

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Directions 2008-2012



Supporting
Partnerships Queensland:
the Future Directions Framework for
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy
in Queensland 2005-10

COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE



The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is determined to be a professional police service, dedicated to excellence and committed to working in partnership with the people of Queensland to enhance the safety and security of the community.

The QPS acknowledges the special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders in this State. At the same time we recognise the challenge of overcoming history and realising the Government's vision of full equality for Indigenous peoples.

The QPS continues to engage and support Indigenous community meetings, events and forums. These activities are enhanced by the development of partnerships with members of Indigenous communities and serve to foster greater understanding, promote trust and eliminate barriers. The QPS uses contemporary policing strategies, analysis and information systems to address crime and road safety issues within Indigenous communities. With other Government agencies, we strive to reduce Indigenous incarceration rates and ensure the safety and security of people who enter our custody. Underpinning all our other efforts, we promote equity and diversity within the QPS and seek to increase the knowledge and skills of our employees in working with Indigenous people and communities.

The Strategic Directions for 2008-12 provide the QPS with the necessary focus for delivering future policing services to Indigenous communities. It also supports the Queensland Government's *Partnerships Queensland: Future Directions Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy in Queensland 2005-10* and outlines how Indigenous principles and practices are integrated into core QPS services.

I commend this document to you.

Bob Atkinson
Commissioner

THE QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is the primary law enforcement agency for the State of Queensland. It is accountable to the public through the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport.

The functions of the QPS include:

- the preservation of peace and good order in all areas of Queensland
- the protection of all communities in Queensland
- the prevention of crime
- the detection of offenders and bringing of offenders to justice
- upholding the law generally and providing policing services in an emergency.

Police stations and police beats are located throughout the State, including many of the remote Indigenous communities. Police are supported by Police Liaison Officers (PLOs) whose role is to promote trust and understanding between community and the QPS. Each region also has Cross-Cultural Liaison Officers (CCLOs) who serve as a higher level liaison between police and Indigenous communities.

Cross-cultural services, including services for Indigenous Queenslanders, are coordinated by the Office of the Commissioner through the Cultural Advisory Unit. The QPS also has other units which provide expertise in specialist areas such as crime prevention, child abuse, domestic and family violence, and alcohol and drug misuse.

The QPS is assisted by an Indigenous/Police Review and Reference Group which meets every month and provides advice on Indigenous issues. A similar function is performed locally by Indigenous Community/Police Consultative Groups and other (regular) meetings. The Review and Reference Group will play an important role in the ongoing implementation, monitoring and review of the Strategic Directions.

COMMITMENT BY POLICE

The QPS Client Service Charter for the Queensland Community makes the following commitment:

We are determined to be a professional police service, dedicated to excellence and committed to working in partnership with the people of Queensland to enhance the safety and security of our community. All of the Service's clients will be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of circumstance or situation.

The QPS also commits to the Queensland Government vision that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders have their cultures affirmed, heritage sustained and the same prospects for health, prosperity and quality of life as other Queenslanders.

In line with the Queensland Government's overall vision for the State, we aim to achieve a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

- have the **same access to quality police services and a safe and secure environment** as other Queenslanders
- enjoy **a relationship of trust and open communication** with police
- work in **partnership** with police towards a better society.

The QPS acknowledges Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Island people as the first nation peoples of Australia and recognises their rich diversity in cultures, languages and contribution to Queensland.

CHALLENGES WE FACE

Recent statistics illustrate some of the challenges we face in policing Indigenous communities in Queensland. For example:

- Indigenous adults are 4 times more likely to be charged by police than non-Indigenous adults, and 8 times more likely to be charged for offences against the person
- Indigenous adults are 10 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Indigenous adults
- Indigenous people account for 3.6% of Queensland's population but less than 2% of sworn police officers.

(Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics publications 1301.0 and 4704.0; Queensland Police Service Annual Statistical Review and EEO data)

Key issues we must address are:

- engagement by Indigenous communities in law and order issues
- propensity to commit crime in Indigenous communities
- incidence of violence in Indigenous communities
- incarceration rates of Indigenous people
- participation of Indigenous people in the police workforce
- police capacity to respond appropriately to the special needs of Indigenous people and communities.

POLICE STRATEGIC PLAN

Police services in this State are delivered in accordance with the Queensland Police Service Strategic Plan 2008-2012. The Strategic Plan ensures the QPS is in line with the Queensland Government's overall priorities, consistent with the Q2 vision of *Fair communities – supporting safe and caring communities*.

Under the Strategic Plan the QPS has four key outputs:

- community safety and engagement
- crime management
- traffic management
- professional standards and ethical practice.

The Strategic Plan is supported by a process of Operational Performance Review which regularly assesses results and identifies good practice and successful initiatives, thereby strengthening the QPS's efficiency and effectiveness.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Directions and Action Plan complement and are consistent with the Strategic Plan. They are also consistent with the State Government's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Framework.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Partnerships Queensland: Future Directions Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy in Queensland 2005-10 is the comprehensive planning instrument which brings together all the Indigenous policies and plans of Queensland Government agencies. *Partnerships Queensland* includes a number of objectives which relate to policing:

- improved community participation in the administration of justice and in justice issues
- reduced levels of violence against children, women and men in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- reduced rates of contact with the criminal justice system
- increased participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the workforce, business sector and broader economy
- better performing and more accountable service providers.

