



Department of Indigenous Affairs
Government of Western Australia



Statement of Corporate Intent

2002 -2005

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1 Introduction

The Machinery of Government Report in 2001 described the objective of the Indigenous Affairs portfolio as 'closing the gap' between the social and economic well being of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) has a leadership role in achieving this aim through strategic management, co-ordination and by bringing the relevant agencies of Government to work together to meet the needs of Indigenous people.

This role will contribute to the commitment made by the Premier to a new and just relationship with Indigenous people based on trust, respect, equity and inclusiveness.

2 Legislation We Administer

DIA is responsible for administering legislation that affects the well-being of Indigenous people.

The **Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972** (AAPA), has principal functions related to consultation, planning and co-ordination of services to Indigenous people, and the adequacy of those services. The AAPA also establishes the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT) which has operational functions related to land.

The **Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972** (AHA) details specific responsibilities related to the management and protection of heritage sites.

The **Aboriginal Communities Act 1979** (ACA) enables Indigenous people to establish by-laws that govern conduct and access on community lands.

3 Core Business Functions

The key role for DIA is to create opportunities for the resources of Commonwealth, State and Local Government agencies to combine into partnerships with Indigenous people through arrangements based on engagement, negotiation, planning and co-ordination of services.

This role requires DIA to provide advice to Government on the directions for Indigenous Affairs, monitor management systems, policy frameworks and service delivery, and assist Indigenous people to engage with Government and other stakeholders to achieve sustainable social and economic outcomes.

Land is central to achieving sustainable economic and cultural outcomes. DIA works with Indigenous people and other stakeholders to address land issues through the ALT land transfer and management program.

The protection, management and promotion of heritage and culture are also key responsibilities of DIA. This is achieved through the effective and efficient administration of legislative responsibilities and working in partnership with Indigenous people to manage their heritage.

4 Vision

Our vision is the long-term view we hold for the Indigenous Affairs portfolio that reflects our aspirations for influencing change through the conduct of our business decisions and operations.

Vision Statement

To improve outcomes and relationships with Indigenous people based on trust, respect, equity and inclusiveness.

Our mission statement provides a more immediate picture of our desired future and creates an overall framework to develop plans to achieve this future.

5 Mission

Mission Statement

To close the gap between the social, cultural and economic well being of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people through strategic leadership of land, heritage and culture, and whole of government coordination of Indigenous issues.

6 Values and Principles Statement

Our corporate values and principles describe our actions and the way we conduct ourselves to meet our challenges.

Government

We will inform our Minister and the Government of the key issues and challenges that influence the Indigenous Affairs portfolio.

Indigenous Culture

We will respect Indigenous cultural values and ways of working and promote an improved understanding in the wider community.

Customer Focus

We value and respect the needs of customers and will at all times endeavour to ensure their service needs are met.

Engagement

We will actively engage with Indigenous people on issues and decisions that affect them.

Partnerships

We will be proactive and work with all stakeholders to develop mutually beneficial partnerships to achieve improved outcomes for Indigenous people.

Our Staff

Our staff are the key to achieving our mission and we will invest in organisation development strategies to build their skills and competencies to achieve our objectives.

Leadership

We will achieve our business results through strategic leadership, teamwork and a commitment to our mission.

Integrity

We value honesty, trust, respect and openness and we will act ethically in all business relationships and dealings.

Corporate Governance

We will manage our organisation in a way that maximises results and outcomes for Government and Indigenous people.

7 Strategic Objectives

DIA's four (4) strategic objectives of effective engagement, functional systems, effective services and agreements based on partnerships, are targeted to achieve DIA's outcome of "sustainable improvement in social, cultural and economic outcomes for Indigenous people".

Strategic Objective 1

Government, community and industry effectively engaged in doing business

This strategic objective recognises the commitment by the Government to a new and just relationship and the need for effective engagement at all levels of Government, the community, industry and the non-government sector, in achieving sustainable improvement. The role of DIA is to broker this engagement, communicate and promote the Government's commitment and to develop relationships and partnerships.

We will achieve this objective by:

- (1) Promoting the Government's commitment to a new and just relationship with Indigenous people; and
- (2) Developing strategies to improve engagement in issues related to the Indigenous Affairs portfolio.

We will measure the achievement of this objective by the:

- Extent of awareness of the Government's commitment to the new and just relationship with Indigenous people;
- Extent to which guidelines, protocols and agreements between Government and Indigenous people act as the basis to conduct and negotiate business and service outcomes;
- Effectiveness of our strategies to develop effective relationships between Indigenous people and stakeholders; and
- Effective management of Government coordinating forums and advisory bodies supported by DIA to provide advice on Indigenous affairs.

Strategic Objective 2

Legislation, policies and practices that achieve service equity and justice for Indigenous people

This strategic objective recognises the need for Government systems, whether through legislation, policies, practice or custom, to achieve service equity and justice for Indigenous people. The role of DIA is to promote equitable outcomes from Government systems and services.

