



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by: Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Redirected to: Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety

Reference: Uncorrected Hansard Transcript pages 66–67

In relation to: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Framework

Hearing Date: 2 August 2024

QTON lodgement date: 5 August 2024

Answer Due Date: 8 August 2024

MISS NUTTALL: Yes. How is implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Framework progressing? Are we sort of on track to meet ...(indistinct)... [1.26.56]

Ms Rule: That is a—so broadly that framework is owned by the Chief Minister’s directorate, as having responsibility for employment matters across the ACT public service.

But in relation to the Community Services Directorate, I will take the opportunity to say that this is something that I am really proud of because we are running between six and a half and seven and a half per cent of our staff are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. And that number has remained relatively stable. And in an employment market where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members are being sought after by government organisations and non-organisations, I think it is really important that the directorate reflects the people that we serve. And the fact that we have been able to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at all levels of the organisation in such high numbers, as I said, is something that I will take the opportunity to put on the record and say that I am really proud of.

MISS NUTTALL: I am glad to hear that. Do you mind me also asking, this might need to just be in the CSD context. In senior leadership roles, do we have any information on what percentage of these are held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Ms Rule: I do not have a percentage. But across the Community Services Directorate, you will see I have got two very excellent senior leaders here at the table with me, Mr Moore and Mr Simpson,

who have made an extremely valuable contribution both to the directorate but in taking on a leadership role across the ACT public service. They will both blush at me saying this, but I think they have done an excellent job in leading Aboriginal staff in working on things like yarning circles, leading delegations to particular events, being involved in training and development opportunities for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff. And so, again I am very grateful for their leadership across the public service.

We are conscious of the cultural load that that puts on Aboriginal staff, and particularly our senior leaders. But, as I said, we have taken this very seriously in CSD, and I am very happy to have people of the calibre of Mr Simpson and Mr Moyle in our team.

Mick Gentleman MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Implementation of The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Framework (the Framework) is an ongoing commitment, that focusses holistically on our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff experience. Whilst all directorates have a responsibility to embed and deliver against the principles of the Framework, CMTEDD, through the Cultural Transformation Branch (CTB) takes the lead.

Activity delivered under the framework includes, but is not limited to:

- Delivery of a career and professional development program of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across the ACTPS. Programs were targeted at different classifications to ensure we are supporting the ethos of leaders at all levels. This includes:
 - Eight places for SOG C-A staff at the 2024 Indigenous Leadership Summit
 - Six places for SOG C-A staff on the Australian and New Zealand School of Government authentic leadership for the path ahead Program
 - Eight places for ASO4-6 staff on the Institute of Public Administration Australia First Nations emerging leaders Program
 - Four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to complete the Queensland University of Technology Public Sector Management Program
 - Two Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander staff to complete the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course.
- Establishment of new Cultural Advisor roles for individual directorates, increasing cultural capability of those directorates, and hiring additional or promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff into leadership roles.
- Four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff commenced the Vocational Employment Program in which participants complete both formalised and 'on the job' training and development and achieve permanency on successful completion of the program.
- The ACT government maintains a strong commitment to participation in the Garma Festival. This year focussing on senior executive participation to enhance cultural capability of the ACTPS Senior leadership group.
- Establishment a whole-of-government SharePoint site that is accessible to all ACTPS staff which included materials aimed at building cultural capability and competency. Key resources include:

- A 'Cultural load in the ACTPS' resource to educate the ACTPS workforce on what cultural load is, how to reduce it, and how to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues who may be experiencing high cultural load.
- A 'Building Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability' site that centralises information on cultural protocols, language guides, professional development, systemic racism, cultural advisor contacts and more.
- Inclusive recruitment guidance to support effective hiring of people from diverse backgrounds.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing resource to support staff access culturally safe wellbeing services.

On 30 June 2024 the ACT Public Service (ACTPS) workforce data showed 2.2% representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The majority of ACTPS directorates have achieved an increased representation compared to workforce data at 30 June 2023 and some directorates have exceeded the 3% representation target and are steadily increasing each year.

On 30 June 2024 the ACTPS workforce data showed 2% of the Executive Officer cohort identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature: 

Date: 30/8/2024

By the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety, Mick Gentleman MLA