DEFENCE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
2015-2018
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY
Defence respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land—both past and present. Defence also acknowledges the services of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have contributed to defending Australia and its national interests.

IMAGE WARNING
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this document may contain images or content referring to deceased persons. It may also contain words or descriptions that are culturally sensitive. The term Indigenous is occasionally used throughout this document to refer to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

ABOUT THE ARTWORK
The artwork, by Balarinji, features curved circles that reflect a camping place, where people come together after long and arduous journeys across country. Here, stories are shared as season follows season and knowledge is passed down from generation to generation.

The streak dots represent Defence moving in a positive, forward trajectory, embracing reconciliation. The symbols express Australian pride and a deep sense of country, and illustrate Defence’s commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and recognition.
The Defence leadership is committed to an inclusive workplace. Diversity is a key tenant to the success of Pathway to Change; Evolving Defence Culture, and we know that organisations with high levels of diversity and inclusion are more effective. The opportunities to enhance capability through a diverse workforce are particularly important now, given the release of the First Principles Review.

Defence has made strong progress in recognising Indigenous culture and providing employment opportunities; however, there is still more work to do. To build on this progress and continue our reconciliation journey, Defence, in partnership with Reconciliation Australia, has developed its third Reconciliation Action Plan.

Defence Reconciliation Action Plan (DRAP) 2015-2018 reflects our enduring commitment and recognition of reconciliation, as a fundamental aspect of Pathway to Change and the Defence Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2012-2017. It provides the broader plan for progressing Indigenous Affairs reform across Defence over the next three years. In this context the plan has been developed around the strategic intent of enhancing capability by providing career or business opportunities, and supporting the Australian community.

Contributing to the national efforts to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage will require a coordinated and sustained approach at every level of Defence. We have a key interest and leadership role in progressing initiatives to increase Indigenous recruitment, retention and procurement opportunities, as well as participation in key events of significance to Indigenous Australians. The Australian Government announced in early 2015 new reforms targeting Indigenous employment and procurement. DRAP 2015-2018 importantly includes many key actions dedicated to these reforms, which include:

- an increase to Indigenous employment across all Government agencies and departments, lifting the Indigenous workforce target to three per cent by 2018; and
- the introduction of a new target to have three per cent of the Government’s procurement contracts with Indigenous suppliers by 2020.

To complement this, DRAP 2015-2018 captures how Defence will deepen its awareness, understanding and appreciation of Indigenous cultural issues across the organisations and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contributions in our daily business and military traditions. We encourage everyone in Defence to learn more about the culture and values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As a more culturally aware organisation, we will enhance our ability to draw on the different strengths and attributes of our workforce to achieve our goals.

We believe in action and documents like this are important to drive a more concerted effort in the right direction. Every person in Defence should have an equal opportunity to contribute to the organisation. Defence needs to recognise individual differences, whatever they may be, and value these different individual qualities that can enhance productivity and our capability. We encourage everyone to embrace the spirit of the DRAP and implement actions to make the Defence organisation a true reflection of the diverse nation we are proud to defend.
The Defence Reconciliation Action Plan (DRAP) 2015-2018 outlines Defence’s desired achievements and measurable actions against the three key reconciliation elements of ‘respect’, ‘relationships’ and ‘opportunities’. DRAP 2015-2018 provides an insight into the disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today and the role Defence plays in contributing to the national efforts to close the gap through offering employment, professional development and contracting opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia.

Defence has committed to the following key focus areas against the Reconciliation Australia themes of relationships, respect and opportunities:

- **Relationships** – building respectful relationships with Indigenous people, community and organisations;
- **Respect** – continuing to build cultural competency across Defence and raising awareness and education of Defence’s Indigenous plans, programs, policies and activities; and
- **Opportunities** – earlier engagement with youth in relation to future employment; professional development for Indigenous staff and increasing awareness of procurement policy in respect of Indigenous suppliers.

The key areas where Defence can contribute to the national efforts in closing the gap of Indigenous disadvantage are through:

- **Offering employment opportunities** to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia;
- **Providing professional and career development opportunities** for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce; and
- **Providing Indigenous businesses with contracting opportunities**.

