



ACT
Government

Chief Minister and Treasury

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ACT Legislative Assembly
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Dear Dr Bourke

Submission to the Inquiry into ACT Public Service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment

We are pleased to make a submission to the *Inquiry into ACT Public Service (ACTPS) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment* on behalf of the ACTPS.

The ACTPS is committed to respect, equity and diversity and seeks to draw on the expertise and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The contributions to public policy and service delivery made by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to our community are highly valued.

We thank you and the Committee for granting an extension to the submission date, which has enabled us to incorporate additional information that we hope the Committee will find useful. This information is to be included in the *2012-13 State of the Service Report*, which is to be published in September 2013.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cappie-Wood
Head of Service

28th August 2013

Andrew Kefford
Commissioner for Public Administration



**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**ACT PUBLIC SERVICE SUBMISSION
TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING,
COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICE**

**INQUIRY INTO ACT PUBLIC SERVICE ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT**

August 2013

Presented by:

Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood, Head of Service &
Mr Andrew Kefford, Commissioner for Public Administration

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ACT Public Service Submission to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing, Community and Social Service Inquiry into ACT Public Service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment

Introduction

Working in the ACT Public Service

The ACT Public Service (ACTPS) is a diverse organisation of almost 20,000 people with responsibilities that range from Namadgi National Park to green and brown-field development fronts, from buses to fire engines, from municipal services to the health, education and justice systems, and from supporting the most vulnerable people in our community to fostering business development and innovation. As such, it offers a uniquely broad range of job opportunities within a single enterprise.

The ACTPS is committed to attracting, developing and retaining a diverse workforce characterised by a positive reputation founded on the respect and courtesy we extend to our colleagues and clients.

The size and scope of the ACT means ACTPS employees are able not only to develop and implement policies and programs which directly benefit the ACT citizenry, but also to see the benefits of their work in their community.

Having a public service that both reflects and values different viewpoints is an important factor in delivering effective services to the community.

It is similarly important that the ACTPS reflect the community it serves, and is well placed to anticipate and meet the needs of the community and governments of the day.

ACT Public Service as an employer

As an employer, the ACTPS strives to achieve a diverse and skilled workforce where individuals are valued for their differences, experiences, knowledge and backgrounds and the contribution they can make to the government of the day's agenda.

With this in mind, the ACTPS has a particular focus on seeking the expertise and insights that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can provide to improve Government policies and services both to their own communities and the whole ACT community.

The main source of obligations and guidance in this context is the **ACT Public Service Employment Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People** (the employment strategy), which is co-ordinated by the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate (CMTD) under the auspices of the Head of Service and Commissioner for Public Administration. The employment strategy forms an integral part of the **Respect, Equity and Diversity Framework** (RED framework), which describes and facilitates a workplace that enables equal employment opportunities for all people and highlights the fundamental importance of each ACTPS employee acting in a way that respects the inherent dignity of the person. The employment strategy is an important pillar of the RED framework in its diversity aspect as it requires actions from the ACTPS to develop and maintain a positive and respectful work culture for its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Implementation of the employment strategy across the ACTPS is the responsibility of all directorates and agencies. A particularly important role is, however, played by Community Services Directorate (CSD). As the directorate with portfolio responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, there is a wealth of knowledge and experience in CSD that informs and bolsters the employment strategy. This arrangement enables the ACTPS to draw on increased resources to give the employment strategy more reach, as indicated throughout the document.

This submission provides detail around the aims, actions and indicators that make up the employment strategy, and how these have been implemented across the ACTPS. As will be demonstrated, overall there is a high level of compliance by directorates with what the employment strategy requires. However, while there have been some good results against the indicators, the measures have not quite yielded the outcomes sought, particularly in relation to employment numbers, and further endeavour and changes will be required if we are to achieve the targets set.

Departing from the order of the terms of reference, the submission looks at data collection and monitoring, specifically the high level indicators in the employment strategy, and the story they convey. It canvasses what might be missing from this story that prevents a comprehensive picture of how the ACTPS is progressing and participating in improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes.

With implementation and data in focus, the submission looks at the effectiveness of the employment strategy and other attraction and retention initiatives around employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including discussion on the successes and shortfalls to date. It examines the current workforce environment and challenges to propose possible new directions or areas of increased focus to better achieve the aims of the employment strategy.

There is no specific section on the experience of other jurisdictions. Relevant comparisons feature throughout the document. In developing and implementing the employment strategy, the ACTPS has consulted and continues to draw on the experience of other jurisdictions, but it is the Commonwealth that provides the most useful information given that we share the local market for public servants. That said, there are a number of career paths offered by the ACTPS that are not available in the Australian Public Service – at least in Canberra – and this is one area of comparative advantage the ACTPS should continue to emphasise.

In summary, the submission aims to provide a frank assessment of the implementation of the employment strategy, the achievements and challenges that have arisen in its implementation and an indication of where the ACTPS might focus in the remaining two years of the strategy's initial phase to expand on the level of success to date.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (Elected Body) has been consulted in relation to an advanced draft of this submission. The Elected Body suggested changes, additions and new initiatives that could assist with furthering the aims of the employment strategy. These have been incorporated into this submission. As always, we are grateful for the Elected Body's continuing interest, encouragement and contributions and look forward to continuing to work even more closely with it to achieve the ACTPS's employment goals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Background

There are several projects and documents that have informed the employment strategy and should be borne in mind as they provide important context to what the ACTPS is trying to achieve.

