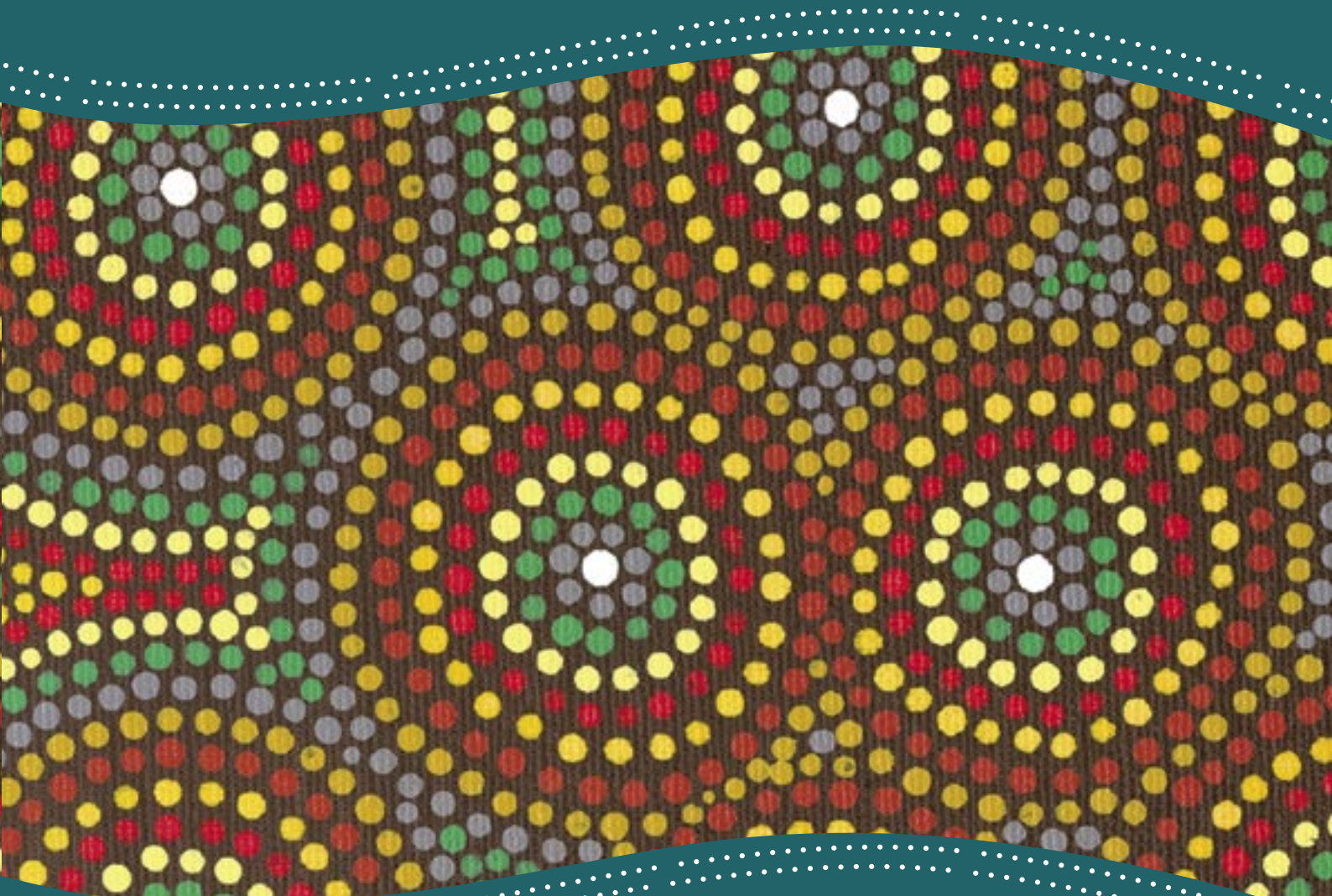


# Strategic Plan for Indigenous Australians 2005 - 2008



**Queensland Government**  
Department of Emergency Services



## Minister's message

It is with great pleasure that I present the Department of Emergency Services Strategic Plan for Indigenous Australians 2005-2008.

This Strategic Plan illustrates the Government's commitment to building a future in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders share the same standard of living, economic prospects and general wellbeing as all Queenslanders.

The Government demonstrates this commitment through Partnerships Queensland: Future Directions Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy in Queensland 2004-2008. This Framework represents a new way of doing business with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and draws together key themes of existing Queensland Government policies and programs into four key goals:

- Strong families, strong cultures
- Safe places
- Healthy living
- Skilled and prosperous people and communities.

