



Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2013-2016



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Statement of Purpose

This Strategy seeks to improve Wollongong City Council's performance in relation to the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Wollongong and the surrounding areas. Wollongong City Council aims to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represented in its work force through proactive strategies in attraction and retention and further as becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This employment strategy details the practical steps that can be taken to ensure positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seeking employment within Wollongong City Council and those already employed by Wollongong City Council.

Definitions

1. Wollongong City Council's Aboriginal Employment Strategy applies to people who are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent and who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or both, and are accepted by the community with which they are associated.
2. For brevity the word *Aboriginal* has been used in this document and can be read to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
3. A **targeted position** identifies a mainstream position that will be targeted during a recruitment campaign to be filled by an Aboriginal person. An **identified position** is one which requires an Aboriginal person due to the specific requirements of the position in working with the Aboriginal Community or services.

What is an Aboriginal Employment Strategy?

An Aboriginal Employment Strategy is designed to increase employment opportunities, career development and job retention for Aboriginal people in a variety of proactive ways.

It aims to address the employment disadvantages of Aboriginal people, actively implement equal employment opportunities at all levels and empower Aboriginal people to achieve economic independence.

In adopting this strategy, it is recognised that there are specific legislative requirements to be met including the Local Government Act (NSW) 1993 and the Anti Discrimination Act (NSW) 1977. Furthermore this strategy aligns with Council's current policies:

- Management Plan 2011-2014
- Employment Equity and Diversity (EED) Policy

Action Plan

This Action Plan has been developed to address key matters that impact on the employment of Aboriginal people across Council:

- Structural barriers that make navigation through the recruitment process difficult and discouraging;
- Under-developed support mechanisms;
- Negative or misinformed perceptions and attitudes; and
- Gaps in educational attainment.

Ultimately Council aims to work with the community to provide Aboriginal people with the confidence, skills and capabilities to apply for any job within Council.

The Action Plan has three (3) key focus areas:

1. Attraction
2. Retention
3. A Culturally Supportive Employer

Key Focus Area One (1) – Attraction

- 1.1 Council will establish and maintain a diverse range of programs targeted specifically at Aboriginal people through constructive engagement strategies.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Council will maintain entry level programs targeted specifically at Aboriginal people including traineeships, apprenticeships and school-based traineeships.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Council will maintain current mainstream positions that have been identified as one which requires an Aboriginal person	Human Resources	Ongoing
Seek funding for additional opportunities related to providing work experience or employment of Aboriginal people.	Human Resources Community Cultural + Economic Development	Ongoing
Establish partnerships with education institutes such as university and TAFE to provide work experience/internship opportunities relevant to their chosen field of study.	Human Resources	Ongoing

1.2 Council will refine its recruitment strategies to better attract Aboriginal people to positions at all levels across Council.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Implement recruitment processes that are culturally inclusive, supporting and encouraging Aboriginal employment.	Human Resources	Ongoing
All job advertisements will include the statement 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged to apply'.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Advertise all targeted and identified vacancies through Aboriginal communities and networks.	Community Cultural + Economic Development	Ongoing
Advertise all targeted and identified vacancies in the Wollongong Advertiser. Additionally, professional vacancies will also be advertised in the Koori Mail.	Human Resources	Ongoing
If a targeted or identified vacancy is a professional role it will be advertised for a minimum of 10 days. All other targeted or identified vacancies will be advertised for a minimum of five (5) weeks.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Selection panels for targeted or identified Aboriginal positions will be gender balanced and include an Aboriginal member where possible.	Human Resources	Ongoing
A list will be available of suitable Aboriginal community members available to act as an independent on selection panels where possible.	Community Cultural + Economic Development	June 2013
Applicants will be provided with the option of a support person to provide a reassuring presence during the interview.	Human Resources	Ongoing

Key Focus Area Two (2) – Retention

2.1 Council will develop strategies to improve the retention of Indigenous employees within Council.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Ensure the Community Development Worker (Aboriginal Services) meets all new Aboriginal employees at induction.	Human Resources Community Cultural + Economic Development	Ongoing
Establish internal and/or external mentoring partnerships with new Aboriginal employees to encourage socialisation into Council and ongoing support.	Community Cultural + Economic Development Human Resources	As required
Establish an Aboriginal Employees Network which meets regularly for development and networking purposes. The network will primarily be made up of internal employees but can include relevant external Aboriginal community representatives at the request of the network.	Community Cultural + Economic Development	Quarterly (minimum four meetings per annum)
Provide training and development opportunities that support career progression, personal and professional development.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Provide trainees and apprentices with opportunities for ongoing employment within Council on successful completion of their training program.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Develop and conduct culturally appropriate exit surveys	Human Resources	July 2013

Key Focus Area Three (3) – A Culturally Supportive Employer

3.1 Council will continue to implement strategies that promote culturally supportive practices.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Develop effective working relationships with Aboriginal community organisations to promote employment opportunities within Council.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Showcase Council through information sessions at local Aboriginal community organisations and career markets, promoting employment opportunities and educate on how to apply for positions.	Human Resources Community Cultural + Economic Development	Ongoing
Provide support and advice to managers with the recruitment process and improved marketing of career opportunities for Aboriginal people.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Provide all employees with diversity awareness training that includes an understanding of Aboriginal culture.	Human Resources Community Cultural + Economic Development	Ongoing
Ensure the EEO data collection process identifies the number of Aboriginal applicants applying for positions at Council.	Human Resources	Ongoing
Continue to promote the principles and practices of Employment Equity and Diversity in the workplace.	Human Resources	Ongoing

Evaluation

This strategy will be formally reviewed at the end of 2016.

Additionally an annual report will be provided to the Aboriginal Reference Group on the outcomes and actions taken in regards to the strategy (as listed in 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 and 3.1).

Acknowledgments

This strategy was written following contributions from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy Working Group. Members included:

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