The Council of Australian Governments National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation

The Council of Australian Governments National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation was signed by the former Chief Minister, Mr Jon Stanhope in January 2009. The National Partnership provided for a national target of at least 2.6% of public sector employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across all classifications by 2015 (noting that jurisdiction-specific targets are to be developed and agreed, recognising that the proportion of indigenous population varies significantly across states and territories).

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

In April 2009 the Australian Government announced Australia's official support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration).

The purpose of the Declaration is to outline and uphold the rights of indigenous peoples throughout the world, and it highlights (among other matters) the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain their own institutions, traditions and cultures and the right to develop their economic and social needs and aspirations as a group.

The ACT Government is obliged to ensure that it enacts programs or policies that support the intent of the Declaration.

Respect, Equity and Diversity Framework (RED Framework)

In line with the National Partnership Agreement, and the UN Declaration, the Chief Minister endorsed a revision of the *2006 Equity and Diversity Framework* as a priority for the Commissioner for Public Administration in 2010.

Sections 39- 41 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* identify whole-of-government management obligations in regard to the establishment of an equity and diversity framework for the ACTPS. A key change to the framework was the inclusion of the concept of respect

and what it means to give and receive respect in the workplace. The revised framework highlighted that the ACTPS aims to create a positive work environment that promotes respect, equity and diversity across the Service.

The framework also included workforce statistics relevant to respect, equity and diversity that assist in identifying workforce challenges for the ACTPS. At that point in time, the metrics supported the development of specific employment strategies for people with disabilities and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The RED framework was developed through extensive research and wide consultation across the ACTPS, the then Management Council and the then Human Resources Council. It aimed to improve the outcomes in employment for ACTPS employees and applicants for positions in the ACTPS and to build on the strategies that were established in the previous Equity and Diversity framework.

Specifically the RED framework:

- expanded on the previous Equity and Diversity framework to include respect, incorporating a positive work culture;
- outlined why a workplace culture that is respectful, courteous, fair and that values individual differences is a core aspect of building a positive workplace culture;
- provided the legislative obligations in relation to respect, equity and diversity;
- defined respect, equity and diversity;
- outlined the workforce challenges for the ACTPS in regards to respect, equity and diversity in three key areas:
 - 'Improving our capability' which has a strong focus on improving ACTPS data capability and the capability of employees;
 - 'retaining employees' which includes ensuring our employees are informed and promoting and supporting staff to achieve work/life balance; and
 - 'attracting employees' which discusses the development of specific employment strategies and removing barriers to employment;
- determined a process to monitor and evaluate our performance against respect, equity and diversity;
- provided an action plan and a range of actions to be undertaken in the three key areas outlined above, and provided a component for directorates to incorporate their own entity-specific actions; and

- provided Employment Strategies for People with Disability and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Essentially, the purpose of the RED framework is to provide a workplace that enables equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees and highlights the fundamental importance of each ACTPS employee acting in a way that respects the inherent dignity of the person. It supports this approach and implements actions to assist in developing and maintaining a positive, respectful work culture that ensures equity and diversity for all employees.

ACT Public Service Employment Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2011-2015

The ACT Government believes it has an ethical imperative, as well as an obligation under the National Partnership and the United Nations Declaration to increase its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment rate.

Consultations occurred with the Elected Body and across the Government in the development of the employment strategy and its associated targets and mechanisms to measure improvements. This included the development of the high level indicator tool provided in the employment strategy, which is further outlined in this submission.

The employment strategy was launched in April 2011 as a cornerstone of the RED framework.

The vision of the employment strategy is: For the ACT Public Service to be seen as an attractive workplace for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to seek employment, and to more than double, by 2015, the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, across the Service.

The employment strategy includes a target of more than doubling the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed across the ACTPS from 176 (0.9%) as at 30 June 2010 to 407 (2%) by 2015.

It should be noted however, the ACTPS makes an ongoing commitment to the values and actions outlined in the employment strategy, and intends to provide for better attraction and retention for a period longer than prescribed by the life of the employment strategy.

Comments on the Terms of Reference

The implementation of the ACT Public Service employment strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Head of Service and Commissioner for Public Administration are generally satisfied with the extent of implementation at the whole-of-government and agency level. Agencies have varied in their approach to implementation and some have had the opportunity (and the need) to take up more of the actions than others, but overall, the ACTPS has successfully incorporated the objectives of the employment strategy into its work environment.

There is top level support for the employment strategy, reflected in its regular appearance on the Strategic Board agenda, and that there is a dedicated sub-committee of the Strategic Board to oversee progress on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in the ACTPS, as well as policy and service issues in the broader community.

There are also dedicated resources allocated to the employment strategy through the budget, and a senior officer within CMTD has been employed to co-ordinate both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and People with a Disability Employment Strategies. In addition, six agencies have made internal budget decisions to recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers.

On 1 July 2013, CSD established a new Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. This Office will focus on policy development and provide advice across government on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. Although the office will not have a specific service delivery function it will, where appropriate assist with the facilitation of community access for service delivery functions.

Reports on the implementation of the employment strategy (as part of RED framework reporting requirements) are provided by all agencies, and is now included as part of the *State of the Service Report* – a copy of the 2012 is available at:

http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/353727/stateofservice2012.pdf

The 2013 *State of the Service Report* will be published in September.

Detail on each of the major initiatives undertaken in this context is provided below.