The release of the Government’s 2015 Closing the Gap Report identified some disappointing progress against the majority of established targets across Australia. In response to this, as a key government contributor and major employer, Defence needs to ensure we continue to focus our efforts in meeting the key objectives of this plan.

### SEPARATION RATES AT 1 JULY 2015:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Defence 12 Month Rolling Separation Rate – Total (All Personnel)</th>
<th>Defence 12 Month Rolling Separation Rate – Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Personnel Only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADF</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>APS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Defence has made significant progress in recent years in our commitment to Indigenous affairs and the overarching national commitment to close the gap. However, we still have a long way to go in achieving reconciliation and meeting the Government’s employment and procurement targets designed to contribute to reconciliation.

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MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Jawun Program – over 50 secondees since 2012, the program now open to ADF members, Defence leading the way
- As at 2014 approximately 30 per cent of participants transitioned from ADF pre-recruitment programs into Defence
- Indigenous procurement and supplier engagement – awarded major contract (construction) - $5 million in 2013
- Affirmative Measures Recruitment – 30 APS positions advertised in 2014 and 135 APS positions being advertised in 2015
- Launch of Worimi Hornet – 2015, Aboriginal artwork first ever on an F/A-18A jet
- Navy Indigenous Dance Group – Bungaree, performed at International Fleet Review in 2014
- Army appointed Uncle Roy Mundine OAM as its Army Elder in 2015
- Jawun Program – over 50 secondees since 2012, the program now open to ADF members, Defence leading the way
- More APS trainees than ever before – increase on previous years (Eight trainees just two years ago, and now up to 100 in 2015, plus we have partnered with Department of Human Services and Australian Taxation Office programs)

Aircraft image: Photography by Sharon Blance & Brence Coghill / Image Workshop
Defence Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018

**WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?**

Reconciliation Australia defines “reconciliation” as building better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the benefit of all Australians.

To create positive change we need more people talking about the issues and coming up with innovative ideas and actions that make a difference. Everyone in Defence should consider what it means for them personally as well as what it means for the work that they do.

Workforce diversity is a core capability issue. Defence must have a workforce that is representative of Australian society.

Capability through diversity is three pronged: attracting enough people to generate the necessary workforce for the future; accessing a large enough cross-section of the population to access all available skills; and generating diversity of thought in decision-making and problem-solving. Defence’s professionalism and war-fighting strength is underpinned by its ability to problem-solve, innovate and adapt quickly. Through diversity Defence gains the varied perspectives needed to tackle complex problems and come up with innovative solutions. We achieve outcomes by drawing on the different strengths, attributes and characteristics of the many individuals who make up our teams.

Through our efforts to encourage and foster Indigenous participation and potential within Defence we will position ourselves as an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians.

Reconciliation within Defence is everyone’s business. If we are to improve relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians we need more people talking about the issues and coming up with innovative ways to create positive change. Understanding cultural differences allows each individual to adjust their behaviour and eliminate prejudice, misunderstanding and racism at personal, professional and organisational levels.

Our *Pathway to Change (Pathway)* strategy builds on Defence’s collective strengths while recognising that there are cultural changes between the lens through which we need to think about our work and deliver Defence Reconciliation Action Plan outcomes and reconciliation.

CEO STATEMENT, RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA


In adopting a Stretch RAP, the Department of Defence has joined a select group of organisations that have stepped up to an advanced level of commitment. It’s a live achievement.

Reconciliation Australia’s RAP program inspires social change in workplaces around the country. By providing sustainable opportunities in education, employment and business for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Department of Defence helps drive change. Among the initiatives already in place are its very successful Affirmative Measures Recruitment and Indigenous Apprenticeships programs which have greatly bolstered the Department’s intake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and trainees.

I was also impressed by the recent appointment of Uncle Roy Mundine as the inaugural Indigenous Army Elder. A Bundjalung man, Uncle Roy had a distinguished 36-year Army career, enlisting in 1958, and is a fine choice for this important post.

With its Stretch RAP, the Department now moves from broad partnership to specific and measurable actions, and signals its firm commitment to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I congratulate everyone involved for their leadership and dedication in implementing a Stretch RAP. I look forward to following the Department’s already impressive reconciliation journey.

