



# MDAS

MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

[www.mdas.org.au](http://www.mdas.org.au)

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MAC Inc. ABN: 54 334 685 198 trading as Mallee District Aboriginal Services

# Mallee District Aboriginal Services

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy

### 2013 - 2016

Document Number: MDAS-PNC-POL-201.01

Generations of vibrant, healthy and strong Aboriginal communities

## **Workforce Profile**

More than half of the workforce (55%) is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background. This is a positive statistic, especially given a large part of the MDAS health service requires specialist clinical skills which are typically challenging role to fill in regional areas, particularly with indigenous people.

Aboriginal Youth Employment is high at MDAS with 87% of employees between 16-24 years of age being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The above figures were accurate at the time the report was created/last reviewed and are monitored and reported on a monthly basis through MDAS Envisio Strategic Planning Reporting (Sept 2014).

## **Initiatives Underway**

New Employee Information Form developed to capture employee demographics and track and report on the success of key strategic directions.

A new Position Description template that includes cultural competencies to facilitate clear selection criteria and culturally appropriate processes to deliver merit based selection processes.

New Non Clinical Salary Structure and classifications to ensure fairness and equity and to promote learning pathways for staff.

New Aboriginal Traineeship Information Pack to ensure managers and their teams effectively engage and support new trainees and they are provided with experiences that provide them with a broad knowledge of the corporations objectives and services.

New Code of Ethics which clearly outlines the values and behavioural expectations for all MDAS employees, contractors and Board members

# Chief Executive Officer Statement

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy demonstrates Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) commitment to Closing the Gap by;

- Providing a resilient workforce with high Aboriginal employment and demonstrated cultural competency for non-Aboriginal employees.
- Developing and establishing a consulting service to provide advice and support to external organisations and service providers on developing Aboriginal Employment Strategies and engaging Aboriginal people in their workforce.

This strategy will position MDAS not only as a strong employer of Aboriginal people within the Mallee region but as a lead organisation equip to provide specialist consulting advise to other organisations and key stake holders making tangible steps to Close the Gap between Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal people.

This direction contributes to the achievements of the MDAS Strategic Plan and every division will be expected to contribute to and measure their achievement within the Aboriginal Employment Strategy.

We are committed to continuously improving our services to the Aboriginal community. We will do this by:

- recruiting the right people, with the right skills, to the right jobs;
- imbedding Aboriginal culture and values into the service and systems;
- developing and supporting a person centred and competent workforce; and
- fostering key relationships with external stakeholders to drive change across the Mallee District for the Aboriginal communities.

## *Purpose and Expectations*

- Acknowledge and respond to current inequities
- Design outcomes with appropriate accountability structures to ensure achievements are measured and reported
- Evolve and continuously improve the service to the Aboriginal community through supporting programs that attract the right people to the right jobs, with the right skills

## *Work area responsibilities*

- Work areas will report on their contributions to the achievement of these strategies on a quarterly basis.
- The People and Culture Team will lead the corporation to achieve the strategies set out in the Aboriginal Employment Strategy.

## *Benefits*

- Improved equitable access and information for Aboriginal people
- Improved outcomes for Aboriginal clients
- Increased cultural knowledge and competency of non-Aboriginal staff
- Deliver a stronger community

- Ensure services are culturally appropriate and appropriately resourced
- Promote Indigenous employment options and successes.

<b>Attraction and Recruitment Initiatives</b>	
1.1	<p>Increase the number of quality student placements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1.1 Identify work that guarantees a quality student placement</li> <li>1.1.2 Offer educational support so students on placement continue to secure qualifications</li> <li>1.1.3 Ensure students experience a diversity of roles and work areas</li> <li>1.1.4 Create stronger pathways between high schools and TAFE</li> </ul>
1.2	<p>Break down the barriers for Aboriginal people trying to enter the workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.2.1 Promote meetings at MDAS where community members can hear about roles being advertised and ask questions and MDAS can identify barriers to community members applying for available positions</li> <li>1.2.2 Create an application form for applying for available MDAS vacancies which will allow MDAS to collect valuable information about applicants Aboriginality and maximise support to Aboriginal people actively seeking to enter the workforce.</li> <li>1.2.3</li> <li>1.2.4 Provide practical assistance too community members preparing for a specific job, especially those trying to re-enter the workforce eg. Elders, young mums and the long-term unemployed.</li> <li>1.2.5 Partner/engage with Job Service Australia providers to achieve success throughout education and employment incentive.</li> <li>1.2.6 Enhance MDAS Website to increase interaction and provide opportunity for Aboriginal People to express interest in working for MDAS and in what Capacity</li> <li>1.2.7 Interview Panels will consist of majority Aboriginal people and endeavour to achieve a gender balance</li> <li>1.2.8 Establish a P&amp;C Advisory Group in Swan Hill and Mildura to provide advice and support to the People and Culture team in relation to the recruitment of staff to MDAS</li> <li>1.2.9 Explore and apply for funding to facilitate employment programs for Unemployed Aboriginal people which will assist them to gain relevant skills and work experience relevant to likely and actual vacancies with MDAS</li> </ul>
1.3	<p>Demonstrate an organisational commitment to ensuring Aboriginal culture and values are integrated within the service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.3.1 Develop and implement a consistent orientation program for all staff</li> <li>1.3.2 Provide Cultural Awareness training to all staff both Aboriginal and Non- Aboriginal</li> <li>1.3.3 Provide the opportunity for Non - Aboriginal staff to be mentored by Aboriginal staff to increase the interaction between cultures and the understanding for a variety of cultures</li> <li>1.3.4 Develop a Celebration of Culture document that reflects MDAS involvement in and employee attendance and celebration of significant cultural days</li> </ul>
<b>Measures of success</b>	
1a	60% of MDAS employees identify as being of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander by December 2016.

