



# Investigating strategies for engagement with young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers

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## Executive Summary

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are only a small percentage of the Australian workforce yet Indigenous workers are disproportionately vulnerable to exploitation in the workplace. The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) has a legislative responsibility to educate people working in Australia about their workplace rights, and education particularly needs to be focused towards vulnerable workers.

Very few Indigenous workers know that FWO exists or that they have access to our services. A targeted engagement strategy is needed to educate Indigenous workers and help them receive the full protection of their workplace entitlements.

This report outlines how information gathered from research and consultations can best help FWO engage and communicate with Indigenous workers aged between 15 and 24 years.

An engagement strategy targeted at young Indigenous workers must involve a long term commitment with a focus on building and maintaining relationships. It must be multi-faceted, using multiple platforms and channels.

The following key considerations should be central in designing and delivering an engagement strategy for young Indigenous workers:

1. It takes time and an ongoing effort to build relationships with Indigenous communities
2. Face to face delivery is the most effective and preferred method for engaging with young Indigenous Australians
3. Information needs to come from known and trusted sources
4. Appropriate Indigenous imagery and visuals will assist in connecting with young Indigenous audiences
5. Language should be simple and clear - not authoritative
6. Young Indigenous workers have very low awareness of us
7. Cultural considerations and practices need to be taken into account but there is no single Indigenous community or culture that shares identical issues and concerns

These considerations can be incorporated into different channels for delivery of an engagement strategy. Primary platforms for delivery of the engagement strategy include online communications, embedding communications with external service providers and face to face communications.

- Online communications should incorporate 'high context' communication styles using personal stories, 'faces' to relate to and visual themes to create continuity of communications. Language should be clear, conversational and non-adversarial.
- Relationships should be developed with Indigenous community organisations and education centres so our messages can be delivered through a trusted source. We can also work with government agencies already engaging with Indigenous Australians to start building relationships with Indigenous communities.
- We should consistently attend Indigenous employment and community events to raise our profile amongst the target audience, start building relationships and engage with individuals in a face to face, conversational way.

## **1. Aim**

- 1.1 The purpose of this project is to make recommendations for improving FWO's engagement with young Indigenous workers. The recommendations intend to motivate and direct this audience to us for reliable advice and assistance in order to empower young Indigenous workers to get the full protection of their workplace rights.
- 1.2 The recommendations will contribute to our goal of empowering people with information on which they can act. The recommendations will also contribute to external *Closing the Gap* initiatives, which address Indigenous disadvantage in Australia. Proactive participation in Indigenous communities will improve our profile and increase the ability for young Indigenous workers to engage with our services.

## **2 Background and business environment**

- 2.1 FWO is an independent statutory office created by the *Fair Work Act 2009*. We have a legislative responsibility to promote harmonious, productive and cooperative workplaces, and educate people working in Australia about their workplace rights and obligations.
- 2.2 Our mission is to work with Australians to educate, promote fairness and ensure justice in the workplace. This involves providing high quality and consistent education, assistance and advice and increasing our public profile. Working towards this goal, we have developed education strategies, targeted at groups identified as vulnerable.
- 2.3 We define vulnerable workers as individuals who find it difficult to seek assistance and adequate representation to resolve issues in the workplace, including breaches of workplace laws. This includes young workers, international students, outworkers and Indigenous workplace participants. Indigenous employees can be vulnerable because of limited employment opportunities in their communities, high unemployment rates and employers' limited understanding of cultural practices and obligations.
- 2.4 The Australian Indigenous population is diverse, with varying levels of education and opportunity. Indigenous Australians live in geographically dispersed parts of Australia and engage with the workforce in different ways. A single strategy or targeted campaign will not effectively reach all Indigenous communities.
- 2.5 This project is aimed at Indigenous people aged 15-24 years engaged in work or about to enter the workforce. The Indigenous population has a young age structure. By targeting this audience we have the opportunity to educate a large proportion of Indigenous workers about Australia's workplace rights from the beginning of their work life, and continue to engage with them throughout their careers.