We will achieve this objective by:

- (3) Advising Government on integrated Indigenous affairs goals, strategies, principles and benchmarks that are agreed and supported by stakeholders as the basis for policy and program frameworks.
- (4) Working with key agencies to achieve public sector reforms in legislative, policy, planning and budgeting systems;
- (5) Monitoring and reviewing DIA administered legislation, (AAPA Act, AHA and ACA) to ensure it is effective and consistent with contemporary trends and practice; and
- (6) Promoting awareness and appreciation of Indigenous tradition, history and contemporary issues.

We will measure the achievement of this objective by the:

- Standard of advice to Government on whole of Government policy frameworks;
- Relevance of the policy frameworks for the land transfer and management programs, and heritage site protection and management;
- Presence of a legislative review program that is agreed and supported by the Minister; and
- Standard of advice to Government that promotes the alignment of public sector systems and services to achieve the Governments key outcomes for Indigenous affairs.

Strategic Objective 3

Well-planned and effective co-ordination of services to Indigenous people.

This strategic objective recognises the need for effective co-ordination of services to Indigenous people and for Government agencies at all levels to take a universal prevention approach to address social and economic disadvantage. The role of DIA is to promote systemic change and support Indigenous people and families to achieve sustainable benefits.

We will achieve this objective by:

- (7) Providing advice to Government on effective approaches to address social and economic disadvantage; and
- (8) Delivering services in land, heritage and culture, community patrols and community engagement.

We will measure the achievement of this objective by the;

- Extent of agreement to action plans around each of the six strategic areas of action (child development and growth, early school engagement, building on the strength of Indigenous people and culture, breaking the cycle of alcohol and substance abuse and ending tobacco use, functional & resilient families and people, and functioning community infrastructure);
- Standard of strategic and tactical advice to Government on Indigenous issues and services;
- Number of land transfers endorsed for negotiation;
- Number of heritage management plans and site protection projects endorsed for negotiation;
- Level and quality of support provided to community patrols;
- Effective administration of all grants.

Strategic Objective 4

Agreements based on partnerships between the community, government and industry

This strategic objective recognises the need to negotiate and develop agreements with Indigenous people based on trust, respect, equity and inclusiveness, which reflect agreed priorities and lead to sustainable results. The role of DIA is to facilitate the development of partnerships and relationships that lead to mutually beneficial outcomes.

We will achieve this objective by:

- (9) Developing agreements and partnerships to address service inequities and agreed priorities; and
- 10) Promoting the negotiation of agreements and partnerships between stakeholders.

We will measure the achievement of this objective by the;

- Number of activities endorsed to support the development of agreements that respond to specific needs and opportunities; and
- Input to ATSIC regional planning process; and

- Standard of support to the development of partnerships by key agencies, organisations with Indigenous people to address agreed priorities and service issues.

8 Organisation Development

DIA will create an organisational environment and business processes that will enable it to meet these strategic objectives. DIA recognises and values the contribution of its staff, and will support their endeavours with the required training, skills development and systems.

Organisation Development Objective

An organisation that has the capacity to meet its future directions and objectives.

We will achieve this objective by the:

- Application of our values and principles in the way we work;
- Engagement of staff in the development and implementation of DIA's strategic direction and priorities;
- Implementation of a communication program to share future directions, plans and strategies;
- Provision of ongoing training and development of staff;
- Provision of clear policies and devolved decision making;
- Development of a diverse, flexible, stable and motivated workforce, recognising the contribution of Indigenous people;
- Continual improvement and innovation in corporate governance, internal administration and business processes to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and customer focus; and
- Provision of a satisfying, safe and healthy workplace.

DIA will regularly review its strategic objectives and operating environment to ensure that strategies remain relevant and appropriate

DIA operations are governed by policies and practices of the public sector related to ethics, conduct and customer service. Additionally, DIA operates within a unique cultural environment. The following standards will guide our actions in these areas.

Customer Service

We will value and respect the needs of customers and will at all times endeavour to meet their service requirements.

Customers will be listened to and in all our dealings we will:

- be friendly, helpful and courteous;
- be open and honest; and
- be respectful to people's privacy and maintain appropriate confidentiality.

At all times, we will deal with issues raised in a prompt and efficient manner.

If customers are unhappy with the service provided, DIA has a customer complaints resolution to handle their service delivery issues.

Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct

In undertaking our responsibilities to achieve the mission and objectives of DIA, staff will be required to comply with the code of ethics that govern the public sector.

The code requires staff to observe the principles of justice, respect for persons and responsible care.

In addition, DIA's code of conduct requires all staff to comply with all rules and regulations in relation to ethical behaviour; and ensure all actions advance the services of DIA.

Indigenous Culture

We will respect traditional and contemporary Indigenous culture and will promote an improved understanding in the wider community.

DIA will observe Indigenous cultural practices and community protocols and respect these when dealing with Indigenous people.