

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

## 1. Document Purpose

This is an Implementation Plan for the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation. This document, by defining the governance and implementation approach provides a basis for developing partnerships to successfully realise the objectives of the National Partnership Agreement. 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. COAG has also identified seven building blocks that need to be in place in order to comprehensively address the current level of disadvantage.
- 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.
- This National Partnership Agreement, which contributes to the Closing the Gap targets agreed in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement, has been established by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories contributing 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 significantly improve opportunities for Indigenous people to engage in private and public sector jobs through the following elements:
  - Element 1: creating real sustainable employment in areas of government service delivery that have previously relied on subsidisation through the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program (which does not apply in Victoria);
  - Element 2: strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment;
  - Element 3: incorporating Indigenous workforce strategies into all new major COAG reforms contributing to the Closing the Gap targets; and
  - Element 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.
- Victoria's Implementation Plan for the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation addresses all these strategies with the exception of Element 1 (creating employment through CDEP), which does not apply in Victoria.

### 3. Governance

- The Commonwealth will monitor the overall implementation of the National Partnership Agreement, as set out in the Bilateral Implementation Plans.
- A joint inter-jurisdictional government committee will be established to oversee the Implementation Plan and ensure that approaches and actions of the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments are complimentary. This Committee will be a forum to share best practice between the jurisdictions will ensure that the resources of the Commonwealth and Victoria are integrated and optimally employed.
- Relevant parties would include the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations, the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development and the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet.

### 4. Reporting

- A common template for reporting will be developed by the Commonwealth in consultation with all States and Territories.
- Both the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments will provide a detailed status report biannually against key milestones outlined in the Implementation Plan commencing 1 July 2009 as outlined in the schedule provided below.

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

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION**

<b>Element 2 - Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment</b>						
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Roles and responsibilities</b>	<b>Performance Benchmarks</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Resources</b>
1. Strengthen <b>State Purchasing Contracts (SPC's)</b>	To ensure that, where practical, State Purchasing Contracts deliver increased employment outcomes for Indigenous Victorians.	This aim will be achieved by: i) Determining appropriate Indigenous employment/traineeship selection criteria for relevant SPC's; ii) Investigating opportunities to include Indigenous Workforce Strategy requirements into the Victorian Industry Participation Policy for major tenders <sup>1</sup> ; iii) Identifying opportunities to include Indigenous employment or training schemes where relevant SPC's are accessed by regional entities.	Department of Treasury and Finance Department of Industry Innovation and Regional Development	Implementation completed over 5 years.	Phased in over 5 years, commencing September 2009	N/A
2. Strengthen funding agreements with the <b>Community sector</b>	To ensure that the government purchasing of services from the community sector delivers increase employment and a strengthened Indigenous workforce.	This aim will be achieved by: i) Identifying appropriate services areas to be targeted; ii) Surveying all current community sector providers of these services to determine effective/best practice Indigenous reconciliation or employment practices; iii) Ensuring Indigenous employment strategies are included in new funding or renegotiated funding agreements; and iv) Including Indigenous traineeships in community sector panel arrangements based on procurement amounts and service needs.	Relevant Victorian Government Departments	Implementation completed over 5 years.	Phased in over 5 years, commencing September 2009	N/A
3. Strengthen <b>Departmental procurement</b>	To strengthen procurement across all Government entities to deliver increased employment outcomes for Indigenous Victorians. This includes major construction activities.	This aim will be achieved by: i) Investigating opportunities to include Indigenous employment criteria in the Victorian Industry Participation Policy <sup>1</sup> ; ii) Incorporating Indigenous Workforce Strategy criteria into large scale infrastructure; iii) Investigating feasibility of Indigenous Participation Plans (modelled on NSW's Aboriginal Participation in Construction Guidelines) where successful contractors are required to outline how they will create opportunities for Indigenous employment and enterprises through delivery of the contract.; iv) Including Indigenous traineeships in Departmental panel arrangements based on procurement amounts and service type; and	All Victorian Government Departments	Implementation of identified strategies including Indigenous Workforce Strategy criteria incorporated into large scale infrastructure.	Over 3 years, from 2010, to be completed by 2013	N/A

<sup>1</sup> On the basis that:

1. The principle of value-for-money is paramount;
2. The VIPP is Australasian and a Victorian-specific clause may not be achievable;
3. The risk of cumulative impact of regulatory burden associated with multiple target groups seeking inclusion in the VIPP; and
4. Increasing the complexity in Government tender processes and requirements may negatively impact on tenderers, thereby reducing competition and value-for-money.