Through the key strategies and key measures, this Strategic Plan supports these key goals and is a blueprint for the department's contribution to providing a safer community and a better quality of life for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. I commend this plan to you.

Hon Chris Cummins MP  
Minister for Emergency Services



## Director-General's message

The Department of Emergency Services is implementing a two-pronged approach to improving quality of life for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders by focusing on both service delivery and employment opportunities

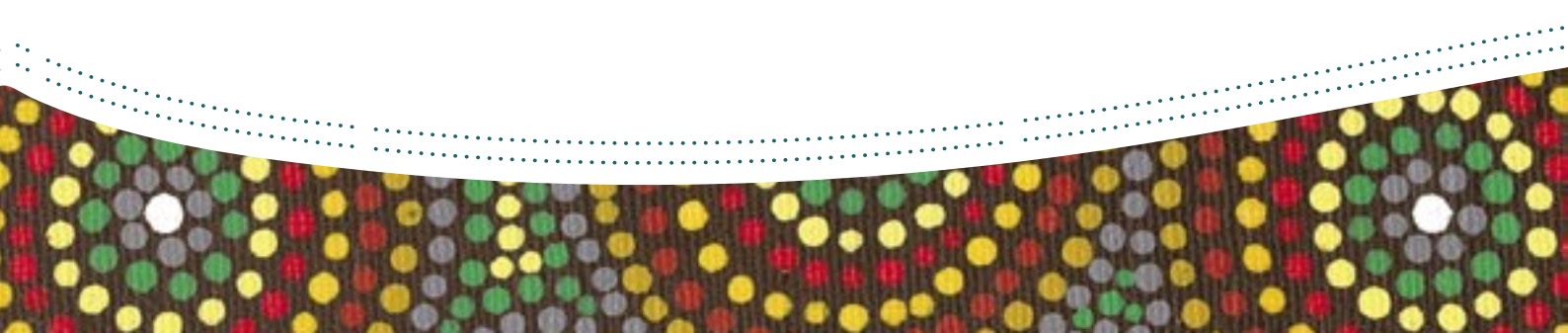
The department is working in partnership with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Queensland to provide a range of services including pre-hospital care, counter disaster, and fire and rescue services.

The department is also working collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to build their capacity to prepare for, prevent and respond to a range of emergencies and disasters in their respective communities.

I am personally committed to improving the safety and security of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders and to delivering innovative and flexible programs and services that meet the individual needs of communities. I am also committed to increasing the number of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders employed in this department.

This Strategic Plan presents a clear direction for the provision of emergency services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Queensland. I join the Minister in commending this plan to you.

Michael Kinnane  
Director-General





## Strategic Plan for Indigenous Australians 2005-2008

This Strategic Plan builds on the opportunities identified in the Strategic Plan for Indigenous Australians 2001-2005. It presents a clear direction for the provision of emergency services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Queensland.

The plan supports the key priorities of the Queensland Government and is structured around five Key Result Areas that reflect where the department will focus its activities and resources to enhance community safety. Those key result areas are:

- Enhance community safety and prevention capability.
- Enhance operational service delivery.
- Develop and support our people.
- Contribute to national, state and local policy agenda.
- Continuous business improvement.

### **Copies of this Strategic Plan are available from:**

Community Engagement Unit  
Department of Emergency Services  
GPO Box 1425  
Brisbane Queensland 4001 Australia

Telephone: 07 3109 5016

Internet: [www.emergency.qld.gov.au/publications/](http://www.emergency.qld.gov.au/publications/)



## Population profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland

Queensland has two large groups of Indigenous peoples within its jurisdiction – Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders. Queensland is home to 27 per cent of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with 3.1 per cent of the State's population identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

In the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census of Population and Housing, 77 per cent of this group identified as Aboriginal, 15 per cent as Torres Strait Islander and 8 per cent as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Twenty per cent live in remote and Deed of Grant in Trust communities.

Thirty-nine per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is under the age of 15, compared with 21 per cent of the general population. Only 2.8 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is aged over 65, compared with 13.9 per cent of the general population.

Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders live in a diverse range of locations across Queensland – some in discrete communities in remote coastal, island or inland areas and others in major urban centres or provincial towns.



## Queensland Government's priority

The Queensland Government is working with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders to build a future in which they share the same standard of living, economic prospects and general well-being as other Queenslanders.

The Government recognises that no single approach to engagement and negotiation, policy setting, planning and service delivery can meet the varied needs of all Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders throughout the State.

Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders desire the same service quality, outcomes and opportunities as other Queenslanders, along with an affirmation of their unique cultural identity.

The Queensland Government has done much to meet the expectations and needs of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders. Policies, programs and service delivery initiatives developed to improve the quality of life in communities reflect extensive consultation and collaboration at the community, regional and State levels. They also reflect a commitment to greater collaboration among Queensland Government agencies and across levels of government.

### Partnerships Queensland

The Government recognises that policy integration is the key to effective program and service delivery, and therefore outcomes, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. To acknowledge this, the Government has developed Partnerships Queensland - a framework that integrates and consolidates current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policies.

Partnerships Queensland operationalises the National Framework of Principles for Government Service Delivery to Indigenous Australians agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments. These principles include sharing responsibility, streamlining service delivery and bringing it in line with mainstream structures, establishing transparency and accountability, developing a learning framework and focusing on priority areas.

Partnerships Queensland builds on the progress already made and provides a clear direction for the future. The four key goal areas for Partnerships Queensland are strong families, strong culture; safe places; healthy living; and skilled and prosperous people and communities.

The Government's three key policies that underpin the Partnerships Queensland framework are:

- Towards a Queensland Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ten Year Partnership;
- Cape York Partnerships – Some Practical Ideas; and
- Meeting Challenges, Making Choices.

### Responsibility of departments

Under the Partnerships Queensland framework, Government agencies are responsible for:

- Developing and implementing strategies that align with the objectives of Partnerships Queensland.
- Providing services at the local level wherever possible (or if this is not feasible, clustering services in nearby towns).
- Ensuring service levels for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders match those expected by all Queenslanders.
- Participating in negotiation tables to ensure effort targets needs.
- Participating in coordinating forums such as the Senior Officers' working group, Regional Managers' Coordination Networks and CEO Committees.
- Working effectively with other agencies to streamline and strengthen services.
- Reporting every six months to the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, which in turn reports to Cabinet on whole-of-Government progress towards achieving the goals of Partnerships Queensland.



## The department's vision

A safer community and a better quality of life for all Queenslanders through world-class emergency and disaster management services.

### Who we are

The Department of Emergency Services (DES) delivers ambulance, fire, search, rescue, disaster management and hazardous materials services to the entire community of Queensland. Our vital role in every community focuses on developing the capacity of the community to prevent, prepare for and lessen the effects of emergencies or disasters, and responding to emergencies and disasters. Our services are provided by 8000 staff and more than 85,500 supported volunteers to 3.73 million Queenslanders across our vast State of 1.77 million square kilometres. Volunteers are represented in the following:

- State Emergency Service
- Rural Fire Service
- Emergency Services Cadets
- Queensland Ambulance Service
- Volunteer Marine Rescue Association
- Surf Life Saving Queensland
- Australian Volunteer Coast Guard
- Royal Life Saving Society
- Response Advice for Chemical Emergencies.

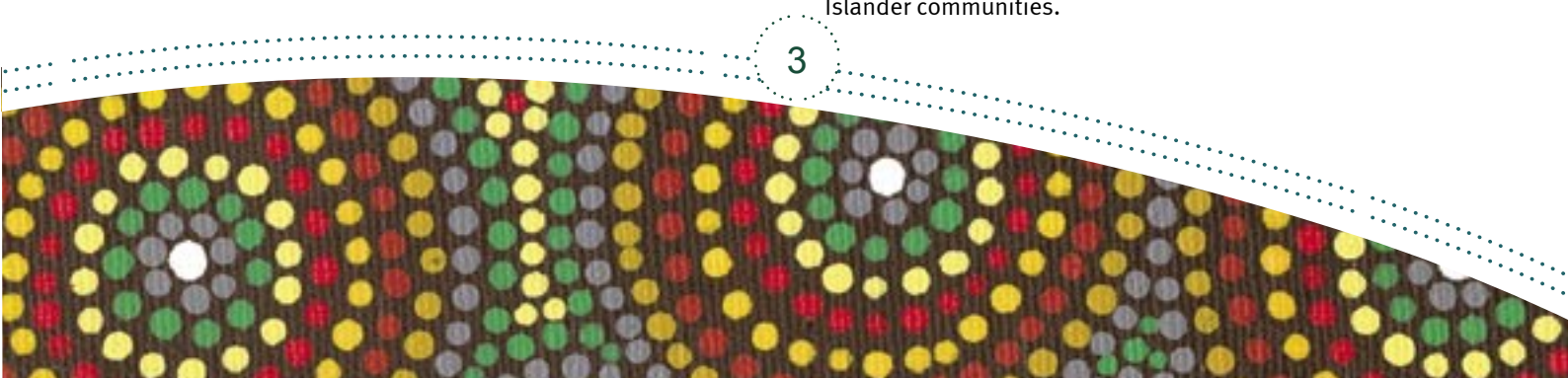
Many rural and remote Indigenous communities are provided with emergency and disaster management services by a range of volunteers. Through these volunteers, DES has had the opportunity to develop valuable partnerships at the local level.

