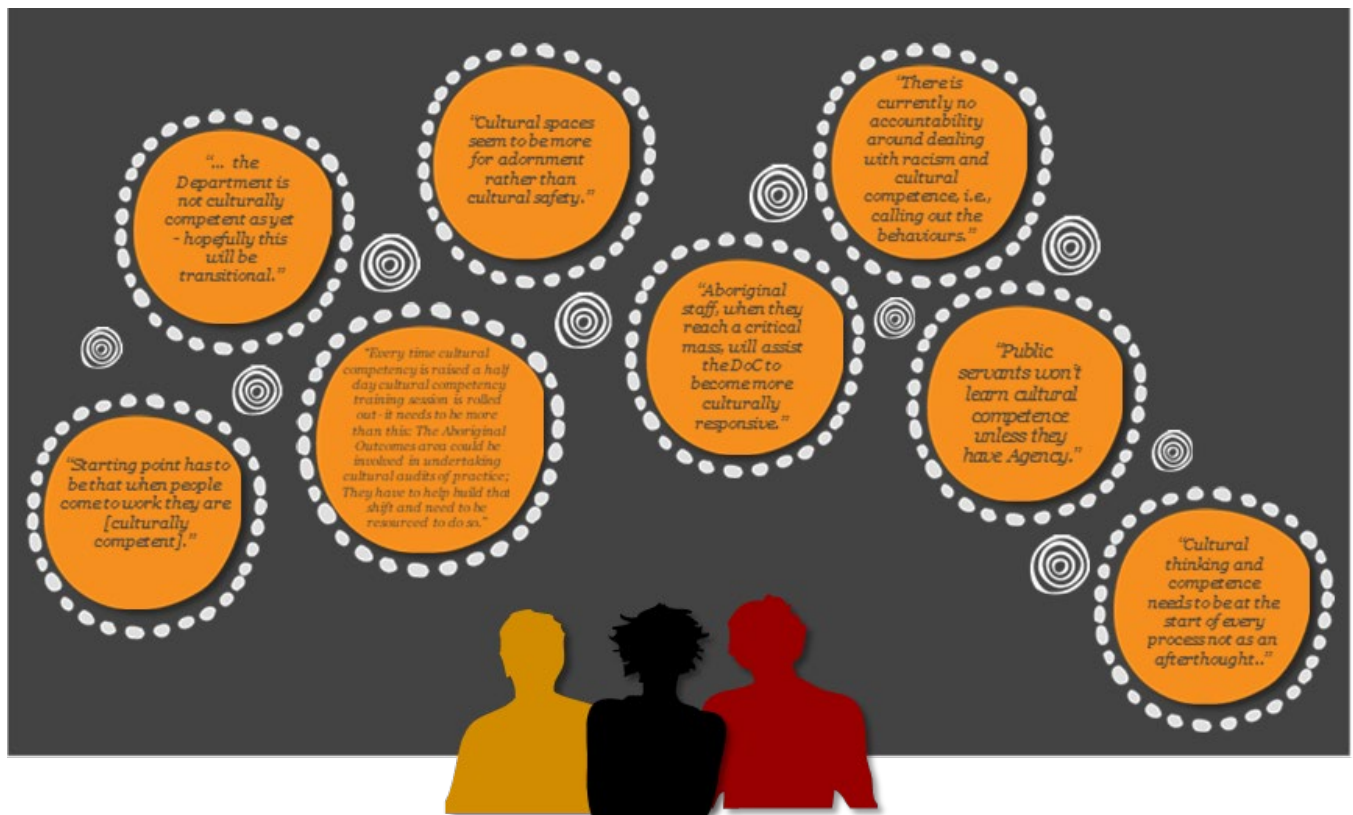
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- An Aboriginal Community Engagement Framework should be developed to guide the Department.
- A strategic approach to partnering with, and building, the ACCO sector is required:
  - The Department should be leading the way in procurement of services from Aboriginal businesses
  - The Division should seek to play a stewardship role to growing the ACCO sector through a two-way capacity, capability and partnership building approach.

#### 6.3.4 Cultural considerations (Aboriginal)

- The Division should play an important role in improving the cultural capability and competency in the Department:
  - Several stakeholders highlighted a lack of cultural capability and competency within the Department which is impacting upon service delivery and ultimately outcomes for Aboriginal people and is consistent with the findings of the Westerman report. Stakeholders also highlighted that the recommendations had not been actioned and the S&T framework being developed was not seen as being owned agency-wide.
  - There needs to be a priority to improve the cultural competence of all staff across the whole Department.
  - A strategic approach to developing the cultural competence of the Department’s workforce needs to be co-developed and co-delivered with the People Development area.
  - Monitoring and evaluation of the Department’s journey with regard to cultural competence is imperative to ensuring change.
- There is an expectation that cultural competence is demonstrated at all levels of leadership, including at the CLT level.
- The Department needs to develop culturally responsive and culturally-sound structures and systems including:
  - Having mechanisms for Aboriginal input (voice) and community input to decision making and ensuring that these voices have agency
  - Ensuring that service-delivery is oriented with the needs of Aboriginal people - How does the Department know how to deal with the complex social systems that surround Aboriginal families
  - Integrating Aboriginal ways of working across all Divisions within the Department;
  - Cultural input can provide a ‘healthy’ tension to drive improved outcomes
  - Program design and delivery should be an iterative process that provides opportunities to learn and improve
  - Developing systems and processes to make the Department a culturally and psychologically safe and trauma informed workplace for Aboriginal people. This approach begins to address the impacts of colonisation and underpins effective service delivery to improve outcomes.





- A Cultural Capability Framework should underpin the Division's and Department's work.
- The Department needs to develop a culturally safe workplace and environment for Aboriginal staff. This environment must value the perspectives of Aboriginal staff and should embrace difference and diversity. This includes:
  - Striving towards becoming a culturally safe workplace of choice in the future
  - Mentoring for staff that is both skills-based and culturally informed
  - Acknowledging that a strong Aboriginal workforce is a key element to improving sector outcomes. This includes developing a strong workforce which includes staff across all levels and roles, particularly in decision making roles
  - Developing an improved understanding of the unsaid and unseen pressures that are placed upon Aboriginal people in senior leadership roles
  - Providing cultural yarning spaces or safe spaces for Aboriginal people/staff (visual – and beyond tokenistic).

“

“...there is no guarantee of cultural safety in the Department at present.”

“There are currently Aboriginal people in the Department who are being disenfranchised and working in a culturally unsafe space: As such there needs to be some actions taken immediately and then others planned for the longer term.”

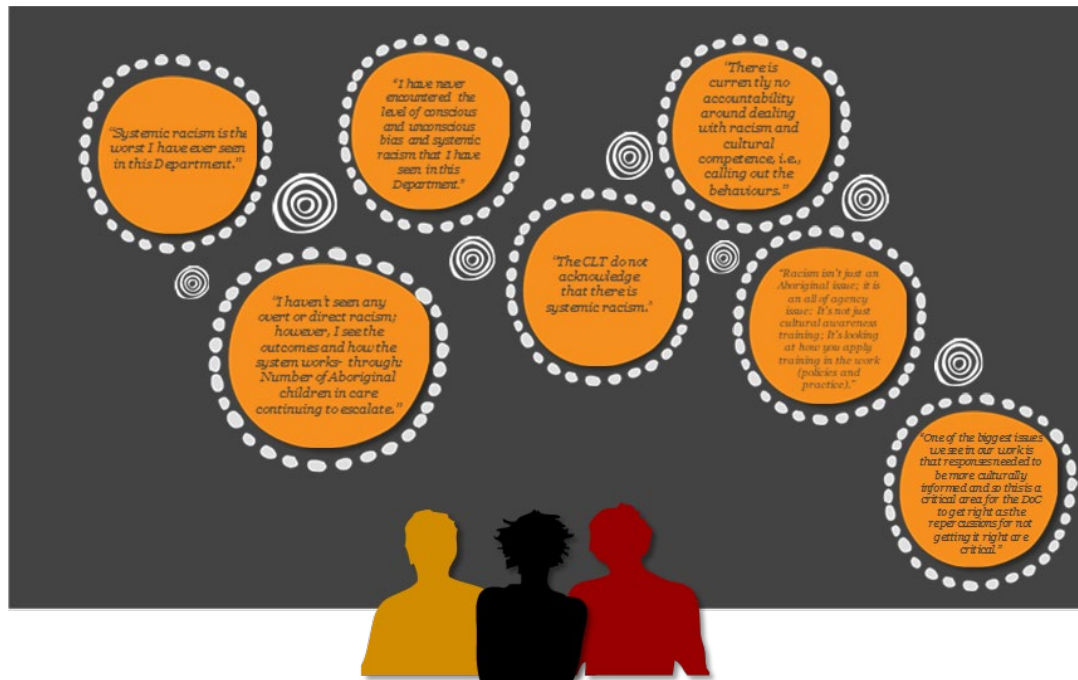
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- The Department needs to overcome some of the challenges of systemic racism that exist which results in poor outcomes for Aboriginal people.
- The Department should have a greater focus on Aboriginal culture and recognition of Aboriginal culture and this needs to be done in a meaningful manner.



## Stakeholder Consultation Findings and Analysis

- The Department needs to consider what the Aboriginal community needs to see, feel and want and then determine what the Department needs to do to enact meaningful change.



### 6.3.5 Systems and processes

- The Department needs to develop a more coordinated approach to strengthen its Aboriginal workforce that considers:
  - Providing a culturally safe work environment for Aboriginal staff
  - Aboriginal workforce targets across the Department (not just the Division) with monitoring and reporting to highlight progress and ensure accountability
  - Mechanisms to ensure that Aboriginal staff are valued, and their voices heard
  - Development pathways for staff to more senior positions through further training and education opportunities
  - Support mechanisms for Senior Aboriginal leaders like coaching and mentoring
  - A strategic approach to the Aboriginal workforce that includes talent identification, talent development, targeted recruitment pathways, retention of talent, accelerated leadership development programs, partnership programs with the resources sector, secondment programs, and so forth.
- The Department should seek to increase procurement from Aboriginal businesses and the ACCO sector. This could include:
  - Developing a procurement strategy and supply chain map that is aligned with the Aboriginal Procurement Strategy (State Policy) and the Closing the Gap Targets to improve outcomes across the Department's portfolio of services. It will be imperative to ensure implementation and adherence across all areas of the Department with disaggregated monitoring and reporting.
  - The development of a strategy to strategically partner with the ACCO sector. This strategy would provide opportunities to further develop capability within the ACCO sector.
  - Carving out procurement opportunities for Indigenous businesses and ACCOs
  - Mechanisms to engage more with the ACCO sector and service providers
  - Developing processes to transition existing contracts with mainstream agencies to ACCOs, ensuring there has been capacity and capability building to safeguard success.
  - The development of more structured approaches for Aboriginal oversight in the application/evaluation/selection process for tenders.
- The stakeholder consults highlighted the need to develop (or review and update) a number of business processes and fundamental frameworks to ensure they capture a different, more culturally informed and

responsive way of working. This Aboriginal way of working would not derogate from service quality and deliverables and would include:

- Formal processes for business cases
- A Cultural Capability Framework and Program
- A Cultural Standards Framework
- Aboriginal Services and Practices Framework 2016-2018 (a previous Department of Child Protection and Family Support Framework)
- An Accountability Framework
- An Outcomes and Evaluation Framework
- A detailed Implementation Plan to achieve the desired outcomes
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Review – To ensure policy, practice, progress on the reform agenda and cultural capability improve or progress and to ensure accountability
- Feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement
- Risk management and appropriate mitigation strategies
- Implementing cultural governance mechanisms into corporate governance processes.

*The above frameworks and approaches could all be encapsulated in one approach, these notions were just presented in different ways by different groups, however the sentiment was clear – there needed to be a guiding framework to build from (a solid foundation and organising system)*

- Clear communications are essential to ensure that all stakeholders are informed on the transition process thereby ensuring that there is a visible and transparent process.
- The Department should complete a review of policy and contract design that is based on data, evaluation and an evidence-based approach.
- The Department should develop monitoring, evaluation and review practices to ensure that policy implementation is aligned to the outcomes that are sought.
- The transformation requires dedicated investment (financial and resources) to achieve the change required. Endeavouring to achieve this change through BAU (Business As Usual) activities **will not** achieve the desired outcomes.
- A clear, detailed operating model should be developed for the new Division including how the Division integrates and interfaces with other Divisions.
- The Department needs to ensure that it takes visible actions to address aspects of previous reviews.
- Live data in each office (e.g. rates of children in care) to raise the awareness of the seriousness of the challenges.
- Given the apparent limited current capacity and capability and the degree of urgency needed in relation to the Department achieving transformational change, it would be of benefit to have a supported process in establishing the new Division – one where it could be supported for success; interpreted by PIC to mean a ‘stand-up and scaffolding support approach’.

### 6.3.6 Skills and resources

- A strong Aboriginal Workforce is critical, not just within the Division, but within the Department, to achieve the desired outcomes.

“

*“There needs to be good, strong and structured leadership opportunities for Aboriginal people...”*

”

- The Department needs appropriate workforce development and support (e.g. mentoring etc.) policies
- The Department/Division should have an aspirational goal to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal people
- The Department needs to ensure appropriate responses and actions to unacceptable behaviours

- Aboriginal staff must be embedded throughout the Department to bring about and drive change.

“

*“Aboriginal employment just makes good resource sense to do; it results in strategic business performance even though, from an intent and conscious level, it may not have started as that. Good social conscience can be grown, and Aboriginal employment is a good way to achieve this.”*

”

- The new model must consider what skills are required to support the new ways of working (e.g. What does a new unit look like? What skills will be required (e.g. co-design, design, innovation, best practice, capability development etc.)?
  - The Division should consider engaging Subject Matter Experts to gain access to both capacity and capability (as required). This approach also allows a more focussed, targeted approach to achieving change
  - The new ways of working will require increased agility and a workforce with a wide range of skills and abilities. This new way of working needs to be underpinned by a learning mindset
  - The Division needs to consider its approach towards building the capability that is required.
- A central focus for the Division should be to build and maintain capacity and capability.
- Inadequate resourcing for the new Division will result in the inability to gain any traction towards driving and implementing change.

“

*“The one thing is that there needs to be a genuine commitment to this: It must be resourced; It needs to be a genuine commitment- not just because it's the right political thing to do, or because a report said they needed to do it - it MUST BE genuine and authentic; If we are being authentic then the changes will be made because we have a strong commitment to making them.”*

”

- The Division will require a skilled and highly competent workforce to deliver outcomes. Recruitment should have a values focus, not just technical skills. Additionally, cultural capability and the ability to engage with community are important strengths that should be sought in recruiting staff.

“

*“We have a social conscience- our work adds value to the community... People who work with us have the opportunity to make a difference.”*

*“The quality of the workforce will drive the quality of outcomes.”*

”

- The Division, and Department, need to create spaces for team building and opportunities for learning to create a truly innovative Division.
- The new Division should lead the development of appropriate policy to build the capability of the ACCO sector.
- The establishment of the Division requires a dedicated Change Management Team to ensure that staff understand what is happening and when.
- The continuity of existing initiatives is critical to ensure that work that is already underway is completed.

- The Division could have a skilled research, innovation and consultancy implementation section/area that could:
  - Look at key recommendations and track the implementation of recommendations made by previous reviews
  - Keep up to date with national and international best practice
  - Monitor trends across the practice to address and/or learn from/share
  - Be outcomes-driven holding the Department to account.

### 6.3.7 Implementation

- There needs to be a detailed Implementation Plan which outlines a clear road map for transformational change.

“

*“Planning is essential – we need to get it right and set the Division up for success.”*

*“There needs to be a detailed plan that provides a clear roadmap.”*

*“If you don’t know what your Policy is then you haven’t got a roadmap.”*

”

- The Department and Division must establish clear measurable targets for both implementation and outcomes and measure and report on these.
- Communication is critical in implementation and the Division’s vision, purpose, and operating model must be clearly articulated.
- The language used by the Department will be critical for success – the name of the Division and role titles will need to be fit-for-purpose and reflective of requirements.

“

*“We don’t always communicate well around change.”*

*“There needs to be an understanding across the whole team; not just at the CLT level around the role of the group.”*

*“At present we (staff in the Department) cannot see where things are starting and ending in the change/reform process; Communication is critical at this time otherwise conspiracy seeps in.”*

*“The role of Strategy & Transformation is not well understood by many staff: It is not currently seen by the general staffing community as an Aboriginal Outcomes area; It seems like a lot of people have been put there but not really a clear understanding of what they do.”*

”

- A scaffolding approach is necessary for the establishment of the new Division. This scaffolding approach should seek to be supported by SMEs who can assist, inform and accelerate change in a skills transfer and capacity building way in order to create a sustainable and performing work unit.
  - Support and development are essential to building the capability of staff and setting up the Division for success
  - Success planning is critical to ensuring the continuity of services and implementation
  - Establishment of the Division requires a dedicated Change Management Team to ensure that staff understand what is happening and when



- Leadership must seek the opinions of others to develop a robust approach to implementation.
- Each Division should be targeted around their skill requirements and seek purposeful/fit for purpose recruitment.
- The Division's structure, roles and responsibilities need to be clearly communicated.
- There needs to be clearly communicated expectations of staff in the implementation process.

### 6.3.8 Organisational structure

- The Division must be underpinned by a strong Aboriginal workforce, built through targeted recruitment. This includes having Aboriginal staff:
  - across all grades within the agency (e.g. leadership, management, decision-making power)
  - across the Department's Divisions.

“

*“All Aboriginal staff should not be in the Aboriginal Outcomes area- they need to be employed across the entire agency.”*

*“It is important that the Department itself at the DG level sets a target for building the Aboriginal workforce right through and across the Structure.”*

*“The Department needs a strong and diverse workforce with a wide range of skills and abilities: The proportion of Aboriginal staff in the workforce needs to be prioritised.”*

”

- The Division must have authority and positional power within the Department if it is to enact true change. To achieve this, the new Division must:
  - be able to choose their own team

“

*“Whoever takes on the leadership role of the Aboriginal Outcomes area needs to have the ability to choose their team - to be unburdened from current/past teams, etc. (Both internal and external).”*

”

- clarify roles and accountabilities to better determine how the new Division will interact with other Divisions across the Department.

“

*“Important for the new Aboriginal Outcomes area is: Clarity of role and responsibility; Clear workplan.”*

”

- A review of existing structures and processes across the Department will inform what can be leveraged and what needs to be built.



- The Department needs to continue to move away from the current siloed model. There needs to be a more agile operating model and the organisational structure must support this capability.

“

*“May need transformation teams to assist the Department: The Department is too hierarchical and gets in the way; The ‘silos’ need to stop, and we need a high-level plan over the next 12+ months.”*

*“The Department is extremely siloed and there does not appear to be an appetite to drive this change around improving Aboriginal outcomes for Aboriginal families and communities (There is no Aboriginal outcomes Framework to drive this change, implement it and monitor performance).”*

*“The organisation has lost a sense of ‘human-ness’, it operates in silos, etc. (S&T as well as all other Divisions).”*

”

- The organisational structure should be agile and fluid to be more responsive to needs
- There will need to be some overlap between the Divisions to achieve the outcomes sought.
- The organisational structure must consider the Departmental structure, be value-driven, and fit-for-purpose to be set up for success.

“

*“The Aboriginal Outcomes area needs to work with the broader CLT, in order to be successful, taking on board a ‘Matrix’ approach whereby there is a dual or multiple managerial accountability and responsibility working across both functional and project/product/client/service areas.”*

”

- Stakeholders highlighted how the Department’s current practices (e.g. policy development, decision making, allocation of resources, funding etc.) are largely driven by head office with insufficient input from regional and remote perspectives.

“

*“Centralised decision making is an error.”*

*“If it is centralised that doesn’t fit with the Department’s place-based approach: If it is centralised, then maybe it should be a function and not a Division; However, if there is no separate Division then there is a risk that you dilute influence; If a separate Division, then what is their role in growing the leadership in the Regions).”*

”

“

*“A leadership group that seeks the opinions of others.”*

*“Creating a leadership role that could be reflexive and learn across areas is important.”*

”

- The leadership of the Department should promote and encourage seeking the opinions and perspectives of others thereby promoting a more inclusive culture, greater staff engagement and more suitable programs, initiatives and services for Aboriginal people in WA.
- The Division must provide leadership on the strategic direction of the Department and drive capability through best practice.