		v) Ensuring cultural change in Departmental procurement activities by raising awareness and embedding good practice in Indigenous cultural awareness and competency.				
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Element 2 - Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment (continued)						
Milestone	Aim	Strategies	Roles and responsibilities	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
4. Strengthen <b>regional approaches</b> , including local government and grants management	To maximise Indigenous employment in regional settings.	This will be achieved by: i) Identifying opportunities to include Indigenous employment or training schemes in relevant SPC's accessed by regional entities; ii) Supporting receivers of large Government grants in regional areas (such as local libraries) to strengthen their employment of local Indigenous Victorians; iii) Utilising Government presence in Central Activity Districts (Melbourne 2030); and iv) Leveraging local government use of State Government arranged procurement contracts.	Department of Planning and Community Development	Completion of Feasibility  Implementation commenced.	By July 2010  From July 2010 – 2012	N/A
5. Develop an <b>Indigenous Enterprise Plan</b> , including Commonwealth Government pilot of an Australian Indigenous Supplier Network	To increase the number of Indigenous owned and/or managed enterprises supplying products and services to Government.	This will be achieved by:  iii) Implementing models that support enterprise growth through procurement. This will include joining the Commonwealth Government pilot of an Indigenous Supplier Network (to match accredited Indigenous owned businesses with member corporations that want to buy their goods and services); ii) Identifying and supporting current Government programs to increase Indigenous suppliers. For example, the Business Victoria's Skills for Growth Program; and iii) Strengthening the connection with Victorian Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce (lead by Koori Business Network) and raise awareness of Indigenous suppliers to Government.	Development to be lead by Department of Industry Innovation and Regional Development  Implemented by all Victorian Government Departments	Completion of feasibility.  Implementation commenced.	By July 2010,  From July 2010 – 2012	N/A
6. Increase Indigenous representation to ensure the membership of <b>Victorian Government boards and committees</b>	Boards and committees to better reflect the diversity of the broader community.  To support Indigenous people to lead and become decision makers in the community.	This will be achieved by: i) Developing an Indigenous Register as a central contact point for all Victorian Government departments who are seeking skilled individuals for upcoming vacancies on boards and committees.	Department of Planning and Community Development	Implementation of Indigenous register.	By June 2010	N/A

Element 2 - Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment (continued)						
Milestone	Aim	Strategies	Roles and responsibilities	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
7. Ensure <b>necessary support</b> for agencies, community organisations and suppliers to fulfil new Indigenous employment requirements	To ensure that there are enough supports for suppliers to minimise administrative and/or financial impact in the short term.	This will be achieved by: i) Developing guidelines and advice to enable Victorian Government agencies to assess which significant projects can provide employment opportunities for Indigenous people and/or supply opportunities for Indigenous enterprises; ii) Developing a toolkit of good practice for major suppliers to government. This could include a range of options such as: workforce strategies to increase Indigenous employment – addressing recruitment and retention, career development and workplace culture, apprenticeships, traineeships and cadetships; and iii) Strong, direct coordination with Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) employment programs (including Job Services Australia and Indigenous Employment Programs) and supported initiatives (i.e. Australian Employment Covenant) to support suppliers to the Victorian Government to recruit and assist Indigenous job seekers in ongoing employment.	Department of Planning and Community Development	Completion of feasibility plans  Development of good practice toolkit.	By June 2010  By July 2010	N/A
8. Appropriate oversight of the <b>development</b> of the Implementation Plan	To ensure appropriate oversight of the <b>development</b> of the Victorian Government elements of the Implementation Plan.	This will be achieved by: i) Establishing a Victorian group to oversight the development of the proposals in the Plan.	Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Treasury and Finance, Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development, Department of Planning and Community Development (MTAA)	Establishment of Group.	Commence upon signing.	
9. <b>Review current</b> Commonwealth Policies	To review existing procurement policies and ensure compliance with Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and Free Trade Agreements.	This will be achieved by: i) Identifying relevant policies for review; ii) Conducting desktop analysis on implementation of the current policy and processes in place for reporting; iii) Developing a revised policy ensuring compliance with the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and Free Trade Agreements; iv) Seeking authority for policy change; and v) Sharing effective procurement practices through the joint jurisdictional best practice committee.	<i>Commonwealth Lead</i> DEEWR  <i>Contributing Commonwealth agencies</i> Finance DFAT	Revised policy agreed	May 2009	Within existing resources
10. <b>Implementation of revised policy</b> within the Commonwealth	To increase Indigenous employment opportunities through government investment.	This will be achieved by: i) Developing robust guidelines to support the revised policy; ii) Establishing a process for agencies to consult and report to DEEWR on applying the policy for relevant procurement processes; and iii) Developing an overarching communications strategy that will cover procurement officers, providers and potential tenderers (businesses). To include	<i>Commonwealth Lead</i> DEEWR  <i>Contributing agencies</i> Finance	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