<i>Attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work in the ACTPS & to make the ACTPS an attractive workplace for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</i>
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Attraction and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACTPS is a key objective of the employment strategy.

The take-up of attraction and retention initiatives has been supported at all levels across the Service. Examples of actions undertaken by agencies to implement attraction aspects of the employment strategy follow.

Recruitment

In conjunction with the release of the employment strategy and the *ACT Public Service Employment Strategy for People with Disability*, amendments were made to the *Public Sector Management Standards 2006* to allow for the identification of positions.

Similar to vacancies that require a mandatory qualification, identified positions are exclusively provided for people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or as a person with disability. It is important to note that these identified positions are not limited to entry level positions or to jobs where the key duties involve working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or people with disability.

Since the amendments came into effect, 18 identified positions have been created across the ACTPS. Indications from directorates are that identified positions are likely to increase as they have been successful in attracting larger fields of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates.

Apart from identified positions, agencies have also implemented more targeted measures to attract more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates, such as advertising in dedicated publications such as the Koori Mail, and forming links with the community to increase awareness of opportunities within the ACTPS.

In order to support these processes, the *ACTPS Recruitment Guidelines* are being amended to include specific information around recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, among other things, such as the use of identified positions, having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as panel members and conducting cross-cultural training.

Entry level programs

In the specific area of employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the ACTPS is particularly supportive of dedicated entry level programs to provide employment opportunities for individuals entering the workforce for the first time, and economic freedom for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

ACTPS Graduate program

The ACTPS Graduate Program aims to attract applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through targeted marketing strategies including promotion through:

- local and regional university careers days;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander centres in all Australian universities; and
- Indigenous Jobs Australia.

In addition to generalist streams in public policy and public administration, the program provides the use of specialist streams to specifically engage graduates with skills in engineering, human resources, information and communications technology, social work, and project management. The Health and Education and Training Directorates administer their own programs for graduate nurses and teachers.

The ACTPS Graduate Program is further enhanced with a comprehensive Learning & Development component which now provides participants with a higher level qualification - Graduate Certificate in Public Administration - delivered by the Australia and New Zealand School of Government Institute of Governance at the University of Canberra. This qualification can be matriculated towards a MBA qualification.

Graduates are promoted to at least an ASO5 or similar level at the successful completion of the program.

Planning is underway for the 2015 program to:

- further increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by providing a number of identified positions;
- provide for mentoring during assessment and duration of the program; and
- focus on engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students Centres at the University of Canberra and the Australian National University.

Australian Government Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) Cadetship program

The Indigenous Cadetship Support program is funded by DEEWR. The program offers University students a paid 12 week work period, with guaranteed 12 month period of employment (at a level to be determined) upon the successful completion of the program.

The ACTPS has been registered as an employer for the program. CMTD is currently coordinating meetings with DEEWR and directorates who have expressed interest to commence the program in 2013. The program will be evaluated in 2014.

Community Services Directorate Indigenous Traineeship program

The Traineeship Program aims to offer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into ACTPS careers following the successful completion of a training program and workplace commitments over a twelve month period.

Participants who successfully complete the program and meet their workplace commitments during the twelve months may be advanced to a higher position (an ASO2) in the ACTPS without a further merit selection process. Participants are advanced within the agency where they undertook their traineeship.

<i>Retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the ACTPS</i>

Retention initiatives are aimed at developing the cultural maturity and sensitivity of the ACTPS to ensure it is a welcoming and pleasant environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, as well as implementing specific programs to further enhance the skills and capabilities of these employees to encourage representation in senior ranks. Details of specific programs in this area follow.

Induction

Managers and supervisors receive a RED framework package upon appointment to the ACTPS and are expected to adhere to the values outlined in the RED framework and the *ACTPS Code of Conduct*.

CMTD is currently redeveloping a whole-of-government package for all staff inducted into the ACTPS which will incorporate the RED framework, Learning and Development calendar of events, dates of cultural significant events and information about cultural leave.

Furthermore, CMTD is developing a toolkit for managers, supervisors and colleagues of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff which aims to provide information and assistance to support the attraction and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACTPS.

Cross-cultural training

An ACT Government cross-cultural training program has been developed and is listed on the Shared Services Training Calendar. Training is delivered by the Yurauna Centre at CIT.

ACTPS Indigenous Network

The Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs within the Community Services Directorate is discussing options to revitalise the ACTPS Indigenous Staff Network.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff need to be consulted as to the type of network that they would like. Some options for consideration may be a social network providing peer support and mentoring for the membership; one that inputs into the development of policy and service delivery; or a combination of both.

Five Agencies reported having an agency based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee network.

Promoting and observing dates and events of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Individual Directorates actively promote and encourage participation at events of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, notable examples include:

- inclusion in the Toolkit for Managers, Supervisors and colleagues of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff;
- supporting community to promote and celebrate significant events such as National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, National Reconciliation Week and National Aboriginal Children's Day;
- collating a calendar of NAIDOC events for broad distribution across the Service and Community; and
- funding of certain NAIDOC celebrations from Cultural Grants.

Mentoring, buddy and coaching programs

A successful example of evolving mentoring practices in the ACTPS currently rests with ACT Health who have been providing mentoring to the ACT Public Service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Trainees for their 2012 Traineeship Program. ACT Health staff attended CIT Solutions in 2012 for the Employment Training Outcomes course in Mentoring Indigenous Trainees. To date two trainees have been mentored with success.