## **3. Project Strategy**

- 3.1 The project involves conducting an analysis of existing internal engagement strategies and external data and research. The project aims to leverage from our engagement initiatives already in place. Consultations with external agencies, community organisations and young Indigenous workers have assisted in identifying relevant issues and engagement options.
- 3.2 The project addresses one segment of the Indigenous population, but the recommendations can be applicable to broader Indigenous engagement strategies. Messages directed at young Indigenous people are likely to reach secondary audiences of

parents, families, employers and older age groups engaged in post secondary school training and education.

#### **4. Research**

- 4.1 FWO has not undertaken research into the number or profile of Indigenous workplace participants that engage with our services. The following section outlines internal and external data and strategies.

##### **External Data**

###### *Australian Bureau of Statistics*

- 4.2 In the 2011 census 548,370 people identified as being of Indigenous descent, making up just over 2.5% of the Australian population. The Indigenous population has noticeably different age demographics than the non-Indigenous population with a median age of 21<sup>1</sup> and more than 58% of the population under 24.<sup>2</sup>
- 4.3 In 2011, an estimated 173,800 Indigenous people were employed,<sup>3</sup> making up approximately 1.5% of all working Australians. Indigenous workers are most likely working in public administration and safety, followed by health care and social assistance and education and training.<sup>4</sup>
- 4.4 In 2006, 31% of the Indigenous population lived in major cities, 45% lived in regional Australia and 24% lived in remote areas.<sup>5</sup> Participation in the labour force was highest in major cities, and lowest in remote areas.<sup>6</sup>

###### *GenerationOne*

- 4.5 GenerationOne, a non-profit organisation that aims to increase employment and education outcomes for Indigenous Australians, has undertaken research into Indigenous employment. In an Auspoll<sup>7</sup> report commissioned by GenerationOne in 2011,<sup>8</sup> 47% of Indigenous participants indicated low to no understanding of workplace rules. This was perceived as a barrier to employment.

###### *Communications Preferences*

- 4.6 In 2009, the Office for Youth in the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) commissioned research into methods of effective communication with young people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, aged 12-24 years. The report<sup>9</sup> highlights the importance of effective and appropriate use of technology when communicating with young audiences.
- 4.7 The report demonstrated that young Indigenous audiences have a clear preference for face to face communication. Connecting and communicating online was most effective when used in conjunction with face to face forums. Key points for developing messages targeted at young Indigenous people include:
- look at information from their point of view; consider what's in it for them and don't lecture
  - be natural; don't use Indigenous lingo, broken or slang words.
- 4.8 In 2011, the Department of Finance and Deregulation commissioned McNair Ingenuity to analyse media consumption and information preferences for Indigenous audiences. The preliminary findings<sup>10</sup> from the research indicate 46% of Indigenous respondents regularly

read Indigenous specific newspapers, such as the Koori Mail and National Indigenous Times. For online communication, 84% of respondents under 24 indicated regular use of the internet. The preferred social media platform, by a significant margin, was Facebook. Media consumption varied greatly based on location, with urban audiences more likely to access newspapers and internet than regional and remote audiences.

## Internal data

- 4.9 FWO does not have measures for assessing our level of engagement with Indigenous workplace participants. The most frequent first point of contact with us is the Infoline, a call centre, which in 2011 answered 687,672 calls. The same year, only 0.09% of callers identified as Indigenous workplace participants<sup>11</sup>. However, in many circumstances, there isn't a need for callers to identify their cultural background during a call to the Infoline. Importantly, none of this data is regularly compiled or monitored.
- 4.10 A second point of contact is lodging a complaint form. The current form doesn't ask complainants if they identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Data on cultural backgrounds in the complaint forms isn't compiled or monitored.

## Existing related strategies

### *Communication Strategies*

- 4.11 In 2009, FWO conducted two market research projects to inform the development of education products and activities.<sup>12</sup> Findings from this research include:
- almost half of all employees agreed they would like to know more about their workplace rights
  - employees with a lower understanding of workplace rights were blue collar employees, young employees and those employed in workplaces with 1-15 staff.
- 4.12 The 2009 research contributed to the development of our *Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communications Engagement Strategy*. Key recommendations for the CALD Strategy include:
- collaborating with other government agencies such as the ATO, Centrelink, DEEWR and DIAC to extend the reach of our communications
  - delivering information in 'community languages'
  - developing printed collateral for intermediaries to transfer our key messages.
- 4.13 In 2011, FWO commissioned further market research to focus on the needs and preferences of workers aged 15-24. The research formed the basis of the *Fair Work Ombudsman Young Workers Communication Strategy*. Key principles for the strategy include:
- development of a young workers 'brand' to position us in the young worker space
  - information focused on education, not enforcement
  - information communicated in a way that is credible, approachable, simple and accessible.
- 4.14 Both the CALD and Young Workers Communications Strategies involve a significant online component, consistent with the media preferences of the target audiences.