		information sessions and training workshops.				
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Element 2 - Strengthening current government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment (continued)						
Milestone	Aim	Strategies	Roles and responsibilities	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
11. Establish an <b>Advisory Service</b>	To provide broad support to Commonwealth officers and share best practice information with the Victorian Government.	<p>This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Developing an advisory service model through consultations with key stakeholders, to provide broad support to Commonwealth and Victorian agencies and promote best practice in this area;</li> <li>ii) Promoting the advisory service to key stakeholders;</li> <li>iii) Inviting participation by Victorian agencies; and</li> <li>iv) Measuring the usage of the advisory service and provide data regarding usage to participating agencies.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Commonwealth Lead</i> DEEWR</p> <p><i>Contributing Commonwealth agencies</i> Finance</p>	<p>Consultations held</p> <p>Advisory model developed and implemented</p> <p>Process for measuring usage established</p>	<p><i>Establishment</i> June – August 2009</p> <p><i>Implementation</i> Ongoing</p>	Within existing resources
12. Explore options to assist the expansion of Indigenous business opportunities through the establishment of an <b>Indigenous supplier network</b>	To promote Indigenous business opportunities through a supplier network.	<p>This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Reviewing existing minority supplier models within Australia and internationally to identify opportunities to conduct a pilot scheme;</li> <li>ii) Identifying relevant legislation which might restrict use of minority supplier networks (FTAs, competition policy etc);</li> <li>iii) Inviting Commonwealth Government departments and the Victorian Government to consider participation in the trial as members;</li> <li>iv) Establishing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism; and</li> <li>v) Measuring the sustainability of the model and provide data as appropriate to participating agencies.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Commonwealth Lead</i> DEEWR</p> <p><i>Contributing Commonwealth agencies</i> Finance DFAT</p>	<p>Research complete and options on pilot project for Indigenous minority suppliers developed</p>	<p>Research on models expected to be complete by 30 June 2009</p>	Within existing resources

Element 3 Incorporating Indigenous Workforce Strategies into all new major COAG reforms						
Milestone	Aim	Strategies	Roles and responsibilities	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
<p>1. State implementation of COAG requirement to develop <b>Indigenous workforce strategies for all COAG major reforms</b> including major and regional construction and National Partnership Agreements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low SES School Communities NP</li> <li>• Literacy and Numeracy NP</li> <li>• Early Childhood Education NP</li> <li>• Indigenous Early Childhood Development NP</li> <li>• Indigenous Health NP</li> <li>• Hospitals and Health Workforce Reform NP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emergency Departments</li> <li>- Subacute</li> <li>- Activity Based Funding</li> <li>- Workforce</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Preventive Health NP</li> <li>• Remote Indigenous Housing NP</li> <li>• Homelessness NP</li> <li>• Social Housing NP</li> <li>• Indigenous Economic Participation NP</li> </ul>	Increase Indigenous employment outcomes.	<p>This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Identifying upcoming major infrastructure investment;</li> <li>ii) Including of Indigenous employment provisions in requests for tenders and in eventual contracts;</li> <li>iii) Linking successful providers with existing Indigenous employment initiatives;</li> <li>iv) Ensuring that all National Partnership Agreement Implementation Plans include an Indigenous Workforce Strategy; and</li> <li>v) Strong, direct coordination with Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) employment programs (including Job Services Australia and Indigenous Employment Programs) and supported initiatives (i.e. Australian Employment Covenant) to support suppliers to the Victorian Government to recruit and assist Indigenous job seekers in ongoing employment.</li> </ul>	<p>Office for Housing, Department of Human Services</p> <p>Department of Transport</p> <p>Department of Industry Innovation and Regional Development.</p> <p>Department of Education and Early Childhood Development</p>	<p>Achievement of Indigenous workforce plan for stage 2 of Nation Building and Jobs.</p> <p>Implementation of Indigenous workforce strategies relating to other infrastructure and National Partnership Agreements</p>	<p>Housing Indigenous workforce plan implemented with stage 2 of Nation Building and Jobs</p> <p>To be completed as Agreements finalised</p>	N/A