ACT Health have indicated relationships that have been formed throughout the mentoring process have been built on trust and honesty, where mentors have provided advice to trainees based on knowledge and experience that they have gained in their professional career, and that the trainees can use to form their own sound judgements and decisions.

Furthermore, ACT Health is undertaking a Mentoring program, for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and staff with disability, with commitments to the funding of 10 staff members to attend and participate in a Mentor course designed by CIT Solutions specific to ACT Health requirements. The prospective mentors are aware of the level of commitment and are motivated to providing mentoring for new and existing staff within their personal and professional capacities.

ACT Health aims to establish a bimonthly network meeting where discussions can be held in confidence and support to mentors provided. By offering mentoring services ACT Health aims to get the message out to its staff to participate in a program that is valuable and rewarding. ACT Health has further long term aims with the program, including the possibility that persons who have been a mentee will return to become mentors.

If the ACT Health mentoring program is successful, CMTD will be interested in further investigating a whole-of-government model in this area.

Career development

As a demonstration of intent and to kick start awareness of training opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, with the launch of the employment strategy CMTD offered funded places in the Executive Leadership and Future Leaders Development programs. These are the lead whole-of-government training programs which foster leadership capability in high performing staff. To date, eight Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff have undertaken the programs. Out of a total participation of 243 staff, participation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff equate to 3.3%.

Data collection, monitoring and reporting mechanisms

The employment strategy contains six high level indicators that inform views regarding implementation and progress. An analysis of what each indicator is conveying and its limitations is provided below, followed by commentary on what might be looked at further in the last two years of the employment strategy to improve results and meet employment targets.

It is worth noting at the outset that given the relatively small sample size, a change which is modest in absolute terms can have a seemingly more significant change in percentage terms.

Employment Strategy - High Level Indicators

Indicator No. 1

Reports on the achievements of the employment strategy are provided to the Chief Minister in accordance with the annual progress report requirements under the RED framework. These reports will also be provided to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body.

After the first year, reporting on the RED framework became part of the Commissioner for Public Administration's Annual State of the Service Report (the Report). The Report is a public document available on the CMTD website. The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body have referred to this Report, given progress in implementation of the employment strategy is a regular topic at the Body's estimates-style hearings.

All agencies have complied with the reporting requirements.

Indicator No. 2

The difference in representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across ACTPS classifications and levels, as measured by average remuneration is progressively reduced.

Group	June 2010	June 2011	June 2012	June 2013
Indigenous Identified Staff	\$	\$	\$	\$
Average Salary	66,390.73	64,059.26	68,473.44	71,831.34
All Staff Average Salary	\$	\$	\$	\$
	71,669.28	73,617.04	76,856.16	80,112.30
% Difference	-7.37%	-12.98%	-10.91%	-10.34%

*Average Salaries are based on a standardised rate where annual salaries are adjusted to reflect a 75 hour fortnight (this allows an accurate comparison between roles which have differing standard full-time hours, providing a true value-of-time comparison)

The difference in average remuneration has increased overall since June 2011. However, there is a decreasing trend over the last three years since June 2011.

The likely reason for the result is that the greatest area of growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment is in entry level positions, noting that 20 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees at the ASO 2 level were recruited in 2011 and 2013. The lower salaries representing a larger percentage of employees in the small Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pool creates a larger disparity in wages against the rest of the ACTPS.

Pay gap will continue to be an important indicator but needs to be considered alongside the spread of classifications and separation data which is discussed below. CMTD will continue to monitor these measures, with a specific aim of employing more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals at both higher level administrative and senior officer level.

Indicator No. 3

The number and percentage share of ACTPS permanent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees who leave the service is progressively reduced.

Group	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Indigenous Identified Staff Separations	16	16	24	30
Total Separations	1060	1399	1323	1097
Proportion Indigenous (% of total)	1.51%	1.14%	1.81%	2.73%

The increase in identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff separations over the 2011-13 period reported in the above table is concerning, although the number is small within the number of total separations. When combined with the pay gap information, it suggests that the ACTPS is losing its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at the middle levels of the Service.

CMTD will seek more information on exit survey data from directorates. This information will assist to target improvements to provide support in the areas of career pathways, mentoring and capability building through learning and development in order to better retain staff and prepare them for promotion within the Service. Without this information, it is not possible to speculate on the reasons for the increase in separations.

More detailed exit survey data would also provide information on why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are choosing to leave the ACTPS to take up positions in either the Australian Public Service or the private sector. It is possible, for example, that the number of separations may also reflect that the ACTPS is developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who then choose to move onto different roles and opportunities, albeit with other employers.

Additionally, a move away from a traditional 'one position for life' favoured by previous generations, and the current trend of regular position changes is a phenomenon across the ACTPS.

If the ACTPS is seen as an employer of choice it is possible that the staff who have been identified in the separations table above will return to the ACTPS in different and possibly higher level positions later in their career, which will bring a broader skill and knowledge base and assist in building capabilities within the Service.

Indicator No. 4

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the ACTPS have learning and development/career plans.

All agencies reported on this indicator positively, but anecdotal evidence suggests that this is because nearly all performance mechanisms throughout the ACTPS require statements around learning and development needs and career aspirations.

In order to increase the usefulness of this indicator, the CMTD is looking to do some qualitative analysis of learning and development/career plans, and whether they are meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island staff.

Data relating to learning, development and career pathways to be published in the *2012-13 State of the Service Report* is included in Attachment A.

