

Department of Police and Emergency Management

ABORIGINAL STRATEGIC PLAN
2014 - 2022



Foreword

This is the third Department of Police and Emergency Management (DPEM) Aboriginal Strategic Plan. The Plan aligns with Tasmanian Government policy, DPEM Strategic Framework, and Directions in Australia and New Zealand Policing, and has been developed in consultation with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The Plan acknowledges the importance of Tasmania's Aboriginal community within the context of the broader community, as well as other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who visit or reside in this State.

The Plan supports strategies to develop and maintain appropriate and culturally respectful relationships, to facilitate an environment wherein policing services are accessible, meet the needs of all, and are delivered equitably.

The Plan provides a focus on five key areas:

1. Safety in Custody
2. Safety and Crime Prevention
3. Communication and Liaison
4. Recruitment
5. Training and Education.

Within these areas there is a strong emphasis on ensuring the safety of all Aboriginal persons who may come into contact with the criminal justice system, either as offenders or victims.

The DPEM remains committed to supporting a coordinated network of Aboriginal Liaison Officers, to develop a better knowledge and understanding of issues facing the Aboriginal community, and to respond appropriately to those issues.

This Department will continue to work in partnership with the Aboriginal community, and other areas of government, in an effort to achieve positive outcomes for Tasmania's Aboriginal community.



D L HINE
Commissioner of Police



Vision

A safe and secure Tasmania.

Mission

To deliver quality policing and emergency management services to the people of Tasmania.

Our Values

- Integrity
- Equity
- Accountability.

Our Business Principles

- Engagement
- Empowerment
- Quality Service
- Continuous improvement.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles underpin the Aboriginal Strategic Plan:

- DPEM will provide a service to the community free of any form of discrimination, irrespective of a person's race, sex, language, culture or religion.
- DPEM will consult with individuals and Aboriginal organisations to progress action to improve community safety and service delivery.
- Service delivery shall be sensitive to the needs and requirements of the Aboriginal community.
- Aboriginal people have the right to live in an environment free of the threat of violence, crime and fear.
- Tasmania Police will act consistently in a humane, ethical and accountable way, recognising that its use of discretion is central to improving the relationship between Tasmania Police and the Aboriginal community.
- Tasmania Police recognises and accept its obligations and duty of care to all people in custody.

Key Objectives

The objective of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan is to achieve practical results in relation to five areas of strategic focus:

1. Safety in Custody
2. Safety and Crime Prevention
3. Communication and Liaison
4. Cultural Awareness Training and Education
5. Recruiting.



State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator

The State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator is appointed by the Commissioner and is responsible for liaison and advisory matters between Tasmania Police and the Aboriginal Community.

The functions of the State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator are to:

- coordinate the roles and functions of the District Aboriginal Liaison Officers
- report on the performance results in the key areas of this Plan to the the Assistant Commissioner, Planning and Development on a twelve-monthly basis
- provide advice on issues affecting Aboriginal people and Tasmania Police to the CMG
- represent Tasmania Police at seminars, conferences and meetings on issues concerning Aboriginal people
- coordinate and conduct lectures in various forums
- liaise with Aboriginal organisations
- keep abreast of current and emerging issues through ongoing research and where possible, identify solutions through effective partnerships
- contribute to the development of local strategies to reduce the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system, either as victims or offenders
- assist other Tasmania Police members with duties affecting Aboriginal people, and
- assist in minor misunderstandings of a local nature between Tasmania Police members and Aboriginal people, and conciliate where possible.

District Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Assistant Aboriginal Liaison Officers

The District and Assistant Aboriginal Liaison Officers are responsible for liaison between Tasmania Police and the Aboriginal community at the District level.

