

## How we do it

Build on and maintain workforce capability that is outcome focussed.

Strengthen performance through contemporary governance best practice.

Deliver corporate solutions and systems that are fit for purpose.

Deliver staff engagement programs.

Embed the *Cultural Capability Framework* within the department's governance mechanisms.

Maintain respectful relationships and cultural considerateness.

Partner with key stakeholders to establish effective networks that foster collaboration.

### Government objective: Be a responsive government

## Snapshot of achievements

**33%**  
of our workforce identify as  
**Aboriginal peoples** and/or **Torres Strait Islander peoples**  
(as at 30 November 2020)

**70%**  
of our workforce are women, with **48%**  
of Senior Officer and Senior Executive Service **positions held by women**  
(as at 30 November 2020)

**4%**  
of our workforce are **staff with disability**  
(as at 30 November 2020)

**8%**  
of our workforce are from a  
**non-English speaking background**  
(as at 30 November 2020)

**96%**  
**program and project performance**  
against budget allocation  
(as at 12 November 2020)

# Strengthen capability, innovation and governance

The department is committed to building workforce capability, fostering innovation and strengthening our governance and compliance systems and processes to support the achievement of the department's vision.

## Our people

Employees are our most valuable asset. Our people are a key component in leading change, through enhanced relationships and decision-making across government, to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to truly thrive.

Throughout the reporting period, the Queensland public service values, and the department's SOLID values, provided guidance and inspiration in planning and delivering workforce initiatives that build workforce capability and strengthen staff engagement.

## Strategic workforce planning and performance

The department's *Strategic Workforce Plan 2016–2021* supports the achievement of the department's vision and is designed to guide the department's executive officers and managers to develop an agile, high performing, professional and innovative workforce that is able to meet the department's current and future business needs.

The plan is based on five key objectives:

- strengthen staff capability, leadership and performance
- create a culture of excellence and innovation
- reinvigorate how we engage with, support and reward our staff
- harness the benefits and power of workforce diversity
- ensure our staff remain healthy, safe and well.

Across the department we continue to explore and implement innovative approaches to leadership, we are identifying new and creative ways of working to deliver improved outcomes for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Strategic Workforce Plan is implemented at all levels of the department through the Operational Plan and business unit plans.

## Learning and development opportunities

During the reporting period, the department provided staff with learning and development opportunities to build staff capability in key priority areas. These included opportunities to undertake secondments in the broader public sector and opportunities to perform in higher duties within the department.

## Leadership and management capability

The department's ability to offer a range of staff development opportunities have been limited this year due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the reporting period, staff were supported to undertake the following leadership and management course:

- Public Interest Disclosure Assessment and Management.

The department remains committed to developing leadership and management capability to meet current and future business needs.

## Managing performance

The department's ongoing approach to performance management is based on a continuous cycle of setting performance criteria, monitoring and assessment, feedback, achievement planning, and learning and development activities.

Achievement and Capability Plans were used to provide an opportunity for supervisors and their staff to discuss performance expectations, how their role links to the department's goals, and the immediate and future career goals for the employee.

## Attraction and retention strategies

The department is focused on attracting, retaining and building a high-performing workforce that is inclusive and diverse.

In May 2019, the Public Service Commission, in partnership with the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, launched a staged implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Pathways Service in response to research identifying a gap of 400 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives at the AO8 level and above.

The service was designed to support the progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public sector employees into leadership and decision-making roles. Through partnering with Queensland Government agencies, the pathway service provides support for individuals to progress their career through cross-agency learning and development opportunities, access to leadership events, networking and mobility opportunities.

In February 2020, the CEO Leadership Board endorsed the extension and expansion of the service, enabling the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Pathways Service to reach a total of 400 participants across the sector by 2022. There are 40 current participants based on data from 16 October 2020.

During the reporting period, the department continued to welcome and engage new employees through the department's induction program, which provides an introduction to the department's role and responsibilities. The department also continued to implement its Cultural Capability Action Plan, and provided staff with flexible working arrangements to help them achieve a better work-life balance.

## Employee health, safety and wellbeing

The department is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, healthy and supportive work environment at all times. The objectives of our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and related procedures and guidelines are to:

- establish and maintain a workplace that is free from risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals
- maintain a workplace in which employees strive for optimum levels of wellbeing
- detail the agreed employer or employee responsibilities, including responsibilities for reporting workplace hazards and incidents.