Partnerships Queensland strategies which relate to policing include:

- support families and communities
- support communities to reduce the impacts of alcohol
- reduce the incidence of crime, especially interpersonal violence
- create a fair and equitable criminal justice system
- promote stronger enterprise cultures and work practices
- promote accessible and relevant training opportunities
- promote and affirm Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Partnerships Queensland ensures a continued commitment to reforms such as:

- implementation of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991)
- the Queensland Government response to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence (2000)
- the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Justice Agreement (2000)
- Meeting Challenges, Making Choices (2002)
- Indigenous Partnership Agreement (2007)
- Cape York Welfare Reform (2008).

These historic and important commitments are continued by the QPS.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR POLICE INDIGENOUS SERVICES

In response to the challenges identified above, the QPS will:

- engage and support Indigenous people and communities, working in partnership to prevent crime
- use contemporary policing strategies, analysis and information systems to address Indigenous crime issues
- promote equity and diversity within the QPS
- increase the knowledge and skills of QPS employees in working with Indigenous people and communities.

These Strategic Directions are broad statements of policy which will guide the QPS in the many aspects of its work affecting Indigenous Queenslanders, from the recruitment and training of officers to the design of systems and procedures and the everyday interaction of police and PLOs with people in the community.

ANNUAL ACTION PLANS

While the Strategic Directions are set for the long-term horizon of 2012, police priorities are subject to more frequent change. This is necessary to accommodate changing circumstances. For this reason, the Strategic Directions are supplemented by annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plans. The overall planning framework is shown in the table below.

Planning for Indigenous services in the QPS is coordinated by the Office of the Commissioner's Cultural Advisory Unit.

Queensland Government Ambitions (whole of State)	
Queensland Police Service Strategic Plan 2008-12	(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Partnerships Queensland 2005-10
Police Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Directions 2008-12	
Police Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan (annual)	
Police Regions – Regional, district and divisional plans	Commands and Divisions - Specialist services plans, e.g. EEO Management Plan
Individual Performance Planning and Assessment (PPA)	

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the Queensland Police Service have a role in the implementation of this Action Plan. Some units, as identified above, have particular responsibilities, but the commitment to advancing Indigenous interests through policing is a Service-wide commitment.

The Office of the Commissioner, including the Cultural Advisory Unit, will:

- ensure there is a consistent, coordinated approach to Indigenous issues
- provide appropriate policy and operational advice
- promote effective relationships between police and Indigenous communities
- support CCLOs, PLOs and other frontline service providers
- engage with and support the Indigenous/Police Review and Reference Group
- partner other government agencies in strengthening Indigenous communities, improving public safety and creating a fairer, more equitable justice system
- provide officers and staff with comprehensive, current information on Indigenous cultures and communities.

Relevant specialist units and staff will:

- provide police recruits with appropriate initial training in Indigenous cultures
- encourage further professional development in regard to Indigenous cultures
- actively recruit and support Indigenous personnel
- maintain effective community liaison through the services of CCLOs and PLOs
- pursue crime prevention initiatives, especially in key target areas such as youth, alcohol abuse and domestic violence
- develop the use of intelligence, technology and information systems to combat crime in Indigenous communities
- maintain ethical standards, including standards in dealing with Indigenous people
- address any complaints in ways that are culturally appropriate and accessible.

Operational police will:

- engage with Indigenous communities and local consultative groups
- encourage Indigenous communities to show leadership in improving public safety
- maintain the focus on causes of Indigenous crime through practices such as Problem-Oriented and Partnership Policing
- enforce State laws about crime, including alcohol restrictions
- apply Service protocols in all communications with Indigenous people

- maximise the use of diversion and alternatives to arrest as appropriate
- provide safe and secure custody as necessary
- encourage and facilitate the use of cell visitors in police watchhouses
- contribute to ongoing decision making on Indigenous crime and offenders by complying with all reporting requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION – TOOLS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

Inevitably, the mechanics of implementation vary considerably from place to place. Each unit must decide for itself the tools appropriate to its own responsibilities. Below is a brief guide to tools available for each of the strategies.

Strategic Directions	Action Areas	Tools for Service Delivery
Engage and support Indigenous people and communities, working in partnership to prevent crime	Community engagement	Cultural Advisory Unit, CCLOs and PLOs Indigenous/Police Review and Reference Group Indigenous Community/Police Consultative Groups Community meetings and events
	Partnerships	National (COAG, MCPEMP, ANZPAA etc) State (Partnerships Queensland, ATSILS etc) Local (Indigenous Partnership Agreements etc)
	Crime prevention	Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan Visible police presence Projects and programs (CAPE etc) Publicity (marketing and promotional material)
Use contemporary policing strategies, analysis and information systems to address Indigenous crime issues	Investigative function and policing strategies	Operational procedures and strategies Environmental scans Problem-Oriented and Partnership Policing Operational Performance Review
	Information systems	Intelligence QPRIME Statistics

