



# Reconciliation Action Plan 2007

## The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC)

HREOC is Australia's national human rights institution. It is an independent statutory body established under the *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1986* (Cth) ('the HREOC Act').

HREOC has developed this Reconciliation Action Plan ('RAP') as part of its commitment to Reconciliation Australia's National Program of Action for Reconciliation.

## HREOC's Vision

An Australian society in which the human rights of all are respected, protected and promoted.

## HREOC's Mission

To provide leadership on human rights by:

- Building partnerships with others;
- Having a constructive relationship with government ;
- Being responsive to the community;
- Promoting reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- Promoting community ownership of human rights.

## HREOC's main responsibilities

- Public awareness and education
- Receiving unlawful discrimination and human rights
- Human rights compliance
- Policy and legislative development

These responsibilities are carried out by the President, Commissioners and staff of HREOC. There are approximately 90 HREOC staff.

HREOC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner also has particular responsibilities to protect and promote the rights of Indigenous Australians.

## **HREOC's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

In addition to its responsibilities to protect and promote the human rights of all Australians, HREOC has an overarching commitment to social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and will take Indigenous human rights into account when determining goals, strategies and projects across all HREOC portfolios.

## **HREOC's commitment to the Reconciliation Action Plan**

The RAP is designed as a 'living document' that makes clear commitments to action while anticipating the need for its goals and actions to develop and change to promote social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To assist in monitoring, developing and implementing the RAP, HREOC has established a RAP Committee.

The RAP:

- Lists what HREOC is doing and will continue to do within its current funding;
- Identifies initiatives that HREOC will develop;
- Commits HREOC to consultation with Indigenous community members and representative organisations to further develop the RAP; and
- Sets up a process for implementing and monitoring the RAP.

## 1 Cultural recognition and awareness

Objective: To ensure the principles of respect for Indigenous people and culture are observed by HREOC in all its work and that HREOC provides services that are accessible to Indigenous people and responsive to their needs.

Action	Timeframe	Performance Indicator
<p>1.1 Develop a HREOC 'Indigenous Protocol' outlining matters including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome to country, acknowledgement of country and acknowledgement of traditional owners and elders at public events;</li> <li>• Production of materials (including production in Indigenous languages as appropriate);</li> <li>• Warnings about images, transcripts or recordings of deceased Indigenous people;</li> <li>• Intellectual property ownership; and</li> <li>• Engagement with Indigenous communities and the standard of free, prior and informed consent in engagement.</li> </ul>	2007-8	A HREOC 'Indigenous Protocol' is produced, promoted, regularly updated and used by staff.
<p>1.2 Develop a HREOC 'Indigenous Engagement Toolkit' for HREOC use, listing items including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous organisations;</li> <li>• Current and previous Indigenous partners;</li> <li>• Indigenous languages;</li> <li>• A calendar of important Indigenous events and occasions; and</li> <li>• Other resources.</li> </ul>	2007-8	A HREOC 'Indigenous Engagement Toolkit' is produced, promoted, regularly updated and used by staff.
<p>1.3 Include an Indigenous cultural awareness component in staff induction.</p>	2007-	Staff induction includes Indigenous cultural awareness.
<p>1.4 Provide cultural awareness training for all staff.</p>	Ongoing	Cultural awareness training provided.

1.5 Measure accessibility of HREOC for Indigenous Australians by completing report on 'Accessible Government Services for All' for Indigenous Australians.	2007-8	Report completed and provided to RAP Committee for review.
1.6 Implement measures to improve accessibility of HREOC for Indigenous Australians based on the outcomes of the 'Accessible Government Services for All' review.	2008	Measures to improve accessibility implemented.
1.7 Provide culturally appropriate conciliation services for Indigenous people, including travel to regional and remote areas where appropriate.	Ongoing	Culturally appropriate conciliation services for Indigenous people provided.
1.8 Ensure that all Indigenous artworks and cultural products purchased, displayed or published by HREOC are created by Indigenous people.	Ongoing	Percentage of Indigenous artworks or cultural products that are created by Indigenous people.
1.9 Include Indigenous cultural awareness in HREOC Business Risk Management Policy as a factor relevant to HREOC's reputation and public image.	2007	Indigenous cultural awareness included in HREOC Business Risk Management Policy.