“

*“Broad strategic direction is what the Aboriginal Outcomes area should do and then it needs to be left to the other Divisions to do the ‘grunt work’.”*

*“The work cannot be achieved if Aboriginal outcomes is not seen as having authority by the other Divisions: Compliance needs to sit alongside a ‘helping role’; Demonstrating best practice so that they are a vehicle for engagement.”*

*“The Aboriginal Outcomes Division is another ‘Centre of Excellence’, they need to drive best practice, aspirations, tools, lessons learnt, etc.”*

”

- A broader whole-of-department approach is necessary to achieve improved Aboriginal outcomes.

“

*“The broader application of initiatives across the ‘whole of the Department’ needs to happen: Work continued from each area rather than it being more broadly applied across the entire agency.”*

*“AO should serve as the one area of accountability in the DoC, but there needs to be shared responsibility for Aboriginal Outcomes across the whole Department.”*

*“Need a planned and whole of Department Strategy: Talent identification; Talent development; Accelerated leadership development program; Partnership programs with the resources sector (instead of competing with each other); Secondment programs, etc.”*

”

- There must be genuine commitment to structural change, and this needs to be adequately resourced.

### 6.3.9 Leadership (including attributes)

- Leadership must live the values of the Division and ensure the vision, purpose and strategy are embedded throughout the Division.

“

*“Leadership needs to walk the talk.”*

*“There should be an expectation that the CLT be culturally competent.”*

*“The whole CLT needs to sponsor this position/person as a team.”*

”

- Key attributes for leading the new Division requires the right skillset to enact change. Some attributes identified by stakeholders include:
  - Aboriginal leadership is essential to gain authority from community. It is symbolic and should be reflective of community
  - Credibility
  - Integrity
  - Experienced in working in government
  - Skilled in government relations
  - Able to work across agencies to achieve joint outcomes
  - Strategic thinking
  - A skilled networker
  - Ability to negotiate constructively - as opposed to telling people what they must do
  - The ability to foster partnerships
  - Interpersonal and relationship management skills
  - Skilful use of authority to influence (*“Leadership = Influence: If you cannot use influence to leverage systemic change/improvement, then you are not being an effective leader.”*)
- The leadership of the new Division must have positional power. Positional power is important as a symbol as an agent of change and a shift of the organisational culture.

“

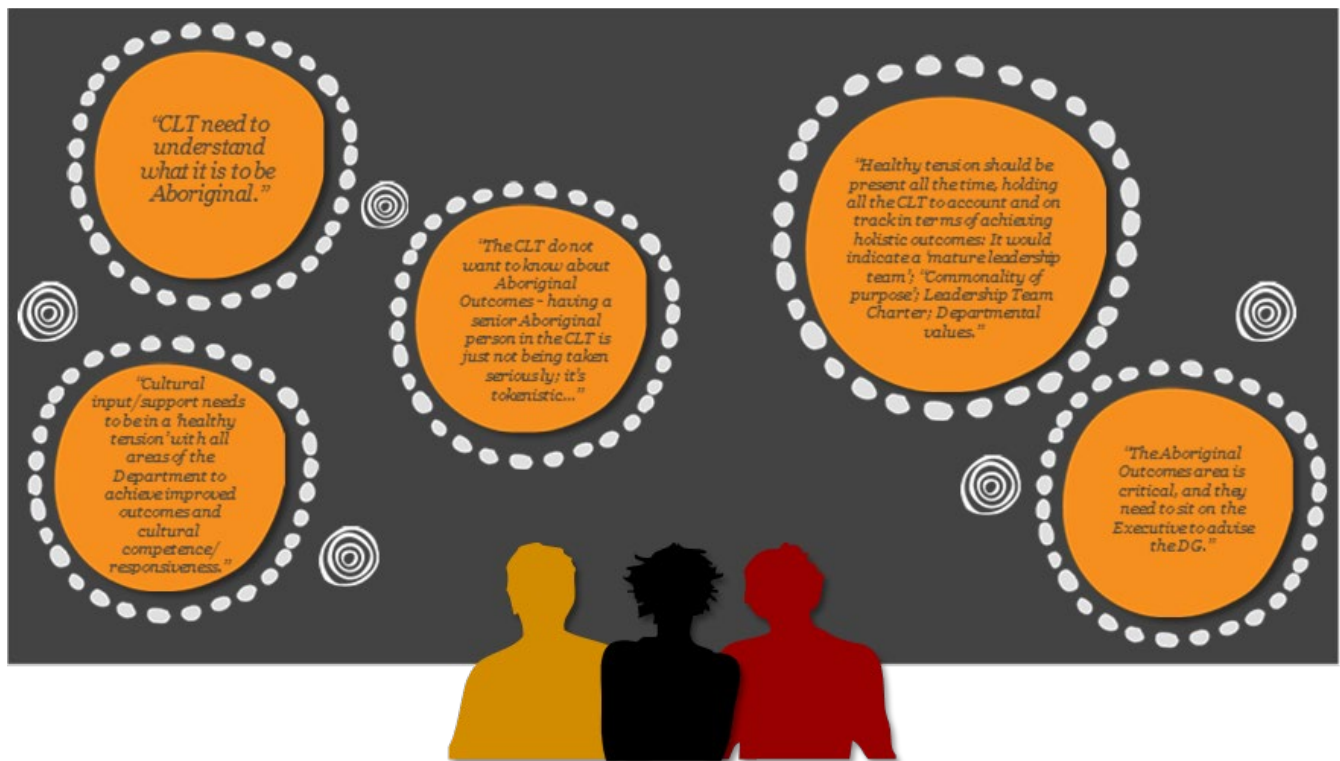
*“Leadership must be empowered with the ability to have influence within the Department.”*

*“Leadership must have the drive and capability to shift the Division to the desired state.”*

”

- Aboriginal input and leadership is required at the CLT:
  - The CLT needs to continue to build and develop a mature foundation for leading and implementing change.
- All leaders within the Department need to own their required outcomes within the Aboriginal domain.
- Given the depth of change required, it would be beneficial to scaffold and support leadership with SME support (e.g. assisting with leadership coaching; providing critical thinking and review; building capability overall etc.). This support could then be gradually transitioned as capability is developed internally.
- Leadership behaviours need to explicitly influence ways of working.

## Stakeholder Consultation Findings and Analysis



- The leadership structure for the new Division should consider an Advisory Group to serve important functions such as providing external and cultural knowledge, validation, advocacy and support.

“

*"The organisation could make the mistake of thinking that the head of the proposed Aboriginal Outcomes division speaks on behalf of all Aboriginal people."*

*"Aboriginal voices have to have decision making powers in the Agency. It needs to be 'top heavy' until the organisational change is brought about; once this is done it may need to revisit this."*

*"There is a lack of confidence in Aboriginal leadership in the Department."*

*"There are too many Chiefs and not enough Indians."*

*"Leadership development must be purposeful."*

”

- The Division must provide leadership in whole-of-government approaches such as Aboriginal workforce development, procurement etc.

### 6.3.10 Organisational culture

- There needs to be a whole-of-government and whole-of-department shift in culture to value and embrace Aboriginal perspectives. The Department need to provide the opportunity for Aboriginal voices to be heard, to be listened to, and to be represented accurately and impactfully to inform policy and practice and improve accountability.

“

*“Very surprised at the low level and focus on the engagement in and recognition of Aboriginal culture in general - it sits with the DG but it’s not evident elsewhere.”*

*“Aboriginal people and approaches always seem to be an afterthought, this needs to stop.”*

*“Bringing the voices of all staff who are tired, jaded and feeling very unsafe into the space will be critical.”*

”

- The Department needs to ensure that all employees are committed to the values, vision and purpose of the organisation, and develop a culture and behaviours around this.

“

*“Needs to be a genuine and collaborative operating model and have an inclusive and culturally competent mindset.”*

”

- There needs to be a shift in the culture of the organisation to use a cultural competency lens to address some of the challenges currently being faced by Aboriginal staff and create a culturally safe working environment for them.

“

*“Staff must have the requisite knowledge and skills to work with Aboriginal people across the areas of attachment, family violence, impact of exposure to violence for kids, etc.”*

”

- There needs to be high expectations set for the Division, however, the Division must also be realistic as to what can be achieved (i.e. ambitious but achievable goals).
- Expectations will be critical in driving this change, and the additional community expectations for Aboriginal staff must also be taken into consideration.

“

*“Accountability has to be both internal and external to stakeholders and the Aboriginal community: visibility is critical.”*

”

- Leadership needs to drive this change in organisational culture, with leaders acting as living examples of the change to promote a trickle-down effect of best practice throughout the organisation.



“

*“Healthy tension should be present at all times, holding all the CLT to account and on track in terms of achieving holistic outcomes - this would indicate a 'mature leadership team' and a 'commonality of purpose'.”*

”

- The division itself needs to be elevated and given the positional and strategic power to inform this change, and to be able to challenge the status quo and embrace new and innovative ways of working.

“

*“The work cannot be achieved if Aboriginal outcomes is not seen as having authority by other Divisions...”*

*“Advisory functions need to be more empowered and the Aboriginal voice needs to be heeded and not tokenistic.”*

”

- Transparency and accountability will be necessary to drive organisational change and will be a key ingredient towards improving and developing the right organisational culture.
- The Department needs to celebrate success and recognise the contributions of employees.
- A shift in organisational culture must address the overt and systematic racism that currently exists within the Department.

# 7 Desktop Analysis

## 7.1 Human rights framework

### 7.1.1 The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

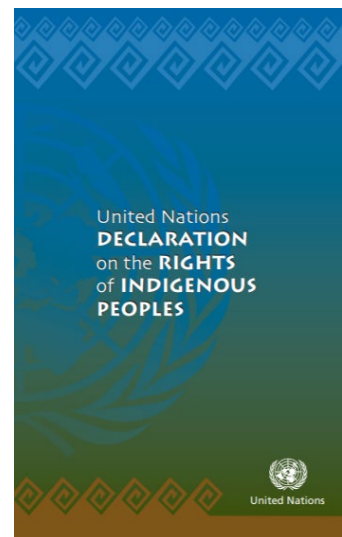
The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the United Nations in 2007 to address the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples. The Declaration provides a framework that aims to enshrine the rights that constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous peoples of the world.<sup>22</sup> In 2009, the Australian Government supported the UNDRIP. Although UNDRIP is non-binding, Australia accepted the UNDRIP as a framework for better recognising and protecting the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

The Declaration contains 46 Articles framed around the following areas:

1. Foundational rights
2. Life and security
3. Language, cultural and spiritual identity
4. Education, information and employment
5. Participation, development and economic and social rights
6. Rights to country, resources and knowledge
7. Self-governance
8. Implementing the Declaration
9. Interpreting the Declaration.<sup>23</sup>

The foundational principles of the Declaration, can be applied to guide actions and engagement with Indigenous peoples (including to develop, implement and measure the effectiveness of laws, policies, programs, projects relating to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples), they include:

1. **Self-determination** – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be provided the basic human right to decide their own health, wellbeing, economic, social, cultural and political futures.
2. **Participation in decisions that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people based on free, prior and informed consent and good faith** – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be respected and treated as key stakeholders in developing, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating all policies, programs and legislation that have an effect on their well-being.
3. **Respect for and protection of culture:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a right to maintain, protect and practice their cultural traditions and cultural heritage. This includes protecting their integrity as distinct peoples, their cultural values, intellectual property, and languages.
4. **Equality and non-discrimination:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a right to govern themselves without discrimination from individuals, governments and/or external stakeholders.



<sup>22</sup> At: <https://arup.sharepoint.com/teams/prj-07868620/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?e=2%3A77dof6bcf754432b9d203074438cdbba>.

<sup>23</sup> See, Australian Human Rights Commission resources on the United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. At: <https://declaration.humanrights.gov.au/get-it>.

## 7.2 National policy context

### 7.2.1 NIAA and Closing the Gap

#### The National Indigenous Australians Agency

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) works to:

*“influence policy across the entire Australian Government. We liaise closely with State and Territory governments, Indigenous peak bodies, stakeholders and service providers to **ensure** that Indigenous programs and services are delivering for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as intended.”<sup>24</sup>*

As an Australian government department, it reports to the Minister for Indigenous Australians, and its functions include:

- to lead and coordinate Commonwealth policy development, program design and implementation and service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- to provide advice to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Indigenous Australians on whole-of-government priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- to lead and coordinate the development and implementation of Australia’s Closing the Gap targets in partnership with Indigenous Australians.
- to lead Commonwealth activities to promote reconciliation.<sup>25</sup>

#### Closing the Gap

The Council of Australian Governments’ (COAG) meeting on 20 December 2007 heralded an unprecedented opportunity for co-operation between the Australian Government and State/Territory governments in the administration of public policy and programs.<sup>26</sup> It agreed to a comprehensive Indigenous Reform Agenda, to be pursued by all levels of governments in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. To strive for health equality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, COAG committed to achieving the following targets:

- Closing the life expectancy gap within a generation (by 2033)
- Halving the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade (by 2018).

#### The National Agreement on Closing the Gap

More recently, a National Agreement has been reached between the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations and all Australian Government (including the Commonwealth Government and the Queensland Government).<sup>27</sup> The objective of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap is to enable Aboriginal

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.niaa.gov.au/who-we-are/the-agency>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.niaa.gov.au/who-we-are/the-agency>

<sup>26</sup> Council of Australian Governments, *COAG Meeting Communiqué, 20 December 2007*. At: <https://www.coag.gov.au/meeting-outcomes/coag-meeting-communicue-20-december-2007>

<sup>27</sup> Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, *National Agreement on Closing the Gap July 2020*. At: <https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/resources/datsima/programs/closing-gap/national-agreement-ctg.pdf>

and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.<sup>28</sup>

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap has 16 national socioeconomic targets across areas that have an impact on life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Progress against the targets is monitored by the Productivity Commission and provides invaluable information to parties to the National Agreement to understand how their efforts are contributing to progress over the next 10 years.

The National Agreement has four Priority Reform areas that focus on changing the way that governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

1. **Shared decision-making:** Building and strengthening structures to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share decision-making with governments.
2. **Building the community-controlled sector:** Building formal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sectors to deliver services to support Closing the Gap.
3. **Transforming government institutions:** Systemic and structural transformation of mainstream government organisations to improve accountability and better respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
4. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led data:** Enable shared access to location specific data and information to inform and engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. This will support informed, shared decision making and greater participation regarding the Closing the Gap priorities and targets.

Additionally, the National Agreement has a focus on **socio-economic outcomes** including:

- a. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives.
- b. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong.
- c. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years.*
- d. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their early years.*
- e. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential.
- f. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways.
- g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth are engaged in employment or education.
- h. Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.
- i. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need.*
- j. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement-closing-the-gap>.

- k. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.
- l. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not overrepresented in the child protection system.*
- m. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe.*
- n. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing.*
- o. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters.
- p. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages are strong, supported and flourishing.

The outcomes which the Department plays a lead, or co-lead, role/s are highlighted in *orange italics* and outcomes where the Department plays a supporting role are highlighted in *burgundy italics*.

### *7.2.2 Productivity Commission and the Indigenous Evaluation Framework*

The Productivity Commission is the Australian Government's *independent* research and advisory body on a range of economic, social and environmental issues affecting the welfare of Australians. Its role, expressed most simply, "is to help governments make better policies, in the long-term interest of the Australian community."<sup>29</sup>

The Productivity Commission produced the *Indigenous Evaluation Strategy* provides a whole-of-government framework for Australian Government agencies to use when selecting, planning, conducting and using evaluations of policies and programs affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Strategy puts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at its centre. It recognises the need to draw on the perspectives, priorities and knowledges of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people if outcomes are to be improved. The Strategy was released on 30 October 2020<sup>30</sup>.

The objective of the Strategy is to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which is supported by a set of guiding principles that set out what good practice looks like and what agencies should consider when undertaking evaluations – refer to Figure 9.

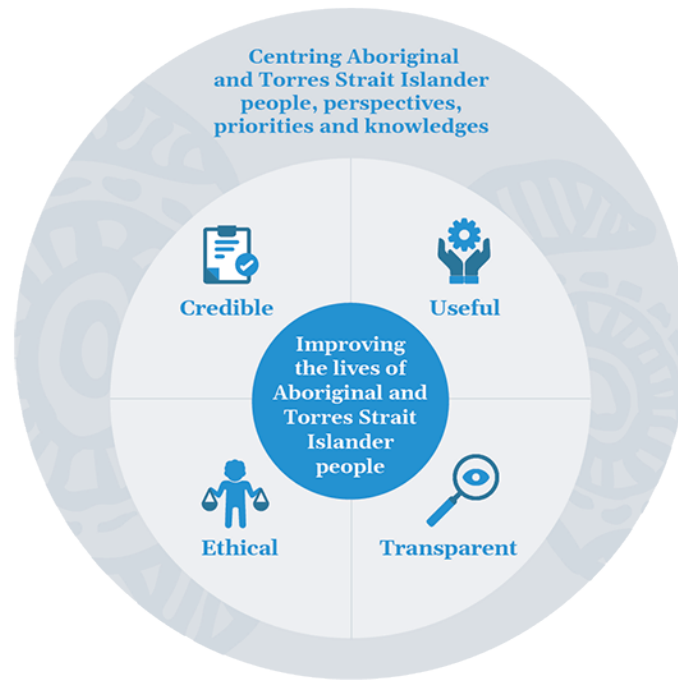
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<sup>29</sup> Productivity Commission Annual Report 2018-19, Pii.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/indigenous-evaluation/strategy>

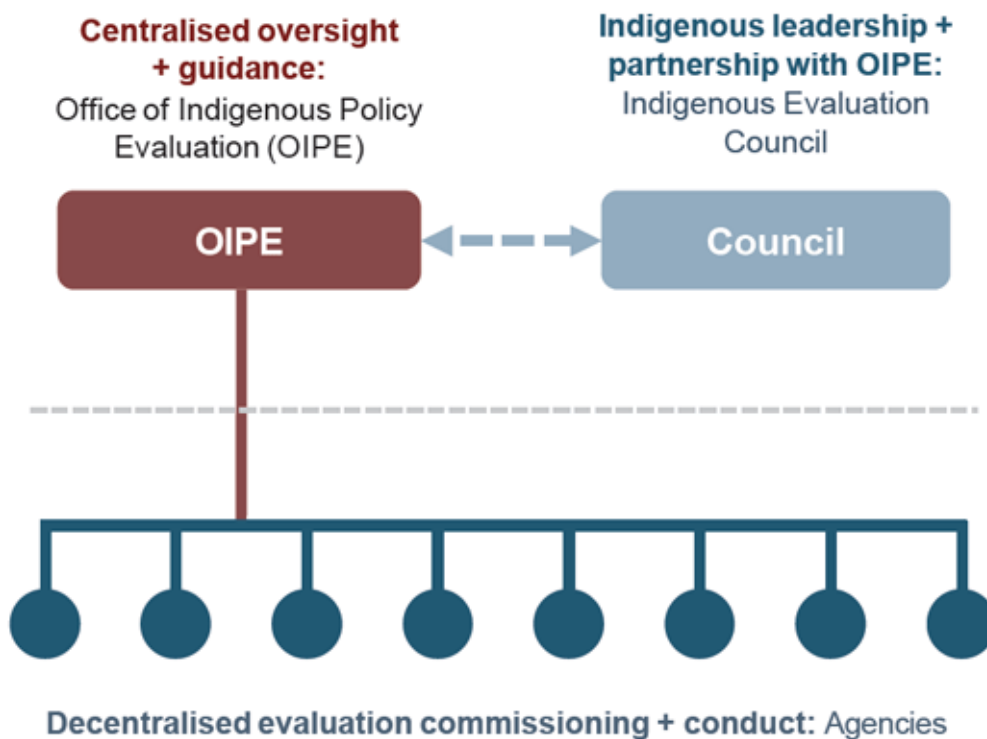


**Figure 9 – Guiding principles of the Indigenous Evaluation Strategy**



The Strategy is also built on the premise that whilst there should be primary responsibility held by Australian Government agencies for conducting evaluations under the Strategy there is a need for this to be undertaken in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – refer to Figure 10.