Strategic Directions	Action Areas	Tools for Service Delivery
	Offender management	Cautioning and youth justice conferences Other diversionary strategies Custody and Cell Visitors Police Prosecutors Court attendance (Murri Court etc)
Promote equity and diversity within the QPS	Equity and diversity management	EEO Management Plan Recruitment strategies (JEP etc) Training and support services Indigenous personnel (QATSIPs, PLOs etc)
Increase the knowledge and skills of QPS employees in working with Indigenous people and communities	Training	PROVE and PACE PLO training
	Professional development	Courses including CAP resources CAPro community profiles CCLO and PLO support
	Ethical conduct	Ethical standards Complaints management
	Policy	Legislation Operational Procedures Manual Other policies and procedures Cultural Advisory Unit

Glossary

Acronym	Name	Description
ANZPAA	Australia and New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency	An organisation providing policing policy and strategic advice, research capacity, knowledge management and information sharing services to Police Ministers and Commissioners throughout Australia and New Zealand.
ATSILS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service	A non-profit community based organisation providing Indigenous Queenslanders with legal representation in criminal, civil and family law by contract with the Federal Attorney-General's Department.
AVSMI	Addressing Volatile Substance Misuse Initiative	An initiative under the Queensland Government's alcohol reforms for Indigenous communities, providing a referral point for police to enable young people to access supervised recovery. AVSMI is in place in several locations. The services offered to young people are not limited to police referrals; young people are encouraged to self-refer.
CAP	Competency Acquisition Product	A series of educational resources available to police, helping them gain additional competence through self-paced learning and thereby gain points necessary for pay point progression. CAP is a responsibility of the Education and Training Support Program, Human Resource Development Branch.
CAPE	Community Activity Programs through Education	A program based in the Far Northern Region, developing PCYC services in Indigenous communities.
CAPro	Cultural Appreciation Project	A project to develop a series of detailed, up-to-date profiles on specific Indigenous communities, based on extensive consultation with community members. These profiles, when completed, will supplement the CAP books on Indigenous issues. The project is a joint effort of the Cultural Advisory Unit and the Human Resource Development Branch.
CCLO	Cross Cultural Liaison Officer	Sworn officers based in the QPS regions who provide their regions with advice and support on Indigenous and multicultural issues. CCLOs work closely with PLOs, developing and maintaining effective relations with Indigenous and multicultural communities and helping in local problem solving.
CMC	Crime and Misconduct Commission	The Queensland Government body charged with combating major crime, raising public sector integrity and protecting witnesses. The CMC also offers other services including research.
COAG	Council of Australian Governments	The peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, comprising the Prime Minister, Premiers, Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association.
JEP	Justice Entry Program	A scheme offering traineeships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to help them gain the necessary educational qualifications for entry to an operational policing career.
MCPMP	Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management – Police	The council of Australian and New Zealand Police Ministers, which seeks to develop a co-ordinated approach to law enforcement policy development, implementation and operations.
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee	The annual celebration of the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, taking its name from the committee which was once responsible for organising the week-long activities.
NIITF	National Indigenous Violence and Child Abuse Task Force	A whole of government response to violence and child abuse in remote, rural and urban Indigenous communities, resourced jointly by the Commonwealth, States and Territories and led by the Australian Crime Commission.
PACE	Police Abridged Competency Education	A 78-day training program for recruits to the QPS who have previous experience. The program is designed to provide these recruits with an opportunity to enhance their already established policing skills and to develop competence to a level which will enable them to effectively perform their duties in the QPS.

Acronym	Name	Description
PCYC	Police-Citizens Youth Clubs	Police and community sponsored centres aimed primarily at youth development, providing a wide range of activities – sporting, recreational, cultural and welfare. PCYCs are being introduced to Indigenous communities through the CAPE program.
PLO	Police Liaison Officer	Non-sworn officers, based in the QPS regions, whose role is to promote trust and understanding between police and culturally specific communities. PLOs are mostly Indigenous but also include a number of officers who identify with other culturally specific communities. Although specialising in their own cultures, PLOs assist in communicating with the range of communities in their area. They work closely with CCLOs.
PQ	Partnerships Queensland	The Queensland Government policy and planning framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the period 2005-2010. Administered by the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Department of Communities, it aims to work in partnership with Indigenous people to achieve for them the same standard of living as other Queenslanders.
PROVE	Police Recruit Operational Vocational Education	A six-month recruit training program for police recruits, conducted at the Oxley and Townsville Academies. It is the first phase of 18 months of education and training before confirmation as a constable in the QPS.
QATSIP	Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Police	Officers employed in a pilot scheme in selected Indigenous communities, performing community policing and additional prescribed law enforcement duties under the direction of State police.
QIADP	Queensland Indigenous Alcohol Diversion Program	A pilot treatment program for Indigenous people involved in the criminal justice or child protection systems. QIADP is a whole-of-government initiative which operates through the cooperation of a number of Queensland Government agencies including the QPS.
QPRIME	Queensland Police Records and Information Management Exchange	The integrated policing information system introduced to the QPS in 2006.