Indicator No. 5

The percentage share of the ACTPS composed of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people progressively increases from 176 employees (or 0.9%) in 2010 to 407 (or 2%) by 2015.

Group	June 2010	June 2011	June 2012	June 2013
Indigenous Identified Staff Headcount	177	214	220	257
Total Headcount	19137	19733	20432	21089
Proportion Indigenous (% of total)	0.92%	1.08%	1.08%	1.22%

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees has progressively increased since the implementation of the employment strategy. While this is a pleasing result, higher numbers at this stage of the life of the strategy were anticipated, with the shortfall at around 0.2% to 0.3%. In headcount terms, a further 150 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will need to be employed in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 periods to meet the target. Given the figures recorded to date for indicators 3, 4 and 6, attraction initiatives would appear to be succeeding, however mechanisms to improve retention rates need further consideration. Possible areas of focus for future directions are discussed under the

“effectiveness of attraction and retention programs” discussion at the conclusion of this submission.

The whole of government staff survey, to be conducted in the second half of 2013, will provide a further opportunity for individuals to identify as being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. It is often the case that individuals are sometimes more willing to self identify in anonymous surveys than they are, for example, at the time of applying for a position. An exercise conducted during 2012 inviting staff to identify themselves as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people drew only a small response.

Indicator No. 6

The number and percentage share of new ACTPS permanent employees recruited to the ACTPS who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is progressively increased.

Group	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Indigenous Identified Staff Commencements	16	25	16	25
Total Commencements	593	673	708	577
Proportion Indigenous (% of total)	2.70%	3.71%	2.26%	4.33%

Since the launch of the employment strategy, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people recruited to permanent jobs in the ACTPS has increased. This would suggest that in the context of tightening vacancies, agencies are still pursuing the aims of the employment strategy with a level of success.

As outlined at Indicator No.3, retaining these permanent employees is paramount to a successful employment strategy, and more broadly, to the intent of the employment strategy.

Other Data collection / Reporting mechanisms

Data collection

Data collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the ACTPS is currently provided by Shared Services HR Reporting. Specific data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is available when an employee identifies as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person at the point of employment. However, the HR21 staff management system has recently been amended to allow staff to personally update their diversity status at any given time.

State of the Service Report

The State of the Service Report provides an account of the management of the ACTPS and focuses on the exercise of the Commissioner for Public Administration's statutory powers and functions under the PSM Act.

The workforce profile utilised the HR reporting resources of Shared Services to provide year-on-year comparisons for the past five years. Shared Services HR reporting has access to data for close to 95% of the ACT Public Sector workforce.

The 2011-12 State of the Service Report rationalised reporting by combining the Commissioner's Annual Report, the whole-of-government Agency Survey, the ACTPS Workforce Profile and reporting on the RED framework.

The first of these combined reports was tabled in September 2012 and will continue to provide reporting on the RED framework.

Relevant data from the *2012-13 State of the Service Report*, which will be published in September 2013, is provided at Attachment A.

ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Estimates-style Hearings

The ACTPS regularly participates in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Estimate-style Hearings.

In April 2013, Members of CMTD provided an update on the implementation of the employment strategy at the Elected Body hearings, and provided further written answers to Questions Taken on Notice during and following the hearings.

ACT Government Budget Estimates

Reporting on the RED framework has been an accountability indicator for CMTD in the 2010-11, 2011-12 & 2012-13 Budgets. This accountability indicator will remain until the program ends in 2015, it is anticipated indicators relating to the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will continue beyond the review of the RED Framework which will shortly be undertaken.

The effectiveness of current ACT Government attraction and retention programs

The Head of Service and Commissioner for Public Administration are of the view that the implementation of the employment strategy has produced good results in terms of awareness, commitment by agencies and attraction initiatives, particularly at the entry level. It is promoted as a high priority by the Strategic Board and there has been significant effort applied by directorates to implement the objectives. The reporting reflects an appropriate level of diligence around the requirements of the employment strategy.

Nevertheless, in the face of a deliberately challenging target, achievements in relation to the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees at this the midpoint of the employment strategy would suggest the need for continued effort by all directorates. The ACTPS as a whole, led by CMTD and the Strategic Board, will continue to focus effort on the identification of other initiatives or measures that could be adopted to improve on our current achievements.

The proportion of the ACTPS workforce composed of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has progressively increased from 176 employees (0.9%) in 2010 to 257 (1.22%) at 30 June 2013.

Identified positions

Amending the *Public Sector Management Standards 2006* to include *identified positions* has been a successful initiative in that agencies are aware of its potential use and there have been 18 identified recruitments. CMTD will continue to educate and inform directorates about processes available to identify positions in individual recruitments, as well as in bulk rounds of recruitment, such as the annual ACT Public Service Graduate Program, to further increase their reach.

It is worth noting in passing, however, that because the position must be identified at the time of advertising, even if an agency has done its research in terms of the position's attractiveness to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, there is a significant risk that the job will not be in an area that the potential indigenous employment candidate pool can or wants to supply.

CMTD has been looking into other ways of making the recruitment pathways easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. One approach which may have merit involves the application of more flexible short listing and selection processes. This approach can operate alongside, as well as in isolation from, the identification of positions. One issue which requires more consideration is the need to balance such processes through the overarching merit principles which underpin all ACTPS recruitment.

Recruitment

Community Services Directorate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship

There is continued support across the ACTPS for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship program.

