

# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

2022 - 2025



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## 01.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Racing Queensland (RQ) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate and conduct our business across Queensland. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to Elders, past, present and emerging.

## 02.

## INTRODUCTION

It is with great pleasure that we introduce the Racing Queensland (RQ) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy (the 'Strategy'). This is RQ's first Strategy, and it forms part of RQ's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), and is also a symbol of RQ's building and strengthening connections between RQ and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland.

The Strategy underlines RQ's commitment to progress in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. While there is a sense of pride in RQ's achievements thus far, with the relationships formed with Aboriginal employment and education providers since implementing our first RAP, RQ acknowledges that there is further work to do.

Through this Strategy, RQ aims to ease the disadvantage experienced by members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in employment. As an organisation that values the contribution that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community makes, RQ seeks to recognise the reciprocal benefits that are created through the enrichment of the racing industry and community engagement.

The Strategy will only be enlivened through the efforts of all employees engaging with, and committing to, the principles and goals that have been set. All employees are encouraged to read the Strategy and consider the contribution that they can make to its success.



*In March 2020, Racing Queensland commissioned an Aboriginal artist to create a bespoke piece of art to be used in all RAP collateral.*

### ARTIST

*Charlie Chambers (Jr) is an Aboriginal Artist and Emu Egg Carver from Cherbourg which is north-west of Brisbane. His tribe is Jarowair from the Toowoomba, Dalby and Bunya Mountain region.*

### THE GATHERING

*This painting is about people attending the race track from bush, country town and city communities to witness with friends and family, whether it is greyhounds, trots or thoroughbred races.*

## 03.

## THE LEGAL CONTEXT

The Strategy applies the opportunities and requirements placed on RQ by law, ensuring meaningful career opportunities and pathways are provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

The legal frameworks for RQ and the Strategy are:

- The Industrial Relations Act 2016 (Qld)
- The Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
- Public Services Act 2008 (Qld) & Public Sector Ethics Act (Qld)
- Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)

The rights of employees to be treated fairly and to not be discriminated against are also protected by the Human Rights Act 2019. This Act places obligations on public entities, which includes government departments and agencies, to act and make decisions which are compatible with human rights.

The Act protects twenty-three human rights and makes it unlawful for actions or decisions to be made in a way which is incompatible with those human rights and to fail to consider relevant human rights in decision making.

Employees can make complaints to either the Queensland Human Rights Commission or the Australian Human Rights Commission if they believe they have been directly or indirectly discriminated against on the basis of their race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, or immigrant status.



## 04.

## KEY STATISTICS ON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data at 30 June 2016:

- There were 798,400 Indigenous people in Australia in 2016, or **3.3% of the total Australian population**.
- Three quarters of the Indigenous population lived in NSW, Qld and WA combined.
- The largest populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians live in New South Wales (265,700 people) **and Queensland (221,400 people)**
- The median age of the Indigenous population is **20.3 years**, and the Non-Indigenous population is 37.8 years.
- The Indigenous population increased by 19% during the years between 2011-2016.

### INDIGENOUS STATUS (INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES)

Among the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in 2016, 91% of people (727,500 people) identified as being of Aboriginal origin only; 5% (38,700) were of Torres Strait Islander origin only; and, 4% (32,200) were of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

### AGE STRUCTURE

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population at 30 June 2016 had a younger age structure than the non-Indigenous population, with larger proportions of young people and smaller proportions of older people.

This is reflective of higher fertility rates as well as higher mortality rates than the non-Indigenous population. The median age of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population at 30 June 2016 was 20.3 years, compared to 37.8 years for the non-Indigenous population.

### STATES AND TERRITORIES

Of the states and territories, the largest populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians live in New South Wales (265,700 people) and Queensland (221,400 people). The smallest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians live in The Australian Capital Territory (7,500 people).

In 2016, about three quarters of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population live in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia combined.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians comprised 30% of the population of the Northern Territory, the highest proportion of any state or territory.

(Source: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/estimates-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-australians/jun-2016>)

## 05.

## CURRENT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT AT RQ

At 1 August 2021 RQ's headcount is 107, with no employees currently identifying themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This data is based on the employee survey conducted in April 2021 where respondents were able to anonymously answer a range of demographic questions, one of which asked if they identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The response rate to the survey was 86%, however no respondents identified themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. It is unknown if any of the remaining 14% of employees who did not respond to the survey identify themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Despite 3.3% of the Australian population identifying as being from an indigenous people, they are underrepresented in our workforce, which further supports the business case for change to proactively promote RQ as an Employer of Choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

RQ's Registered Training Organisation (RTO) has 74 students enrolled, of which five identify as Aboriginal and feature in RQ's Reflect RAP. In the RTO, 7% of students currently identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

A separate strategy will be developed for the RTO to increase the number of indigenous students undertaking a racing qualification, which will lead to future employment in the racing industry as a Jockey, Stablehand or Track Rider.



