

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP
AGREEMENT ON
INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION
BETWEEN
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
AND
THE NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA**

ACRONYMS

AEC	Australian Employment Covenant
AG	Australian Government
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DBE	Department of Business and Employment
DCM	Department of the Chief Minister
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DPI	Department of Planning and Infrastructure
DRDPIFR	Department of Regional Development, Primary Industry Fisheries and Resources
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
IEDT	Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce
LGH	Department of Local Government and Housing
NP	Indigenous Economic Participation National Partnership Agreement
NT	Northern Territory
NT CE CTG	NT Chief Executives Closing the Gap Operational Group
NTER	Northern Territory Emergency Response
NTG	Northern Territory Government
OCPE	Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment
SIHIP	Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program

1. Document Purpose

This is an Implementation Plan for the National Partnership Agreement (NP) on Indigenous Economic Participation. This document, by defining the implementation approach and including the positioning of the Implementation Plan within a broader governance approach provides a basis for developing partnerships to successfully realise the objectives of the NP. It also provides an up to date reference for all aspects of project management and reporting.

2. Policy Objective/Outcome

- In December 2007, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a partnership between all levels of government to work with Indigenous communities to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage.
- In recognition that outcomes for Indigenous Australians remain well below those of non-Indigenous Australians, COAG agreed to six targets.
 1. Close the life expectancy gap within a generation;
 2. Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade;
 3. Ensure all four year olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years;
 4. Halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy achievements within a decade;
 5. At least halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020; and
 6. Halve the gap in employment outcomes within a decade.
- COAG has also identified seven building blocks that need to be in place in order to comprehensively address the current level of disadvantage.
 - Early Childhood;
 - Schooling;
 - Health;
 - Economic Participation;
 - Healthy Homes;
 - Safe Communities; and
 - Governance and Leadership
- 7. On 26 March 2008, COAG agreed to a new national target for its reform agenda – halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade. On 3 July 2008, COAG leaders reaffirmed this commitment and agreed to sustained engagement and effort by all governments over the next decade and beyond to achieve the Closing the Gap targets for Indigenous people.
- 8. This National Partnership Agreement has been established by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories and contributes to the COAG target to halve the gap in employment outcomes. The Agreement involves complementary investment and effort by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories to improve opportunities for Indigenous people to engage in private and public sector jobs through:
 1. *Creating real sustainable employment in areas of government service delivery that have previously relied on subsidisation through the Community Development Employment Projects program;*
 2. *Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment;*

3. *Incorporating Indigenous workforce strategies into all new major COAG reforms contributing to the Closing the Gap targets; and*
4. *Reviewing all Public Sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to increase employment to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015, currently projected to be at least 2.6 percent*

3. Governance

- This NP is one element of a suite of initiatives being implemented by both the Australian and Territory Governments to maximise Indigenous employment and economic participation in the Territory.
- Both the Territory and Australian Government are committed to achieving the outcomes of this NP through implementation of the agreed outputs in their areas of jurisdiction, and maximising the positive benefit of cooperative arrangements for relevant, identified initiatives
- In recognition that this NP is only one of a broader set of initiatives, a Governance Group will be established to provide a formal mechanism for the Territory and Australian Governments to work together toward its shared objectives.

The Governance Group will comprise the Executive Director Employment DBE and the State Manager DEEWR. The Governance Group will be supported by departmental officers at director level from the NT and Australian governments.

The role of the Governance Group will be to:

- Discuss and advise on each governments action in respect of the NP Implementation Plan where the initiative falls within the jurisdiction of the government
- Agree and drive implementation of joint initiatives as identified in the Implementation Plan or as further agreed
- Receive and consider matters from the Reference Group and consider and refer matters to the Reference Group
- Support, advise and ensure appropriate action is undertaken in relation to other areas of joint interest, such as the Remote Service Delivery NP, and matters referred to the Governance Group from the Reference Group

Reference Group

The Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce (IEDT) will act as the Reference Group.