Seven agencies created placements for 20 trainees who commenced the program in August 2012. The Trainees participated in a Certificate III of Government and attend the Job Ready Program. Initially 21 people commenced the program, with 13 people completing the required qualifications. 11 people graduated from the program in NAIDOC Week 2013, and all graduated trainees are employed at the ASO2 level in the ACTPS.

ACTPS Graduate program

The promotion of the ACTPS Graduate program has proven to be effective as the overall number of applications has risen for the 2013 and 2014 cohorts, including applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The promotional aspect has been effective in not only increasing awareness of the program, but also the ACTPS as an employment opportunity. For example, enquires and interest in the ACTPS regarding the graduate program and possible cadetship opportunities have been received from as far afield as Queensland.

Since 2011 there have been a total of 1930 applications for the graduate program, including 15 from students who identify as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. A total of 254 applicants have progressed to be assessed at the interview stage with a total of four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants invited to this stage of the process. Two of the four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants have been offered positions in the program over the three years (2011-2013). To put percentage figures of participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into perspective, the four individuals equates to 1.6% of total people shortlisted.

Thirty-nine positions will be filled for the 2014 cohort. A record number of 811 applications were received for the intake, with 145 applicants being shortlisted to attend assessment centres which concluded in the first week of August 2013. This includes two students who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. To put percentage figures of participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into perspective, the two individuals equates to 1.4% of total people shortlisted.

The success of the program has been highlighted by an Aboriginal graduate from the 2012 cohort who has already established a career pathway, and is currently acting at a Senior Officer Grade C level in the Community Services Directorate.

While entry level programs are contributing to increase in employment numbers, and raising awareness of the ACTPS as an employer, we continue to examine ways to maximise opportunities for individuals completing traineeship and other programs to secure permanent employment. This is an issue of general application across the ACTPS and as such is not specifically related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, but reflects the

tightening employment opportunities across the ACTPS. It reflects a reluctance from directorates to commit to ongoing employment as staffing budgets are being reduced.

CMTD is looking at ways to address this, including allowing agencies to offer a position somewhere in the agency (rather than a specific business unit) or elsewhere in the ACTPS. That said, some candidates might be primarily interested in a particular job or work area rather than a broader offer. It is also important for directorates to take into account the likely staff turnover rates at the ASO 5/6 and equivalent levels. The ACT Government has made a commitment to expand the number of entry level training places by 10 per cent per annum.

Recruitment methods

The Elected Body has regularly highlighted the importance of reaching out to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to market the ACTPS as an attractive place to work and emphasising its immediacy to the people it serves. They have suggested that forming links beyond the university centres with other groups to tell the stories of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have progressed in the ACTPS to build word-of-mouth and currency in the community would be beneficial to achieving greater levels of indigenous employment across the ACTPS.

A further suggestion around recruitment methodology was to think of ways other than addressing selection criteria in writing as a means of applying to work in the ACTPS. Criticism of using responses to selection criteria as a first step in recruitment is not new, particularly for jobs where high level writing skills are not required. This will be investigated further as part of the review of the whole-of-government recruitment guidelines currently taking place.

Targeting the middle

As indicated earlier in this submission, although the overall number of indigenous staff is increasing, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff leaving the ACTPS workforce is an area of concern. Through an increased focus on mentoring and re-establishing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee network along with better information gathered through exit survey data, it is hoped that a greater level of support can be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by providing more information about career opportunities and ready access to a human resource that can discuss issues and provide advice.

Another idea put forward by the Elected Body is to have a secondment program. This would provide an avenue into the ACTPS particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the community sector, who would have years of experience that would make them unsuitable for the current entry level programs, but who need some public service experience to be competitive in open selection processes.

Cross-cultural training

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross-cultural training workshop has been conducted four times with a total of 57 participants. Cross-cultural training is being scheduled to take place at a Strategic Board meeting during 2013. Additionally, some agencies are conducting in-house training to ensure their staff have ready access to learning opportunities.

However, while interest in training increases and enrolment numbers in courses are on the rise, the ACTPS is interested in undertaking targeted work on their effectiveness, particularly given that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff retention may be an issue. Also, while training is a good start, the ACTPS is interested in forming closer links with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to gain better understanding of its culture and customs and actively promote the ACTPS as an attractive employer where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can develop professionally while serving their community.

ATTACHMENT A

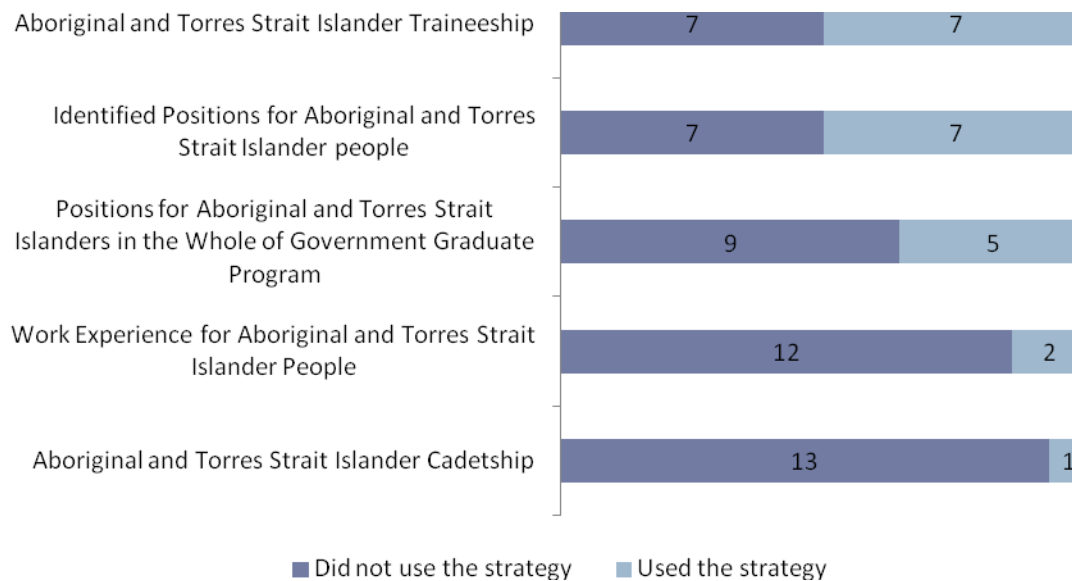
The information contained in this attachment will be presented by the Commissioner for Public Administration in the *2012-13 State of the Service Report* which will be published from September 2013.