## 06.

**OUR COMMITMENT**

This Strategy complements our efforts to transform the culture at RQ and build a robust talent pipeline that includes attracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to our workplace and helping them develop their skills and capabilities to advance their careers.

RQ aims to improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and development. This will support RQ's commitment to create a culture that is diverse and inclusive, as a culturally safe employer of choice.

## 07.

**SETTING AN EMPLOYMENT TARGET OF ONE PER CENT (1%)**

The foundation of this Strategy is to provide career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland. The Strategy proposes an Aboriginal employment target of at least 1% for the next four years, i.e., the duration of the Strategy.

RQ is committed to engaging and collaborating with Aboriginal communities to adopt new practices and ideas that enable us to meet the Aboriginal employment target of at least 1%.

A key objective is to innovate recruitment practices with a focus on driving change and increasing measurable outcomes that demonstrate how Aboriginal people are valued and the contribution they can make to the organisation.

A 1% target is recommended, based on a number of factors including:

- No employees at RQ currently identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, which does not reflect the Aboriginal community population.
- This Strategy covers a period of four years during which time a number of the recommended actions will be fully implemented.
- The Strategy focuses on developing a talent pool and achieving the target through natural employee turnover and replacement rather than creating new roles.
- Some departments can achieve greater outcomes with respect to Aboriginal employment, e.g., the RTO can explore setting specific targets for student enrollments.

- RQ acknowledges that the employment of Aboriginals will benefit the Queensland Aboriginal community as a whole and enhance the awareness of Aboriginal affairs for non-Aboriginal employees. This will result in improved policies and programs to meet the needs of Aboriginal Queenslanders.

## 08.

**PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGY:**

- Create employment opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at RQ.
- Commit to addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage in our community by increasing participation in employment – this is recognised as an important part in 'closing the gap' in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.
- Recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
- Provide a culturally safe workplace.
- Develop and strengthen positive relationships between RQ and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and organisations.
- Promote RQ as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and their cultural knowledge are important contributors to RQ's success.



*RQ celebrated NAIDOC Week at Townsville Turf Club on July 7 2021 by dedicating a race called the RQ Yaddaman Race. The Bindjal people are the traditional owners of the land where Townsville Turf Club is situated and Yaddaman means horse in their language. RQ paid our respect to the Bindjal people by inviting them to perform a Welcome to Country, a smoking ceremony and a traditional dance. We also included the Torres Strait Islander community who performed a traditional dance and ceremony as well.*



## 09.

## RQ'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

As part of RQ's Strategic Plan, RQ has a set of Values that guide how RQ employees behave in order to fulfil our commitments to each other, the industry and the community.

RQ's Values and Purpose underpin RQ's commitment to the development and implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.

**VISION**  
TO BECOME THE #1 SPORTING INDUSTRY IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

**PURPOSE**  
CONNECTING QUEENSLANDERS THROUGH GREAT RACING, EVENTS AND THE LOVE OF OUR ANIMALS

**TIMELESS VALUES**

- MAKING A DIFFERENCE
- ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE
- EARNING AND SHOWING RESPECT
- DOING WHAT WE SAY
- VALUING TEAM ABOVE SELF
- DEMONSTRATING GREAT LEADERSHIP

## RQ'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Implementing this Strategy will support the achievement of RQ's organisational and community objectives to improve diversity and inclusion, grow employee satisfaction, reduce employee turnover and be recognised as employer of choice. The Strategy also supports the achievement of growing student enrolments and community partnerships as well as developing connections with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.



## ORGANISATIONAL

**Develop Organisational Capability and Capacity to Improve Performance and Efficiency**

## How the objectives will be achieved:

- 1 Improve the employee experience by embedding a new Employee Value Proposition (EVP) to enhance RQ's employment brand.
- 2 Achieve Employer of Choice (EOC) recognition.
- 3 Enhance management information systems for better decision-making, improved productivity and increased commercial returns.
- 4 Develop a culture of purposeful leadership and teamwork.
- 5 Enhance the talent management framework and succession planning.
- 6 Ensure compliance with whole-of-government policies and procedures.