### *Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)*

- 4.15 FWO implemented a RAP in 2011, which runs from 2012 to the end of 2013. The RAP outlines our vision for reconciliation – to build respect, support and understanding of Indigenous cultures through activities that increase awareness and promote cultural diversity. Relevant outcomes of the RAP include:
- develop and maintain a list of key Indigenous contacts, including land councils and Indigenous education units
  - develop awareness and improve understanding of Indigenous cultures internally
  - monitor mechanisms for collecting tangible data on the use of our services by Indigenous clients.
- 4.16 The outcomes included in the RAP are consistent with the aims of this project. The contact list will be an important resource for engagement. Implementation of a communication strategy developed from this project should be undertaken in collaboration with the Diversity team and the RAP Working Group.

### *Northern Territory Project*

- 4.17 In November 2010, Fair Work Inspectors visited two remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory to investigate a non-payment case and hold information sessions. The inspectors involved found it was difficult to engage with employees and the wider community. Lessons learnt from the project include:
- educative messages delivered to remote communities need to be clearly linked to the benefits and relevance to that community
  - it is crucial to work with trusted organisations to deliver information
  - it can be difficult and time consuming for government agencies to establish trusted relationships in remote communities.

### **External related projects**

#### *NSW Department of Industrial Relations (NSW IR)*

- 4.18 NSW IR has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Unit, which works to deliver information on workplace rights and responsibilities specifically to Indigenous audiences. Work undertaken by the Unit includes:
- attendance at NSW Indigenous events including the 'Indigenous Job Markets'
  - regular appearances on Koori Radio's 'Blackchat' program to discuss workplace rights
  - fact sheets tailored for Indigenous employees and employers.

#### *Australian Taxation Office (ATO)*

- 4.19 In 2011, the ATO commissioned ORIMA Research Pty Ltd to look at communication preferences of Indigenous Australians. The report<sup>13</sup> identified key principles common to successful information products and communication strategies with Indigenous audiences, including:
- collaborative partnerships with Indigenous communities
  - ensuring strategies reflect priorities and concerns identified by the community

- using multiple communication channels with an emphasis on face to face and verbal communications where possible.

4.20 Key outcomes arising from this report include:

- leveraging cross-agency relationships to embed information
- increased ATO presence at Indigenous community events
- development of an Indigenous visual theme to increase engagement and relevance of products.

#### *Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Indigenous Electoral Participation Program (IEPP)*

4.21 In June 2010, the AEC implemented the IEPP to increase Indigenous levels of participation in voting as part of the broader Commonwealth Government *Closing the Gap* Initiative. The IEPP is a multi-faceted, national program that operates in remote, regional and urban Australia. The key elements of the program include:

- 24 Indigenous Field Officers who deliver electoral education directly to remote and regional communities
- targeted media and communications, including promotional materials
- attendance and sponsorship of Indigenous cultural and sporting events
- employment of Indigenous Electoral Awareness Officers to assist during elections.

## **5. Consultation**

### *Internal Consultations*

5.1 The first stage of consultation involved speaking to employees internally. People consulted internally fell into four groups; Indigenous employees, the Diversity team, employees in the Communications branch and employees in Education.

5.2 Internal Indigenous employees said the primary workplace issues for Indigenous Australians are low rates of employment and barriers to employment. These barriers include generational unemployment within families and the isolation from the community that can occur when a person is employed. The Indigenous employees also highlighted trusted contact points where young Indigenous people seek information. These include liaison officers within schools and vocational education centres, community centres, Job Services Australia, community events and Indigenous media. Additional support in the workplace through mentoring programs is an important tool for retaining Indigenous employees and can be a source of workplace rights information.