**Figure 10 – Roles & Responsibilities (Indigenous Evaluation Strategy)**



An interim set of priority areas has been established based on the National Agreement (refer to Table 6). Under the proposed interim government-wide evaluation priorities, the four priority reforms under the National Agreement will help identify what actions within (and across) the identified priority policy domains should be prioritised for evaluation.

**Table 6 – Proposed interim Government-wide evaluation priority areas**

<b>The Strategy should prioritise evaluation of government efforts ...</b>			
... delivered as part of a formal partnership and/or shared decision-making arrangement ( <b>Priority 1</b> ) ...	... that build up the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector ( <b>Priority 2</b> ) ...	... (particularly mainstream ones) that eliminate racism, embed and practice meaningful cultural safety, deliver services in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ( <b>Priority 3</b> ) ...	... involved in data sharing arrangements ( <b>Priority 4</b> ) ...
... and focused across (and within) the following <b>policy domains</b> :			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Land and water</li> <li>• Justice</li> <li>• Culture and languages</li> <li>• Safety (Families, children and youth)</li> <li>• Employment (Economic development)</li> </ul>			

*Source: adapted from Joint Council on Closing the Gap (2020)<sup>31</sup>.*

This Strategy provides a solid framework for strengthening Aboriginal programs and approaches to improving outcomes in Aboriginal service delivery and is mentioned here as it can guide the manner in which the new Division undertakes its work in this area. This framework also provides a degree of accountability as this is how DPC will be evaluating performance across the four key priority areas.

### 7.2.3 *The Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Children in Care (SNAICC)<sup>32</sup>*

SNAICC was formally established in 1981 after the creation of such a body was proposed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the ‘First Aboriginal Child Survival Seminar’ held in Melbourne in 1979. The organisation elected its first national executive in 1982 and has received Federal Government funding support from 1983.

SNAICC has a dynamic membership base of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-based child care agencies, Multi-functional Aboriginal Children’s Services (MACS), crèches, long day care child care services, pre-schools, early childhood education services, early childhood support organisations, family support services, foster care agencies, family reunification services, family group homes, services for young people at risk, community groups and voluntary associations, government agencies and individual supporters.

SNAICC also has a network and subscriber base of over 10,000 organisations and individuals from community-based services and individuals and state and federal agencies nationally who share an interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/indigenous-evaluation/strategy/contents>

<sup>32</sup> Mandy’s Jurisdictional Scan

**Family Matters – Strong communities. Strong culture. Stronger children.**

'Family Matters – Strong communities. Strong culture. Stronger children' is Australia's national campaign to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture. Family Matters aims to eliminate the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care within a generation (by 2040).

Family Matters is led by SNAICC – National Voice for our Children and a group of eminent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders from across the country. The campaign is supported by a Strategic Alliance of over 150 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous organisations.

## 7.3 State policy context – Environmental Scan

### 7.3.1 Structural jurisdictional analysis

#### Australian Capital Territory (ACT)

##### Whole of State

The ACT's **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB)** is a seven-person body representing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living within the ACT. It was established under its own legislation (**the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008 [ACT]**). The ATSIEB supports the ACT Government to develop policy and provide services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as advocating for accountability, transparency and effectiveness in government.<sup>33</sup>

Core areas of action are associated with children and young people, cultural identity, inclusive community and Aboriginal community leadership. Other significant areas of action are expected to be in:

- Connecting community.
- Life-long learning.
- Economic participation.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Housing and justice.

Accountability is achieved through the Act 2008 and through a non-legislated Agreement.

Within the Act 2008 the ATSIEB is mandated to:

- to monitor and report on the effectiveness and accessibility of programs and services conducted by government agencies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT.
- to monitor and report on the accessibility by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT to programs and services conducted by government agencies for the general public.<sup>34</sup>
- hold at least two public hearings during each ATSIEB term to obtain information about:
  - (a) the effectiveness and accessibility of programs and services conducted by government agencies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT; and
  - (b) the accessibility by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT to programs and services conducted by government agencies for the general public.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> [https://atsieb.com.au/about-us/#tab\\_overview](https://atsieb.com.au/about-us/#tab_overview)

<sup>34</sup> Australian Capital Territory, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008, p5

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, P7

An *Outcomes Framework* that tracks performance against the core outcomes identified in the Agreement has been created. The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs reports via a publicly available annual statement of performance against strategic indicators<sup>36</sup>.

*Focus Area Action Plans* that track the work underway to achieve the targets set in the Outcomes Framework are also in place. Government departments report against the actions prescribed as part of their reporting process and update them as work progresses towards achieving 10-year outcomes.<sup>37</sup>

The **ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028** (ACTATSIA) is an agreement between the elected Aboriginal board and the ACT Government. It is an overarching statement of commitment to the right to self-determination and an acknowledgement of the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the Canberra region. As an accountability mechanism, it symbolically links the ATSIEB legislation to these concepts declaring that it:

*“builds on the strength of the previous Agreement (2015–2018) to be accountable to ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body, to provide accessible and equitable services that aim to improve the social, environmental, economic and cultural infrastructures within their communities.”<sup>38</sup>*

### **The Children and Young People Commissioner**

The Children and Young People Commissioner is an independent statutory position that sits within the ACT Human Rights Commission. The *Human Rights Commission Act 2005* describes the functions and role of the Commissioner.<sup>39</sup>

The role of the CYPC includes:

- promoting the rights of children and young people
- consulting and talking with children and young people
- encouraging other organisations to listen to children and young people, and seriously consider their views in decision making
- providing advice to government and community agencies about how to improve service delivery for children and young people.

### **Territory Agency – The Community Services Directorate**

The Community Services Directorate (CSD) has responsibility for a wide range of human services functions in the ACT, including:

- Multicultural affairs
- Community services
- Older people
- Women
- Public and community housing services and policy
- Community recovery
- Children, youth and family support services and policy
- Support for families concerned about their child's development
- Child and family support

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<sup>36</sup> The Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory, *ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028*, 2019 Annual Report.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, P6.

<sup>38</sup> ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028, P1.

<sup>39</sup> <https://hrc.act.gov.au/childrenyoungpeople/>.



## Desktop Analysis

- Homelessness
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and
- ACT Office for Disability.

The CSD Strategic Plan 2018-2028 is an ambitious 10-year plan that sets a long-term direction for the organisation. CSD has a strong focus on celebrating the significant cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners and improving outcomes in this area. The Strategic Plan reflects this and seeks to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a strong voice, are decision makers on issues that impact them and lead in the achievement of positive life outcomes.

The CSD has an **Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs** (the Office), headed up by an Executive Branch Manager at a Tier 3 level, reporting to the Department's Deputy Director-General. The Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs provides strategic advice to the Minister on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the ACT, so has a much broader role than just advising the CSD as an Agency.

The Office coordinates a whole-of-government approach to issues affecting residents and provides secretariat and administrative support to the following committees/councils:

### **ACT Reconciliation Council**

The ACT Reconciliation Council act as community ambassadors, encouraging community conversations about the importance of Reconciliation throughout the year. The Council plays a vital role in promoting reconciliation across Canberra, encouraging all members of the community to learn more about the histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The purpose of the Council includes:

- Support the ACT Government in developing a program of activities taking place in the lead-up to and on Reconciliation Day.
- Provide high-level strategic direction to the event coordinator and promote the events.
- Provide leadership in the jurisdiction about Reconciliation.
- Act as “ambassadors” for Reconciliation Day.

### **ACT Public Service Indigenous Network (ACTPSIN)**

The ACT Public Service Indigenous Network (ACTPSIN) was established in January 2008 and provides an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed in the ACT Public Service to contribute to improving program and service delivery by the ACT Government.

Murranga Murranga is a Ngunnawal word given to the network by the United Ngunnawal Elders Council. Murranga by itself means ‘hand’ and together Murranga Murranga means “hand in hand.”

The ACTPSIN has an Executive Team consisting of 2 co-chairs and 2 team members. The network is open to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ACT Government staff who are encouraged to attend and/or join the network to be kept up to date with information relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

The network also consists of four working groups, including:

- Employment
- Mentoring and Leadership
- Workforce Retention
- Cultural integrity

### **United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC)**

The United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC) is a significant Aboriginal body providing advice to the ACT Government in relation to heritage and connection to land matters for the Ngunnawal people. UNEC also provides advice to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (as outlined above, in accordance with section 9 of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008*).



UNEC is made up of representatives nominated by each of the Ngunnawal family groups. The Council meets up to four times a year in Canberra at various locations, including community-based organisations.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB)**

The ATSIEB is outlined above as a whole of State Body.

The CSD does not have a RAP, however, there is a whole of ACT Government Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), and the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs supports the ACT Reconciliation Council.

## ***New South Wales***

### **Whole of State**

*OCHRE* (an acronym for Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment) is the community-focused plan for Aboriginal Affairs in NSW (New South Wales). It was established in 2011 to improve education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW and to enhance service accountability to support these goals.

There is a defined accountability plan for OCHRE and the accountability process (refer to Figure 11) includes six elements:

1. **A Deputy Ombudsman (Aboriginal Programs) role:** stated to be “legislated independent scrutiny of the relevant government’s Aboriginal programs” (*ibid*). The Deputy Ombudsman (Aboriginal Programs) and his team monitor progress in the implementation and outcomes achieved across all *OCHRE* initiatives and sites. They give feedback to *OCHRE* agencies and partners to enable them to address any issues raised early and to adopt good practices and to achieve the plan’s goals. They can also table public reports on *OCHRE* in Parliament.
2. **Public reporting:** An annual report on the progress of *OCHRE* implementation is tabled in Parliament.
3. **Independent evaluation:** The Social Policy Research Centre (UNSW) conducted an evaluation in 2016 to inform OCHRE’s on-going progress.
4. **Solution Brokerage:** Aboriginal Affairs ([www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au)) has a role in delivering whole-of-government solutions to local, regional and state-wide issues that affect Aboriginal people and communities. Under *OCHRE* Aboriginal Affairs can act as a solution broker across the NSW Government to improve co-ordination, resolve issues, reduce duplication and achieve the best possible outcomes.
5. **Secretaries Board oversight:** The Secretaries Board, a forum made up of the Secretaries of every NSW Government Department, has ultimate oversight over the implementation of *OCHRE*.
6. **Community input:** *OCHRE* publicly commits the NSW Government to ensuring Aboriginal people are involved in the planning, design and evaluation of *OCHRE*.

**Figure 11 – NSW Government OCHRE Accountability Model<sup>38</sup>**



### **NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation - AbSec**

**NSW Child, Family and Community Peak Aboriginal Corporation**, or commonly referred to as **AbSec**, is a not-for-profit incorporated Aboriginal controlled organisation. They are the NSW Aboriginal child and family peak organisation, working to empower Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities impacted by the child protection system, as well as support a quality Aboriginal community-controlled child and family sector to deliver needed supports in Aboriginal communities across the State.

AbSec provides child protection and out-of-home care policy advice on issues affecting Aboriginal children, young people, families and carers, and are informed by their membership base and community to ensure that Aboriginal perspectives are included in government policy and reform directions.

AbSec's Vision is that all Aboriginal children and young people are looked after in safe, thriving Aboriginal families and communities and are raised strong in spirit and identity, with every opportunity for lifelong wellbeing and connection to culture, surrounded by holistic supports. AbSec's objectives are to:

- Work towards achieving self-determination for all Aboriginal people and communities, and building a safe, secure and caring environment for their children and young people that is surrounded by culture
- Support Aboriginal organisations in delivering quality holistic supports for all Aboriginal children, young people, families and carers, people with disability and communities
- Provide and support opportunities for continual improvement, learning, growth and change for organisations delivering for Aboriginal children, young people, families, people with disability and their communities, recognising the principles of self-determination
- Represent and inform government and key stakeholders on the issues facing Aboriginal children, young people, families, carers and communities, particularly in accessing quality holistic supports for lifelong wellbeing surrounded by culture
- Support Aboriginal workforce development to ensure a strong and capable workforce for supporting Aboriginal children, young people, families, people with disability and their communities.

## NSW Advocate for Children and Young People

The Advocate for Children and Young People is an independent statutory office reporting to the NSW Parliament through the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Children and Young People. The office is established under the *Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014*.<sup>40</sup>

The Advocate works to improve the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people in NSW. We speak up for children and young people to ensure that their rights are respected and their points of view heard by adult decision makers. The role of the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People is to influence and initiate positive change by:

- making recommendations to Parliament, and government and non-government agencies on legislation, policies, practices and services that affect children and young people
- promoting children and young people's participation in activities and decision-making about issues that affect their lives
- conducting research into children's issues and monitoring children's well-being
- holding inquiries into important issues relating to children and young people
- providing information to help children and young people.

## State Agency - Department of Communities and Justice Services

On 1 July 2019, the Department of Family and Community Services and the Department of Justice were brought together to form the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) under the Stronger Communities cluster. DCJ is accountable for seven of the NSW State Outcomes and five of the Premier's Priorities as below:

### NSW State Outcomes:

1. Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery
2. Corrective Services
3. Child Protection
4. Youth Justice
5. Housing
6. Disability
7. Law reform and legal services

### NSW Premier's Priorities:

1. Decrease the proportion of children and young people re-reported at risk of significant harm by 20 per cent by 2023.
2. Double the number of children in safe and permanent homes by 2023 for children in, or at risk of entering, out-of-home care.
3. Reduce the number of domestic violence reoffenders by 25 per cent by 2023.
4. Reduce adult reoffending following release from prison by 5 per cent by 2023.
5. Reduce street homelessness across NSW by 50 per cent by 2025.

There is not a separate Tier 2 (Band 3), Tier 3 (Band 2) or Tier 4 (Band 1) Division, reporting to the Deputy Secretary, Health and Wellbeing.

The NSW *Stronger Communities Cluster* agencies and with other government departments to lead the development and delivery of coordinated support, services and programs to achieve departmental goals for the outcomes below.

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<sup>40</sup> <https://www.acvp.nsw.gov.au/about>.

### Creating stronger communities together

The DCJ Clusters share a common purpose across many areas of their work, particularly when improving outcomes for:

- children and young people
- Aboriginal people
- people with disability
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- people experiencing domestic and family violence
- victims of sexual assault
- juvenile offenders
- people at high risk of reoffending
- people experiencing homelessness.

### **Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy**

The Stronger Communities cluster brings together the former Family and Communities and Justice clusters, with the intention being, that for the first time the opportunity to focus on prevention and early intervention into the social welfare system within the entire law and order system can be made possible. This is intended to support and drive change in the organisational culture around how NSW looks after its most vulnerable people.

These arrangements take a completely new approach, with empowerment and focus on much greater collaboration across the more traditional and separate family, communities and justice functions across government.

DCJ does not have a RAP.

## **Northern Territory**

### **Whole of State**

The main accountability body in the Northern Territory (NT) is the **Aboriginal Affairs Sub-Committee of Cabinet (AASC)**. Its function is to advise and monitor the Territory's whole-of-government Aboriginal Affairs agenda, including policy development and implementation. The Sub-Committee is chaired by the Chief Minister and most of its members are Aboriginal, including four Aboriginal members of the Legislative Assembly and five Aboriginal advisors, representing the five main geographical regions in the Territory.<sup>41</sup>

The Aboriginal Affairs Sub-Committee of Cabinet is an internal voice within government, which essentially means its monitoring role involves monitoring its own (that is the Government's) activity. The monitoring role is to include scrutinizing the "whole of government approach to the NT Government's Aboriginal Affairs agenda" including policy direction and implementation in the areas of:

1. Progressing Treaty discussions with Aboriginal Territorians and the broader public;
2. Ensuring land and sea ownership delivers on the economic and social aspirations of Aboriginal Territorians;
3. Providing oversight and guidance on the development and delivery of the Local Decision Making policy and its implementation; and
4. The development and monitoring of an NT Aboriginal Affairs Strategy, including the Territory's responsibilities as part of the COAG's Closing the Gap refresh.

The AASC is different from a government department in that its members are primarily elected Aboriginal politicians. As such, they have direct input into Government decision making and potential oversight of government machinery.

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<sup>41</sup> <https://dcm.nt.gov.au/supporting-government/office-of-aboriginal-affairs/aboriginal-affairs-sub-committee-of-cabinet/aboriginal-affairs-sub-committee-of-government>

## **Territory Families, Housing and Communities**

Territory Families, Housing and Communities was established by the Northern Territory Government on 7 September 2020.

Territory Families, Housing and Communities is a multi-functional human services and community-focused agency that works to provide responsive, safe and quality services and programs that empower communities and improve social outcomes for Territorians across the following divisions:

- Arts
- Child Protection
- Culture
- Disability Services
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Reduction
- Family and Financial Support
- Family Support
- Gender Equity and Diversity
- Emergency Management
- Heritage
- Homelessness
- Indigenous Essential Services
- Interpreting Services
- Libraries and Archives
- Multicultural Affairs
- Out of Home Care
- Seniors and Carers
- Sport and Active Recreation
- Urban Housing
- Remote Housing
- Youth Justice
- Youth Affairs
- Women's Safe Houses

The Department has a *Cultural Capability Framework* that is supported by the following resources:

- Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework- Poster
- Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework – Fact Sheet
- Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework – Organisational Assessment Tool
- Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework – Personal Assessment Tool
- Aboriginal Cultural Security Framework – Action Plan Template

There is no information available on the Organisational Structure of the recently formed Department so it cannot be ascertained at what level, or if in fact, there is a separate Aboriginal portfolio within the Department. The Department does not have a RAP.

## **The Northern Territory Children's Commissioner**

The Northern Territory Children's Commissioner is an independent statutory officer whose core functions focus on the wellbeing of vulnerable children. The position of Northern Territory Children's Commissioner was created in the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly in November 2007.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> <https://occ.nt.gov.au/about?>



The core functions of the Commissioner are as follows:

- Deal with and manage enquiries and complaints
- Identify and address issues affecting vulnerable children
- Monitor developments reform, legislative and policy issues relevant to vulnerable children
- Contribute to improved decision making
- Community awareness and education

## Queensland

### Whole of State

The Queensland Government **Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships** published a *Statement of Commitment to reframe the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Queensland Government* as part of the *Tracks to Treaty* process. The document states:

In August 2020 the Queensland Government accepted, or accepted in principle, the recommendations of the Panel and released a *Statement of Commitment and Response* which outlined a new way of working in partnership between the Queensland Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples—one that is underpinned by self-determination and actioned through truth telling, empowerment and agreement making. It included the following priorities to negotiate a new way of working together:

- Addition to the preamble to the Queensland Constitution to honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians in 2010
- Launch of the Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan 2018–2021
- Establishment of Local Thriving Communities initiative to support local decision making in remote communities and build on their strengths to implement ideas on how best to achieve the aspirations and vision for their local community
- Commencement of the Queensland Human Rights Act 2019 which in its preamble acknowledges the right to self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and creates obligations on public entities to protect and promote the human rights set out in the Act, including the distinct cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Commitment to the legal recognition of traditional Torres Strait Islander child rearing practices
- Implementation of *Our Way: A generational strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, 2017–2037*
- Establishment of the Queensland First Children and Families Board
- Appointment of the First Nations Advisor for Housing
- Adoption of the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy and development of Queensland's Framework for Action – Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence
- Appointment of the first Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Officer and Deputy Director-General of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Division
- Commencement of the Health and other Legislation Amendment Act 2019 which aims to strengthen the commitment to health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Development of a Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Strategy to address the impact of intergenerational trauma, grief and loss, violence and abuse
- Ongoing commitment to increase representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on government boards and committees.

The overarching outcomes sought from this reframed relationship is to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to build on strengths and to support thriving communities. The focus will be on building partnerships directed to negotiated solutions to complex problems and which support the following shared outcomes:

## Desktop Analysis

- Treaties and agreement making
- Healing and truth-telling
- Relationships anchored by high expectations
- Investing in and embracing local leadership
- Vibrant cultures and communities
- Innovative policy programs
- Negotiated solutions to complex challenges
- Guaranteed service outcomes

The methodology for achieving accountability of government, such as indicated by the *guaranteed service outcomes* stated above, is unclear except for the stated agreement to maintain a *Closing the Gap Report Card* and a matching annual statement.

### Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak

There is a Peak Child Protection Agency in Queensland; the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSCIPP). They are the peak body representing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled child protection and family support services sector in Queensland. Their principal purpose is to promote and advocate for the rights, safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families, and they strive to create effective partnerships, facilitate strategic collaborations and in consultation advocate for the development of policies, strategies and programs that help to resource, support and strengthen the capacity and capability of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child protection sector.

QATSCIPP recently established a Centre of Excellence (CoE) as an exciting new initiative which aligns to the Queensland Government's plans to develop the state's first Children and Families Centre of Excellence. Primarily the CoE will seek to establish and embed best practices in policy, practice and program delivery to significantly improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in Queensland.

Building on QATSCIPP's existing strategic linkages to academics and institutions with significant expertise relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, child protection practice and system reform, the CoE's key objectives are to:

- Build a critical evidence base informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and experience to influence policies and practices to combat the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.
- Explore and promote innovative practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations in the child protection sector.
- Explore and promote innovative collaborations between the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and Community Controlled Organisations that give effect to the intent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle.

### Queensland Family & Child Commission

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) works collaboratively with government and non-government partners, including families and communities themselves, to help ensure young Queenslanders grow up in safe and inclusive environments where they are valued and supported to reach their full potential. The QFCC's role is to respect, advocate for and protect their rights, well-being and safety by driving continuous improvement of the services and systems that support them.<sup>43</sup> The Queensland Family and Child Commission was established on 1 July 2014 under the *Family and Child Commission Act 2014 (Qld)*. This was a result of the Queensland Government's response to the *Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (Carmody Inquiry)*.

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/about-us/our-role-how-we-work>.

Through system reviews, best-practice research and direct consultation with young people through platforms like Growing Up in Queensland, the QFCC is well-positioned to educate professionals and communities about what young Queenslanders need to ensure safe and happy futures. The QFCC aims to improve the child protection and family support system by:

- Promoting the inherent values, beliefs and behaviours that make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families strong
- Improving engagement with young Queenslanders from all backgrounds to further inform decisions impacting their lives.
- Actively celebrating and promoting the achievements of young Queenslanders and the contributions they make to society.
- Engaging with service providers to enhance our oversight of the child and family support system and provide insight on latest research and policy.

### State Agencies

In Queensland there are three (3) State Government Agencies that cover the same functional areas as the WA Department of Communities, namely:

- Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
- Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs
- Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy.

### Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

This Department covers the functional areas of:

- **Disability Accommodation Support and Respite Services, which** provides direct service delivery to Queenslanders with intellectual disabilities who reside in an accommodation or respite service.
- **Disability Connect Queensland, which** provides strategic leadership and oversight of the State, Ministerial and Departmental accountabilities as it relates to disability services.
- **Community Services, which** delivers strategies, programs and initiatives that support Queensland communities to thrive and to lead human and social recovery.
- **Seniors, which** works closely with government and non-government human services organisations to facilitate social and economic participation for seniors focussing on increasing older people's awareness of healthy lifestyle options, reducing social isolation and strengthening personal and community connectedness.

### Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs

This Department covers four (4) functional areas:

- Child and Family
- Youth
- Women
- Violence Prevention.

The Divisions within the Department include:

- Corporate Services
- Information, Innovation and Recovery
- Strategy
- Service Delivery.

Within the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs **Strategy Division** there is a Tier 3 **Indigenous Strategy & Partnerships** area, headed up by an Executive Director.

The Department has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan, *Respectfully Journey Together*. This sets out the Department's approach and commitment to growing cultural capability and building capacity to better support vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and partner more inclusively with key organisations and engage genuinely with communities. The *Action Plan* was originally launched in May 2015, to provide the cultural capability framework for the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (DCSYW) and the Department of Youth Justice (DYJ). The *Action Plan* contains 15 aspirational goals which will help to build on and consolidate the ongoing Cultural Capability journey for both departments.

**Child and Family**, is Queensland's statutory child protection function within this Department and covers the areas of:

- Support for Children and Families
- Child Protection
- Foster and Kinship Care
- Adoption
- Child and Family Reform.

When the Department is making an important decision about an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child, the child and the child's family have a right to have a say and to have an independent Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander entity for a child (independent person) help make sure their voice is heard.

The **Youth** function within this Department is underpinned by the Queensland Youth Strategy, which creates opportunities for young people to participate in decision-making that will affect their lives now and in the future. It sets out this government's vision for young people to actively contribute to Queensland's economic, civic and cultural life. It covers the areas of:

- Youth leadership programs
- Youth Engagement Charter
- Youth Support Services
- Youth Housing and Reintegration Service and After Care.

The Office for **Women** leads gender equality reforms and delivers projects that support government and industry to promote and protect women's rights, interests and wellbeing.

The **Violence Prevention** function with the Department is responsible for implementing the Queensland Government's 10-year reform program to eliminate domestic and family violence, the *Not Now, Not Ever* recommendations for government, as well as supporting a further 20 recommendations being led by other agencies. This highlights the Queensland Government's investment (via budget allocations) to support this policy.

The Queensland Government is also committed to providing a strong, cohesive and evidence-based approach to preventing and responding to sexual violence in Queensland.

### Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy

The Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy unifies diverse services to benefit Queenslanders and support government service delivery including:

- Housing and Homelessness
- Building Policy
- Public Works
- Sport and Recreation
- Digital and Information Technology
- Government Corporate Service.

The core objectives of the Department are:

- Services for communities
- Customer and digital services
- Asset, building and procurement services.



Within the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy there is a Tier 3 **Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing** area, headed up by an Executive Director.

## **South Australia**

### **Whole of State**

South Australia has a **South Australian Aboriginal Advisory Council (SAAAC)** and the **South Australian Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement**. Neither of these organisations have a defined role to hold government and government-funded services to account for the policy, services or service outcomes associated with the South Australian Aboriginal community.

Additionally, a new engagement model being proposed by the Commissioner does not include an accountability function. The new model suggests that SAAAC be replaced by a body that:

- Contributes to state policy debate by influencing policy and laws affecting Aboriginal South Australians
- Makes recommendations to government on issues and barriers raised by Aboriginal people or identified by the body
- Makes recommendations to agencies on policy and programs that impact Aboriginal people
- Continues the ongoing relationship with strategic Cabinet meetings.<sup>44</sup>

### **SA Housing Authority**

SA Housing Authority works with customers, the housing and homelessness sector and the broader community to provide better housing opportunities for all South Australians. The Authority has a clear goal to reform the housing system by increasing the supply of suitable affordable housing; modernising and improving the social housing system; supporting a modern multi-provider system; and establishing an environment that promotes shared responsibility and ownership of the housing challenges we face.

The Authority develops, implements and provides housing services for people who are at risk or in high need, and works with government and non-government organisations to improve the standard of - and access to - housing across the state.

Their role also includes:

- The management of grants for housing services to low-income households
- Specialist homelessness and domestic violence services
- The management of public housing
- Aboriginal housing
- Community housing
- Financial support for private rental
- The regulation of housing standards.
- Housing strategy, policy development and advice to government.

SA Housing Authority is in the process of developing a new 10-year Aboriginal Housing Strategy to improve housing outcomes for all Aboriginal people in SA. This strategy is one of 33 actions under the SA Government's *Our Housing Future 2020-2030 Strategy* to enable a more tailored approach specific to Aboriginal housing needs. The strategy will consider the full housing continuum, from crisis services and social housing through to affordable housing options and home ownership.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/about-the-department/attached-offices/commissioner-for-aboriginal-engagement/south-australian-aboriginal-engagement-reform>



The State Government engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers Indigenous Consulting to work with South Australian Aboriginal communities and partner organisations to develop the strategy, to ensure it captures the voices of Aboriginal people. The strategy will also be guided by the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, which was formed to guide the South Australian Housing Trust on Aboriginal housing matters. The strategy will be finalised and released publicly by April 2021.

The new Head of Aboriginal Housing with the South Australian government, a newly created role, has a mandate to co-design a 10 year Aboriginal housing strategy for government, including structural sector reform, community capacity building / self-determination and improved interagency coordination particularly in regional and remote Aboriginal communities. This strategy has the aim of improving outcomes for Aboriginal people.

### **Department for Child Protection**

The Department for Child Protection (DCP) was formed in November 2016 in response to recommendations from the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission. The Department works in partnership with:

- Vulnerable families
- Government and non-government organisations
- Foster carers and the community (where children cannot safely stay in the family).

The Department uses an evidence-informed, strengths-focused, family-centred and competency-based approach, to ensure that contact with the child protection system adds value to children and their families across the following areas of responsibility:

- Managing cases of children that are at risk of harm, are unsafe, neglected or abused
- Managing and supporting children and young people under the guardianship of the chief executive
- Facilitating care for children and young people at risk
- Supporting the reunification of children with their families where it is safe to do so
- Managing the adoption process
- Supporting refugee children and young people through the Commonwealth Guardianship team.

The Department has an Aboriginal Action Plan 2020-21 that sets out a range of actions that the Department will take to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children in care. This plan follows on from the Department's inaugural Aboriginal Action Plan 2019-20. The action plan acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle as a guiding framework for action and commits to active efforts across each of the 5 core elements:

- Prevention
- Partnership
- Placement
- Participation and
- Connection, as well as actions under the precursor to the five elements, Identification.

The plan aligns with the department's commitment to the SNAICC Family Matters Campaign and the State Government's Aboriginal Affairs Action Plan and sets out a range of actions that the Department will take to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children in care.

The Department has an Aboriginal Practice Division headed up by a Director at Tier 2 level.

### **Department of Human Services:**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) brings together a range of services, funding and policy responsibilities which together support fairness, opportunity and choice for all South Australians.

DHS has lead responsibility on behalf of the South Australian government in the areas of:

- Early intervention to support health
- Disability
- Domestic Violence
- Safety and Wellbeing of Children
- Screening Services
- Youth Justice.

The Department also provides:

- A wide range of grants to community organisations, and
- Concessions.

The Department has lead policy responsibility in relation to women, youth and volunteers.

The Department has a Reconciliation Action Plan – *Innovate* – that ran from 2018-2020, although it is unclear as to whether they have progressed to the *Stretch* level.

The Department has an Aboriginal Practice and Partnership Division at Tier 2 level.

### **Commissioner for Children & Young People**

The South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People is an independent position, established under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016*. This legislation was introduced to the South Australian Parliament in response to the *Child Protection Systems Royal Commission 2014*. The purpose of the legislation was to create a statutory officer that has powers and functions to promote and advocate for the rights, interests and wellbeing of all children and young people living in South Australia and to help bring about improvements to the systems that negatively impact on them most.<sup>45</sup>

The work of the Commissioner for Children and Young People is guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; the core international treaty established in 1989 to which Australia is a signatory. This important agreement sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children around the world. The Commissioner aims to ensure that as a part of the Australian Commonwealth, South Australia enacts its international obligations under this Convention.

## **Tasmania**

### **Whole of State**

The Tasmanian Government signed a statement of intent with the Tasmanian Regional Aboriginal Communities Alliance (TRACA) in December 2017. TRACA was developed to provide a mechanism to engage and advise Government at all levels in regard to affairs affecting Aboriginal Tasmanians. The Statement of Intent commits the signatories to working collaboratively for enriched cultural, social, economic and political participation by member organisations and the families and communities they represent.

The Tasmanian Government will also provide funding to support TRACA in meeting the costs associated with governance, engagement, representation and advisory functions.<sup>46</sup>

### **Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania**

The Commissioner for Children and Young People is an independent statutory officer responsible to the Parliament of Tasmania established under the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016 (Tas)* Act.<sup>47</sup>

The Commissioner's general functions include:

- Advocating for all children and young people in Tasmania, with a particular focus on, but not restricted to, children who by virtue of their circumstances, are in particular need of strong advocacy, such as children involved with the child safety system and/or the youth justice system.

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.ccpv.com.au/commissioners-role/>.

<sup>46</sup> [http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/statement\\_of\\_intent\\_signed\\_with\\_traca](http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/statement_of_intent_signed_with_traca).

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/about/>.

- Advocating for young people who are detained under the Youth Justice Act 1997. The Commissioner regularly visits Ashley Youth Detention Centre to meet with the young people who are detained there.
- Researching, investigating and influencing policy development into matters relating to children and young people generally.
- Promoting, monitoring and reviewing the wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania generally. The term “wellbeing” in relation to children and young people includes the care, development and education, and the physical, emotional and psychological health and safety of children and young people.
- Promoting and empowering the participation of children and young people in the making of decisions or the expressing of opinions on matters that may affect their lives. This includes encouraging and promoting the establishment by organisations of appropriate and accessible mechanisms for the participation of children and young people in matters that may affect them.

### Department of Communities Tasmania

The Department of Communities Tasmania provides opportunities for all Tasmanians to participate in community life and sport and recreation; supports, protects and nurtures vulnerable children, young people and their families; delivers and facilitates specialist disability services; and provides services to support social and affordable housing, specifically across the client service areas of:

- Children and Youth Services
- Housing, Disability and Community Services
- Communities, Sport and Recreation.

It is made up of three operational divisions that are supported by Capability and Resources and Office of the Secretary. The operational areas are:

- Children, Youth and Families
- Communities, Sport and Recreation
- Housing, Disability and Community Services.

The Department works with:

- Families and carers
- Peak bodies
- Community services sector
- Sport and recreation sector
- Tasmanian Government agencies
- Australian Government agencies
- Councils.

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs (OAA) in the Communities, Sport and Recreation Division is responsible for high-level consultation with Tasmania's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. OAA is the primary resource for advice to Government on policy issues affecting Aboriginal communities in Tasmania.

The role of OAA is to:

- Provide accurate representation of the communities' view to advise the Minister, Premier and Cabinet on the efficient, effective management of policies, legislation and programs that affect Tasmania's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.
- Seek to assist Tasmania's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population to achieve social, cultural and economic outcomes.
- Promote greater understanding and acceptance of Aboriginal culture.

Within the Department of Communities, there is a Tier 4 **Office of Aboriginal Affairs** area, headed up by a Manager.

## Victoria

### Whole of State

Victoria has a *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023* (VAAF) that lays out the State's approach to Aboriginal affairs. It provides a forward-looking agenda for Aboriginal affairs and has two key purposes:

1. It is the Victorian Government's overarching framework for working with Aboriginal Victorians, organisations and the wider community to drive action and improve outcomes.
2. It sets out whole of government self-determination enablers and principles and commits government to significant structural and systemic transformation.

It provides the metrics, the targets and the priorities to guide progress forward, and for the State, represents a new way of doing business, with the voices of Aboriginal people at its heart. The VAAF is the Victorian Government's plan for working with Aboriginal Victorians to close the gap.

The State has begun consultation about "establishing an Aboriginal-led evaluation and review mechanism in Victoria"<sup>48</sup> associated with the *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VAAF) 2018-2023*.

The VAAF notes:

*"Government and government-funded organisations must be held to account for delivering services that meet the needs of communities. Too often, government funding in Aboriginal affairs focuses on outputs – what activities, products or services it is providing and at what cost. We need to move from measuring outputs to measuring outcomes – what we are achieving for and with Aboriginal Victorians. Government must also be held accountable for changing its systems and structures to enable Aboriginal self-determination."<sup>49</sup>*

The VAAF commits the Victorian Government to establishing an Aboriginal-led evaluation and review mechanism to track government's progress against the VAAF. This includes evaluating and reviewing:

- Government's efforts to achieve the goals, objectives and measures set out in the VAAF; and
- Government action to enable Aboriginal self-determination (*ibid* P5).

### Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) is a state-wide ACCO servicing children, young people, families, and community members.

### Commission for Children and Young People

The Commission for Children and Young People is an independent statutory body that promotes improvement in policies and practices affecting the safety and wellbeing of Victorian children and young people. The Commission has a particular focus on vulnerable children and young people. The functions and powers of the Commission are outlined in the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012* and the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> State of Victoria, Establishing an Aboriginal-led evaluation and review mechanism in Victoria, Discussion Guide 1, February 2019.

<sup>49</sup> State of Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023, P58.

<sup>50</sup> <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/about-the-commission/who-we-are/>

## Desktop Analysis

### The Commission:

- provides independent scrutiny and oversight of services for children and young people, particularly those in the out-of-home-care, child protection and youth justice systems
- advocates for best practice policy, program and service responses to meet the needs of children and young people
- supports and regulates organisations that work with children and young people to prevent abuse and make sure these organisations have child safe practices
- brings the views and experiences of children and young people to the attention of government and the community
- promotes the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Importantly, the Commission for Children and Young People has a dedicated Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People.

### **The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) delivers policies, program and services that support and enhance the health and wellbeing of Victorians across the areas of:

- Ageing
- Disability
- Public Health
- Alcohol and Drugs
- Health and Wellbeing
- Ambulance Services
- Housing and Homelessness
- Children and Families
- Mental Health.

There is a separate Tier 3 Division, reporting to the Deputy Secretary, Health and Wellbeing that is titled:

- Chief Aboriginal Health Advisor.

The DHHS also has a whole of Agency outcomes framework that identifies outcomes and key result areas the Department commits to, including a specific focus on culture and community (\*Note: other outcomes and key result areas are also explicitly focussed on improving outcomes for Aboriginal people):

#### Victorians are connected to culture and community

*Outcome 4.1: Victorians are socially engaged and live in inclusive communities*

Key result 23: Increase rates of community engagement – especially for Aboriginal children and young people

*Outcome 4.2: Victorians can safely identify and connect with their culture and identity, with their health and wellbeing advanced through self-determination*

Key result 24: Increase cultural connection for children in out-of-home care – especially Aboriginal children

Key result 25: Increase the cultural safety of our department's direct-delivered and funded services

#### Victorian health and human services are person centred and sustainable

*Outcome 5.2: Services are inclusive and respond to choice, culture, identity, circumstances and goals*

Key result 30: Increase client and patient choice concerning the services and treatment they receive

Key result 31: Increase diversity of the department's workforce – especially Aboriginal people employed in senior roles

Key result 32: Increase citizen engagement in the design and delivery of services

Key result 33: Increase participation of service providers and staff in the design of services



The DHHS has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety framework that states:

***“Cultural safety is everyone’s business”***

The framework was developed to help the department and mainstream Victorian health, human and community services to create culturally safe environments, services and workplaces and was developed as the first phase of a continuous quality improvement approach.