## Performance measures:

- Grow employee satisfaction
- Recognition as an employer of choice
- Reduce employee turnover
- Improve diversity and inclusion



## COMMUNITY

**To be a significant contributor to the Queensland Community through great racing and events**

## How the objectives will be achieved:

- 1 Measurement and promotion of the racing industry's contribution to the economy and community.
- 2 Engagement with participants and key stakeholders to identify industry career pathways and training needs.
- 3 Develop and implement integrated marketing strategies with key partners.
- 4 Develop and execute a comprehensive communications plan to always communicate the narrative of the Queensland racing industry scale and economic contribution.
- 5 Partner with local communities.

## Performance measures:

- Grow economic and community contribution of racing
- Grow student enrolments
- Grow recognition of industry scale and impact
- Grow community partnerships

## 10.

## KEY PRIORITY AREAS

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2022-2025 aims to create quality and sustainable work opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The 2022-2025 Strategy will focus on the following three priority areas:

1. **Cultural Competence** and **Safety**
2. **Recruitment** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
3. **Development** and **Career Success** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees



## 10.1

**PRIORITY 1 - CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND SAFETY**

PROVIDE A CULTURALLY SAFE WORKPLACE BY DEVELOPING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURAL COMPETENCY ACROSS RQ AND RESPECTING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</b>
Deliver Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training to all employees as part of RQ's RAP.	People and Performance	Implemented in July 2021 during NAIDOC week	All employees invited to attend Indigenous Perspective Workshop.
Implement mandatory cultural competency training for new employees as part of RQ's Corporate Induction program.	People and Performance	Implement by October 2021	All new employees undertaking cultural competency training as part of the RQ induction process.
Implement Mandatory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency course for all employees as part of Annual Compliance Course and Test	People and Performance	Annually commencing from April 2022	Course available as part of SAP Litmos LMS Content Library.
All employees encouraged to participate in the planning of and attendance at RQ Indigenous events.	EGMs and Managers	Annually	RQ RAP working group provided with support to engage with and promote events to the wider RQ community. Employees provided with an opportunity to attend RQ Indigenous events.

## 10.2

**PRIORITY 2 - RECRUITMENT OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYEES**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</b>
Promote and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment through targeted pathway programs - traineeships, cadetships, career development fellowships.	People and Performance	Twice yearly during term of Strategy	RQ Managers aware of the availability of programs, and report annually on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees participating in pathway programs.
Review of current positions, with a particular focus on opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander targeted positions.	People and Performance	Review complete by June 2022	Review completed and opportunities for additional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment identified.
Report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within individual work units to encourage accountability and focus.	People and Performance	Annually	Work unit reporting included as part of the 'Strategy' report to RAP and EGM PBS
RQ to participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events as a means of promoting RQ as an employer of choice.	Marketing and RAP working group	Annually	RQ promoting at community events at selected locations in our footprint at least once per year.



## 10.3

**PRIORITY 3 - DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER SUCCESS FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYEES**

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Prioritise access to development opportunities for employees including consideration of secondments where available and encouragement and support to apply for advertised roles.	People and Performance	Annually	Increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees participating in development opportunities.
Development of a mentoring program targeted at new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	People and Performance	Commence January 2024	Formalised program in place with objectives, guidelines and training available.
Development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee network as an opportunity to discuss issues relevant to employment at RQ	People and Performance	Commence July 2024	Employee network in place and meeting on a quarterly basis.
Exit interviews offered and encouraged upon cessation for all fixed term and continuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to gauge their experience at RQ and reasons for leaving.	People and Performance	As employees leave	Exit interviews offered to all employees ceasing employment with RQ.

## 11.

**EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The Strategy will operate until June 2025 and will be reviewed annually to ensure that objectives and initiatives are aligned with the current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment environment, RQ's RAP and Strategic Plan.

The Strategy outcomes will be reported annually to RQ's Executive Leadership Team through the EGM People and Business Services, and to employees.

Feedback and updates on the implementation of the Strategy will occur through the RAP working group, and relevant Indigenous networks to ensure continued progress and success of the Strategy.

## 12.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Strategy was developed by RQ's RAP Working Group. Before the Strategy was implemented, consultation and feedback was undertaken with senior leaders at RQ and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community members known to RQ.

## 13.

**RESOURCES**

- RQ Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan
- RQ Employee Handbook 2021
- RQ Strategic Plan FY22-FY25
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Closing the Gap - <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement>
- Overcoming indigenous disadvantage - <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/overcoming-indigenous-disadvantage>