The IEDT is an established intergovernmental group comprising government and non-government members who meet regularly.

The role of the Reference Group will be to:

- Consider and refer matters to the Governance Group
- Consider, inform and guide as appropriate Australian and Northern Territory Government departmental effort in order to implement agreed actions
- Provide advice to the Governance Group on corporate sector engagement on Indigenous employment.
- Escalate matters requiring Cabinet, Ministerial or head of department consideration or approval
- Ensure that all monitoring, reporting and evaluation of NP initiatives described in the NP Implementation Plan occurs as required

4. Reporting

- The AG will report annually to COAG on the implementation of the NP
- The Northern Territory will provide a report every six months to the AG against the performance indicators and timelines for its initiatives in the Implementation Plan to

support the AG's reporting role to COAG. The AG will provide regular updates and reports to the Territory via the Governance Group to support the cooperative approach for this NP.

- The reports will be provided within 1 month of the end of the relevant period, or as otherwise specified
- Reporting under this National Partnership will comply with the requirements of Schedule C to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations http://www.coag.gov.au/intergov_agreements/federal_financial_relations/index.cfm
- Where agreed by both parties, reporting against the NP may from time to time include additional reporting in relation to areas of individual or joint effort and interest which further the longer-term aims of the NP, but which do not form part of the specific outputs.

The Governance Group will direct the coordination, monitoring and reporting requirements for the NP Implementation Plan.

Reporting Timelines

Year	Action	Dates
1 1 July 2009 To 30 June 2010	Reporting period 1	1 July 2009 – 30 September 2009
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	31 October 2009
	Commonwealth yearly report due	30 November 2009
	Reporting period 2	1 October 2009 – 31 March 2010
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	30 April 2010
2 1 July 2010 To 30 June 2011	Reporting period 3	1 April 2010 – 30 September 2010
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	31 October 2010
	Commonwealth yearly report due	30 November 2010
	Reporting period 4	1 October 2010 – 31 March 2011
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	30 April 2011
3 1 July 2011 To 30 June 2012	Reporting period 5	1 April 2011 – 30 September 2011
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	31 October 2011
	Commonwealth yearly report due	30 November 2011
	Reporting period 6	1 October 2011 – 31 March 2012
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	30 April 2012
4 1 July 2012 To 30 June 2013	Reporting period 7	1 April 2012 – 30 September 2012
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	31 October 2012
	Commonwealth yearly report due	30 November 2012
	Reporting period 8	1 October 2012 – 31 March 2013
	Individual jurisdiction reports due	30 April 2013
	Reporting period 9	1 April 2013 – 30 June 2013

	Individual jurisdiction final reports due	31 July 2013
	Commonwealth final report due	31 August 2013

5. Northern Territory NP Reporting Framework

The Chief Executive's Closing the Gap (CTG) Operational Group will approve the development and coordination of the Northern Territory reporting framework.

6. Stakeholder Management

Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Level of Interest	Ability to Impact
Australian Employment Covenant	High	Moderate
Commonwealth Agencies	High	High
Community organisations	High	Moderate
Employer organisations	Moderate	High
Employment Service Providers	High	High
Indigenous Affairs Advisory Council (NT)	High	High
Indigenous peak bodies	High	High
Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce	High	High
Ministers of the NT and Australian governments	High	High
Peak Industry & Employer Groups	Moderate	High
State/Territory agencies	High	High
Training Advisory Councils	High	Moderate
RTO and other training providers	High	Moderate
Welfare groups	High	Moderate

The Governance Group, through its departmental processes will undertake stakeholder engagement and promote the Implementation Plan actions with stakeholders.

The NT will use existing relevant NT communication strategies to ensure elements are widely known to stakeholders.