5.3 Other employees pointed out that some of the Indigenous community have the perception that the government doesn't understand their culture or needs. This means that it can take a long and sustained effort by government to develop working relationships with communities. Employees also raised the need to develop strong communications or partnerships with stakeholders in order to build relationships with Indigenous communities.

5.4 Non-Indigenous employees said addressing lower literacy levels and motivators in the workplace, such as cultural recognition and community focus, are key factors to shape communications.

## *Cultural Awareness*

- 5.5 During the consultation process, important issues were raised regarding Indigenous cultural traditions. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures traditionally use a high context communication style. In high context cultures less information is conveyed explicitly, with shared cultural understandings and interpersonal relationships also contributing to meaning. In contrast, government bodies generally use low context communication, relying on the explicit meaning of words. Direct or upfront language, when delivered without an existing relationship or shared context, can be perceived as authoritative or threatening to high context cultures.
- 5.6 Those familiar with high context communication styles will be more receptive to information delivered from a trusted source, and where information is communicated as part of an ongoing relationship or conversation. High context communication can be information delivered through face to face conversation, storytelling or personal experiences
- 5.7 Other relevant cultural considerations include:
- a history of interventions by State and Australian Governments has left many Indigenous communities distrustful of government
  - Indigenous cultures traditionally avoided direct interpersonal confrontation if addressing disputes and conflict
  - extended kinship relationships can impose extensive family obligations on many members of extended families.

## *Government Agencies*

- 5.8 Following internal consultations, representatives from a range of government agencies were consulted. These included DEEWR, the ATO, the Victorian Indigenous Coordination Centre (ICC) within the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and the AEC. Consultations focused on issues relevant to engaging with Indigenous audiences and strategies for that engagement.
- 5.9 A consistent theme emerging from consultations with government agencies was that Indigenous audiences will respond best to face to face communications. This communication is direct and allows audiences to build a relationship with individuals delivering a message.
- 5.10 For example, to build its profile in Indigenous communities, the ICC attended and hosted a series of government information sessions throughout urban and regional Victoria. The sessions were promoted through local Indigenous co-ops and they were consulted about the appropriate locations for the sessions. The ICC found these events an effective way of promoting its 'face' in communities and spreading knowledge of the organisation through word of mouth.
- 5.11 An alternate suggestion was attending and sponsoring existing community and sporting events. AEC effectively did this by financially sponsoring a Murri rugby league carnival in Ipswich, Queensland. To make the sponsorship valuable, it was a condition of playing in the carnival that all players were enrolled to vote.
- 5.12 In building relationships with Indigenous individuals, the need to take time to communicate appropriately and grow the relationship was emphasised. It takes time to establish trust with Indigenous communities and demonstrate that an agency is making a genuine attempt to engage with individuals and communities. Engagement must be consistent and

ongoing to be effective. The ATO and AEC undertook significant research including extensive community consultation before implementing their engagement strategies.

- 5.13 Government agencies emphasised the value of delivering their own information through alternative avenues. This allows communications to be distributed more broadly than direct agency delivery. Information can also be delivered through familiar, trusted sources. The AEC partners with other government agencies already working with Indigenous communities. The Department of Human Services (Centrelink) agreed to conduct enrolment checks while monitoring welfare payments and Aboriginal Hostels Limited distribute AEC materials to tenants. Working collaboratively minimises and simplifies the multiple levels of government engaging with communities, allowing for a more consistent approach.
- 5.14 DEEWR representatives recommended using trusted community institutions and programs to deliver information. Suggestions included community health centres, Indigenous liaison officers, vocational education centres, universities and Indigenous media. Large numbers of young Indigenous individuals use structured pathways, such as cadetships or traineeships, to enter the workforce and it was suggested these would be effective points to deliver information.
- 5.15 A consistent recommendation regarding the design of communications was to tailor language for Indigenous audiences. Language should be clear, simple and informal. Individuals in Indigenous communities can have lower literacy levels and communications need to accommodate this. Increased use of visuals can overcome literacy issues. When language is tailored to Indigenous audiences, care must be taken that the language and any visuals used are not patronising or overly authoritative. The ATO identified comic books and pamphlets containing stories and experiences of Indigenous characters as effective ways to incorporate visual storytelling and simple language in communicating important messages.
- 5.16 The use of Indigenous imagery was identified as a highly effective tool for engaging the target audience. Photographs or visuals of Indigenous Australians can quickly demonstrate the information is relevant to the target audience. It can also communicate that the agency is welcoming of Indigenous Australians. Representatives from DEEWR said having Indigenous staff instantly shows that an agency is making a genuine effort to engage with Indigenous cultures and communities. Care must be taken when using Indigenous artwork because it's generally geographically specific and won't always be representative of all Indigenous communities.
- 5.17 All government agencies consulted emphasised the diversity of Indigenous communities and the need to engage in different ways with urban, regional and remote communities. For example, the ATO delivers information through the National Indigenous Radio Service, but recognises it's mainly remote Indigenous communities listening to and engaging with these messages.