## 2 Education, promoting understanding and public discussion of Indigenous people's rights

Objective: To increase Indigenous and non-Indigenous people's knowledge of Indigenous Australian's human rights and intersecting rights relating to gender, disability, age, sexual preference and others rights protected by the HREOC Act.

Action	Timeframe	Performance Indicator
2.1 Deliver educational workshops and presentations on human rights, the role of HREOC, alternative dispute resolution and legal issues relevant to Indigenous people at Indigenous educational institutions and educational institutions at which Indigenous students are attending.	Ongoing	Workshops provided, presentations made.

<p>2.2 Deliver national information and education campaign for Indigenous complainants and support services, providing Indigenous specific complaints information sessions.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Information produced, promoted, distributed annually to Indigenous organisations, advocacy groups and community legal services.</p> <p>Information sessions provided to Indigenous organisations, advocacy groups and community legal services.</p>
<p>2.3 Enter into partnerships and consultation with Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations where appropriate, to promote understanding and compliance with intersecting rights issues affecting Indigenous Australians including disability discrimination, sex discrimination, age discrimination and other rights in HREOCA.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Consultations undertaken and partnerships entered into.</p>
<p>2.4 Produce educational materials for Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities providing information on Indigenous history, statistics and research.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Development of educational materials.</p>
<p>2.5 Provide information to Indigenous people about their human rights, including through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational material;</li> <li>• Speeches and participation in public forums; and</li> <li>• Responding to public inquiries.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Educational material provided, speeches made, inquiries answered.</p>
<p>2.6 Provide information to media on Indigenous issues through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of opinion pieces;</li> <li>• Responding to media inquiries;</li> <li>• Providing information to media; and</li> <li>• Developing relationships with Indigenous media.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Publication of opinion pieces; responses to inquiries; information provided; and relationships developed.</p>

<p>2.7 All units review existing and proposed projects, including speeches, publications, submissions and events, to ensure, where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of Indigenous people;</li> <li>• Inclusion of information relevant to Indigenous people; and</li> <li>• Inclusion of information about Indigenous people.</li> </ul>	<p>2007-</p>	<p>Projects include Indigenous participation; provide information relevant to Indigenous people; and provide information about Indigenous people.</p>
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### 3 Working for HREOC

Objective: To promote HREOC-wide opportunities for employment and training to Indigenous Australians, enhancing the work of HREOC and providing opportunities for employment and professional development for existing staff.

Action	Timeframe	Performance Indicator
<p>3.1 Ongoing implementation and development of HREOC's Indigenous Employment Strategy in consultation with Indigenous staff to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide greater employment opportunities within HREOC for Indigenous people;</li> <li>• Improve retention of Indigenous staff;</li> <li>• Support professional development of Indigenous staff through training and leadership programs, studies assistance and mentoring programs.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Indigenous Employment Strategy published on intranet and internet.</p> <p>Numbers of Indigenous staff employed.</p> <p>Numbers of Indigenous staff retained.</p> <p>Professional development of Indigenous staff provided.</p> <p>Report to RAP Committee on development of Indigenous Employment Strategy.</p>
<p>3.2 Identify positions in HREOC for which knowledge of Indigenous culture and community and an ability to communicate with Indigenous people are skills included in the selection criteria.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Positions identified.</p>

3.3	Promote opportunities for Indigenous trainees/law students to work across HREOC, including support of Indigenous law undergraduates under HREOC's intern program.	Ongoing	Number of trainees/interns.
3.4	Support work experience for Indigenous high school students.	Ongoing	Number of work-experience students.
3.5	Advertise staff vacancies in Indigenous media.	2007-	Number of positions advertised in Indigenous media.
3.6	Encourage Indigenous service providers, including designers and illustrators, to tender for project work (such tenders to be decided consistently with Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines).	2007-	Numbers of different Indigenous service providers tendering.