7. Risk Management

Risk	Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Treatment
Element 1	Dealt with under the NTER			
Element 2	Alignment of AG/ NTG procurement policies.	Moderate	Inconsistencies in procurement requirements for joint AG/ NTG projects. (Noting AG processes must be compliant with CPG's and for certain projects, the Indigenous Opportunities Policy).	Model that addresses standardised procurement requirements for indigenous employment outcomes eg SIHIP.
	Application and monitoring of NTG procurement policy for Indigenous employment and workforce development outcomes.	Moderate	Inability to implement, capture data and report on achievements made through procurement policies and guidelines.	Adequate compliance monitoring and reporting systems. Promotion of procurement policy and practice requiring outcomes for Indigenous employment.
Element 3	Incorporating Indigenous workforce strategies into all major COAG reforms.	Moderate	Potential to reduce employment or enterprise development opportunities for Indigenous Territorians.	Addressed through the NT CE CTG with agencies. Communication of COAG requirements and government commitments. Availability of support and guidelines.
	Adequacy of workforce development and employment strategy content to allow effective implementation.			
Element 4	Global Economic Crisis.	High	Increase in unemployment levels and changes to employment opportunities.	Monitor regions and employment sectors adversely affected and work with related industries/ regions on responses.
General	Availability of consistent data and standardised data sources used for monitoring and reporting.	High	Impact on reporting timelines and quality of reports.	Alignment of COAG and NT <i>Working Future</i> , previously CTG targets. Agreed data sources and systems that support adequate reporting.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2008 - 2012

Element 1 - Creating sustainable employment in areas of government service delivery that have previously relied on subsidisation through the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program						
Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
<p>Element 1 is dealt with under the NT Emergency Response arrangements. However both the Australian and NT Governments seek to monitor and review this situation for the life of the NP.</p> <p>Both Agencies seek to reserve their right to review Element 1 over the life of the NP.</p>						

Element 2 - Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment						
Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
2.1 Australian Government						
Review current Commonwealth Policies	Review existing procurement policies and ensure compliance with Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and Free Trade Agreements	<p><i>Lead</i> DEEWR</p> <p><i>Contributing agencies</i> Finance DFAT</p>	<p>i) Identify relevant policies for review</p> <p>ii) Conduct desktop analysis on implementation of the current policy and processes in place for reporting</p> <p>iii) Develop a revised policy ensuring compliance with the Commonwealth</p>	Revised policy agreed	May 2009	Within existing resources.

Element 2 - Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment						
Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
			Procurement Guidelines and Free Trade Agreements iv) Seek authority for policy change			
Implementation of revised policy within the Commonwealth	To increase Indigenous employment opportunities through government investment	<i>Lead</i> DEEWR <i>Contributing agencies</i> Finance	i) Develop robust guidelines to support the revised policy ii) Establish a process for agencies to consult and report to DEEWR on applying the policy for relevant procurement processes. iii) Develop an overarching communications strategy that will cover procurement officers, providers and potential tenderers (businesses). To include information sessions and training workshops.	Guidelines in place Processes established Communications strategy developed First round of training workshops held	<i>Implementation</i> June – mid August 2009 <i>Reporting and measuring</i> Ongoing	Within existing resources.
2.2 Northern Territory Government						
NT Government procurement policy and guidelines that facilitate Indigenous employment and workforce development.	Publish revised procurement policy and guidelines that strengthen Indigenous employment outcomes achieved through NTG procurement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DBE responsibility to revise NTG procurement policy and guidelines that strengthen Indigenous employment and workforce development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Procurement Working Group lead by DBE Procurement Division to revise the current policy to ensure Indigenous employment outcomes are articulated in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTG procurement that requires Indigenous employment and workforce development outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised policy and guidelines agreed by September 2009. Procurement reporting framework in 	Within existing resources.

Element 2 - Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment

Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
		strategies through government procurement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBE to promote and inform policy revision and implementation. 	current policy and guidelines. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a procurement reporting framework with qualitative and quantitative indicators. • Promote revised policy and guidelines to NTG agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems that facilitate reporting and monitoring of policy achievements regarding Indigenous employment and workforce development outcomes. 	place incorporating capacity for qualitative and quantitative indicators by September 2009.	