During the reporting period, a number of measures were implemented to improve workplace health, safety and wellbeing across the department. These included:

- providing ongoing employee support through the department's Employee Assistance Program, including Manager Assist and on-site employee support, delivered by Benestar
- producing regular communications to promote a positive workplace culture as well as a monthly Human Resources Update to ensure staff are kept informed about human resource matters
- training and resources in order to better support staff impacted by domestic and family violence
- hosting weekly all staff online forums led by the Director-General and other senior leaders, to ensure staff stay connected during COVID-19, to share best practice advice, to celebrate success, and to provide direct access to information from senior leaders.

## Workforce profile

As at 30 November 2020, the department had 292 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. Of the full-time equivalent employees, 82.82 per cent were permanent staff, 14.43 per cent temporary staff, 2.41 per cent contract staff and 0.34 per cent casual staff.

The department's annual separation rate was 6.18 per cent as at 30 November 2020.

No redundancy, early retirement or retrenchment packages were paid during the period.

## Workforce diversity

- 33 per cent of the workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- 4 per cent of the workforce are staff with disability
- 70 per cent of the workforce are women, with 48 per cent of Senior Officer and Senior Executive Service positions being held by women
- 8 per cent of the workforce are from a non-English speaking background.

## Graduate, traineeship, scholarship and cadetship programs

During the final reporting period, one graduate and one trainee were employed within the department.

The department continues to work in partnership with the Public Service Commission to advance the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Pathways Service.

## Employee induction and training

All new employees undertake an induction process, which is designed to:

- ensure a smooth transition into the department and work environment
- provide information on employment conditions and entitlements
- help new starters to understand the responsibilities and behaviours expected of them by the Queensland Government and the department
- provide an understanding of the function and operations of the department, as well as the business group or work unit.

All employees, including new employees, are required to undertake a number of mandatory online courses through the department's iLearn site to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver effective and efficient services.

As at 30 November 2020, the following mandatory training modules were offered to employees:

- Conflict of Interest
- COVID-Safe Workplace Training for Queensland Public Sector Employees and Checklist
- Ethical Decision-Making and Code of Conduct
- Fraud and Corruption Control
- iDOCS
- Information Privacy
- Information Security
- Information Security Management System
- Internal Controls and Financial Responsibilities
- Record Keeping and You
- Public Entities and the *Queensland Human Rights Act 2019*
- Public Interest Disclosures: Rights and Responsibilities of Employees Program
- Recognise, Respond, Refer – Domestic Violence in the Workplace
- Risk Management
- Starting the Journey
- Building Emergency Procedures.

## Upholding Human Rights

The department is committed to embedding the Queensland *Human Rights Act 2019* within all aspects of decision-making, policies, processes and practices to ensure an organisational culture that respects, protects and promotes all human rights.

The department's key achievements during the reporting period were:

### ***New legislation passed by the Queensland Parliament***

- The *Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa (Torres Strait Islander Traditional Child Rearing Practice) Act 2020* – was passed the Queensland Parliament on 8 September 2020 with Assent on 14 September 2020. The Act will commence by Proclamation in 2021
- This Act is the first Act in Queensland to include Torres Strait Islander languages in its title; and is a further step to embedding the importance of culture, family, connection and self-determination for Torres Strait Islander children and their families (lore), and recognising and acknowledging these, in Queensland law
- The Act promotes the right of Torres Strait Islanders to enjoy, maintain, control, protect and develop their kinship ties under section 28(2)(c) of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (HR Act), while still ensuring the protection of children in their best interests in accordance with section 26(2) of the HR Act
- The Queensland Human Rights Commission was a witness in the public hearing on the Bill and also provided a written submission, as part of the Parliamentary Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee's detailed consideration of the Bill
- Further human rights analysis is provided in the Statement of Compatibility and explanatory notes [www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/asmade/act-2020-033](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/asmade/act-2020-033).

### ***Promotion of Human Rights Month***

- The department promoted Human Rights Month, 10 November 2020 to 10 December 2020, with links to resources and information on the internal and external websites and social media platforms.

### ***Human rights complaints***

- There were no recorded human rights complaints received by the department during this final reporting period, 1 July 2020 to 12 November 2020.

### ***Reviews***

The department has undertaken a review process of its policies, procedures and services for their compatibility with human rights. Key activities included:

- completing the review of the department's Business Continuity Plan, and the related Business Continuity Management Policy and Procedure. The documents have been updated to include clear statements regarding upholding human rights obligations and decision-making, in the management and response to disaster events, and subsequent recovery activities

- completing the review of the department's Legislative Compliance Framework, Policy and Procedure to ensure compatibility with the *Human Rights Act 2019*
- continuing the ongoing review process of the department's administered legislation and the review of other departmental policies, procedures and services.