The development of the framework underpins a key commitment in the DHHS’s:

- Korin Korin Balit- Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017– 2027.
- The Aboriginal Governance and Accountability Framework
- Aboriginal employment strategy 2016–2021<sup>51</sup>
  - The cultural safety framework: Part 1
  - A cultural safety continuum reflective tool: Part 2

The framework (refer to Figure 12) will support Korin Korin Balit-Djak to achieve the Victorian Government's vision of:

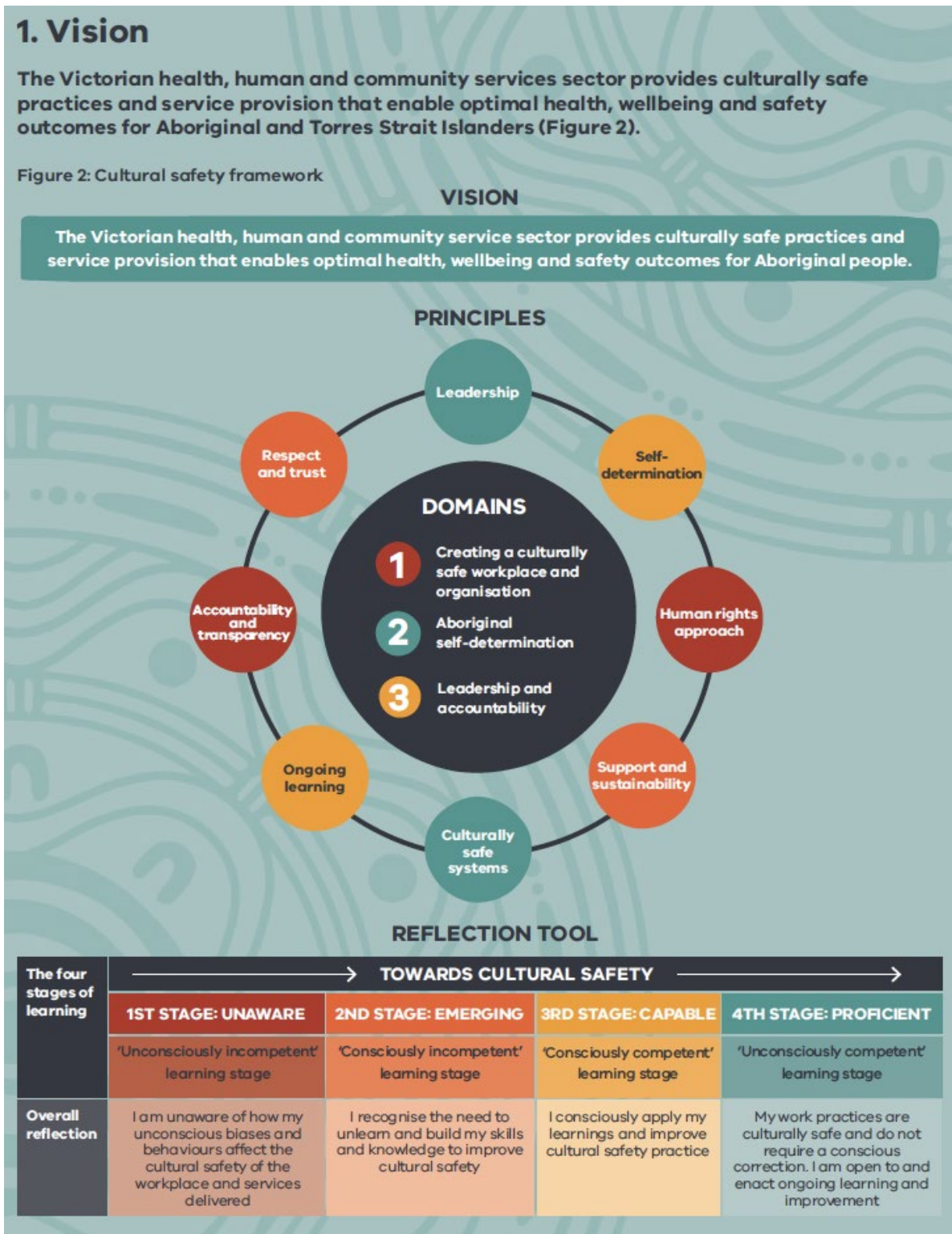
***'self-determining, healthy and safe Aboriginal communities'***

DHHS does not have a RAP.

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<sup>51</sup> <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202004/Part%201-Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20Islander%20cultural%20safety%20framework-20190620.pdf>

**Figure 12 – DHHS Cultural Safety Framework**



## Western Australia

### Whole of State

#### **Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy**

WA, through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) published a draft *Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy* in December 2019 that articulated a set of Principles including:

- Empowerment and self-determination
- Culture and Country
- Diversity of people and places
- Services
- Evidence.

The Strategic Elements of the *Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy* included:

- Putting **Culture** at the centre.
- Bringing decisions **closer to communities** through empowered engagement and agreement making.
- Investing more in **preventative initiatives**.
- Building **cultural understanding and respect**.
- Boosting **economic opportunities** across all areas of Government activity.
- Enabling **Aboriginal-led solutions** through better service commissioning.

This Strategy is currently under review and the Aboriginal Engagement and Coordination Division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet are working across Government with *Aboriginal Affairs Coordination Council* agencies, and with the *Aboriginal Advisory Council of WA* to strengthen a whole of State approach to improving outcome for Aboriginal Western Australians.

#### **Aboriginal Procurement Policy**

The Aboriginal Procurement Policy sets targets for the number of government contracts awarded to registered Aboriginal businesses<sup>52</sup> and seeks to develop entrepreneurship and business opportunities for the Aboriginal community.

The Policy applies to each state government agency. Agency means the following:

An agency as defined in the Financial Management Act 2006, section 3 other than a university listed in Schedule 1 to that Act.

Agencies are required to award three per cent of the number of government contracts to registered Aboriginal businesses by end of June 2021. The targets apply to all contracts for goods, services, community services and works. With respect to works contracts awarded by the Minister for Works, the responsible Agency is the agency that provides the majority of the funding.

Targets will apply to each financial year as per Table 7 below.

**Table 7 – Aboriginal Procurement Policy Targets**

Financial Year	Targets
2018-2019	One (1) per cent of the number of awarded contracts
2019-2020	Two (2) per cent of the number of awarded contracts
2020-2021*	Three (3) per cent of the number of awarded contracts

\* It is envisaged that from 2020 the three per cent target will remain constant for future years.

<sup>52</sup> An Aboriginal business must be registered on a suitable directory, as determined by the Department of Finance, to meet the requirements of this Policy.

### Department of Communities approaches

There are Agency specific strategies and approaches that guide work in this area. For the Department of Communities, the following and current policies are in existence:

- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy to 2022
- Aboriginal Enterprise and Employment Tendering Preference Policy
- Aboriginal Employment Targets in Construction and Civil Works Contracts (and associated fact sheets and plans/templates)
- Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy (10-year FDV Action plan).

The status of these strategies, and documents has not been verified, so their effectiveness or 'fit for purpose' standing is uncertain in the current day setting of the Department.

Of note and worth reviewing is the expired Child Protection and Family Support Aboriginal Services and Practice Framework (2016 – 2018) and the four accompanying papers:

- Community Engagement
- People Development
- Capacity Building (from which the ACCO strategy evolved)
- Practice Development.

The Department's trial of Aboriginal led decision-making is also an excellent development given its success in other jurisdictions.

### Other WA Government approaches for noting:

There are a range of approaches taken to providing guiding frameworks to improving outcomes for Aboriginal peoples across the WA State Government sector. A high-level summary includes:

#### Department of Health:

The Department of Health has a *WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015 - 2030* that provides a comprehensive and holistic approach to improving outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. The Framework has been developed for Aboriginal people by Aboriginal people and was informed by an extensive consultation program. It has a strong focus on prevention and acknowledges culture as a key determinant of health.

The Framework is accompanied by a robust implementation and outcomes framework, along with other supporting documents, including:

- Implementation Guide for the WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030
- Monitoring and Reporting Plan for the WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030
- Outcomes Framework for Aboriginal Health 2020-2030
- WA Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategy.

Health Service Providers have also developed and are in various stages of implementing frameworks to support their work in this area. Of note is recent work undertaken by the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) and the development of a *Mental Health Cultural Governance Framework* that is being considered for adoption across the entire WACHS.

#### Department of Education:

The WA Department of Education's *Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework* sets expected standards for all staff when working with Aboriginal students, their parents and families, and communities. The framework has five cultural standards and a continuum aligned with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership's Australian Professional Standard for Principals and Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

The framework supports staff to reflect on their behaviours, attitudes and practices with a view to progressing from cultural awareness to cultural responsiveness to maximise learning outcomes for Aboriginal students. The framework is not an assessment tool, however, provides a mechanism for self-reflection to drive improvement.



### **Department of Justice:**

The Department of Justice has an Aboriginal Workforce Development Strategy 2018-2021 is based on recommendations set down by the Public Sector Commission's *Attract, appoint and advance: An employment strategy for Aboriginal people* initiative, which has been superseded by the *Training together – working together* Aboriginal workforce development strategy.

The Approach taken by the department through this strategy is to provide a set of actions to inspire more Aboriginal people to work at the department across all areas and levels, in line with their RAP 2018/19 to 2020/2021. A goal on increasing Aboriginal employment from 6% in June 2018 to 7.5% in June 2021 was set.

### **Department of Training and Workforce Development:**

The *Training together – working together* Aboriginal workforce development strategy was aimed at assisting Aboriginal people participate effectively in the workforce and ensuring that the development and application of their skills was within a workplace context. It contained recommendations aimed at making better connections between employers and Aboriginal people and, through a more unified system of support, helping individuals progress through various transitions towards sustained employment, thereby reducing long-term welfare dependency. The strategy made six key findings:

1. There is a lack of connection and coordination between employers, job seekers and service providers, between State agencies and between State and Australian Governments that creates inefficiency and ineffectiveness.
2. There are job opportunities for Aboriginal people, but employers do not know how to successfully engage with them. There is an opportunity to increase employer involvement and commitment to employing Aboriginal people.
3. One size does not fit all – locally responsive solutions are needed to address unique local issues.
4. Support for Aboriginal people transitioning from school to training, from training into jobs, from unemployment to employment is essential – relationship-based mentoring is the critical ingredient in helping individuals to make successful transitions into sustainable employment.
5. There are major individual and institutional barriers to Aboriginal participation in the workforce – a strategic, systematic response is needed to remove these fundamental barriers.
6. There is a need to raise awareness of Aboriginal employment opportunities and promote new Aboriginal role models.

The strategy had an overarching goal of halving the Aboriginal employment gap by 2020. It is unclear whether the strategy has been evaluated or if there are intentions to pursue an evaluation of it.

### **Public Sector Commission**

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: Action Plan to Improve WA Public Sector Employment Outcomes 2020–2025* is part of the Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for the WA Public Sector Employment 2020-2025.

The twin goals of the strategy are to increase the representation of people from different backgrounds at all levels across the WA public sector, and to ensure all staff in the sector experience a sense of belonging and inclusion in the work environment.

The action plan aims to increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the public sector to 3.7% from the 2020 baseline of 2.7%. The target of 3.7% is based on representation in the Western Australian working age population and is derived from two key data sets – the most recent ABS Census in 2016 and ABS population projections.



### Commissioner for Children and Young People in WA

The Commissioner is the independent person who works closely with children and young people, their families, community and government to make WA a better place for 0 to 18-year olds. The position was created because the Western Australian Parliament made a commitment to the children and young people of WA that they would live in a state where they were heard, valued, healthy and safe. The WA Parliament passed the Commissioner for *Children and Young People Act* in 2006. A joint standing committee provides an oversight role for the WA Parliament.<sup>53</sup>

The Commissioner undertakes projects, commissions research, publishes reports, and hosts events to highlight specific aspects of children and young people's wellbeing. Using research and the other evidence available, the Commissioner seeks to positively influence legislation, policy, services and attitudes. The office meets regularly with key decision makers and advises on legislation and policy through submissions and issues papers and speaks directly to government and the broader community.

In particular, the key functions of the office include:

- Advocating for all children and young people.
- Monitoring laws, policies and practices that affect the wellbeing of children and young people.
- Promoting and valuing the voice of children and young people and the positive contributions they make to our society.
- Consulting children and young people, parents, families and government and non-government organisations.
- Researching the latest trends and information that relate to children and young people.
- Inquiring on behalf of children and young people about issues relating to their wellbeing.
- The Commissioner's work has regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and acting on the principle that parents, families and communities have the primary role in safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of their children and young people and should be supported in carrying out their role.

### Reconciliation Action Plans

The WA State Government agencies and Government Trading Entities (GTE) who have current RAPs include:

- WA Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (Reflect)
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Reflect)
- Central Regional TAFE (Reflect)
- WA Police Force (Reflect)
- Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (Innovate)
- WA Department of Transport (Innovate)
- WA Department of Justice (Innovate)
- WA Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (Innovate)
- South Metropolitan TAFE (Innovate)
- Government Employees Superannuation Board (GESB) (WA) (Innovate)
- Legal Aid WA (Innovate)
- Horizon Power (Innovate)
- Museum of Western Australia (Innovate)
- Water Corporation WA (Stretch)
- Development WA (Stretch)
- WA Mental Health Commission (Stretch).

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<sup>53</sup> <https://www.ccp.wa.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/>.

The RAPs currently in place all have strategies and commitments included that are reported publicly through Reconciliation Australia across the areas of Relationships, Respect, Opportunities (Aboriginal employment, procurement and supplier diversity), and tracking and reporting.

### *7.3.2 Structural jurisdictional analysis*

The Australian Government and the governments of each State and Territory are engaged to varying degrees in activities or planning to create improved outcomes and accountability for services delivered to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people across the portfolios of:

- Child Protection
- Family Support and Early Intervention
- Family Violence
- Disability
- Housing.

The situation, in terms of improving outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and communities, will not improve with a tweaking of current approaches. There is a need for significant change in policy levers, procurement practice, workforce development, and practice behaviour if a wholesale systems change is to be realised in order to improve outcomes in this area.

Establishing clear lines of accountability, integrated system relationships and maximising opportunities to benefit the Aboriginal community are essential considerations in establishing the new Division.

A summary of each jurisdiction can be found at Appendix B.

### *7.3.3 Key lessons from previous reviews in WA*

There have been a number of previous reviews in WA, all of which have come up with their own recommendations as signposts for systems change and improvement. Most recently the Department of Communities, or its predecessor organisations have had the below noted reviews:

- Ian Rennie – Capability Review – Conducted in 2019; delivered to the Department in July 2020.
- Dr Tracy Westerman – Cultural Competency Review commissioned in 2017 and delivered in 2019.
- Agency Capability Review (2018).

## 8 Findings and recommendations

### *The current state*

The Department is at a critical point in relation to providing services improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. This current situation is highlighted by the following statistics:

- 56% of children in care in WA are Aboriginal.
- 29% of people experiencing homelessness in WA are Aboriginal.
- 37% of people living in social housing in WA are Aboriginal.

Given the Aboriginal population of WA is 3.93%, these statistics highlight the entrenched disproportionality of poor outcomes impacting Aboriginal people across WA. The Department has an important role and responsibility in working in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities to address these disparities and close the gap when it comes to outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia.

In trying to address these challenges, it is important to also observe some key structural elements that the Department faces that may have the potential to impede or impact its ability to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA. Some examples of these elements include:

- The Department is still emerging from a significant organisational restructure.
- There is a level of bias and racism, both systemic and overt, within the Department, a view gathered through the Westerman Report and recent stakeholder interviews, that is affecting Aboriginal staff who feel disengaged, unsupported and unheard.
- In the absence of an understanding and application of Cultural Competence principles and learnings, the Department often adopts a Western-centric approach to service design and delivery that, in many instances, does not meet or address the needs of Aboriginal people and communities.
- The Department is observed to be slow in adopting and enacting change and is often not responsive enough to drive the level of transformation that is required to improve Aboriginal outcomes.
- The Department has been involved in the State-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department is also currently responsible for leading the State's social recovery initiatives following the COVID-19 pandemic (State Emergency Welfare Plan, COVID-19). A key focus of this response is in regional and remote areas.

Collectively, these factors and the current state of outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia highlights the need for change. The current approach is not addressing the disparity that Aboriginal people are facing at an acceptable rate of change. A transformational approach is necessary to accelerate the speed at which a change to the current situation is achieved.

### *What does success look like?*

In addressing the current situation and accepting that change is needed, the Department must consider what success might look like. Some key attributes that provide insights to achieving a situation where Aboriginal outcomes are significantly improved include the following:

## Findings and recommendations

- Achieving the Closing the Gap targets and eliminating the disparity that currently exists for Aboriginal people in WA
- The Department is an employer of choice for Aboriginal people in WA
- The Department has a strong Aboriginal workforce with a retention rate that is comparable, if not better, than the overall retention rates for the Department
- The Department's Aboriginal workforce has Aboriginal staff in leadership positions with authority and influence to drive change and be responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people
- The Department recognises and respects the dual accountabilities that Aboriginal staff have to the Department and Aboriginal community
- The Department has embedded systems and processes that incorporate Aboriginal ways of doing and being
- The Department has an organisational culture that actively respects, includes and promotes Aboriginal perspectives in its ways of working
- The Department is agile and culturally responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people and communities in WA
- The Department has an embedded, collaborative organisational culture that works across Divisions and Departments.

In this future state:

***“Everyone in the Department is responsible for contributing to improved Aboriginal outcomes”***

### *A compelling case for change*

The Department is at a critical point in relation to what it is doing to meet the needs of Aboriginal people in WA. Outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA may remain the same or worsen should the Department continue to function and operate in the same way.

There is an urgency for the transformational change within the Department. Delaying this change poses on-going and incremental risks to the Department such as:

- reputational risks for the Department, Government and Minister
- budget blowouts
- challenges in retaining and recruiting Aboriginal staff
- increased opportunity costs should a transformational change be delayed
- an inability to meet the high expectations of the Aboriginal community for imminent change to address their concerns
- most importantly, unacceptable social-economic outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities in WA.

In addition to these risks, the Closing the Gap National Agreement is a major initiative that is a catalyst for change. The WA Government has committed to the key priorities, outcomes and targets in the Agreement and the

## Findings and recommendations

Department is responsible for delivering on a number of these as outlined in Section 7.2.1. Without a truly transformational change, the Department is unlikely to be able to achieve the targets that are outlined in the National Agreement. Furthermore, the current initiative to establish a new statutory office to strengthen accountability for Aboriginal Affairs in WA may present an additional layer of scrutiny for the Department should an improvement in outcomes for Aboriginal people not be achieved.

### *What changes are required?*

In order to achieve the transformational change required to improve Aboriginal outcomes in WA, a number of changes from the current operating model are required. Some of the key changes include:

- A commitment to the transformational change that is required
- An understanding, acceptance and acknowledgement of the scale of the change that is required is significant. A change of this significance requires a considered approach and appropriate investment
- Leadership that lives, promotes and advocates for the transformational change
- A formal, culturally informed leadership development process that builds the capability of the Department's leadership to drive the behavioural and cultural shift needed
- Fit-for-purpose governance mechanisms with the authority to enact change
- A change in the way that the Department does business by developing new ways of working that incorporate and embed Aboriginal knowledge in systems and processes. Consolidating the old/current way of doing things will not be able to achieve the magnitude of change that is required.
- An Aboriginal-led approach driven by Aboriginal staff at all levels within the Department, including in leadership positions
- Greater cross Divisional collaboration within the Department
- A change in the organisational culture of the Department to embed a behavioural shift to develop a culture where: *"Everyone in the Department is responsible for contributing to improved Aboriginal outcomes"*
- A dynamic approach that continues to improve service delivery while still having a future-focus.

The Department should have an appropriate response for the transformational change that is required. The scale of change that is required is significant and requires a considered approach and appropriate investment. The Department's response requires an appropriate level of investment, both financial and resourcing, to deliver the transformation required. Given the challenge posed by having to maintain delivering services, programs and initiatives while concurrently implementing this transition, the Department should leverage the assistance of an Implementation Partner(s). This Implementation Partner(s) would not only support the Department to drive the implementation, but also, provide independent expertise to further inform the implementation. The Department will require a considered, well planned approach to deliver this transformation change that should be outlined in a detailed Implementation Plan. Finally, the Department should establish an Implementation Oversight Committee to increase the Department's accountability for progressing the transformation required.

**Recommendation:** The Department should acknowledge and commit to, and appropriately resource, the transformational change that is required to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA.

**Recommendation:** The Department should commit an appropriate level of investment (both financial and resourcing) to ensure the successful implementation of the transition.



**Recommendation:** The Department should seek the services of an Implementation Partner(s) to support the transformation and provide independent expertise to inform and build the processes necessary to achieve the transformation.

**Recommendation:** The Department should develop a detailed Implementation Plan which includes clearly articulated roles and responsibilities. This is in addition to high-level Implementation Plan outlined in this report to ensure a sufficient level of planning to enact the transformational changes.

## 8.1 Purpose and values

### 8.1.1 Purpose

The proposed purpose of the new Division is:

***“To support and enable the Department of Communities to improve Aboriginal outcomes.”***

### 8.1.2 Values

The new Division should seek to align with the Department’s existing iCREATE values as outlined in the Department’s Strategic Plan 2019-2023.<sup>54</sup> The Department’s current iCREATE values are:

- **Integrity** – We show a consistent and uncompromising adherence to honesty and strong ethical principles as set out in our Code of Conduct and consistent with the high expectations of the people we serve.
- **Courage** – We understand that doing what is right is not always what is easy. To achieve something new, we must be willing to do what we have never done before.
- **Respect** – We treat everyone with dignity and fairness. We recognise contribution and value diversity.
- **Empathy** – We extend ourselves to understand the perspectives and experiences of others to actively ‘walk in their shoes’. We communicate and act in a respectful way that makes sense to others.
- **Accountability** – We are individually accountable and collectively responsible. We own our actions and see them through for the best possible outcome.
- **Trust** – We say what we mean and act accordingly. We are honest in our dealings and use of resources. We keep our promises and act with integrity.
- **Empowerment** – We help our colleagues, individuals and the community to be the best they can be.