Element 3 - Incorporating Indigenous Workforce Strategies into all new major COAG reforms

Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
3.1 Australian Government						
DEEWR to work in partnership with NTG, communities and our contracted providers to develop and implement Indigenous workforce development strategies.	Maximise and support Indigenous employment and business development opportunities through DEEWR programs (ie. IEP, employer broker, innovation, JSA etc).	DET/DBE/DEEWR reference group (meets bi monthly).	Increase knowledge and understanding of what programs and initiatives are available, how to incorporate workforce development strategies and how they might leverage off each other. Relevant and appropriate information is shared between agencies. NTG feedback is sought on programs/proposals where appropriate. Ensure place based approaches incorporate development of Indigenous workforce strategies.	Increased uptake of Indigenous workforce development programs. Decrease in NTG/DEEWR program duplication, competition or misalignment. Enhanced outcomes from NTG and DEEWR programs.	As new programs, strategies or proposals are developed or implemented.	Within existing resources.
Implementing workforce strategy principle into all new COAG reforms (including National Partnership Agreements) Target sectors include: • Early childhood	To promote the principle of Indigenous workforce strategies within the Commonwealth	<i>Lead</i> DEEWR <i>Contributing agencies</i> FaHCSIA PMC Other relevant agencies	i) Establish/identify key governance structure that has an overview on all COAG work. ii) Include the Indigenous workforce strategy principle in NP templates iii) Develop a circular and distribute to key stakeholders in both	<i>Establishment</i> May – July 2009 <i>Implementation</i> Ongoing	Circular distributed Workforce strategies in implementation plans of all relevant national partnership agreements Communications and reporting protocol established	Within existing resources

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Health • Infrastructure 			<p>Commonwealth and State Governments</p> <p>iv) Establish a communications and reporting protocol under the governance arrangement to monitor the implementation of the principle.</p> <p>v) Ensure that where workforce strategies apply, the appropriate procurement policy to maximise Indigenous employment is applied.</p> <p>vi) Provide support to contractors to develop Indigenous employment strategies and take on Indigenous employees using existing relevant programs.</p>			
3.2 Northern Territory Government						
Develop and implement Indigenous Employment and Workforce Development strategies in NP Agreements.	Maximise Indigenous employment outcomes from National Partnerships Agreements where appropriate.	DBE/DCM to provide advice to NTG agencies through CE CTG Ops Group.	Communication through the monthly CE CTG Ops meeting.	Increased NPs with Employment and Workforce Development strategies embedded.	As new NPs are developed.	Within existing resources.

Element 4 - Review public sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015

Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
4.1 Australian Government						
Develop and agree jurisdictional targets to deliver on the national target of 2.6%	To ensure each jurisdiction including the Commonwealth achieves an appropriate share of the national 2.6% target.	<p><i>Lead</i> DEEWR</p> <p><i>Contributing agencies</i> APSC PM&C</p>	<p>i) Identify appropriate data sources including administrative data to use to develop targets</p> <p>ii) Develop a methodology for setting jurisdictional targets to meet national target of 2.6%</p> <p>iii) Work with State Governments to identify data sources and gaps and work through any issues</p> <p>iv) Develop ways of measuring and monitoring targets</p> <p>v) Investigate whether the Commonwealth can match jurisdictional targets in each State and Territory</p> <p>vi) seek agreement to methodology and ways of measuring and monitoring target</p> <p>vii) Seek agreement on Commonwealth target</p>	May – June 2009		<p>Methodology agreed</p> <p>Measuring and monitoring process agreed</p> <p>Data sources agreed</p>

Element 4 - Review public sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015

Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
Achieving the Commonwealth target of 2.7% and matching jurisdictional target of at least 10% of the AG NT workforce is Indigenous – achieved by 2012	To increase Indigenous participation within the Commonwealth public sector	<p><i>Public Service</i></p> <p><i>Lead</i></p> <p>APSC</p> <p><i>Contributing agencies</i></p> <p>DEEWR</p> <p><i>Public Sector</i></p> <p><i>Lead</i></p> <p>DEEWR</p> <p><i>Contributing agencies</i></p> <p>APSC</p>	<p>Three components:</p> <p>1. Continuation of the <i>APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees</i>:</p> <p>i) provide pathways to employment through whole-of-Government recruitment/targeted placement programmes for graduates, entry level employees and cadets</p> <p>ii) provide professional development opportunities for Indigenous staff</p> <p>iii) assist agencies in managing and supporting Indigenous staff</p> <p>iv) continue to evaluate the strategy in the context of strategic whole-of-Government initiatives.</p> <p>2. Agencies Indigenous Recruitment strategies</p> <p>i) continue to provide information and support to APS agencies and managers</p>	<p><i>Development</i></p> <p>July – October 2009</p> <p><i>Implementation</i></p> <p>ongoing</p>		<p>Revised <i>APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees</i> is published (including on the Commission's website) and distributed to APS agencies</p> <p>Recruitment programme continues as scheduled</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation and delivery of professional development programmes</p> <p>The <i>Building an Indigenous employment strategy – a starter kit for APS agencies</i> is revised and continues to be promoted to APS agencies</p> <p>APS agency heads are contacted by the Commissioner</p>

Element 4 - Review public sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015

Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
			ii) assist APS agencies to develop their own Indigenous employment strategy iii) request APS agencies to find effective ways of encouraging Indigenous staff to self-identify 3. Public Sector Strategy * note – develop strategies to ensure agencies report on Indigenous staffing levels			APS agencies develop and implement their own Indigenous employment strategy Improved agency reporting on Indigenous staffing levels
Improved attraction, retention and career development for Indigenous staff employed by the AG in the NT.	AG to be an employer of choice, implementing DEEWR's Mura Kaimel-Yarrangi Committee actions for Indigenous employees.	State Manager NT – DEEWR.	As per DEEWR's Indigenous Employment Strategy Development of an Indigenous consultative forum to support and develop Indigenous employees.			Within Existing resources
4.2 Northern Territory Government						
Improved attraction, retention and career development for Indigenous employees in the	Workforce strategies that strengthen and improve Indigenous employment profiles in the NTPS through:	The OCE takes the lead role in developing the Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy (IECDS).	Draft Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2009 – 2012 (to be adopted).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A whole of NT Government IECDS • Promotion and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASAP; Implementation pending adoption of IECDS by NTG. 	Within existing resources.

Element 4 - Review public sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015

Milestone	Aim	Roles & Responsibilities	Strategies	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
<p>NTPS.</p> <p>At least 10% of the NTPS is indigenous by 2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligned NTPS effort through key identified agencies • Public sector leadership • Effective recruitment strategies • Effective retention strategies • Career development and • Flexible work practice. 	<p>All agencies will be responsible for supporting and implementing the Strategy. Four key focus areas for implementation relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace environment • Attraction • Retention • Communication. 	<p>Implementation of the strategy to focus on workplace environment; attraction, retention and communication.</p>	<p>of the IECDS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Indigenous employment in the NTPS • An Indigenous NTPS workforce that is reflective of the NT working age population share. 		
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 10% of the NTPS is indigenous by 2012 		
<p>Monitoring and reporting framework.</p>	<p>Ability to monitor and report on progress of the achievements of the IECDS and individual agency indigenous employment outcomes.</p>	<p>OCPE to implement systems that monitor, evaluate and report on progress against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IECDS performance measures • COAG and CTG benchmarks in the strategy. 	<p>As outlined in the IECDS.</p>	<p>Valid and reliable data that supports NP reporting and future development of NTPS strategies and actions.</p>	<p>In line with IECDS and NP requirements.</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>