#### 4 Human Rights Compliance

Objective: To advance HREOC's work promoting, monitoring and reporting on compliance with standards of human rights for Indigenous Australians.

Action	Timeframe	Performance Indicator
4.1	Ongoing	Reports made by Social Justice Commissioner.
4.2	Ongoing	Numbers of HREOC activities which promote the human rights of Indigenous Australians.

- Submissions to inquiries;
- Media comment;
- Involvement in court proceedings as intervener or *amicus curiae*;
- Reports and research publications;
- Events such as workshops, seminars and conferences; and
- The work of the Social Justice Commissioner.

4.3 Continue to monitor complaints by Indigenous people of discrimination and any trends, particularly in systemic discrimination.	Ongoing	Monitoring conducted and results conveyed to Social Justice Commissioner in regular meetings.
4.4 Continue to report to United Nations human rights committees and participate in special procedures and other mechanisms as appropriate concerning Australia's compliance with human rights	2007	Reports made by, and participation of, the Social Justice and other Commissioners on behalf of HREOC.

## 5 Celebration and Commemoration

Objective: To celebrate and commemorate important Indigenous events and occasions.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>
5.1 Celebrate and commemorate Indigenous events by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inviting Indigenous speakers;</li> <li>• Publishing materials;</li> <li>• Participating in Indigenous community events; and</li> <li>• Holding events which promote Indigenous human rights.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Number of activities undertaken to celebrate and commemorate Indigenous events.
5.2 Celebrate and promote contributions of HREOC to the enhancement of Indigenous people's human rights.	Ongoing	Numbers of activities undertaken to celebrate and promote HREOC contributions.

## 6 Responsibility for Implementing the RAP

Objective: To ensure identified Actions are implemented across HREOC and that the RAP is effectively monitored, reported upon, developed and improved.

Action	Timeframe	Performance Indicator
<p>6.1 In addition to other specific actions listed in the RAP, the HREOC RAP Committee will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet every four months;</li> <li>• Receive reports from managers concerning RAP implementation;</li> <li>• Assist units with the implementation of the RAP;</li> <li>• Monitor implementation of the RAP and receive staff feedback;</li> <li>• Report to the Commission 6-monthly;</li> <li>• Prepare a report for the HREOC Annual Report on the implementation of the RAP; and</li> <li>• Consider how the RAP can be developed and make suggestions to HREOC for the improvement of the RAP.</li> </ul>	2007 -	<p>Number of RAP Committee meetings</p> <p>Numbers of Actions implemented</p> <p>Improvements to the RAP made.</p>
<p>6.2 The RAP Committee will develop a programme for consultation with the Indigenous community to receive feedback on, and input into, the RAP.</p>	2007	Programme for consultation developed.
<p>6.3 HREOC will implement the consultation programme developed by the RAP in 6.2 above.</p>	2007-8	Programme for consultation implemented.
<p>6.4 HREOC will include a report into the implementation of the RAP in its Annual Report</p>	2007-	Publication in the Annual Report.

<p>6.5 The Manager of each unit in HREOC will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the RAP actions relevant to their activities;</li> <li>• Ensure that the RAP actions are met as far as possible in the performance of the work of their unit; and</li> <li>• Report to the RAP Committee every four months as to the implementation of the RAP by their unit.</li> </ul>	<p>2007 -</p>	<p>Reporting to RAP committee.</p>
<p>6.6 The Actions identified in the RAP will be incorporated into HREOC's Workplace Diversity Plan</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>Incorporation of RAP Actions in the Workplace Diversity Plan</p>