JUSTIN MOHAMED

CEO RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Development of this third DRAP was overseen by Defence People Groups Directorate of Indigenous Affairs. In March 2015, the first DRAP Working Group was established with representation from all Groups and Services made up of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous personnel. This was a significant step for Defence, formalising the importance of Indigenous affairs across every part of the organisation.

The development of the DRAP is a critical part of advancing discussion on reconciliation. Defence has made positive progress in recent years to contribute to the national efforts to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage, however there is still a lot of work to be done. The efforts to engage with and listen to our people and continue the conversation throughout the transition to a new DRAP is recognised as fundamental to its success. The actions identified in DRAP 2010-2014 and those in this DRAP will help Defence become a more respectful and inclusive organisation.

To capture the broadest perspective and input from our people, consultation occurred across Defence, with a number of targeted engagements at major Defence sites. This was an opportunity for everyone in Defence to consider how they could be part of our reconciliation efforts. The actions identified in the DRAP 2015-2018 will require concerted effort so that we can make a difference in Defence.

Defence would like to acknowledge the following groups for their dedicated contribution to the development of the DRAP 2015-2018:

**The Defence Senior Leadership Group, specifically the DRAP Ambassadors, Senior APS Indigenous Champions, Group Heads and Service Chiefs.**

The Defence Reconciliation Working Group (DRAP WG)

The following Defence people were appointed by their respective Group Head/Service Chief as their representative and are acknowledged for their contribution and dedication in the development of this plan.

**Glyn Greenaway (Chairperson)**

Directorate of Indigenous Affairs

Nicki Curtis

Defence People Group

Glenn Keesing

Intelligence and Security Group

LGCDL Ron Baumann

Joint Operations Command

Laura Scovil

Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group

WGCDR Cheryl Neal

Vice Chief of the Defence Force Group

David Bensley

Chief Information Officer Group

Rebecca Halliday

Defence Science and Technology Group

Warren Nelson

Capability Development Group

LTCDL David Benson

Army

Michael Howell

Defence Estate and Infrastructure Group

CPO Ray Rosendale

Navy

Nick Corre

Strategy Group

GPCAPT Lisa Jackson-Pulver

Air Force

Fleur Taylor-Lumb

Chief Finance Officer Group

The Defence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network (DATSIN) continue to provide advice, support and dedicated effort in the reconciliation efforts of Defence. Thank you to all who contributed ideas, thoughts, comments and feedback on the development of this plan.

WHAT IS A RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN?

A Reconciliation Action Plan is a strategic business plan that allows an organisation to improve relationships, show respect and increase opportunities. As with any business plan, it should include timelines and targets, and each action should be assigned to the person or position responsible for the outcomes. RAPs will have the best chance of success if each action, timeline, responsibility and deliverable is as specific as possible. Everyone in Defence, at all levels should consider how their work can contribute to or enable achievement of the Defence Reconciliation Action Plan outcomes and reconciliation.
As the basis for successful and productive relationships, Defence values communication, consultation, cooperation and input from its entire workforce on matters that affect their workplace. Building respectful relationships with the Indigenous community and identifying how Defence can address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is a key component of reconciliation.

**DID YOU KNOW?**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lower levels of education and employment opportunities. According to the 2013 National Outcomes Report, only 41.4 per cent of Indigenous students completed Years 9–12 secondary education. In comparison, 81.2 per cent of non-Indigenous students completed Years 9–12.

Source: Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience website, https://aimementoring.com/about/aime/

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR DEFENCE?**
A focus of the national efforts to close the gap is towards getting children to school, adults into work and making communities safer. All Australians have the right to live and work in safe communities, where they can raise healthy families and have access to education and employment opportunities. Defence provides avenues to access such opportunities through establishing productive and respectful relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the broader community, to the mutual benefit of all.

**ACTION** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** | **KEY CONTRIBUTORS AND ENABLERS** | **TIME FRAME** | **KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES**
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
1.1 Maintain an effective DRAP Working Group to monitor implementation and refresh of the DRAP. | DRAP Working Group | Defence People Group (DPG) | September, December, March and June each year; Quarterly | - Working Group to meet quarterly.
- Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the Working Group.
- Invite external representatives to share experiences with the Working Group.