Element 3 Incorporating Indigenous Workforce Strategies into all new major COAG reforms (continued)						
Milestone	Aim	Strategies	Roles and responsibilities	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
2. Commonwealth implementation of COAG requirement to develop <b>Indigenous workforce strategies for all COAG major reforms</b> including major and regional construction and National Partnership Agreements)	To promote the principle of Indigenous workforce strategies within the Commonwealth	<p>This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Immediately including the Indigenous workforce strategy principles in NP templates as listed above in milestone 1;</li> <li>ii) Developing a circular and distribute to key stakeholders in both Commonwealth and Victorian Governments;</li> <li>iii) Establishing a communications and reporting protocol under the governance arrangement to monitor the implementation of the principle;</li> <li>iv) Ensuring that where workforce strategies apply, the appropriate procurement policy to maximise Indigenous employment is applied and ensure effective practice is shared; and</li> <li>v) Supporting Commonwealth and Victorian Government contractors to develop Indigenous employment strategies and take on Indigenous employees using existing relevant programs.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Commonwealth Lead</i> DEEWR</p> <p><i>Contributing Commonwealth agencies</i> FaHCSIA PMC Other relevant agencies</p>	<p>Circular distributed Workforce strategies in implementation plans of all relevant national partnership agreements</p> <p>Communications and reporting protocol established</p>	<p><i>Establishment</i> May – July 2009</p> <p><i>Implementation</i> Ongoing</p>	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	Strategies	Roles and responsibilities	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
1. <b>1% Indigenous public sector employment</b> in Victoria	Achieve 1% Indigenous employment across all levels in the Victorian public sector by 2015 to ensure achievement of an appropriate share of the national 2.6% target.	This will be achieved by: i) Establishing central accountability and reporting arrangements for the Victorian Government; ii) Building sustainable pathways between education and employment for Indigenous young people; iii) Making the Victorian public sector an employer of choice for Indigenous people; iv) Creating inclusive workplaces and support Victorian Government agencies to recruit, develop and retain Indigenous people; v) Providing leadership and accountability to private and community sector; and vi) Ensuring strong, direct coordination with Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) employment programs (including Job Services Australia and Indigenous Employment Programs) and supported initiatives (i.e. Australian Employment Covenant) to support suppliers to government to recruit and assist Indigenous job seekers in ongoing employment.	Victorian State Service Authority All Victorian public sector agencies.	Annual reporting (sector and agencies) on performance against indicators, including number of employees who identify as Indigenous	2015	N/A
2. To <b>match the Victorian Government 1% Indigenous employment target</b> in this jurisdiction	Achieve 1% Indigenous employment across all levels in the Australian Public Sector in Victoria by 2015.	This will be achieved by: i) Identifying appropriate data sources including administrative data to use to develop targets; ii) Developing a methodology for setting jurisdictional targets to meet national target of 2.6%; iii) Working with State Governments to identify data sources and gaps and work through any issues; and iv) Developing a monitoring and reporting model for Commonwealth contribution.	<i>Lead</i> DEEWR  <i>Contributing agencies</i> APSC PM&C	Agreement on Commonwealth contribution, monitoring and reporting	Agreement on the preferred monitoring and reporting model by July 2009	
3. <b>Achieving the Commonwealth target</b>	To increase Indigenous participation within the Commonwealth public sector.	This will be achieved by: i) Continuing the Commonwealth <i>APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees</i> which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of pathways to employment through whole-of-Government recruitment/targeted placement programmes for graduates, entry level employees and cadets.</li> <li>Provision of professional development opportunities for Indigenous staff.</li> <li>Assisting agencies in managing and supporting Indigenous staff.</li> <li>Continuing to evaluate the strategy in the context of strategic whole-of-Government initiatives.</li> </ul>	<i>Public Service Lead</i> APSC  <i>Contributing agencies</i> DEEWR  <i>Public Sector Lead</i> DEEWR <i>Contributing agencies</i> APSC	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  Recruitment programme continues as scheduled  Ongoing evaluation and delivery of professional development programmes	<i>Development</i> July – October 2009  <i>Implementation</i> Ongoing	\$6.0 million over three years to improve the representation of Indigenous Australians in the Australian Public Service (APS).

Element 4 - Review public sector Indigenous employment and career development strategies to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015 ( Strategies continued)						
Milestone	Aim	Strategies	Roles and responsibilities	Performance Benchmarks	Timeframe	Resources
3. (cont.) <b>Achieving the Commonwealth target</b>		<p>ii) Supporting Commonwealth agencies Indigenous Recruitment strategies which involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to provide information and support to APS agencies and managers;</li> <li>Assisting APS agencies to develop their own Indigenous employment strategy;</li> <li>Requesting APS agencies to find effective ways of encouraging Indigenous staff to self-identify; and</li> </ul> <p>iii) Developing a Commonwealth Public Sector Strategy which includes mechanisms to support agencies to report on Indigenous staffing levels.</p> <p>iv) Working with the Victorian Government to share effective practice (including outcomes of available evaluations) so that approaches are complementary and pathways from State to Commonwealth (and vice versa) are developed and supported.</p>	<p><i>Sharing Best practice</i> DEEWR</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> <p>APS agencies develop and implement their own Indigenous employment strategy</p> <p>Improved agency reporting on Indigenous staffing</p> <p>Processes established to share effective practice</p>	September 09	<p>Public Sector Strategy – within existing resources</p> <p>Within existing resources</p>