### The Department's commitment

The Department of Emergency Services (DES) is implementing a two-pronged approach to improving quality of life for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders by focusing on both service delivery and employment opportunities. Key strategies include:

- Employment of ambulance field officers in targeted rural and remote Indigenous communities.
- Implementation of Queensland Ambulance Service First Responder Groups in targeted rural and remote Indigenous communities.
- Implementation of Joint Emergency Service Units in targeted rural and remote Indigenous communities.
- Review and evaluation of Disaster Management Plans and Fire Management Plans in rural and remote Indigenous communities.
- Continuation and enhancement of community safety and awareness programs in targeted Indigenous communities, including:
  - First Aid and CPR courses;
  - provision of First Aid Kits to rural and remote Indigenous outstations and homelands;
  - junior education programs focusing on first aid, boat safety, fire safety and preparing for and responding to disasters and emergencies;
  - disaster awareness campaigns focusing on preparing for and responding to disasters and emergencies; and
  - suicide and drug support programs.
- Achievement of employment targets for Indigenous Australians across the department.
- Continuation of the development of bridging programs for Indigenous Australians to assist them in qualifying as student paramedics and firefighters.
- Further training of DES community volunteers in rural and remote Indigenous communities.

The department is working with other State Government agencies, other sectors of government, businesses and communities to streamline and strengthen service delivery and community safety in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



## Indigenous Australian Service Delivery Enhancement Package

To further enhance services to Indigenous communities, the department has been implementing the Indigenous Australian Service Delivery Enhancement Package.

Providing \$2.1 million over four years, the package provides the foundation for the department to engage with Indigenous Australian communities in the development of flexible models of service delivery, and outlines a range of specific strategies to enhance employment and training opportunities, and to assist with community capacity building.

### Key outcomes for Indigenous communities

- To improve and develop flexible and innovative service delivery models that meet the needs of Indigenous communities throughout Queensland.
- To build the capacity of communities to prevent, prepare, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters.
- To increase the number of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders employed, retained and promoted within the Department of Emergency Services.



## Our key result areas

### Enhance community safety and prevention capability

**Safer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.**

Definition:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have the resources and the capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters.

- Implementing inclusive and targeted training/ professional development strategies and peer support programs that enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to reach their full career and personal potential.
- Providing a work environment that celebrates and values the cultural heritage of DES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and is free from all forms of harassment and discrimination.

### Enhance operational service delivery

**Models of service delivery are developed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that meet the specific needs of individual communities.**

Definition:

Flexible models of service delivery that ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have access to appropriate services in the event of an emergency or disaster.

### Contribute to the national, State and local policy agenda

**The department contributes to the development and implementation of Indigenous policy at all levels of government.**

Definition:

DES as a key strategic partner in enhancing Indigenous policy across all levels of Government, informing and influencing whole-of-Government policy development and implementation.

### Develop and support our people

**A significant representation of Indigenous employees across all levels of the department.**

Definition:

Continuously increasing the number of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders employed and retained within DES through:

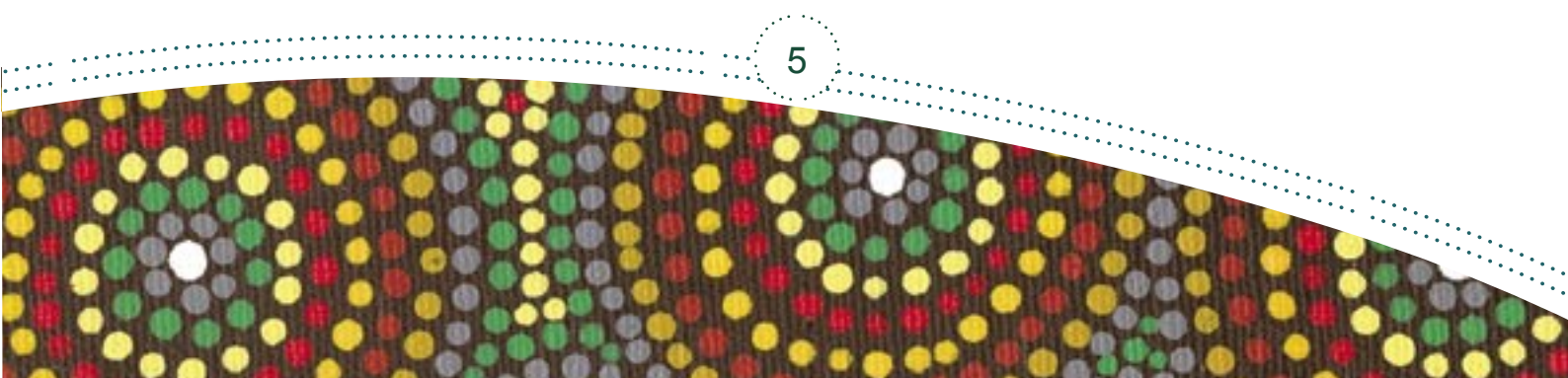
- Implementing innovative recruitment, employment and training strategies to encourage Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders to apply for DES positions.

### Continuous business improvement

**The department is committed to improving the way we develop and deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.**

Definition:

The department will continue to revisit current work practices and be prepared to use and value innovative, strategic thinking to allow continuous improvement.





## Our key strategies

### Safer Indigenous Queensland communities

- Ensure identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are prepared for and have the capacity to respond to emergencies and disasters.
- Maintain continuous improvement in First Aid and community education. (QAS Strategic Plan 2004-2007)
- Promote community awareness and early identification of sudden illness and injury. (QAS Strategic Plan 2004-2007)
- Enhance the First Responder Initiative. (QAS Strategic Plan 2004-2007)
- Encourage State Government agencies, local governments and community councils to undertake mitigation planning and implement treatment options. (CDRS Strategic Plan 2004-2008)
- Focus initiatives to meet the needs of 'high-risk' and priority groups. (QFRS Strategic Plan 2003-2007)
- Cultivate a more informed, alert and participative community in relation to emergency safety issues. (QFRS Strategic Plan 2003-2007)
- Assist the community to develop its capacity to meet its community safety obligations. (QFRS Strategic Plan 2003-2007)

### Appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- To develop flexible and innovative service delivery models that meet the needs of Indigenous Australian communities throughout Queensland.
- Develop and review community-based Multi-Agency Action Plans with identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders in the planning, development and delivery of services.
- Explore alternative QAS service delivery models. (QAS Strategic Plan 2004-2007)
- Use appropriate resources to match the community profile (QFRS Strategic Plan 2003-2007)
- Provide collaborative service delivery that is responsive to the diversity of the Queensland community. (QFRS Strategic Plan 2003-2007)
- Continue to focus on the service needs of stakeholders by developing and applying flexible models of service delivery. (CDRS Strategic Plan 2004-2008)
- Continue to deliver cultural awareness training to DES staff.

## Increase recruitment, retention and promotion of Indigenous Australians

- Increase the Department of Emergency Services representation, retention and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across all levels of the organisation . (Diversity and Equity Plan – Towards 2008)
- Develop innovative employment strategies that promote DES as an employer of choice and encourage Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders to apply for DES positions. (Diversity and Equity Plan – Towards 2008)
- Implement inclusive and supportive practices that facilitate the progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants through all stages of recruitment and selection. (Diversity and Equity Plan – Towards 2008)
- Provide inclusive and targeted training/professional development strategies and peer support programs that enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to reach their full career and personal potential with the department. (Diversity and Equity Plan – Towards 2008)
- Create a work environment free from all forms of harassment or discrimination and a workforce that celebrates and values the cultural heritage of DES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. (Diversity and Equity Plan – Towards 2008)
- Develop an equitable and diverse workforce through continuous implementation of DES equity and diversity initiatives. (QAS Strategic Plan 2004-2007, CDRS Strategic Plan 2004-2008 and QFRS Strategic Plan 2003-2007).
- Enhance access to, and satisfaction with, training and development programs. (QAS Strategic Plan 2004-2007, CDRS Strategic Plan 2004-2008 and QFRS Strategic Plan 2003-2007).

## Strategic partnerships

- Maintain existing and develop new strategic partnerships with national, State and local government agencies to inform and influence the development of Indigenous policies and strategies being implemented throughout Queensland.
- Continue to support and influence national organisations whose policies impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities such as the Council of Australian Government (COAG).