#### *Business Organisations*

- 5.18 Consultations were held with [REDACTED], an Indigenous Cultural Awareness Consultant and representatives from Kinaway, the Victorian Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce.
- 5.19 Both parties identified the importance of creating high context relationships and the continuation of such relationships. Kinaway noted that high context techniques can be utilised in online forms. They send regular email newsletters to their members to continually maintain a presence. The newsletters contain a message and photo from [REDACTED], allowing members to put a 'face' to the

information. The organisation highlighted cultural factors and a lack of cultural understanding as the biggest issues facing Indigenous workplace participants.

- 5.20 Kinaway provided examples of ways they work with government agencies to distribute information relevant to its members. Intellectual Property Australia (IP Australia) has developed a formal partnership with Kinaway and publishes their information on the Kinaway website. A biography of a 'face' behind IP Australia is used so members better connect with the information.
- 5.21 Both organisations emphasised the importance of an agency having a strong understanding of Indigenous culture before engaging. ██████████ said appropriate and genuine recognition can create spaces of 'cultural safety' where Indigenous people feel comfortable raising concerns. In physical locations, this can include flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands flags and employing Indigenous people. Emphasising communications are confidential and won't be shared with other government agencies, employers or other members of the community, also helps to create this sense of safety.

### *Community Organisations*

- 5.22 Consultations were held with representatives from GenerationOne and the Indigenous Education Centre at Kangan Institute, a vocational education institute in Broadmeadows, Melbourne. A consistent theme was that Indigenous people, particularly young people, don't know where to begin when looking for information on workplace rights.
- 5.23 GenerationOne emphasised that the primary employment related issue for Indigenous people is reducing disproportionate unemployment rates and removing barriers to employment. Community organisations working in the area of Indigenous employment generally assume employers are doing the right thing in relation to workplace rights.
- 5.24 Again, the use of visuals, a 'face' behind a message and face to face conversations were seen as important in communications designed to engage Indigenous audiences. The use of videos with real stories of Indigenous employees was identified by GenerationOne as an effective way of delivering information using simple and concise language in a way the audience can relate to.

### **Focus Group**

- 5.25 On 3 September 2012, a focus group was facilitated at the ██████████. The focus group was held to obtain the personal perspectives of Indigenous young people. The students had a variety of working backgrounds including tiling, gardening, construction, music and retail. They were all between the ages of 15 and 20 years old.

### *Sources of Information*

- 5.26 When looking for information about workplace issues, students considered the internet (Google), job providers or networks, the company/business website and newspapers. Students quickly identified the internet as a primary source of information and had difficulty thinking of others. Family and friends were the first avenue for sourcing employment.

### *Problems or issues at work*

- 5.27 No participants identified FWO as a place they would seek information for, or assistance with, a workplace issue. The students chose to approach family or friends if they had a

problem. The participants also said they didn't know an agency like ours existed and referred to Centrelink, local councils and Indigenous community centres instead.

#### *Knowledge of workplace rights*

- 5.28 Less than half of the participants could identify their minimum entitlements in the National Employment Standards. While students were able to identify occupational health and safety issues, they were less familiar with other workplace entitlements. A large amount of their responses focused on safety issues.