This engagement has highlighted the need to further build upon and refine the Department’s iCREATE values as follows (changes are highlighted in *italicised orange text*):

- **Integrity** – We show a consistent and uncompromising adherence to honesty and strong ethical principles as set out in our Code of Conduct and consistent with the high expectations of the people we serve.
- **Courage** – We understand that doing what is right is not always what is easy. To achieve something new, we must be willing to do what we have never done before.

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<sup>54</sup> <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/about/publications/strategic-plan-2019-2023/>.

- **Respect** – We treat everyone with dignity and fairness. We recognise contribution and value diversity. *We will be culturally respectful and operate in a culturally capable, culturally safe and culturally competent manner that respects the influence and authority of Aboriginal leadership.*
- **Empathy** – We extend ourselves to understand the perspectives and experiences of others to actively ‘walk in their shoes’. We communicate and act in a respectful way that makes sense to others.
- **Accountability** – We are individually accountable and collectively responsible. We own our actions and see them through for the best possible outcome. *We will recognise the dual accountabilities of Aboriginal staff to the Department and to the Aboriginal community.*<sup>55</sup>
- **Trust** – We say what we mean and act accordingly. We are honest in our dealings and use of resources. We keep our promises and act with integrity.
- **Empowerment** – We help our colleagues, individuals and the community to be the best they can be. *We will respect the rights of First Nations people to self-determination and autonomy.*
- **Collaboration** – *We work together to cooperatively solve problems and develop solutions.*

**Recommendation:** The Department should adopt the proposed purpose of the new Division: “*To support and enable the Department of Communities to improve Aboriginal outcomes*”.

**Recommendation:** The Department should refine the existing iCREATE values to incorporate the changes proposed in this Report that incorporate Aboriginal perspectives.

**Recommendation:** The Department should consider further refining the ACP to reflect the cultural considerations that are incorporated in this Report.

**Recommendation:** The Department should re-engage with its Aboriginal workforce to develop a name for the new Division. This should be incorporated as part of the engagement strategy.

## 8.2 Proposed functions for the new Division

Through the synthesis and analysis of the emergent themes of the desktop review and the stakeholder consultations, and the intended purpose of the new Division as part of the Department’s restructure, four key functional roles were identified for the new Division:

1. **Cultural Competence & Responsiveness**
2. **Best Practice Partnerships**
3. **Aboriginal Workforce Support**
4. **Strategy & Reporting**

These core functional roles highlight that the proposed functions of the new Division do not include a service delivery role.

**Recommendation:** The new Division should have four key functional areas: 1. Cultural Competence & Responsiveness; 2. Best Practice Partnerships; 3. Aboriginal Workforce Support; and 4. Strategy & Reporting.

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<sup>55</sup> Stewart, J. & Warn, J. (2016). Between Two Worlds: Indigenous Leaders Exercising Influence and Working across Boundaries. Australian Journal of Public Administration, Institute of Public Administration Australia.

### *Improving the cultural competence and responsiveness of the Department*

The Closing the Gap National Agreement highlighted that governments, their organisations and their institutions must be culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through the services they fund. The National Agreement identified the need to transform these mainstream institutions to be more culturally safe and responsive as a key priority element.

In alignment with this focus to transform mainstream institutions, a key role for the new Division should be to improve the cultural capability and cultural competence of the Department. Improving the cultural capability and competence of the Department's staff underpins the ability to:

- deliver culturally appropriate and culturally responsive services
- maintain a strong Aboriginal workforce that is proportionate to the Department's Aboriginal client base
- contribute to improving outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA.

Continuing to build the cultural capability and competence of staff is critical for the Department's policy, programs and initiatives to achieve the desired impacts and improved outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA. This capability is required across the Department at all levels and in all Divisions. Leadership must recognise, support, endorse, advocate and commit to improving the cultural competence and responsiveness of the Department. This leadership will be critical to the implementation of and programs and initiatives of the new Division to improve the cultural competence and responsiveness of the Department to improve outcomes.

The urgency for driving this organisational capability shift is a critical factor in achieving improved outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia as highlighted in the Westerman Review of the former Department of Child Protection and Family Support. Dr Westerman developed a Child Protection specific Cultural Competency assessment tool and tested around 300 Departmental staff. The findings of this assessment were concerning and presented a Department that had a long way to go in terms of its cultural competence and ability to respond appropriately to Aboriginal people. The report highlighted that "the impact of the effectiveness of the Department's role in the delivery and outcome of service on Aboriginal families and communities must be addressed".

### *Best Practice Partnerships*

The new Division has an opportunity to establish a new core functional area (Best Practice Partnerships) that provides leadership, best practice, research and support to the Department to improve Aboriginal outcomes. The Best Practice Partnerships function for the new Division will inform, guide and develop culturally responsive and fit-for-purpose ways of working with Aboriginal people through the development, evaluation and continuous improvement of practice frameworks. The new functional area would leverage evidence-based best practice (in an on-going manner), both locally in WA and more broadly (nationally and internationally) for testing and local implementation. The Best Practice Partnerships function would provide opportunities to develop innovative approaches underpinned by Aboriginal ways of working.

In developing these new, and culturally informed approaches the Best Practice Partnerships function would contribute to improved policy, service design and delivery and resource allocation to ultimately improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. It is important to note that the role of this new functional area is not service delivery, but rather, developing best practice approaches to improve service delivery and consequently outcomes.

The Best Practice Partnerships function will have an important role in establishing and maintaining key statutory agencies including:

- the Office of the Ombudsman for Western Australia (i.e. investigable child deaths and domestic family violence fatalities)
- the proposed office for accountability in Aboriginal affairs

## Findings and recommendations

- the Commissioner for Children and Young People
- the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services
- the Western Australian Auditor-General.

Additionally, the Best Practice Partnerships function will have to work closely with the Strategy and Partnerships Division of the Department to provide an Aboriginal lens in responding to Royal Commission reports.

### *Aboriginal Workforce Support*

A strong and supported Aboriginal workforce underpins the Department's ability to deliver culturally responsive services and support to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. The stakeholder consultations highlighted that the engagement of staff within the Department is poor with many Aboriginal staff feeling disengaged, dissatisfied and feeling unsupported in their roles. Several staff raised that they felt that their voices weren't being listened to. A strong Aboriginal workforce will be critical to support the Department to drive the transformational change that is required. The Department's workforce composition should also be designed to be responsive to its current client base across its three main business areas of Child Protection, Housing and Disability Services in which Aboriginal people represent a major cohort, and which is more pronounced with regional and remote areas.

In order to address this current state, the new Division should have a targeted focus on supporting the Department's existing Aboriginal workforce but also seeking to further strengthen and grow the Aboriginal workforce.<sup>56</sup> The new Division, in partnership with the People Division, must co-develop an Aboriginal Workforce Strategy for the Department including reviewing any existing programs. This Aboriginal Workforce Strategy must consider a range of programs and initiatives including (but not limited to):

- increasing the **retention** of Aboriginal staff so that it is proportionate to the broader workforce
- providing **professional development** opportunities to Aboriginal staff (including leadership development opportunities)
- identifying employment pathways for the **recruitment** of Aboriginal staff (including through partnerships with educational institutions)
- reviewing **job design** to promote employment opportunities for Aboriginal people
- developing systems and processes to make the Department **a culturally and psychologically safe and trauma informed workplace** for Aboriginal people
- developing **culturally informed human resource policies** to support Aboriginal staff
- conducting a **review of current remuneration** of all Aboriginal staff to ensure parity in pay and conditions (for example, access to government housing in regional areas)
- **workforce planning**, in partnership with the Public Sector Commission, to identify forecasted roles, budgets and employment targets to implement appropriate strategies and partnerships.

Through implementing the Aboriginal Workforce Strategy, the Department should seek to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. It should be noted that the accountability for Aboriginal employment must remain with each Division within the Department.

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<sup>56</sup> Faulkner, S. & Lahn, J. (2019). Navigating to Senior Leadership in The Australian Public Service: Identifying Employment Barriers and Enablers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, College of Arts & Social Sciences - Australian National University.



## Findings and recommendations

Once the Aboriginal Workforce Strategy is developed, the new Division would transition into a role with an oversight function on the implementation of the Strategy. Some of the specific responsibilities for this functional area in its oversight role would include:

- working closely with the People Division to ensure that the Aboriginal Workforce Strategy implements current best practice
- providing an oversight and reporting function for the Department's Aboriginal Workforce Strategy
- guiding approaches to, and working to support, the coordination of the Department's Graduate Development Program
- establishing mechanisms such as regular surveys and team feedback to gauge the engagement of the Aboriginal workforce
- supporting the Aboriginal employment aspects of the Department's RAP
- establishing peer support networks including events for Aboriginal staff.

### *Strategy & Reporting*

The last core function for the new Division is focussed on Strategy & Reporting. There are key four key focus areas for this proposed function:

- Building the Aboriginal community-controlled sector
- Developing a data-driven approach to monitor the implementation efforts for Closing the Gap priorities
- Developing a strategic approach to the socio-economic outcomes specified in the National Agreement that the Department leads, co-leads or supports
- Coordinating the Department's response to the National Agreement for Closing the Gap.

These four key focus areas for this core function are explained in further detail below.

#### **Building the Aboriginal community-controlled sector**

A priority reform of the National Agreement for Closing the Gap is a strong and sustainable Aboriginal community-controlled sector delivering high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal people. In order to achieve this outcome, this focus area will have to:

- Develop a strategic plan that outlines the Department's approach towards building the community-controlled sector. This strategic plan should include programs and initiatives to invest in the on-going development of the capability and capacity of ACCOs in WA.
- Report on progress on the implementation of the strategic plan for building the community-controlled sector.
- Deliver programs and initiatives to promote ACCO-led innovation in service delivery.
- Develop a long-term strategic plan for transforming service delivery (service delivery reform). This strategic plan should seek to understand what service delivery will look like in the future considering what the Department's role will be and what the ACCO sector's role will be. The development of this plan requires consultation and engagement with the ACCO sector.
- Report on progress on the strategic plan for transforming service delivery.



## Findings and recommendations

- Establish and build relationships and long-term strategic partnerships with key external partners/bodies to enable the whole service delivery system.
- Conduct a review and assessment of current procurement strategies and practices to identify opportunities to improve the way the Department engages with the ACCO sector.

### **Improving and sharing access to data and information to enable Aboriginal communities to make informed decisions**

The Closing the Gap National Agreement highlighted a priority reform area as the collection of, and access to, data. Specifically, Aboriginal people must have access to use, locally relevant data and information to inform decision making and monitor the implementation of efforts to close the gap. This functional area of the new Division must lead efforts to develop appropriate practices and frameworks for the capture, management and sharing of this data. This approach should be developed in partnerships with the Best Practice Partnerships functional area of the new Division as well as any other relevant areas within the Department such as Information services which resides within the Integrity & Reform Division. These practices and framework must take into consideration factors such as how to collect and store data, what data can be shared, cultural intellectual property, data sovereignty and data collection methods.

Finally, this data driven approach will underpin the Department's ability to monitor implementation efforts for Closing the Gap priorities that the Department leads, co-leads or supports.

### **Developing a strategic approach to the socio-economic outcomes specified in the National Agreement that the Department leads, co-leads or supports**

The Department leads, co-leads and supports the achievement of a number of socio-economic outcomes as specified in the National Agreement for Closing the Gap (detailed previously in Chapter 7). A key role for this core focus area is to work with the other Divisions in the Department to develop an Implementation Plan for how the Department will seek to achieve, or contribute to achieving, each of these targets. The new Division, under this core function, would be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the Department's progress in relation to these Implementation Plans.

Another key role for this focus area is to develop an Accountability Framework to ensure the delivery of Department-wide commitments to Aboriginal people. This Accountability Framework would also incorporate the Department's commitments to achieving the specific socio-economic outcomes in the National Agreement for Closing the Gap that the Department leads, co-leads or supports (as described above).

### **Coordinating the Department's response to the National Agreement**

The new Division will play an important role in coordinating and delivering the Department's response to the Closing the Gap National Agreement in alignment with reporting requirements. The National Agreement includes four Priority Reforms that cascade to down to agency specific responses. This response will focus on reporting on the Priority Reforms as well as the targets that the Department leads, co-leads or supports. In order to achieve this, the new Division will have to work closely and collaboratively with the other Divisions within the Department.

### **Department's Reconciliation Action Plan**

This core function would also have accountability and responsibility for coordinating the Department's Reconciliation Action Plan.

**Recommendation:** The new Division should consider urgently developing the following:

- A Cultural Capability Framework including an overarching outcomes framework (for internal and external application), an implementation plan, an evaluation plan and governance.

## Findings and recommendations

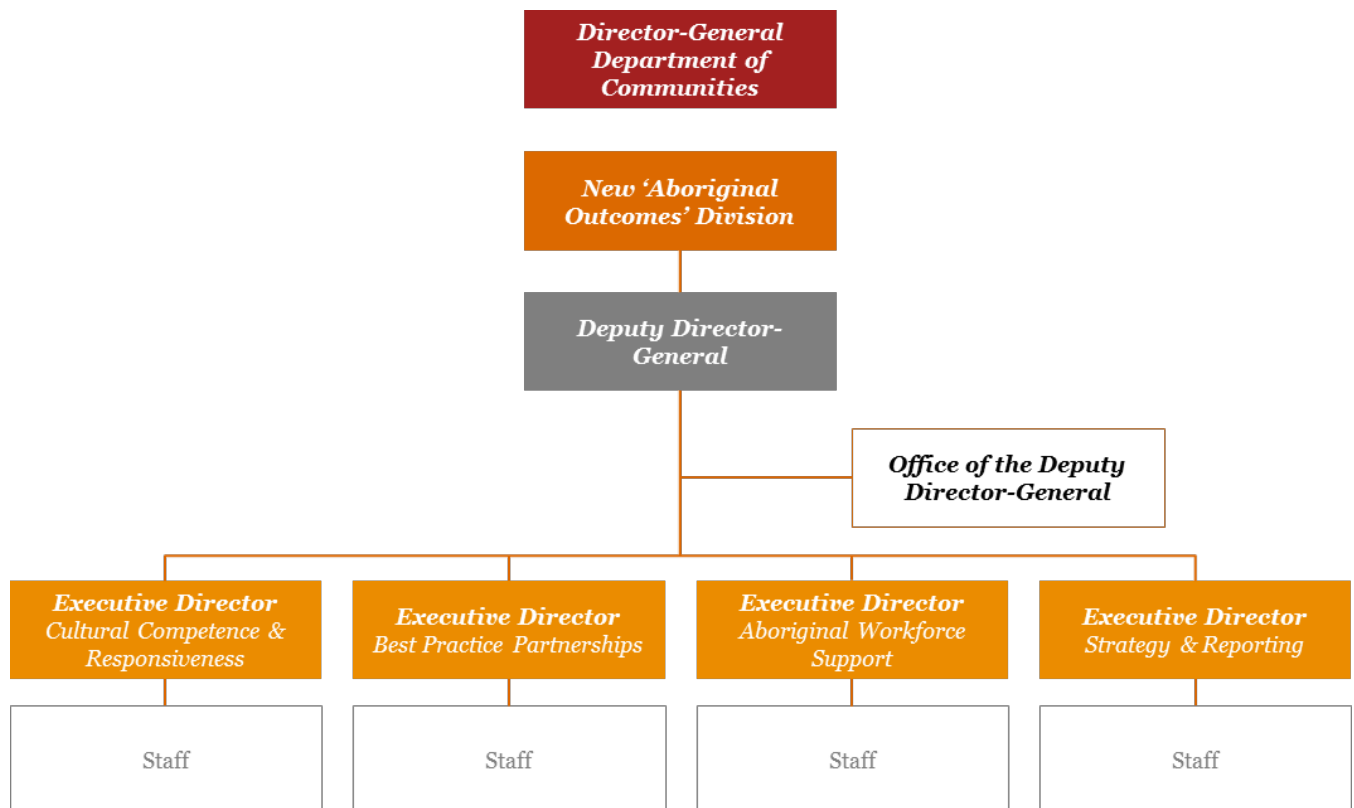
- A Family Care Strategy
- An Aboriginal Procurement Strategy
- An Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy (to respond to Family and Domestic Violence)
- In partnership with the People Division, develop and implement a Policy around S51 employment practice across the Department.

## 8.3 Proposed organisational structure

### 8.3.1 Proposed organisational structure

A proposed organisational structure has been developed in alignment with the proposed core functions for the new Division. Figure 13 illustrates the proposed organisational structure for the new Division.

**Figure 13 – Proposed Organisational Structure for the new Division**



### Deputy Director-General

The new Division will be led by a Deputy Director-General with the necessary qualifications, skills, experience and expertise to be successful in implementing the transformational change required. This position must be: 1. an identified role (S50(d)), and 2. respected by the Aboriginal community in WA (including possessing cultural authority). Additionally, the ideal candidate must have a solid understanding of urban, rural, regional and remote Aboriginal communities in WA and have a demonstrable network in relation to Aboriginal service delivery. Key attributes for this role include strategic management and leadership, organisational change management, driving performance and accountability and technical expertise or understanding in a key service in the Department's portfolio (e.g. child protection).

## Findings and recommendations

It is recommended that the leadership position for the new Division be for a Deputy Director-General for two key reasons. Firstly, by specifying the role as a Deputy Director-General role, the Department will serve to ensure the integrity of the Department from an Aboriginal perspective. The Department currently has an additional Deputy-Director General role to focus on the integrity of the Department following a recommendation from the Crime and Corruption Commission. The establishment of the role and appointment of a Deputy Director-General to the new Division would be viewed as a proactive step by the Department to underscore its commitment to the position as well as a focus on integrity through an Aboriginal lens. Secondly, by creating and appointing a Deputy-Director General role to lead the new Division, the Department will provide the authority to the role to drive the transformational change across the Department as well as hold the Department to account.

**Recommendation:** The Department should establish the Deputy Director-General position for the new Division as an identified position as per S50 (d) of the Government of Western Australia's *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

**Recommendation:** The Department should recruit and appoint a Deputy Director-General with the necessary qualifications, skills, experience and expertise to implement the transformational change required.

### *Executive Directors of the Core Functional Areas of the new Division*

Given the extent of organisational transformation required, it is recommended that four new Executive Director positions are established in the new Division to support the Assistant Director-General to deliver the work program and functions outlined in this report. It is recommended that these four roles are all S50(d) identified positions with similar attributes sought for the position of the Assistant Director-General, however, with a higher emphasis for the technical expertise appropriate for each of the functional areas. In ensuring these positions are filled by Aboriginal people, the Department will increase the degree of Aboriginal leadership within the organisation which is an essential factor to achieve the organisational transformation required.