## Our key measures of success

### Safer Indigenous Australian communities

- Percentage of Queenslanders located within identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities trained in CPR or First Aid.
- Percentage of identified Indigenous Queensland communities with current disaster management plans.
- Percentage of local governments and community councils located within identified Indigenous communities that have completed or are undertaking risk assessment studies.
- Percentage of identified Indigenous Queensland communities with current Fire Management Plans.
- Percentage of rural fire brigades located in identified Indigenous communities resourced in accordance with the standard set for their brigade classification.

### Appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- Percentage of rural, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that have established flexible models of service delivery to meet community needs (e.g. joint Emergency Service Units, First Responder Groups and/or QAS field offices)
- Percentage of identified Indigenous Australian communities with community-based DES Multi-Agency Action Plans.
- Percentage of DES staff who undertake cultural awareness training.

### Increased recruitment and retention of Indigenous Australians

- Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at all levels of the department and their retention rate.
- Percentage of staff who agree that DES is committed to diversity and equity.
- Number of discrimination complaints within DES.
- Level of staff satisfaction with access to training and development programs.

### Strategic partnerships

Number of strategic partnerships developed across the sectors to deliver services and programs to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

### Our Employment targets

The following targets have been developed and implemented in relation to DES Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. These include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees represent greater than 2.4 per cent of all employees in the department by the end of the year 2008.
- Employment turnover rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to equal the employment turnover rate for all DES employees.