#### *Education Materials*

- 5.29 There were four materials shown to the participants:
- Brothablack video clip from the AEC
  - Indigenous fact sheets from NSW Industrial Relations
  - our Young Worker's Best Practice Guide video
  - a comic book from the Department of Health and Ageing.

The materials were well received by all participants, who had not seen or heard of them before. The participants said they would read or watch the materials if presented with them. This suggests a number of campaigns capable of engaging with young Indigenous people have been created, but making them known is a problem.

#### *Conflict Resolution*

- 5.30 Participants resolved issues with managers in two ways; approaching head office or resigning.



Both scenarios can be seen as indicative of Indigenous employees' difficulty in taking direct paths to deal with workplace disputes.

## **6. Key issues and considerations**

A significant amount of common themes emerged from the research and internal and external consultations. The following themes are central to the methods and nature of communications that are appropriate and effective for young Indigenous workers.

- A. It takes time and an ongoing effort to establish relationships with Indigenous communities
- B. Face to face delivery is the most effective and preferred method for engaging with young Indigenous Australians
- C. Information needs to come from trusted and known sources
- D. Appropriate Indigenous imagery and visuals assist in connecting with audiences
- E. Language should be simple and clear but not authoritative
- F. Young Indigenous workers have very low awareness of us

- G. Cultural considerations and practices need to be taken in to account, but there is not a single Indigenous culture or community that shares identical issues and concerns

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 Indigenous Australians make up a small percentage of the Australian workforce. However, Indigenous workers can make up a disproportionate amount of vulnerable workers. This is due to lower levels of employment, low awareness of workplace rights and their cultural responsibilities and obligations.
- 7.2 A pro-active and targeted engagement strategy will support Indigenous workers by increasing understanding of basic workplace entitlements and the knowledge to seek advice and assistance from us. An increased understanding of workplace rights and dispute resolution options can contribute to satisfaction in the workplace and help with employee retention. An Indigenous engagement strategy will support *Closing the Gap* targets to reduce the disparity in employment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- 7.3 While this information is directed at Indigenous workers aged between 15-24 years, many of the key issues and recommendations are relevant to Indigenous people of all age groups and other young workers. An engagement strategy will likely have varied levels of effectiveness in different geographic locations. Urban and regional areas have higher levels of Indigenous employment, including in mainstream workplaces. Information about workplace rights will be more relevant to urban and regional audiences.
- 7.4 An Indigenous engagement strategy must be multi-faceted and utilise different communication platforms. It should also be sensitive to difference within and between Indigenous communities and tailor messages accordingly. Most importantly, an Indigenous engagement strategy must be long term; committed to building relationships and trust. One-off attempts at engagement will not be effective. The following section outlines specific recommendations to be considered in the development of the engagement strategy.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 A communications or engagement strategy targeted at young Indigenous workers should utilise multiple platforms to effectively reach its audience. Three core platforms that incorporate the considerations above are:
- online communications
  - embedding communications
  - face to face communications.

### **Online Communications**

- 8.2 A preference for high context communications can be incorporated into online material through the use of 'personal stories' and experiences of real Indigenous workers to communicate key messages. Having information communicated through the experiences of an Indigenous person provides a face behind the information. The target audience can relate to the person and this allows information to be conveyed in a voice that is easily understood and relevant. When stories are communicated through video, this can overcome literacy issues that might exist.