**Recommendation:** The Department should appoint an Executive Director for each of the four functional areas outlined in this report. It is recommended that all four of these appointments be identified positions as per S50 (d) of the Government of Western Australia's *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

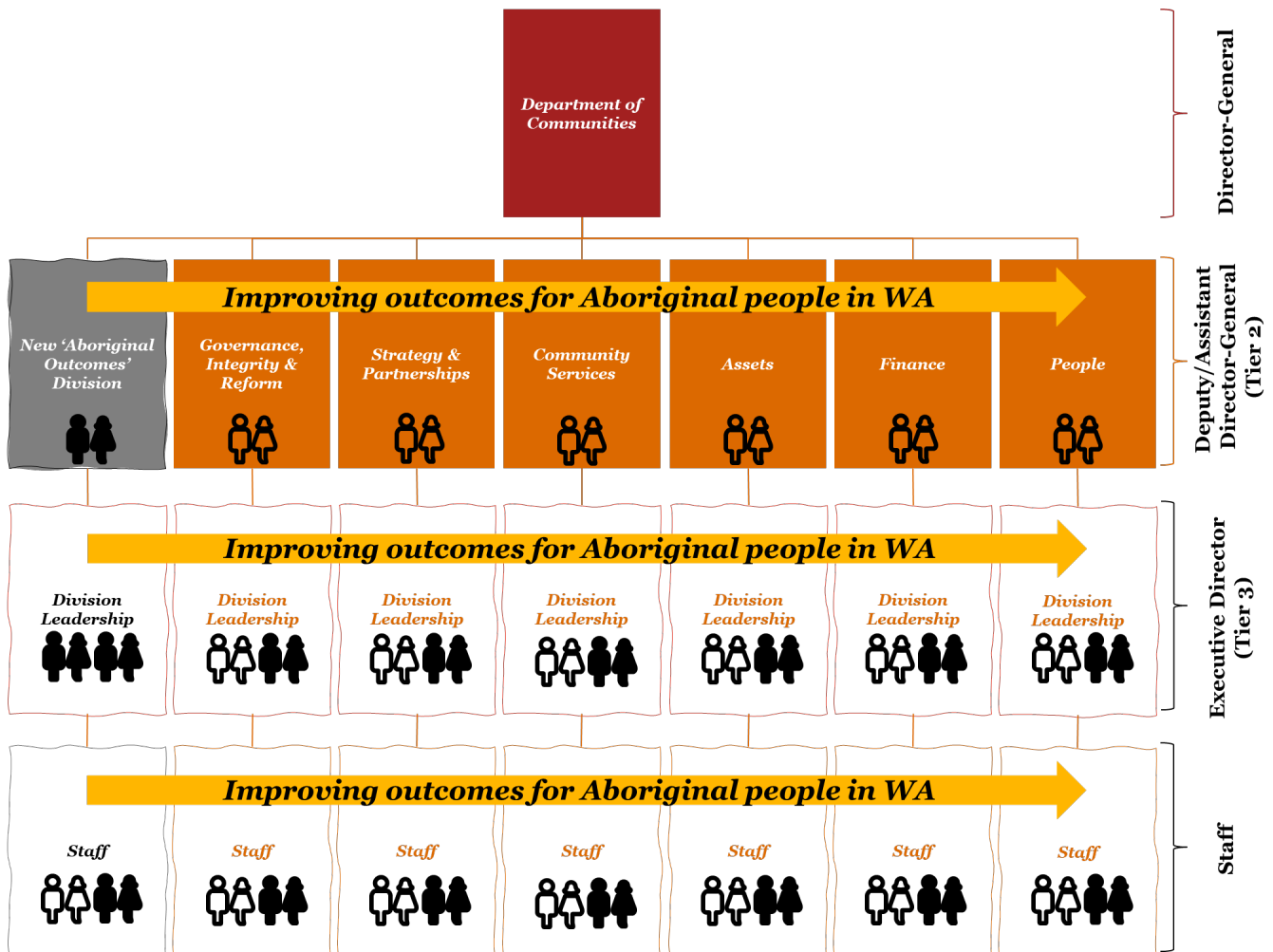
**Recommendation:** The Department should strengthen its regional workforce to decentralise decision making, policy development and resource allocation (funding and human resources) to better reflect the needs of Aboriginal communities.

**Recommendation:** The Department should review all positions to look at the WA *Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1984* and determine a Policy position around the wholesale use of S51 and S50d.

### 8.3.2 Interfaces with other Divisions

In order to enact the transformational change that is required within the Department, the new Division must effectively interface with the other Divisions within the Department – refer to Figure 14.

**Figure 14 – Interface between the new Division and other Divisions in the Department**



Please note – The figures in this image are not quantitative.

The new Division must interface with all of the other Divisions within the Department on a range of initiatives, aligned to the Division's purpose, vision and functions. Specific examples of how the Department will interact with other Divisions are outlined in Sections 8.2 & 8.4.

In order to facilitate the transformational change that is required, it is recommended that each Division within the Department embed, at a minimum, a senior Aboriginal person in a leadership role in each Division to support the transformational change within each Division and ensure that Aboriginal perspectives are incorporated into the functions of these Divisions. These Senior Aboriginal leadership roles will contribute to the senior leadership of the Department.

## 8.4 Proposed accountabilities for the new Division

The RASCI (Responsible Account Support Consulted Informed) framework provides a tool to:

1. Allocate a program of works into pieces.
2. Identify the key stakeholders responsible for, or impacted by, the delivery of the program of works.
3. Assign clear roles and responsibilities to project stakeholders.

This framework was adopted because the Department has indicated that it has been used previously. The RASCI (Responsible, Account, Support, Consulted, Informed) framework provides a useful tool to document clear responsibilities and provide a clear definition of an organisation's, or in this case a Division's, hierarchy – refer to Figure 15.<sup>57</sup> The key elements of the RASCI framework are summarised below:

- **Responsible** – Stakeholders or resources that are responsible for the delivery of the project or program of works (i.e. do the work).
- **Accountable** – Stakeholders or resources that have ultimate accountability and are answerable for the completion of the project or program of works.
- **Support** – Stakeholders or resources that contribute to completing the project or program of works.
- **Consulted** – Stakeholders or resources that that are consulted to provide input and valuable advice for the project or program of works.
- **Informed** – Stakeholders or resources that must be kept informed of progress over the course of project or program delivery.


Figure 15 – The RASCI Framework



The RASCI framework has been used as a tool to clearly describe roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in alignment with the proposed functions of the new division – refer to Table 8.

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.goodcore.co.uk/blog/a-guide-to-the-raci-ras-ci-model/>.





## Findings and recommendations

**Recommendation:** The new Division should use the RASCI framework provided to establish roles and responsibilities once established. The process of completing the RASCI process will increase engagement of new staff to achieve the work responsibilities outlined.

**Recommendation:** The new Division should further refine and add to the key functions and roles that are provided in the RASCI Framework template outlined in this Report.

**Recommendation:** The new Division should action all of the key functions and roles that are provided in the RASCI Framework template outlined in this Report.

**Table 8 – RASCI Framework for the new Division**

Key Function or Role	Director-General	Deputy Director-General (New Division)	Director, Cultural Competence & Responsiveness	Director, Best Practice Partnerships	Director, Aboriginal Workforce Support	Director, Strategy & Reporting	Project Officer	Project Support Staff
<p><b>Cultural Competence &amp; Responsiveness</b></p> <p>Develop a strategy and implementation plan to improve the cultural competence and responsiveness of the Department which takes into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the Department’s current capabilities;</li> <li>– existing programs and initiatives;</li> <li>– the learning outcomes required across cohorts of Departmental staff; and</li> <li>– previous reviews that consider the criticality of cultural competence and capability to advance Aboriginal outcomes, including identification of specific roles that are of critical importance.</li> </ul>								
<p>Report on progress on the strategy and implementation plan focussed on improving the cultural competence and responsiveness of the Department.</p>								
<p>Develop and deliver appropriate training to improve the cultural competence and responsiveness of the Department.</p>								
<p>Develop a framework to assess progress towards improving the cultural competence and responsiveness of the Department. This reporting framework should seek to gain input from non-Aboriginal staff, Aboriginal people and communities and Aboriginal staff within the Department.</p>								

Findings and recommendations

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key Function or Role</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Director-General</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Deputy Director-General (New Division)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Director, Cultural Competence &amp; Responsiveness</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Director, Best Practice Partnerships</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Director, Aboriginal Workforce Support</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Director, Strategy &amp; Reporting</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Project Officer</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Project Support Staff</p>
<p>Monitor and evaluate on the Department’s progress to improve cultural competence and responsiveness using the framework developed (above).</p>								
<p>Consider and implement the recommendations of the Westerman review.</p>								
<p>Report on progress in implementation of the recommendations of the Westerman review.</p>								
<p>Develop a Cultural Capability Framework for the Department that aims to embed culturally safe practices to enable staff to engage in a culturally appropriate manner. This Cultural Capability Framework should incorporate an Engagement Framework for the Department that places Aboriginal people at its core.</p>								
<p><b>Best Practice Partnerships</b></p>								
<p>Provide leadership, best practice, research and support to the Department to improve Aboriginal outcomes across portfolio functions.</p>								
<p>Establish and maintain relationships with key statutory agencies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Office of the Ombudsman for Western Australia (i.e. investigable child deaths and domestic family violence fatalities);</li> <li>- the proposed office for advocacy and accountability in Aboriginal Affairs;</li> <li>- the Commissioner for Children and Young People;</li> </ul>								

Findings and recommendations

Key Function or Role	Director-General	Deputy Director-General (New Division)	Director, Cultural Competence & Responsiveness	Director, Best Practice Partnerships	Director, Aboriginal Workforce Support	Director, Strategy & Reporting	Project Officer	Project Support Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services; and</li> <li>- the Auditor-General.</li> </ul>								
<p>Work collaboratively with the Strategy &amp; Partnership Division to provide an Aboriginal lens in response to Royal Commissions.</p>								
<p>Provide culturally led insights and best practice advice and guidance to inform the development of the Aboriginal Family-Led Decision Making reform agenda in partnership with the Strategy &amp; Partnerships Division.</p>								
<p><b>Aboriginal Workforce Support</b></p>								
<p>Co-develop and design an Aboriginal Workforce Strategy for the Department.</p>								
<p>Embed a continuous improvement approach to implement best practice in relation to supporting an Aboriginal workforce.</p>								
<p>Implement core elements of the Aboriginal Workforce Strategy in partnership with the People Division such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reviewing job design to promote employment opportunities for Aboriginal people;</li> <li>- identifying employment pathways for the recruitment of Aboriginal staff;</li> <li>- workforce planning to identify forecasted roles, budgets and employment targets to implement appropriate strategies and partnerships etc.</li> </ul>								

Findings and recommendations

Key Function or Role	Director-General	Deputy Director-General (New Division)	Director, Cultural Competence & Responsiveness	Director, Best Practice Partnerships	Director, Aboriginal Workforce Support	Director, Strategy & Reporting	Project Officer	Project Support Staff
Report on progress in implementing the Aboriginal Workforce Strategy.								
Establishing mechanisms to gauge the engagement of the Aboriginal workforce (e.g. surveys etc.).								
Establishing initiatives such as a formal mentoring program and peer support networks including events for Aboriginal staff.								
<b>Strategy &amp; Reporting</b>								
Develop a strategic plan that outlines the Department's approach towards building the Aboriginal Community-Controlled sector.								
Report on progress on the implementation of the strategic plan to build the Aboriginal Community-Controlled sector.								
Deliver programs and initiatives to promote ACCO-led innovation in service delivery.								
Develop a long-term strategic plan for transforming service delivery.								
Report on progress on the strategic plan for transforming service delivery.								
Establish and build relationships and long-term strategic partnerships with key external partners/bodies to enable the whole service delivery system.								



Findings and recommendations

Key Function or Role	Director-General	Deputy Director-General (New Division)	Director, Cultural Competence & Responsiveness	Director, Best Practice Partnerships	Director, Aboriginal Workforce Support	Director, Strategy & Reporting	Project Officer	Project Support Staff
Conduct a review and assessment of current procurement strategies and practices to identify opportunities to improve the way the Department engages with the ACCO sector.								
Develop appropriate practices and frameworks for the capture, management and sharing of data and information to enable Aboriginal communities to make informed decisions								
Develop a strategic plan to achieve the socio-economic outcomes specified in the National Agreement that the Department leads, co-leads or supports.								
Develop an accountability framework to provide assurance that Department-wide commitments to Aboriginal people are delivered.								
Monitor the progress of each Division against the strategic plan to achieve the socio-economic outcomes specified in the National Agreement that the Department leads, co-leads or supports.								
Coordinate the Department's response to the National Agreement.								
Develop and coordinate the Department's Reconciliation Action Plan and report to the CLT and Reconciliation Australia as appropriate.								

## 8.5 A roadmap for implementation

### *A scaffolding approach for implementation*

The new Division, and more broadly the Department, will have to be able to concurrently continue to deliver its services, programs and initiatives while implementing the transformational changes proposed through establishing a new Division. In order to achieve this, a scaffolding approach is recommended to provide the capacity to support and assist the establishment of this new Division.

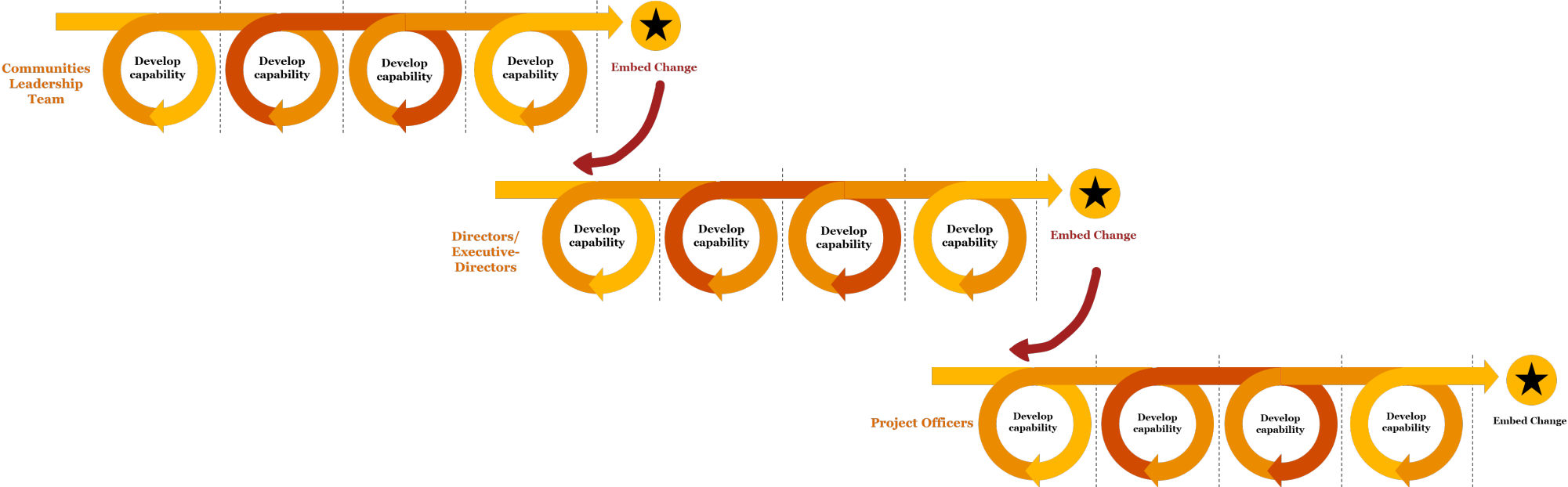
This scaffolding approach is necessary to establish the new Division, build capability, transfer skills and, ultimately, embed new ways of working. Furthermore, this scaffolding approach recognises the magnitude of the transformation that is required and the need for a coordinated approach to ensure that the implementation achieves the objectives that are being sought.


This scaffolding approach will require support from a variety of different sources including:

- other Divisions within the Department – Coordinating the Department’s programs, services and initiatives
- the Public Sector Commission – Workforce-related support
- Treasury – Funding support
- Aboriginal Engagement Directorate, DPC – Whole-of-government coordination support
- An Implementation Partner(s) to provide support and independent expertise for the transformation.

Acknowledging the importance of leadership in driving the transformation, this scaffolding approach should commence with the CLT. As the CLT builds its capabilities, this scaffolding approach should work its way to the Director & Executive-Director levels for each Division within the Department. This approach to capability development in the Department is summarised in Figure 16.

Figure 16 – Approach to Building Capability in the Department and Embedding New Ways of Working





The first stage of the scaffolding approach should include a formal, culturally informed leadership development process to build the capability of the Department's leadership to drive the behavioural and cultural shift needed. These workshops should seek to embed a design-based approach to problem solving and should incorporate Aboriginal perspectives. This approach is to challenge members of the CLT to recognise, and shift, their mindsets as necessary to implement the transformational change that is required of the Department. This approach would challenge current norms and assumptions and adopt a team-based approach to problem solving. This will serve as an important process to challenge and break down the conventional ways of doing things.

**Recommendation:** The Department should implement a scaffolding approach to implement the transformational change that is required to improve outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.

**Recommendation:** The Department should adopt a top-down approach to building capability and driving the transformation starting with the Communities Leadership Team.

**Recommendation:** The Department should initiate the scaffolding approach with a formal, culturally informed leadership development process to build the capability of the Department's leadership to drive the behavioural and cultural shift needed. The Department should engage an Implementation Partner to deliver this series of workshops.

### *Aboriginal Leadership Advisor for the Director-General*

In parallel to building the capability of the CLT, the Department should engage a specialist role that provides Leadership advice to complement the existing specialist Leadership Advisor support to the Director-General. This specialist role would provide the Director-General with an Aboriginal perspective that would provide two-way integrated advice, support and guidance on the establishment of the new Division.

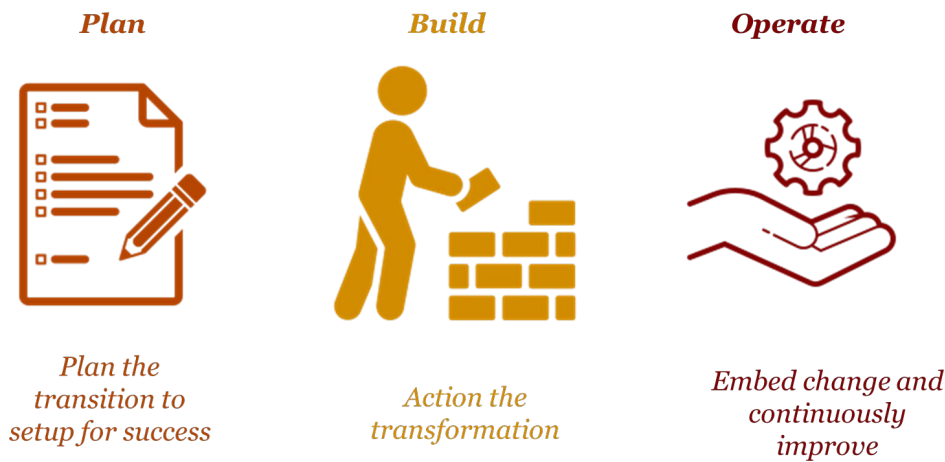
**Recommendation:** That the Department engage a specialist Aboriginal Leadership Advisor to work alongside the Director General's existing Leadership Advisor to ensure two-way integrated leadership advice.

## **8.6 A roadmap to implementation**

A high-level roadmap for establishing the new Division has been prepared to assist the Department in considering how best to approach the implementation process. The proposed roadmap is comprised of three phases (refer to Figure 17):

- **Plan** – *Plan the transition to setup for success*
- **Build** – *Action the transformation*
- **Operate** – *Embed change and continuously improve*

**Figure 17 – Phases of the roadmap for implementation**



A high-level outline of some of the key steps in implementing and establishing the new Division is provided below. It is important to note that the roadmap to implementation is not a comprehensive implementation strategy. It is recommended that the Department develops a comprehensive implementation strategy. The development of this detailed comprehensive strategy should be in partnership with an external implementation partner.

**Recommendation:** The Department adopt the Roadmap to Implementation framework to establish the new Division and initiate the process of organisational transformation.