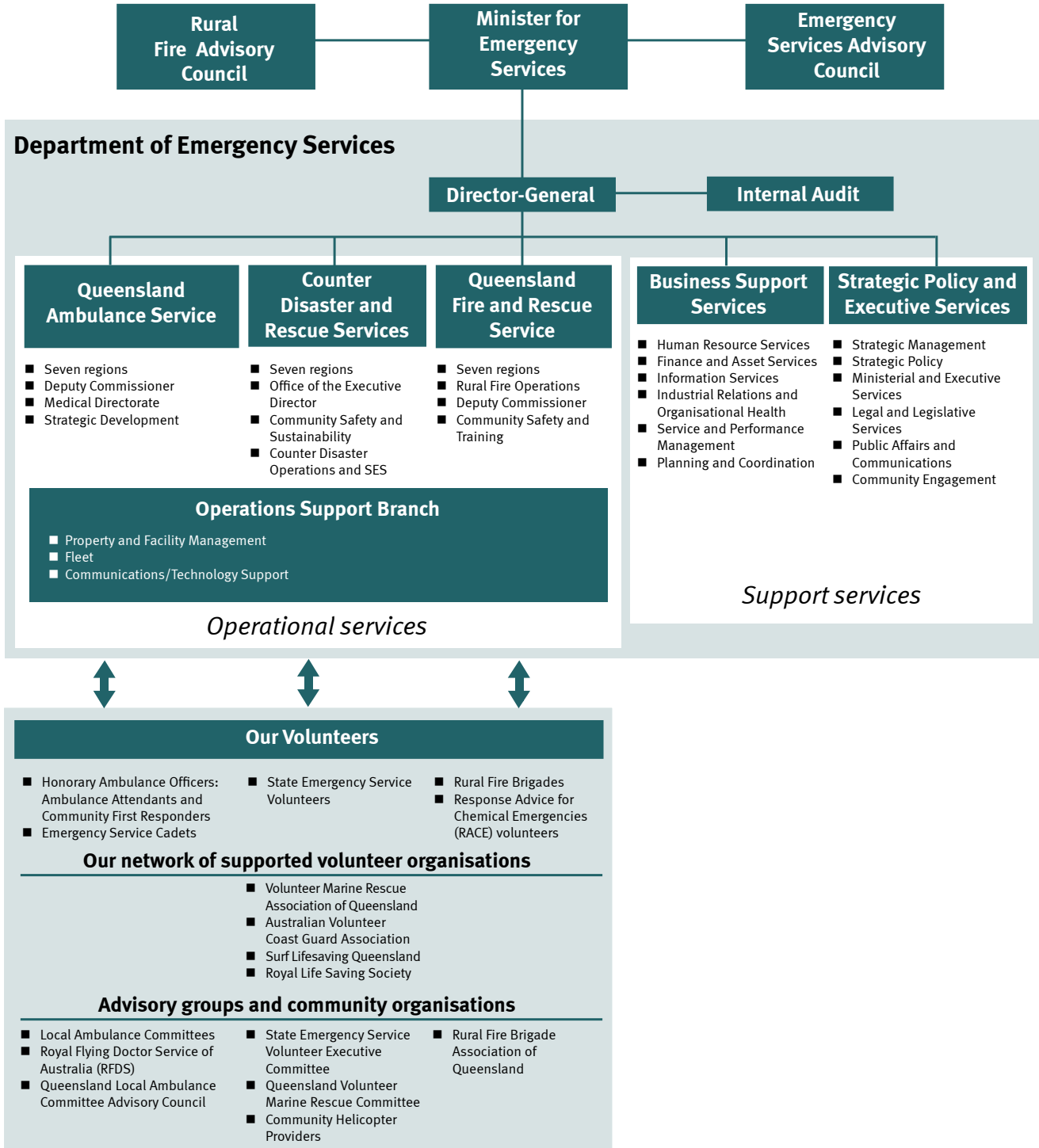
### Review, evaluation and reporting

- Progress on this plan is reported:
  - quarterly to the Director-General and the Executive Management Team;
  - to the Cape York Partnerships Chief Executive Officers Committee;
  - quarterly to the Director-General, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy as part of the Meeting Challenges, Making Choices initiative; and
  - Biannually to Cabinet through the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy as part of the Partnerships Queensland Framework.
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of employment equity strategies form part of the EEO annual report.
- Performance measures are incorporated into Departmental Performance Plans.
- Key strategies and measures of success are incorporated into Regional Operational Plans.



# Our organisation

The department works closely with many government, business and community partners, and our structure allows effective multi-service cooperation and coordination for the benefit of the community.





## Aligning our priorities

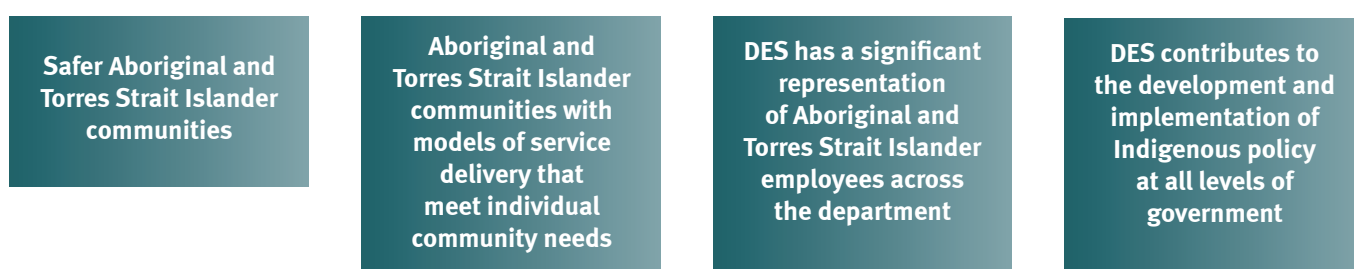
### Key Government priorities for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders (Partnerships Queensland)