- 8.3 Another technique for incorporating high context communication preferences is to have one 'face' as our representative of the engagement strategy. Having one person as a focal point makes the message more personal and allows for the establishment of trust. Options for a personal 'face' behind us and the strategy include:
- the Fair Work Ombudsman, Nick Wilson;
  - the Indigenous representative appointed by the Diversity Council; or
  - a high profile Indigenous Australian.
- 8.4 Language used in online communications should be clear, conversational and easy to understand. Considering the tendency to avoid direct interpersonal conflict, the language for Indigenous material should be non-adversarial and emphasise our advice and assistance functions. The confidentiality of advice functions should be emphasised where appropriate to allow for the history of mistrust in government.
- 8.5 Continuity of communications is an important way to build trust. One method is to create a distinct visual theme for communications targeted at Indigenous people. The theme should be distinct, but related to our brand, and incorporate appropriate Indigenous colours and images. A graphic designer with experience in creating Indigenous visuals can be engaged to ensure the imagery effectively speaks to the target audience and is culturally appropriate. ██████████, an artist originally from the ██████████, was employed by ATO and Kinaway to design the artwork for their Indigenous communications.
- 8.6 Another method to deliver targeted information online is to create a 'micro site' within [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) specifically for Indigenous workers and incorporating the distinct visual theme. This will create a space of 'cultural safety' within the website for Indigenous workers. The micro site will ensure all relevant information for this target audience uses the most effective language and visuals.
- 8.7 To access online networks of Indigenous workers, we can link into existing social media networks of relevant community and business organisations. For example, GenerationOne has over 100,000 'likes' on its Facebook page and more than 4,000 followers on Twitter. Any of our information communicated through these existing social media networks will access a broad audience of Indigenous people that otherwise wouldn't engage with us.

### **Embedding Communications**

- 8.8 Data shows very few Indigenous people are making contact with us. Embedding our messages into trusted sources of information that the target audience already access creates an important shortcut for engagement. Avenues for embedding our information include:
- Indigenous community centres and community health centres
  - local land councils
  - recruitment organisations and job service agencies assisting Indigenous workers
  - Indigenous specific education centres at TAFEs and universities, such as the Indigenous Education Centre at Kangan Institute
  - State and Commonwealth government agencies
  - Indigenous specific media.
- 8.9 Different levels of embedding should be utilised, depending on the nature of the organisation. For local organisations like community centres and land councils; providing hard copy communications and collateral will allow these organisations to deliver our

information without imposing time or resource obligations. Media releases that contain information particularly relevant to Indigenous communities can be passed on directly to Indigenous specific media.

- 8.10 More involved relationships can be developed with State and Commonwealth Government agencies that are already engaging with Indigenous audiences. Indigenous Coordination Centres within FaHCSIA are designed as a central contact point for Indigenous people to engage with whole of government. The ICCs in each state hold regular meetings with representatives from various government agencies. Attending these meetings is an opportunity to establish relationships with other agencies working in Indigenous engagement and become aware of relevant government and community events. The ATO, AEC and Department of Human Services are agencies undertaking communication and engagement work with Indigenous people.
- 8.11 A further opportunity for embedding our information is working with vocational education centres to develop materials that can be added to the curriculum in relevant courses.

### **Face to Face Communications**

- 8.12 An important way to build awareness of our work and develop relationships with Indigenous communities is to engage face to face. This will involve expanding the range of employment and community events we attend to include Indigenous specific events. Education and employment focused events will be most relevant to us but sponsoring sporting and arts events will also raise our profile among the target audience.
- 8.13 Another option for face to face communication is to organise direct education forums and seminars through vocational education centres, universities and community organisations. Where face to face communications are employed, they need to be supplemented by ongoing communication and engagement to ensure relationships initiated can be thoroughly established.

## APPENDIX 1 – REFERENCES AND NOTES

**NOTE** In this report the term ‘Indigenous’ has been used to refer to all Australians identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. FWO recognises the diversity of languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census of Population and Housing – Counts of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2075.0.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census Community Profile Series 2002.0.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 20116287.0.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, Indigenous Statistics for Schools, Industry and Occupation.

<sup>5</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006, Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 4705.0.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006, Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 4705.0.

<sup>7</sup> Auspoll is a specialist social research consultancy. They work with government departments, corporations, industry associations and NGO’s in sectors such as infrastructure, the environment, education, health, energy, workplace relations and Indigenous Affairs.

<sup>8</sup> Auspoll, Commissioned by GenerationOne, *Community Attitudes to Indigenous Education, Training and Employment*, May 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Patrick Shanahan and David Elliot, E&S Research, *Effective Communication with Young People*, December 2009.

<sup>10</sup> McNair Ingenuity Research, *Indigenous Media Survey*, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> Fair Work Ombudsman, *Infra/CCMS Analysis*, May 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Fair Work Ombudsman, *Cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD), Communications Engagement Strategy*, updated July 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Australian Taxation Office, *Exploring and Improving Indigenous Australians’ understanding of the taxation and superannuation system*, 20 October 2011.