### ***Plan – Plan for the transition to setup for success***

The steps that are outlined in the Plan phase set the implementation and transition up for success. Some of the high-level steps that are required in the Plan phase include:

- ***Recruit suitable candidates for key leadership positions*** – Recruit suitable candidates for the key leadership positions (i.e. Deputy Director-General and Executive Director roles) for the new Division.
- ***Develop a Business Case for the transformation (if required)*** – If required, the Department should develop a Business Case to secure the necessary funding and resources for the implementation and establishment of the new Division.
- ***Establish an Implementation Team*** – Establish a team that will be responsible for the establishment of the new Division. This implementation team should be comprised of the newly appointed leadership of the new Division as appropriate support from corporate functions (e.g. Human Relations, Finance etc.) as required.
- ***Establish an Implementation Oversight Committee*** – Establish an Implementation Oversight Committee to ensure accountability for the implementation.
- ***Develop a detailed Implementation Plan*** – Develop a detailed Implementation Plan for the establishment of the new Division. This implementation plan should incorporate the scaffolding approach described earlier.
- ***Develop a detailed Risk Management Plan*** – Develop a detailed Risk Management Plan for the establishment of the new Division.
- ***Develop a detailed Communications Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the transition*** – Develop a detailed Communications Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the establishment of



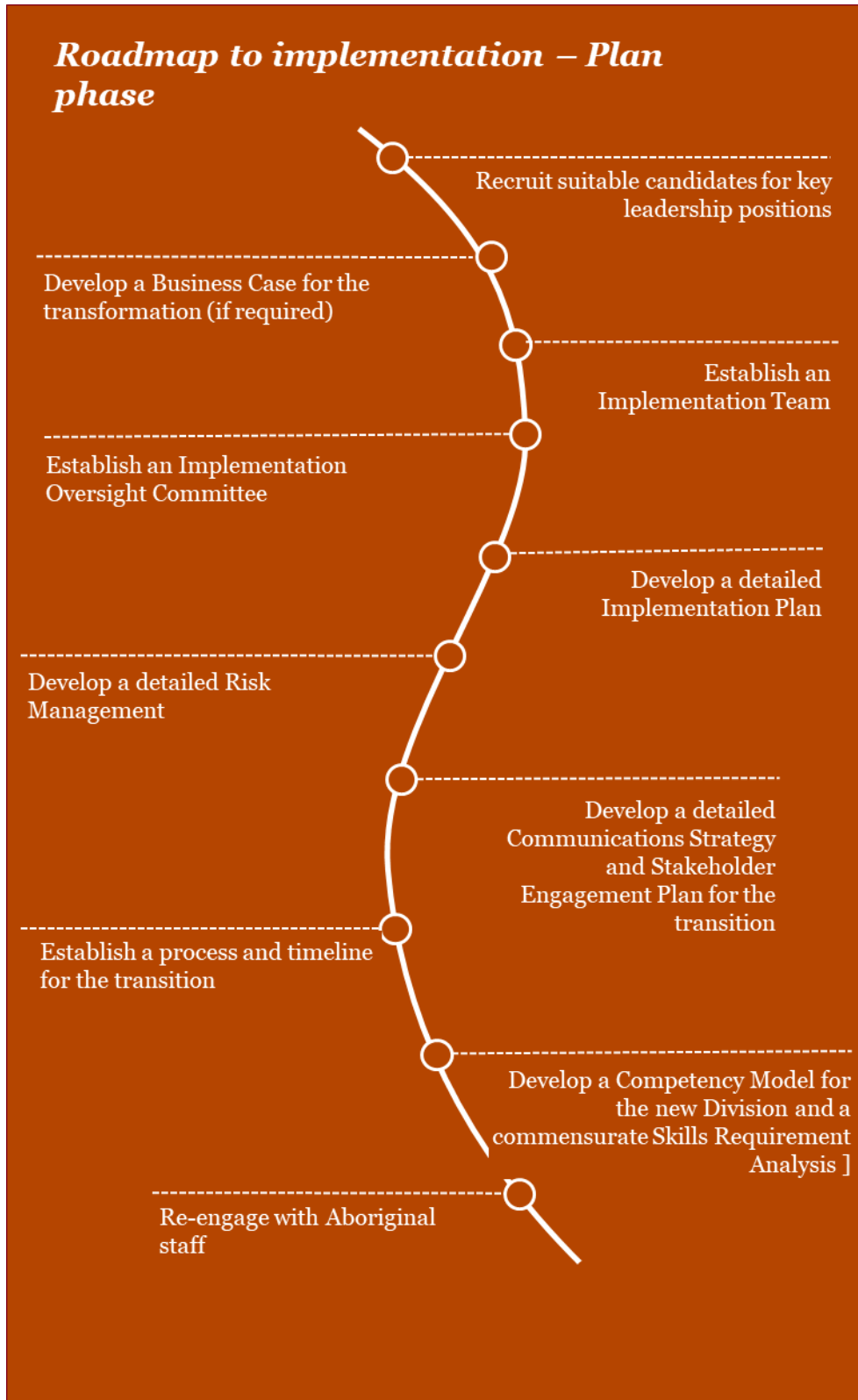
## Findings and recommendations

the new Division. The Communications Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan should incorporate the Department's approach to engage and communicate these changes to the Aboriginal community (e.g. key community leaders etc.).

- *Establish a process and timeline for the transition* – A process and timeline for the transition is necessary to ensure that the implementation proceeds in a timely manner.
- *Develop a Competency Model for the new Division and a commensurate Skills Requirement Analysis* – Develop a Competency Model for the new Division and a commensurate Skills Requirement Analysis in alignment with the core functions of the new Division.
- *Re-engage with Aboriginal staff* – Aboriginal staff must be re-engaged in this phase and provided a transparent path forward for the proposed recommendations. In this process of re-engaging with Aboriginal staff, it is critical that opportunities are provided to Aboriginal staff to be heard.

A diagrammatic representation of the 'Plan' phase is provided at Figure 18. Please note, this is a diagrammatic representation and many of the actions may need to be concurrent and not necessarily sequential.

Figure 18 – Roadmap to implementation – The Plan Phase



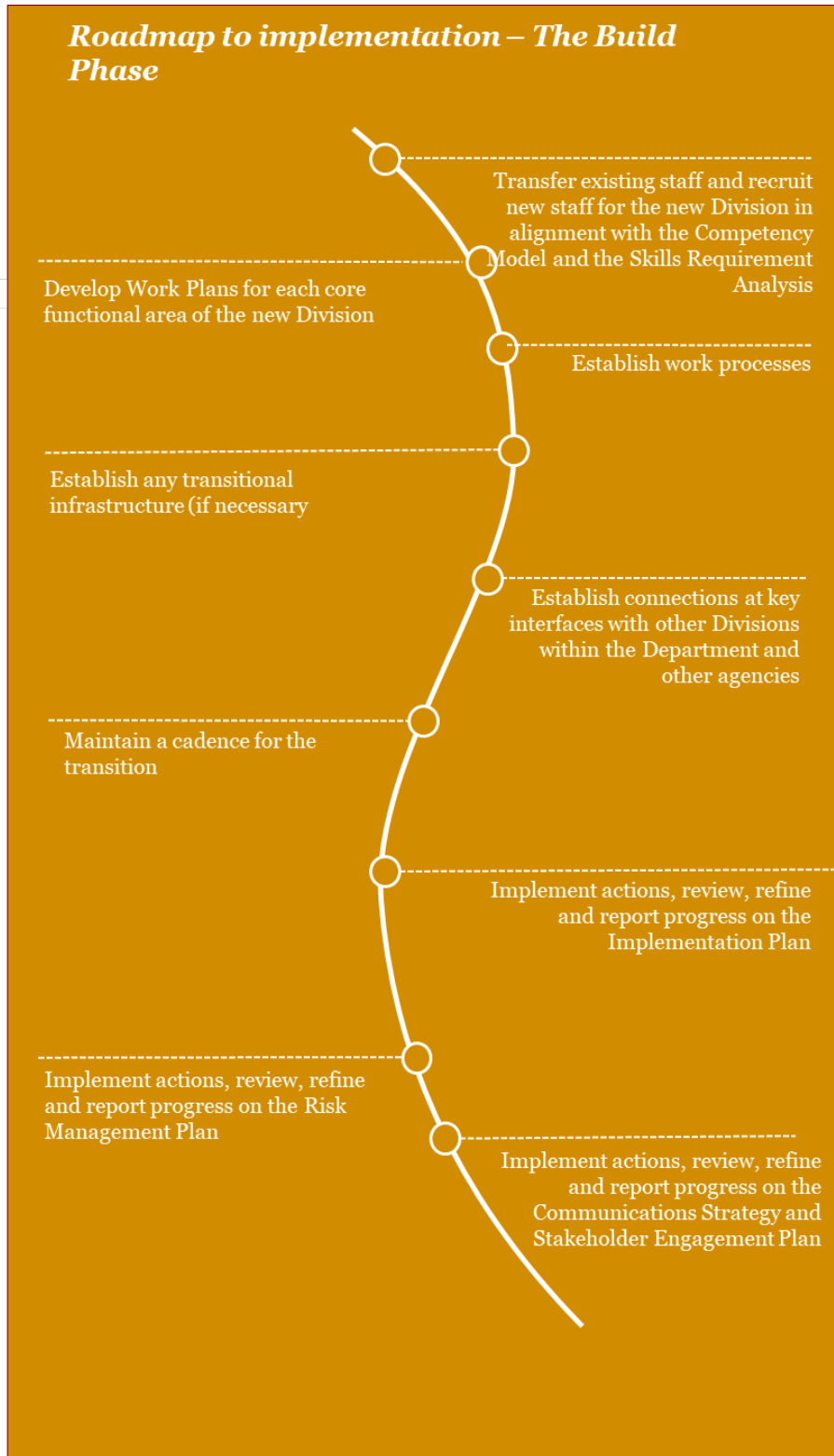
## **Build – Establish the new Division**

The steps that are outlined in the 'Build' phase of the implementation is to action the implementation, transition and establishment of the new Division. This phase seeks to execute the plans and approach as developed in the previous phase of the roadmap to implementation. Some of the high-level steps that are required in the 'Build' phase include:

- *Transfer existing staff and recruit new staff for the new Division in alignment with the Competency Model and the Skills Requirement Analysis* – Using the Competency Model and the Skills Requirement Analysis (developed in the Plan phase), an appropriate staffing strategy will be developed. This strategy will consider the requisite skills required for each role and consider the opportunity to transfer existing staff and recruit new staff.
- *Develop Work Plans for each core functional area of the new Division* – Detailed Work Plans will be developed for each core functional area of the new Division. These Work Plans must appropriately prioritise the delivery of key work packages accordingly.
- *Establish work processes* – New work processes (e.g. meetings, reporting etc.) should be established to enable the new Division to functionally operate as a coordinated unit.
- *Establish any transitional infrastructure (if necessary)* – If required, any transitional infrastructure that may be required for the new Division must be established.
- *Establish connections at key interfaces with other Divisions within the Department and other agencies* – The leadership of the new Division must establish connections at key interfaces with other Divisions within the Department as well as other agencies across broader Government (e.g. the Aboriginal Engagement Directorate, DPC).
- *Maintain a cadence for the transition* – A cadence must be maintained to ensure successful implementation to establish the new Division.
- *Implement actions, review, refine and report progress on the Implementation Plan* – The actions of the Implementation Plan must be actioned, reviewed and refined. Progress on execution of the Implementation Plan should be regularly reported.
- *Implement actions, review, refine and report progress on the Risk Management Plan* – The actions of the Risk Management Plan must be actioned, reviewed and refined. Any implementation risks should be reported accordingly.
- *Implement actions, review, refine and report progress on the Communications Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan* – The actions of the Communications Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan must be actioned, reviewed and refined. Progress on execution of the Communications Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan should be regularly reported.

A diagrammatic representation of the 'Build' phase is provided at Figure 19. Please note, this is a diagrammatic representation and many of the actions may need to be concurrent and not necessarily sequential.

**Figure 19 – Roadmap to implementation – The Build Phase**



## Operate

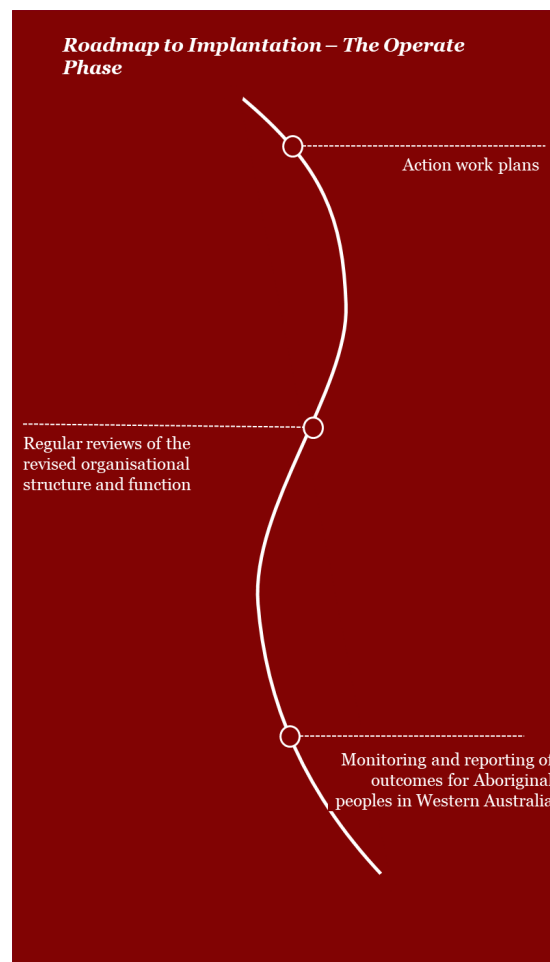
The steps that are outlined in the 'Operate' phase of the implementation represent the completion of the implementation process. In this stage, the new Division will be operational, change will be embedded in the Department and a culture of continuous improvement will be established.

Some of the high-level steps that are required in the 'Operate' phase include:

- *Action work plans* – Each established functional area of the new Division will action the key work packages as outlined in the Work Plans (developed in the Establish phase).
- *Regular reviews of the revised organisational structure and function* – The organisational structure and functions of the new Division should be independently reviewed to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose. Based on the findings of this independent review, improvements and adjustments to the structure and function of the new Division should be actioned.
- *Monitoring and reporting of outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia* – The new Division must regularly monitor and report outcomes for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. Based on this data, the Division should make recommendations to the Department to improve responsiveness.

A diagrammatic representation of the 'Operate' phase is provided at Figure 20. Please note, this is a diagrammatic representation and many of the actions may need to be concurrent and not necessarily sequential.

**Figure 20 – Roadmap to implementation – The Operate Phase**







# *Appendices*

Appendix A	Stakeholders Consulted	108
Appendix B	Summary of national jurisdictional scan	110

# Appendix A Stakeholders Consulted

Internal Stakeholders		
Stakeholder	Role	Department/Division
[Redacted]	Leadership Advisor	Office of the Director General
[Redacted]	Director General	Office of the Director General
[Redacted]	Deputy Director General	Governance (Integrity & Reform)
[Redacted]	As above	(Took up role 01/02/2021)
[Redacted]	Deputy Director General	Chief People Officer
[Redacted]	Deputy Director General	Chief Finance Officer
[Redacted]	Deputy Director General	Strategy & Partnerships
[Redacted]	Deputy Director General	Community Services
[Redacted]	Assistant Director General	Strategy & Transformation
[Redacted]	Assistant Director General	Assets
[Redacted]	Executive Director	Strategy & Transformation
[Redacted]	Executive Director	Strategy & Transformation
[Redacted]	Project Manager	Service & Operational Improvement
Regional Executive Directors Group Interview (Total 7 attendees)	Community Services Division	Department of Communities;
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
Strategy & Transformation Focus Group (Aboriginal staff) (10 attendees)	Strategy & Transformation	Department of Communities
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
Strategy & Transformation Focus Group (all staff) (13 attendees)	Strategy & Transformation	Department of Communities
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		
- [Redacted]		

Stakeholders Consulted

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

Regional Directors Group Interview (2 attendees)      Community Services Division      Department of Communities

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

External Stakeholders		
Stakeholder	Role	Organisation/Department
[Redacted]	Director	Department of Premier & Cabinet – Aboriginal Engagement
[Redacted]	Assistant Director	Department of Premier & Cabinet – Aboriginal Engagement
[Redacted]	Assistant Director	Department of Premier & Cabinet – Aboriginal Engagement
[Redacted]	Director General	Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage
[Redacted]		Noongar Family Safety and Wellbeing Council
[Redacted]	Co-lead	Priority Service Review
[Redacted]	Owner*	Indigenous Psychological Services (*Cultural Audit of Fostering and Adoption Manual’ and created ‘Child Protection Cultural Competency Assessment’)
[Redacted]	Partner	Nous Group
[Redacted]	Partner	Nous Group
[Redacted]	Former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Social Security	
[Redacted]	Policy Advisor to Pat Turner AM (Convenor, Coalition of Peaks)	
[Redacted]		Cultural Council
[Redacted]	Ombudsman WA	Ombudsman’s Office
[Redacted]	Ombudsman WA	Ombudsman’s Office

## Appendix B Summary of national jurisdictional scan

State	Agency Name	Functions	Aboriginal Division & Tier	Aboriginal Peak	RAP/Specific Strategy
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	ACT Community Services Directorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multicultural affairs</li> <li>• Community services</li> <li>• Older people</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Public and community housing services and policy</li> <li>• Community recovery</li> <li>• Children, youth and family support services and policy</li> <li>• Support for families concerned about their child's development</li> <li>• Child and family support</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and</li> <li>• ACT Office for Disability.</li> </ul>	Yes; Tier 3 Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs <i>Executive Branch Manager</i>	No	A whole of ACT RAP that has Secretariat support through the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
<b>New South Wales</b>	Department of Communities and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery</li> <li>• Corrective Services</li> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Youth Justice</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Law reform and legal services</li> </ul>	There is not a separate division, however one of the priority areas, or clusters is Aboriginal people. It is unclear how the Department is structured in order to meet this priority need.	Yes - AbSec	No RAP
<b>Northern Territory</b>	Territory Families, Housing and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts</li> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Disability Services</li> </ul>	Unable to access organisational chart	No	No RAP



Summary of national jurisdictional scan

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic and Sexual Violence Reduction</li> <li>• Family and Financial Support</li> <li>• Family Support</li> <li>• Gender Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Emergency Management</li> <li>• Heritage</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> <li>• Indigenous Essential Services</li> <li>• Interpreting Services</li> <li>• Libraries and Archives</li> <li>• Multicultural Affairs</li> <li>• Out of Home Care</li> <li>• Seniors and Carers</li> <li>• Sport and Active Recreation</li> <li>• Urban Housing</li> <li>• Remote Housing</li> <li>• Youth Justice</li> <li>• Youth Affairs</li> <li>• Women's Safe Houses</li> </ul>			
<b>Queensland</b>	Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability</li> </ul>	No		Yes – Queensland Government RAP
	Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection</li> </ul>	Yes; Tier 3 Indigenous Strategy & Partnerships <i>Executive Director</i>	Yes - QATSCIPP	Yes – Queensland Government RAP
	Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and Homelessness</li> <li>• Community Support</li> <li>• Services for Government</li> <li>• Digital</li> <li>• Arts</li> </ul>	Yes; Tier 3 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing <i>Executive Director</i>	No	



Summary of national jurisdictional scan

<b>South Australia</b>	Department for Child Protection		Yes – Tier 3 Aboriginal Practice <i>Director</i>	No	RAP  <b>Departmental Strategies:</b> Aboriginal Action Plan
	SA Housing Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and Homelessness</li> </ul>	No	No	No RAP  <b>Departmental Strategies:</b> Aboriginal Housing Strategy (not yet complete)
	Department of Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early intervention to support health</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Domestic Violence</li> <li>• Safety and Wellbeing of Children</li> <li>• Screening Services</li> <li>• Youth Justice</li> </ul>	Yes – Tier 2 Aboriginal Practice & Partnerships <i>Director</i>	No	RAP  <b>Departmental Strategies:</b>
<b>Tasmania</b>	Department of Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, Youth and Families</li> <li>• Communities, Sport and Recreation</li> <li>• Housing, Disability and Community Services</li> </ul>	Yes; Tier 4 Office of Aboriginal Affairs <i>Manager</i>	No	No RAP
<b>Victoria</b>	The Department of Health and Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Public Health</li> <li>• Alcohol and Drugs</li> <li>• Health and Wellbeing</li> <li>• Ambulance Services</li> <li>• Housing and Homelessness</li> <li>• Children and Families</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> </ul>	Yes; Tier 3 <i>Chief Aboriginal Health Advisor</i>	No - although VACCA is often seen as this (although ACCO service provider)	No RAP
<b>Western Australia</b>	Department of Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Housing</li> </ul>	Yes; Tier 2 Strategy & Transformation (to become the new Division) <i>Assistant Director General</i>	No	No RAP  <b>Departmental Strategies:</b> - Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Strategy to 2022



Summary of national jurisdictional scan

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Aboriginal Enterprise and Employment Tendering Preference Policy</li><li>- Aboriginal Employment Targets in Construction and Civil Works Contracts (and associated fact sheets and plans/templates)</li><li>- Aboriginal Family Safety Strategy (10-year FDV Action plan)</li></ul>
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