This data is derived from the 2012-13 Workforce Profile for the ACT Public Service and the 2012-13 Agency Survey. Where applicable, the questions from the Agency Survey are included to accompany the data below.

1. ACTPS diversity (2008-09 to 2012-13)

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders					
FTE	140.4	139.4	175.2	186.0	216.7
Headcount	154	153	193	202	238
Proportion of workforce	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%

2. Strategies to Attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

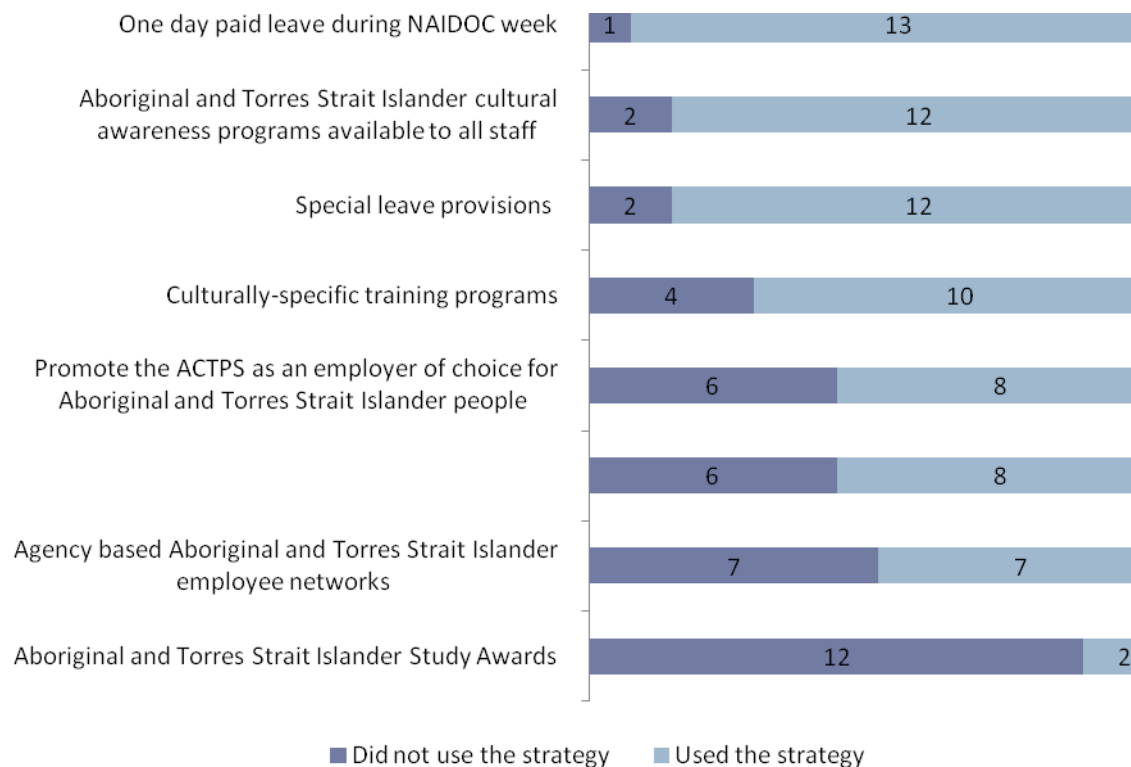


Question 45. Did your Agency use the any of the following strategies to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the ACT Public Service? If yes, how many? Base: All respondents, n=14.

Strategies to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People – Tracking

	Used the strategy		Did not use the strategy	
	2011/2012	2012/2013	2011/2012	2012/2013
Identified Positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	9	7	6	7
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traineeship	7	7	8	7
Positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Whole of Government Graduate Program	3	5	12	9
Work Experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People	4	2	11	12
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship	0	1	15	13
Total	15	14	15	14

