Respectfully Journey Together

Our journey so far

The growing of cultural capability is not an outcome that can be achieved with certainty. Rather, it is a constant, ongoing journey for the organisation and our staff. It is a journey filled with discoveries and challenges. The department is committed to respectfully journey together to achieve the aspiration to be the most culturally capable agency in the nation.

Acknowledging the past

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSSDS) has a long history of many dedicated staff working to improve outcomes for vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and a commitment to improving cultural capability. These efforts created a strong foundation for the journey ahead.

Respectfully Journey Together

Message from the Director-General

It gives me great pleasure to officially launch the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan, Respectfully Journey Together.

The plan sets out the department’s approach and commitment to growing our cultural capability and building our capacity to better support vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, partner more inclusively with key organisations and engage genuinely with communities.

The development of this plan has been led by the department’s Cultural Capability Enablers Network, a group of committed staff members who are first and foremost Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

They have invested in this plan because they believe this is the start of a journey to improve outcomes for their people. I thank this group for their generosity and commitment to their cultures, communities and the department.

The name of the plan is Respectfully Journey Together. This name was crafted by the network through a process where they explored what cultural capability means to them and their people; spoke with and listened to their families, Elders and community; and explored their languages and cultural meanings.

I believe this name aptly describes our approach to building cultural capability and highlights the need for us to continually learn and grow together.

The launch of this action plan is a significant milestone in our department’s respectful journey.

I acknowledge there is still a way to go on this journey and I am confident the projects planned within Phase One Implementation, that define the roadmap for our journey, will demonstrate our commitment to achieving the aspirations outlined in the plan.

I recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples share a continuing legacy of resilience, strength and determination. For some, there is also fear, distrust and anger at the actions of this department and those of previous authorities. I want this action plan to change the prevalence and effects of that dynamic.

I believe what we have achieved so far in developing this plan, the significant work of the Cultural Capability Enablers Network and the actions already underway to implement its intent stand us in good stead to collectively move forward.

As we respectfully journey together we will act in the spirit of reconciliation, learn from the past and positively engage in the present to build a trusting and respectful future.

Michael Hogan
Director-General
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

February 2015

The Cultural Capability Enablers Network finalises Respectfully Journey Together as the plan’s name to aptly describe the necessary approach to cultural capability development.

During the journey to find the name, network members explore their languages, cultures and the impacts of historical government interventions.

May 2015

Yarning Circles with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff commence to inform the department’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy.

27 May 2015

Official launch of Respectfully Journey Together: the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan.

The future

The growing of cultural capability will be a journey filled with discoveries and challenges. Phase One implementation defines the road map for the department’s journey ahead.

Cultural capability development will be included as a priority in the DCCSSDS 2015 Strategic Plan and will be inherent in all subsequent planning processes.

The first strategic performance report for cultural capability development will be presented to EMT in June 2015.

About the artwork

The artwork was created for the Cultural Capability Action Plan by Stacey Giles, a staff member who is a Kamilaroi woman from St George in south-west Queensland and a member of the department’s Cultural Capability Enablers Network. The design references the journey of cultural capability, the importance of remaining open to the discovery of answers throughout the process, and that the plan can provide the pathway but everyone needs to take their own steps.

EMT endorses Phase One Implementation and approves:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Strategy
- Cultural Capability Training Review
- Governance, Performance and Reporting Strategy
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy
- Cultural Capability Action Plan

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The Cultural Capability Enablers Network leads the development of and consultation on strategic indicators to measure our progress and success.

The Cultural Capability Enablers Network leads the development of the DCCSSDS Cultural Capability Action Plan Consultation Draft.

The department’s Executive Management Team (EMT) endorses the DCCSSDS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan Consultation Draft.

Staff and key external partners provide feedback and comment on the plan. This feedback is used to shape both the plan and the implementation approach.

The department’s Executive Management Team (EMT) endorses the DCCSSDS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan.

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We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this country and recognise their connection to land, wind, water and community. We pay our respect to them, their cultures, and to the Elders both past and present.