The functions of the District and Assistant Aboriginal Liaison Officers are to:

- liaise directly with the Tasmania Police State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator
- develop and maintain a knowledge of Aboriginal issues in the District via communication with operational members and Aboriginal organisations/agencies
- provide advice on issues affecting Aboriginal people and Tasmania Police to the District Commander
- represent the District at seminars, conferences and meetings on issues concerning Aboriginal people
- coordinate and conduct lectures in various forums within the District
- liaise with Aboriginal organisations
- provide information on Tasmania Police practices and procedures to Aboriginal groups
- ensure members are apprised of operational procedural changes pertaining to Aboriginal people and the Aboriginal community
- contribute to the development of local strategies to reduce the number of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system, either as victims or offenders, and
- assist other Tasmania Police members with duties affecting Aboriginal people.



Objective:

- To reduce the number of Aboriginal people who are detained in custody, and provide a safe environment should a viable alternative not be readily available.

Strategies:

- Where practicable and as set out in legislation, Aboriginal people should be admitted to bail and not detained in custody.
- Where possible, Aboriginal people will be proceeded against through appropriate use of cautions, summons, 'places of safety', youth justice and drug diversionary processes.
- Engagement with the Aboriginal community to identify non-custodial options for Aboriginal people.
- The Aboriginal Legal Service will be notified in every case where an Aboriginal person is in custody and an effort shall be made to notify a relative or friend of the person.
- Details regarding the notification of the Aboriginal Legal Service shall be recorded on the Online Charging system.
- Where it is necessary to detain an Aboriginal person in custody, Tasmania Police will provide a safe environment and exercise vigilance to guard against death or injury in custody.
- Members shall not conduct warrant checks at cultural events except in certain circumstances. Arrest of persons on warrant attending those events is not to occur unless it relates to a crime and cannot reasonably be delayed.
- To establish the percentage of Aboriginal persons incarcerated, the standard Indigenous Origin question on the Online Charging System is mandatory and policy will reinforce that the question is asked in all cases to achieve one hundred percent compliance.

Performance Indicators:

- Number of Aboriginal people charged.
- Number of Aboriginal people detained in custody.
- Number of Aboriginal people cautioned.
- Number of Aboriginal people subject to drug diversion.
- Number of people supported by Early Intervention and Youth Action Units.
- Number of notifications to the Aboriginal Legal Service when an Aboriginal person is detained.
- Number of Aboriginal deaths in custody.
- Level of engagement with the Aboriginal community and organisations in line with the *Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement*.
- Instruction in relation to warrant checks at cultural gatherings.



Objective:

- To reduce the level of crime committed by and against Aboriginal people.

Strategies:

- DPEM will identify local crime trends and implement appropriate initiatives to reduce the level of crime committed by and against Aboriginal people.
- DPEM will work with other agencies and Aboriginal communities and organisations, as part of the Whole-of-Government Safe at Home program, to reduce the incidence of family violence and provide support to victims and children affected by family violence.
- Tasmania Police shall continue to support young Aboriginal people considered to be at-risk and their families, through the Early Intervention and Youth Action Units (EIYAU). The EIYAU will work closely with other government and non-government agencies to address individual issues relating to youth offending behaviour, regarding indigenous-specific programs.
- To establish the percentage of Aboriginal persons who are victims or offenders, the standard Indigenous Origin question on the Online Charging System and Offence Reporting System is mandatory and policy will reinforce that the question is asked in all cases to achieve one hundred percent compliance.
- DPEM will develop partnerships with Aboriginal Government Agencies to improve service delivery to the Aboriginal community.
- Tasmania Police will continue to deliver training programs and presentations on crime issues impacting, or likely to impact on, the Aboriginal community.
- Working with stakeholders to identify criminogenic risk factors and develop and deliver programs to reduce re-offending.

Performance Indicators:

- Number of Aboriginal people identified as offenders.
- Number of Aboriginal people identified as victims.
- Number of Aboriginal children supported by the EIYAU.
- Number of interdepartmental committees relating to Aboriginal services in which DPEM is represented.
- Number of training programs or presentations delivered to the Aboriginal community.
- Number of partnerships established with Aboriginal representative organisations.
- Level of engagement with committees/programs targeting early intervention and offending, in line with the *Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement*.