- 1b Increased participation of Aboriginal people across all levels in MDAS.
- 1c Aboriginal staff are represented on every selection panel by December 2013.
- 1d Increased participation in the MDAS orientation process for all employees.
- 1e Engagement of Aboriginal staff in the delivery of the MDAS face to face orientation session.
- 1f Increased number of Aboriginal people applying for available vacancies.

<b>Retention and Development Initiatives</b>	
2.1	<p>Establish interdepartmental and cross organisational mentors</p> <p>2.1.1 Establish interdepartmental mentors within MDAS</p> <p>2.1.2 Identify co-mentors in different organisations to assist with ideas, collaboration and learning</p> <p>2.1.3 Ensure staff participating in mentoring are adequately trained to maximise benefit</p>
2.2	<p>Build staff capability so there is a choice to progress at MDAS or enter mainstream organisations</p> <p>2.2.1 Implement a thorough Performance Appraisal and development plan process for all staff identifying both development opportunities and career aspirations</p> <p>2.2.2 Develop a framework for succession planning across all levels of MDAS ensuring adequate opportunities exist for Aboriginal people to enter MDAS workforce regardless of their point in time knowledge, skills and attributes</p> <p>2.2.3 Provide opportunity for staff to build on their knowledge, skills and attributes which will assist MDAS staff to be competitive within mainstream agencies</p> <p>2.2.4 Develop a Workforce plan for MDAS to ensure staff development, retention and recruitment strategies are proactive and reflect the estimated requirements of the MDAS future workforce</p>
2.3	<p>Establish a MDAS study culture and facility</p> <p>2.3.1 Develop a study support policy which includes scheduled study days for staff who are enrolled in further education</p> <p>2.3.2 Create a quiet study facility with modern technology (eg. laptops)</p> <p>2.3.3 At the facility, make available a mentor so studying is both a positive, productive and successful experience for staff</p>
2.4	<p>Introduce a peer support/mentoring system for those involved in outreach services and to strengthen the link between the Mildura, Swan Hill and Kerang offices</p> <p>2.4.1 Develop a peer support/mentoring system within each division to ensure new staff at all MDAS locations are linked with a more experienced staff member in a like position during their probationary period</p> <p>2.4.2 Develop an internal staff shadowing program to provide opportunities for staff at all MDAS locations to shadow staff in other positions which may interest them for future progression</p> <p>2.4.3 Identify like positions across all divisions of MDAS and establish a regime to ensure cross pollination of all MDAS services and maximised opportunity for increased services to clients</p>
2.5	<p>Provide consultancy services to assist the Mallee Region to take positive steps towards Closing the Gap and increase Aboriginal Employment</p> <p>2.5.1 Develop and establish a consulting service to provide advice and support to external organisations and service providers on developing Aboriginal Employment Strategies and engaging Aboriginal people in their workforce.</p>
<b>Measures of success</b>	
2a	Increased number of Aboriginal employees with current and competitive skills, knowledge and attributes to support strong career growth and achievement

2b	Increased communication and collaboration between MDAS employees in like positions
2c	Increase communication and collaboration between MDAS divisions resulting in higher levels of engagement from clients in all available / eligible services
2d	Increased engagement from external organisations and key stakeholders within mainstream to establish an Aboriginal Employment Strategy and increase engagement with Aboriginal communities

<b>Other Initiatives</b>	
3.1	Promote cultural inclusion through the development and facilitation of a Cultural Awareness Training Program across the Mallee District
3.2	Explore the feasibility of MDAS becoming an RTO
3.3	Determine the viability of partnering with TAFE to secure childcare places at their new facility
3.4	Explore avenues to diversify opportunities for employment within MDAS such as establishing a labour hire company and applying for appropriate contract work