1.2 Celebrate National Reconciliation Week, including raising awareness and exploring opportunities to connect with others. | Each Group/Head Service Chief | DPG Defence Estate and Infrastructure Group (DEIG) | 27 May – 05 June each year | - At least one celebratory and/or cultural awareness activity is to be hosted by each Group or Service during National Reconciliation Week.
- Encourage all staff to participate in at least one National Reconciliation Week event.
- Communication and promotion of National Reconciliation Week through Defence mechanisms.

1.3 Support the Defence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network (DATSIN), as a source of advice, support and networking for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel and the organisation more broadly. | DPG | Commanders and Managers of DATSIN members | Each financial year (Sep/Oct) | Each year by December 2016 | - Hold a DATSIN conference, with members encouraged to attend and commanders/ managers encouraged to support this attendance.
- Investigate opportunities to review and implement appropriate recommendations from DATSIN Conference outcomes.
- Empower DATSIN members to self-manage the DATSIN Framework.

1.4 Build relationships with Indigenous organisations, individuals, families and their communities to support community engagement. | All Defence Groups and Services | DPG | By June 2016 | - Community engagement and building relationships to be embedded as ‘business as usual’ for Defence. Some examples include, but are not limited to:
- Identify and appoint Regional Indigenous Liaison Officers within Army
- Identify and appoint Ships Warrant Officers as Indigenous Liaison Officers within Navy
- Develop a Defence Engagement Guide and a central repository of information to facilitate effective community engagement.

1.5 Develop, implement and actively monitor a Communication Strategy at a whole-of-Defence level, aimed at better promoting increasing awareness and celebrating achievements of Defence Indigenous events, programs and activities. | Ministerial and Executive Coordination and Communication (MECC) DPG and the DRAP Working Group | All Groups and Services | By Dec 2015 | - Increase the visibility of Defence Indigenous programs, plans, events and activities both within Defence and the broader community.
- Include Indigenous events, programs and activities as a standing agenda item for the Base Management Forum meetings.

1.6 Explore opportunities to assist with pre-induction demands support for Indigenous communities, as an extension to community engagement. | DPG | All Groups and Services | In line with Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet direction | Each financial year by Dec 2016 | - Continue the Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program.
- Continue the Air Force Kummandoo Program.
- Investigate mechanisms to identify assets which could be repurposed by Indigenous communities as part of Defence disposals strategies.
- Defence Assistance to the Civil Community (DAC) program to support Indigenous communities when requested to assist, as per DMCS policy requirements and guidelines.
Defence is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive environment, free from discrimination and one that recognises the diversity of the Australian community it serves.

The knowledge of and respect for the cultural pride of Indigenous people in their communities, countries and histories is an important element of support for Defence Indigenous members and employees.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

According to the Defence results of the 2014 Reconciliation Barometer Survey, 20 per cent of Defence non-Indigenous staff reported a perception of very low trust of Indigenous people in the general public. Similarly, 23 per cent of Defence Indigenous staff reported a perception of very low trust of non-Indigenous Australians in the general public.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR DEFENCE?**

A key component of reconciliation is respect, between both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Through this DRAP, Defence recommits to its efforts to positively demonstrate the respect that we hold for Indigenous Australians, their culture and their history.

The following initiatives are the practical steps Defence is taking to improve the respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

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**2.1 Actively participate in whole-of-Government Indigenous Affairs reform.**

- DPG
- All Defence Groups and Services

- Appoint appropriate representation for Defence on all whole-of-Government forums influencing Indigenous Affairs reform. Some examples include:
  - Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet whole-of-Government Indigenous Affairs Framework
  - Diversity Council
  - Inter-departmental Committee for Commonwealth Collaboration in Indigenous Affairs
  - Indigenous Champions Network
  - Jawun Indigenous Reference Board.

- Maintain mechanisms for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural advice to be provided to Defence. Some examples are:
  - Strategic Indigenous Advisors
  - Service or Group-specific Elders
  - Defence Indigenous Cultural Advisory Group (ICAG)
  - Army Indigenous Cultural Advisory Board (AICAB).

- Each Group or Service is to host or participate in at least one activity, during NAIDOC Week (or on an alternate date if operational requirements limit ability).

- Defence will hold at least one flagship event at a corporate level each year.

- Develop a central repository of information on NAIDOC Week events, programs and activities across Defence.

- Acknowledge plaques and/or base signage to be displayed at all Defence sites, once appropriate community relationships have been established.