## Corporate governance arrangements

### **Corporate planning and performance**

The department's Planning and Performance Management Framework is a single overarching framework that identifies the key elements for driving policy, program and service delivery improvements that create value for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and our stakeholders. These elements include planning, measuring performance, and internal and external reporting.

The framework responds to the requirements of the Queensland *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* and the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*.

The department continued to support performance improvements through the maintenance of the DATSIP Planning and Performance Management Framework. These included:

- reviewing and updating corporate reporting templates and processes to streamline performance reporting and facilitate staff engagement
- continuing to use information technologies to improve staff collaboration and engagement in corporate planning and reporting.

### **Strategic and operational planning**

The department's *Strategic Plan 2019–2023* (revised for 2020–2021) sets the four-year strategic direction for the department to achieve its vision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders thriving culturally, socially and economically, and to deliver on the *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*. The department's plan was developed in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

Commitments in the strategic plan were reflected in the department's operational plans and related risk registers.

## Public Sector Ethics

The *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* (the Code of Conduct) is based on the ethics, principles and associated set of values prescribed by the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*. It also contains standards of conduct for each of the ethics' principles, namely:

- integrity and impartiality
- promoting the public good
- commitment to the system of government
- accountability and transparency.

The Code of Conduct applies to all departmental employees including volunteers, students, contractors, consultants and anyone working in any other capacity for the department. Adherence to the Code of Conduct is another way in which the department demonstrates its ethical leadership in how it performs its role.

During the reporting period, departmental staff were able to access the Code of Conduct and a range of supporting resources through the department's intranet site. New employees also completed the online Code of Conduct training via iLearn as part of their induction process.

The assessment and investigation of serious complaints was referred to and managed by the Ethical Standards Unit within the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors through a Memorandum of Understanding. Where appropriate, matters are referred to the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission.

## Risk management

The department's risk management framework provides the management approach, principles and processes for managing risk within the department in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2019* and Queensland Treasury's whole-of-government risk management guidelines 2009. The framework ensures risk treatments are defined in response to the department's risk appetite. This ensures that identified risk events that might impact on the delivery of the department's strategic objectives, are embedded within the department's culture and practices.

During the reporting period, the department continued to monitor its strategic and operational risks in line with the department's risk appetite.

## Fraud and corruption control

The department is committed to an organisational culture where any act of fraud or corruption is not tolerated. This commitment requires that staff act ethically and professionally in their dealings with other staff, clients and service providers.

The department's Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Procedure are published on the department's intranet site. Staff are encouraged to report any suspected fraudulent or corrupt activities through a range of avenues cited on the department's intranet site.

## External scrutiny

The Auditor-General, supported by the Queensland Audit Office and in accordance with the *Queensland Auditor-General Act 2009*, conducts the financial and performance audits of the department.

During this final reporting period, the Queensland Audit Office continued with its audit review program and progressively released its performance reports.

The department provides quarterly reports to the Queensland Public Service Commission in relation to work performance matters. The department will provide the conduct and performance data to the Commission for publishing on the Queensland Government website.

## Internal audit

The internal audit function for the department is sourced directly from the Internal Audit Unit within the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors. This arrangement enables the department to leverage its limited resourcing for internal audit and gain the benefits of access to a full internal audit team with significant experience in the department's business.

Internal Audit provides an independent and objective assurance and consulting service designed to add value and improve the operations of the department. It undertakes strategic and annual planning based on a risk assessment of the department's current business activities in accordance with the *Queensland Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

The DATSIP Strategic Internal Audit Plan for 2020–2021 was developed by Internal Audit in consultation with departmental senior executives and with a focus on risk exposures and independent assurance needs.

## Information systems and recordkeeping

The department's information and communication technology enabled business initiatives were provided by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women as part of an overarching Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of corporate services.

The department meets the accountability requirements of the *Queensland Public Records Act 2002* and complies with the General Retention and Disposal Schedule to maintain accurate records for accountability and business continuity.

## Open data

For additional final reporting information related to consultancies, overseas travel, and Queensland Language Services Policy visit: [www.data.qld.gov.au/organization/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-partnerships](http://www.data.qld.gov.au/organization/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-partnerships)