3. Strategies to Retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

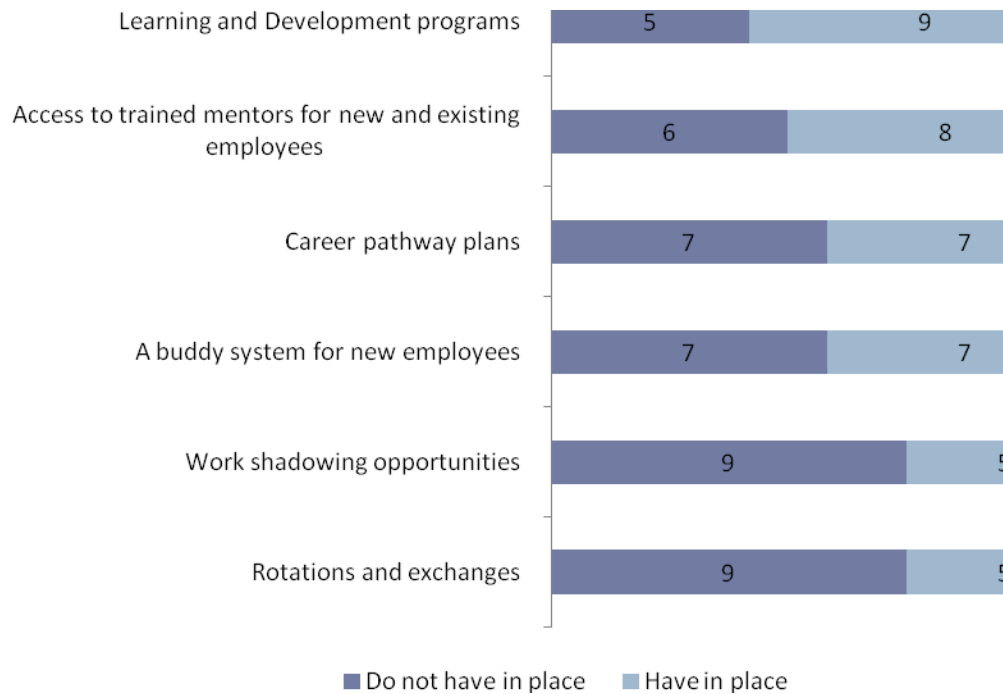


Question 46. Does your Agency use any of the following strategies to retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT Public Service? Base: All respondents, n=14.

Strategies to Retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People – Tracking

	Used the strategy		Did not use the strategy	
	2011/201	2012/201	2011/201	2012/201
	2	3	2	3
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Study Awards	2	2	13	12
Agency based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee networks	5	7	10	7
Advertise employment opportunities through a variety of media sources including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander publications/media	6	8	9	6
Promote the ACTPS as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	6	8	9	6
Culturally-specific training programs	9	10	6	4
Special leave provisions	14	12	1	2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness programs available to all staff	9	12	6	2
One day paid leave during NAIDOC week	14	13	1	1
Total	15	14	15	14

4. Further Strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees



47. Does your Agency have any of the following in place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees? Base: All respondents, n=14.

Further Strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees – Tracking

	Have in place		Do not have in place	
	2011/2012	2012/2013	2011/2012	2012/2013
Access to trained mentors for new and existing employees	5	8	10	6
A buddy system for new employees	6	7	9	7
Rotations and exchanges	1	5	14	9
Work shadowing opportunities	6	5	9	9
Learning and Development programs	10	9	5	5
Career pathway plans	6	7	9	7
Total	15	14	15	14

5. Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers

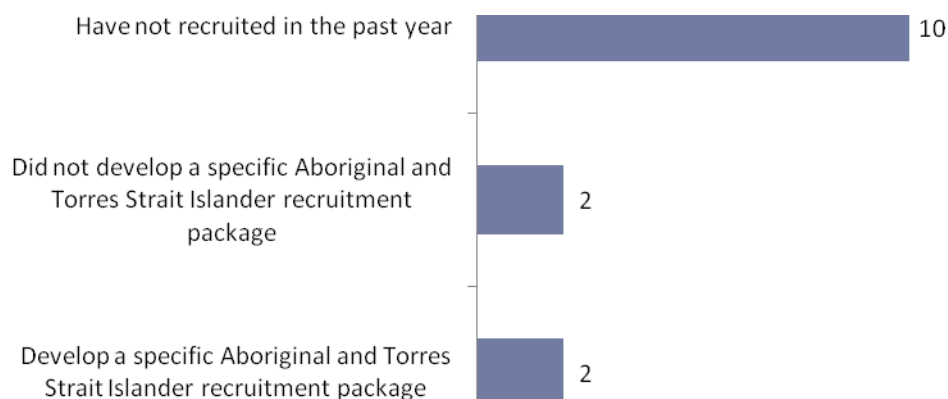
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Of those who completed the survey, Five Agencies recruited a total of eight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers. Further, four Agencies report they arranged for an Aboriginal Community member to be on the

48. How many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers were recruited in 2012/2013? Base: All respondents, n=14.

49. Did you arrange for an Aboriginal Community member to be on the interview panel? Base: Respondents who recruited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officers, n=4.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Package



50. When your Agency is recruiting to Agency Liaison Officer roles, does your Agency develop a specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment package that ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and position descriptions relevant? Base: All respondents, n=14.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Package – Tracking

Develop a specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment package	3	2
Did not develop a specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment package	5	2
Have not recruited in the past year	7	10
Total	15	14

The Agencies were further asked if they ensure that a proportion of positions on management are allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. A high majority (13) of Agencies indicate that they do not do so while only one Agency reported that a proportion of positions on management development programs are allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

	2011/2012		2012/2013	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Positions are allocated	2	13%	1	7 %
No positions are allocated	13	87%	13	93 %
Total	15	100%	14	100 %

51. Does your agency ensure a proportion of positions available on management development programs are allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, even if not all criteria for acceptance to a program are met? Base: All respondents, 2011/2012; n=15, 2012/2013; n=14.