- Groups and Services to hold an event or to celebrate the plaque/sign unveiling.

- Explore the establishment of Cultural Centres at the entrance to Defence sites and/or bases and provide recommendations to senior Defence committee(s) for their consideration.

- Flags to be flown/displayed permanently at every Defence establishment.

- Flags to be incorporated into significant Defence corporate level publications (or other Defence publications currently featuring the Australian flag).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>ACCOUNTABILITY</th>
<th>KEY CONTRIBUTORS AND ENABLERS</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>All Group Heads/Service Chiefs</td>
<td>Every Individual</td>
<td>As required</td>
<td>- Cultural elements included in all Defence celebrations and military parades, including Chief handovers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>Senior Leaders</td>
<td>by Jun 2016</td>
<td>- Senior Leadership Group to be trained to respond to Welcome to Country and provide Acknowledgment of Country cultural protocols.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>DIFP Working Group</td>
<td>by Dec 2015</td>
<td>- Promote awareness and review existing resources for conducting cultural ceremonies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Review support to military family’s policies, processes and service delivery methods and implement recommendations agreed by the relevant Branch Head.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Review dispute resolution policies and processes and implement recommendations agreed by the relevant Branch Head.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Review ADF and APS recruitment policies and processes and implement recommendations agreed by the relevant Branch Head.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>All Group Heads/Service Chiefs</td>
<td>All Group Heads/Service Chiefs</td>
<td>July each year</td>
<td>- Embed cultural ceremonies, including Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country across Defence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>All Group Heads/Service Chiefs</td>
<td>Through four intakes each calendar year</td>
<td>- Facilitate cultural awareness experiences for Defence personnel working in specialist Indigenous areas or similar, including Indigenous Land Use Agreements, Defence Environmental Officers, HR Specialists, Directorate of Indigenous Affairs, Strategic Recruitment Team (Indigenous) personnel.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Implement, review and report on the Cultural Awareness (Indigenous) Learning Framework CA(I)LF.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
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<td>- Report to Group Heads and Service Chiefs on the number of people who have completed the Indigenous Cultural Awareness e-Learning CAMPUS course, with the aim to increase course completions by 5%.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
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<td>- Participation in the Jawun Program:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Defence will nominate a minimum of 12 participants (APS and ADF) per year for placement;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- plus at least two SLG participants each year.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Explore opportunities for a Defence-specific cultural immersion program for Defence personnel at the APS 4 to APS 6 levels (and military equivalent) and provide recommendations to senior Defence committee(s) for their consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Include at least two external Indigenous speakers within the SLG Speaker Series and other similar speaker series across Defence (for example the Women’s Speaker Series).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Better empower all Defence Senior Leaders (including SLG Champions and DRAP Ambassadors) to support, promote and advocate Defence Indigenous Affairs, through the provision of tailored Cultural Awareness training for all Senior Leaders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defence fosters an environment of mutual support and benefit by supporting Indigenous Australians to prepare for and develop through a career within the ADF or APS. The development of specialised pathways to employment and career opportunities underpins Defence’s commitment to the national efforts to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage.

Defence is also committed to the retention and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Having mechanisms in place to support career development and retention is an integral component of maintaining and building a sustainable workforce. Defence is particularly focusing on initiatives to increase Indigenous representation at higher APS levels. As more Indigenous recruitment activities are embedded into mainstream Defence business, a key focus area for Defence will be the strengthening of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee career development and retention.

Creating business, employment and career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will enable Defence to deliver practical outcomes contributing to closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage and build diversity into the Defence workforce. Defence will lead by example in the Australian Government’s direction to increase its Indigenous workforce to three per cent by 2018, with Defence and all other Government Agencies being held accountable for achieving these public sector employment targets in the next three years.

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With the launch of the Government’s overarching Indigenous Procurement Policy on 1 July 2015, there is a renewed focus for Commonwealth agencies to stimulate Indigenous entrepreneurship and business development. Under the Government’s Indigenous Procurement Policy, the Commonwealth will award at least three per cent of its contracts to Indigenous businesses each financial year by 2019-2020. Defence is committed to support procurement and contracting opportunities through the interim targets set at 70 domestic contracts in 2015-2016.

Increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s participation in further training and education is critical to Indigenous economic development. Defence needs to increase the number of Indigenous professionals who will be role models for the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and focus on developing our future Defence leaders.

Indigenous businesses are 100 times more likely to employ an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person than any other Australian business.

The Forrest Review states that “we must use the power of the market and business incentives to deliver the jobs to eliminate disparity and the high barriers to employment entry for individuals.”

Nationally, the proportion of Indigenous 20 to 24 year olds who had achieved Year 12 or equivalent increased from 45.4 per cent in 2008 to 58.5 per cent in 2012-13. For non-Indigenous Australians, the proportion rose slightly (85 per cent in 2008 to 86.5 per cent in 2012). We know that 20 per cent of the gap in school performance is attributed to poor school attendance (Biddle 2014). In very remote parts of the Northern Territory, less than a quarter of Indigenous students attend school 80 per cent or more of the time (Office of the Children’s Commissioner NT 2014).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience higher rates of arrest and incarceration than non-Indigenous Australians. A prison record can be a major barrier to employment and families with members in prison are put under tremendous financial and emotional stress with the major impact being felt by children.

It is clear that since 2008, no progress has been made against the target to halve the gap in employment outcomes within a decade (by 2018). The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 15-64 years who are employed fell from 53.8 per cent in 2008 to 47.5 per cent in 2012-13.
### Opportunities

#### Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Key Activities and Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>All Group Heads/Service Chiefs</td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>By Dec 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>by April and July intakes in each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Each financial year</td>
<td>- Advertise at least 25 APS Affirmative Measures (Indigenous) positions in Defence.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>by Dec 2018</td>
<td>- Increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the Defence APS Senior Leadership Group (SLS) to 2.7 per cent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>DPG / Defence Force Recruiting (DFR)</td>
<td>Navy/Army/Air Force</td>
<td>Each financial year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Each financial year</td>
<td>- Identify and maintain at least two specialist Indigenous recruitment officers in APS Recruitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>All Group Heads/Service Chiefs</td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>By Dec 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Alice Springs based Defence initiatives to increase APS and Defence Contractor workforce</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>- Familiarisation Tours and Influencer Tours</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Work Experience/Career Counsellor Visits</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Establish or expand existing youth engagement programs (such as the cadet programs) in key Indigenous recruiting areas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Pre-recruitment programs</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Scholarships</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Establish formal agreements with organisations that have mutual interests in Australian Indigenous Monitoring Experience (AIME).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Procurement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Key Activities and Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>Each financial year</td>
<td>- Support at least five Indigenous students per year for tertiary studies, for example through the Defence Indigenous University Support Program (Aurora Project).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>Each financial year</td>
<td>- Support at least 30 Defence Indigenous personnel to complete Indigenous Leadership Training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Army/PG</td>
<td>Each financial year</td>
<td>- Facilitate the improvement of educational outcomes for Regional Forces Surveillance Unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>By Dec 2015</td>
<td>- Review the outcomes and investigate key findings of the longitudinal study of Indigenous pre-recruitment courses and provide recommendations to senior Defence committee(s) for their consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>By June 2016</td>
<td>- Explore and scope the requirement for Indigenous mentoring and provide recommendations to senior Defence committee(s) for their consideration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**NOTES:**

- Support at least five Indigenous students per year for tertiary studies, for example through the Defence Indigenous University Support Program (Aurora Project).
- Support at least 30 Defence Indigenous personnel to complete Indigenous Leadership Training.
- Facilitate the improvement of educational outcomes for Regional Forces Surveillance Unit.
- Review the outcomes and investigate key findings of the longitudinal study of Indigenous pre-recruitment courses and provide recommendations to senior Defence committee(s) for their consideration.
- Explore and scope the requirement for Indigenous mentoring and provide recommendations to senior Defence committee(s) for their consideration.
### TRACKING OUR PROGRESS, INTERNAL REPORTING AND WORKING WITH RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible Parties</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actively monitor and report on the implementation of DRAP 2015-18.</td>
<td>DPG and DRAP Working Group</td>
<td>Report due 30 Sep each year</td>
<td>- DRAP Working Group to complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia each year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG</td>
<td>Every two years (2016 and 2018)</td>
<td>- Participate in the Reconciliation Australia Barometer Survey.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG and DRAP Working Group</td>
<td>June each year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Aug 2018</td>
<td>Quarterly each financial year (July, October, January, April)</td>
<td>- Refresh the DRAP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DPG and DRAP Working Group</td>
<td>By Aug 2018</td>
<td>- Report to relevant senior Defence committees and Group Heads/Senior Chiefs, regarding milestones of the DRAP (detailing achievements of Defence Indigenous programs, events and activities).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For information regarding this Reconciliation Action Plan, please contact Defence at indigenous.affairs@defence.gov.au
Our Journey to Reconciliation continues through our People.
Here are some of their stories.