Communication and Liaison

Objective:

- To improve communication and liaison between DPEM and the Aboriginal community.

Strategies:

- The level of communication and liaison between DPEM and the Aboriginal community will be improved through proactive consultation and dialogue.
- The Tasmania Police State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator will establish a framework for regular meetings between Tasmania Police and local Aboriginal organisations. The State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator shall report on performance, in relation to the strategic areas, to the Assistant Commissioner, Planning and Development every twelve months.
- Tasmania Police District Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Assistant District Liaison Officers shall be appointed to each police District. These officers shall be responsible for developing knowledge of Aboriginal issues in the District via communication with operational members and local Aboriginal organisations. These officers shall report their activities to the State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator.
- Tasmania Police shall participate in the Whole-of-Government reference group to improve service delivery to Aboriginal people.
- DPEM will promote respect for Aboriginal traditions and customs by appropriate acknowledgement at important events and celebrations.

Performance Indicators:

- Appointment of a State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator, District Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Assistant District Aboriginal Liaison Officers.
- Number of meetings with Aboriginal organisations.
- Reporting on the strategic areas.
- Participation in the Whole of Government reference group.
- Number of DPEM ceremonial events including the Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country, as provided by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.



Recruitment

Objective:

- To implement recruitment and selection processes consistent with Tasmanian Government policy that provide opportunities to everyone, remove barriers to diverse recruitment, and aim for a workplace that is discrimination free.

Strategies:

- Engagement with the Aboriginal community to promote the option of recruitment to Tasmania Police.
- Application of *The Job Suitability Test Facilitated by the Australian Institute of Forensic Psychology* which provides a different level of assessment for people who identify as Aboriginal.
- Tasmania Police will continue to screen all police applicants for racist attitudes prior to selection.
- Involvement of Aboriginal Elders in recruit training to enhance understanding of Aboriginal issues.
- Recording of the indigenous status, when identified, of Police Officers and State Service employees by Human Resources.

Performance Indicators:

- Level of engagement with the Aboriginal community and organisations in line with the *Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement*.
- Consistent application of *The Job Suitability Test Facilitated by the Australian Institute of Forensic Psychology* for all recruit applicants.
- Compliance with Tasmanian Government policies concerning recruitment.

Training and Education

Objective:

- To ensure members of Tasmania Police and State Service employees receive appropriate training to enhance positive relationships with the Aboriginal community.

Strategies:

- Tasmania Police will continue to deliver cultural awareness training to all members of Tasmania Police.
- DPEM will continue to provide workplace diversity training to all State Service employees.
- The Aboriginal Strategic Plan will be maintained as a key corporate document. The Aboriginal Strategic Plan shall be distributed to all members of Tasmania Police and State Service employees, and made available to members of the wider community on the Tasmania Police website.
- The Aboriginal Strategic Plan will form part of initial recruit training and be incorporated into the qualification process for constables, sergeants and inspectors.



- The Tasmania Police State Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator shall maintain a list of Tasmania Police officers who identify as Aboriginal, and where appropriate, utilise those members in the delivery of training programs for Tasmania Police and the Aboriginal community.

Performance Indicators:

- Aboriginal Strategic Plan incorporated in recruit training.
- Aboriginal Strategic Plan to be incorporated into the qualification process for Constables, Sergeants and Inspectors.
- Aboriginal Strategic Plan incorporated in State Service employee induction and workplace diversity training.
- Number of members who have undertaken cultural awareness training.
- Number of State Service employees who have undertaken workplace diversity training.
- Availability of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan on the DPEM intranet.
- Availability of a link to the Aboriginal Strategic Plan in the Tasmania Police Manual.
- Number of self-identifying police officers.