### DES key result areas (DES Corporate Plan 2004-2008)



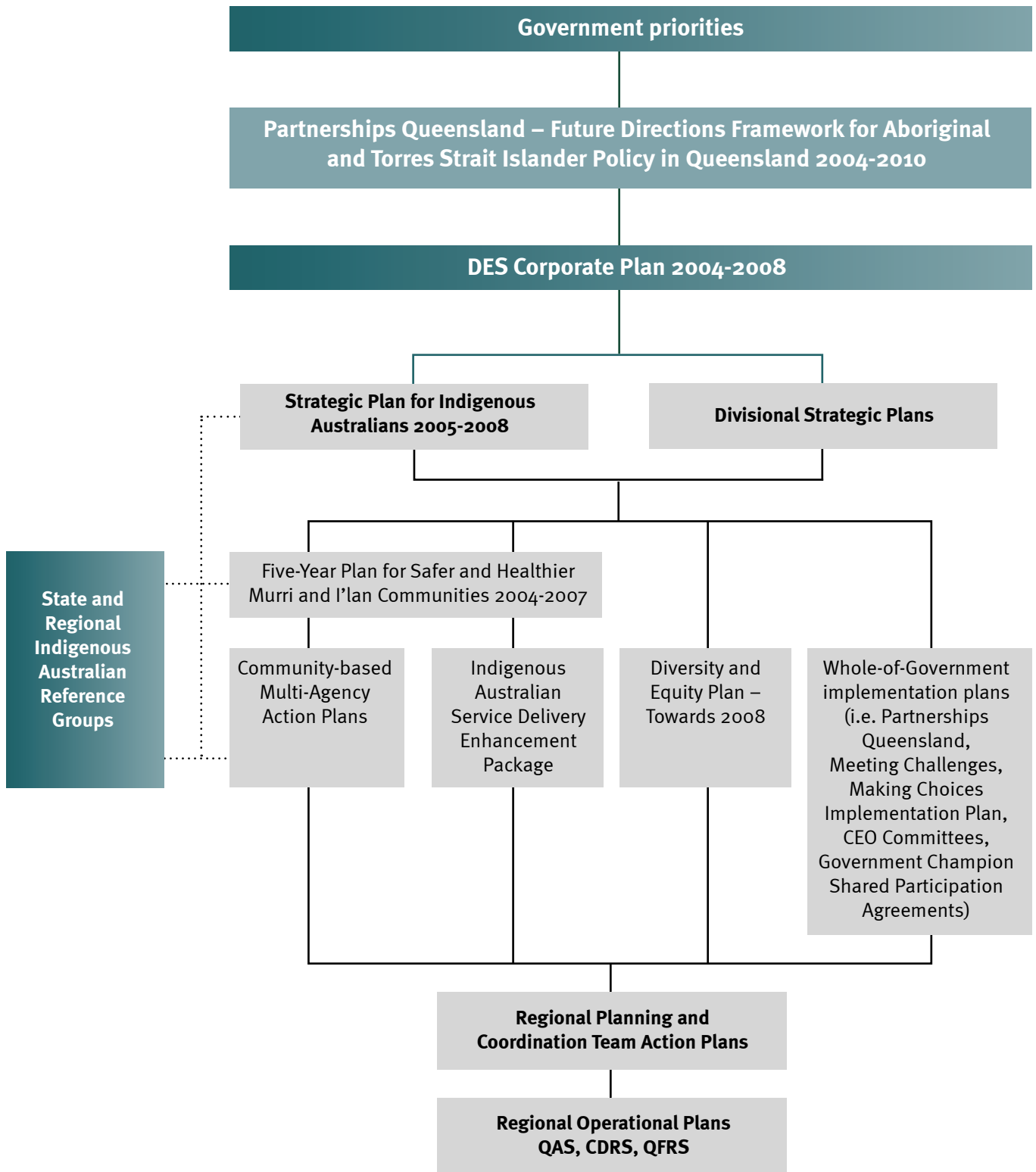
### DES priorities for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders (Strategic Plan for Indigenous Australians 2005-2008)



DES is committed to improving the way we develop and deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities



# Our planning structure





## Our key human resources

### Indigenous Coordination Unit

The department's Indigenous Coordination Unit is located in Cairns. The unit comprises of staff representing each of the divisions within the department who focus on service delivery strategies for Indigenous communities from a Statewide perspective.

### Indigenous Employment Unit

The Indigenous Employment Unit is located in Brisbane and managed by the Business Support Services, Diversity and Equity Unit. This unit comprises of staff who focus on recruitment employment and professional development strategies for all divisions from a statewide perspective.

### State Indigenous Australian Reference Group

The department's State Indigenous Australian Reference Group is sponsored and chaired by the Director-General and comprises of 14 Indigenous Australian staff representing each region throughout the State, eight Management representatives from all divisions within the department and five external representatives from Indigenous organisations and committees.

This group is an advisory body and ensures a strong Indigenous influence in the development of policy, procedures and guidelines, and in service delivery across DES.

### Regional Indigenous Australian Reference Groups

The Departmental Regional Indigenous Australian Reference Groups are sponsored by a Regional Planning and Coordination Team representative from each region. These groups are chaired by a State Indigenous Australian Reference Group member and are inclusive of non-Indigenous staff working with Indigenous communities.

These groups are also advisory bodies and ensure a strong Indigenous influence in the development of policy, procedures and guidelines, and in service delivery across DES.

### Regional Indigenous Liaison Officers

Indigenous Liaison Officers are located in selected regions across the State and focus on service delivery, and recruitment and employment strategies for Indigenous communities within their region.

### QAS Field Officers

QAS Field Officers have been appointed in selected Indigenous communities. The QAS Field Officer serves the local community, surrounding communities and related homelands and outstations. The role of the Field Officer includes injury prevention and First Aid training, developing the emergency response capability of communities, and training primary health care workers in the use of emergency equipment such as defibrillators. Field Officers also provide first aid kits and equipment to homelands and outstations.

### Indigenous Training Officers

QFRS and CDRS Indigenous Training Officers are based in Cairns and the Torres Strait area. The role of Indigenous Training Officers is to provide on the ground skills training in a range of fire and disaster management initiatives.