Seaman Jordy Lenoy (Navy)
I applied to the Defence Indigenous Development Program, which later led to recruit school in Melbourne. One of the best things about Defence is having mates who lift you up and support you. There's a great sense of family and belonging. It doesn't matter where you are from or what colour you are, you always feel welcome.

Ms Charnelle Roberts (APS 3)
I am a descendant from the Bundjalung tribe, my mother is a Minjungbal woman from NSW and my father is a Bundjalung man from the South coast. I was born and raised on the far south coast in a town called Bodalla. I joined Defence through the APSC pathways program and completed my traineeship in 2014. I am currently a Social Network of Graduates committee member representing my Indigenous peers across the APS. Defence offers Indigenous public servants a great opportunity to grow, learn and develop their careers.

Flying Officer Sarah Conway-James (Air Force)
There were moments in basic training when I thought I wouldn't make it through. I remember crying in my car once when one of my instructors found me. I told him, “I don't think I can do it.” He said to me, “Miss Conway-James, we can get you through this – you just need to believe you can do it, and don’t give up.” And somehow I did. Leaders need to be brave both physically and mentally.

Sergeant Anne Dufficy (Army)
One of the best things about being in Defence is the support it provides for my family. Defence has provided and encouraged me to do a Bachelor of Organisational Leadership. I have been to the Middle East on operations and New Zealand to play rugby union for the Army. My family are very proud every time they see me in uniform and acknowledge I have done something good in my life for myself and my community.

Mr John Howell (APS 6)
For me, as a young Indigenous bloke growing up in a small town, Defence was the place where I felt I belonged. After my deployment with the Australian Army to East Timor, I had completed over twenty years in the Army and decided I needed a change. I transferred to the Army Reserve and got a job in the Australian Public Service in Defence. I was very happy to get the APS job. I didn't want to leave Defence because they had become part of my family.

Ms Charrellen Roberts (APS 3)
I am a descendant from the Bundjalung tribe, my mother is a Minjungbal woman from NSW and my father is a Bundjalung man from the South east coast. I was born and raised on the far south coast in a town called Bodalla. I joined Defence through the APSC pathways program and completed my traineeship in 2014. I am currently on the Social Network of Graduates committee, representing my Indigenous peers across the APS. Defence offers Indigenous public servants a great opportunity to grow, learn and develop their careers.

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Ms Edith Pau (APS 3)
One day at work, I was feeling ready for a change when I received an email about Australian Public Service Indigenous Pathways Program applications. Defence was at the top of the list so I applied, wondering whether my age – 47, would be a barrier. My fears turned out to be misplaced as I was accepted into Defence.
THE DEFENCE JOURNEY CONTINUES THROUGH OUR PEOPLE

LEN TRACEY STORY

Major Len Tracey has been in the Army for over 30 years and during that time he has served side by side with Indigenous Australians, an experience that he considers vitally important to the success of his overseas deployments.

Len has been deployed to Fiji and Sudan. While on deployment Len worked with multinational peacekeeping forces and the Fijian and Sudanese communities. Len attributes his success while on deployment to being able to break down the cultural barriers; a skill he developed while working with Indigenous Australians.

“Working with my Indigenous colleagues I learnt that all cultures are different. This helped me when I was on deployment working with other people from cultures different to my own. For example, I learnt that many cultures have a vastly different perception of time – I count seconds and minutes, while the people I worked with counted days and seasons. Working closely with my colleagues from different cultural backgrounds, I was able to gain a better understanding of different viewpoints and so communicate more effectively, which enhanced the decisions I made. This understanding and appreciation of diverse outlooks increased my capability while on deployment.”
The Department of Defence acknowledges the service of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have contributed to the defence of Australia in times of peace and war.