



WORKFORCE DIVERSITY COUNCIL

Wednesday, 2 September 2009

MINUTES

Attendees: Craig Allen, Gary Francis, Annette Richards, Andrea Harris, Trudy Jaeschke, Gina Archer, Ches Hargreaves, Mark Hunter, Joy Holbeck, Lin Esders, Kate Owen, Marion Healy.

Teleconference: Andrea Harris

Apologies: Sue Fergusson, Leah Mertens, Adele Rice, Gail Stocker, Dewani Nand, Nicole Lee, Chris Rider

Secretariat: Monica D'Souza

Pre- reading papers distributed: Agenda, Minutes from previous meeting, Workforce Diversity Council Membership, Promotional Teaching Positions – Permanent Part Time, DET – Representation by Diversity groups, Draft – Online Disability Awareness Training (Module 1 – Understanding Disability & Module 2 – Employing a Person with Disability), and Draft – Workforce Diversity Strategy 2009-2012.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome, Welcome to Country/Acknowledgement and Apologies

Craig Allen opened the meeting, acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land and welcomed attendees.

2: Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Previous Minutes were accepted.

3: Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Action	Outcome/ Update
Action 3.1: Further update of TOR to add Chair QIECC to membership listing	Completed.
Action 3.2: WID to advise Leah Mertens on policy position re: designation of pregnant employees as having a temporary disability and linkages with central funding pools for reasonable adjustment resources (e.g. employment of Teacher Aides)	Completed. Members were advised that based on research into departmental precedents and discussion with Organisational Health and Workforce Disability reference group members, the Department's position remains that pregnancy in itself cannot be designated as a form of disability. However, the Pregnancy in the Workplace policy provides a framework to address risk and duty of care issues arising during

Minutes

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	pregnancy and ensure the health and safety of the employee concerned. Appropriate adjustments and the resourcing for these are considered on the merits of each case.
Action 3.3: WID to arrange meeting with Governance Strategy and Planning Branch to gain further clarification of the usage of 'disability' in the Strategic Plan.	Completed. The wording that was of concern in the 2008-12 plan has not been replicated in the 2009-13 plan.
Action 4.1: WID to provide members with data on women in management and part-time working arrangements for June 2009	Addressed under agenda item 4
Action 4.2: Further analysis of workforce diversity data including women in management and part-time representation by gender.	Addressed under agenda item 4.
Action 5.1: Copy of Diversity framework report to be forwarded to Carolyn Turnbull	Completed.
Action 5.2: WID to seek advice from Qld College of Teachers regarding the current status of Diversity Framework Action 36 (Promote English language proficiency and teacher bridging programs)	Completed. Discussions with Queensland College of Teachers revealed that they routinely promote the English language proficiency program offered at Southbank Institute of Technology and pre-assessment training for English proficiency tests.
Action 5.3: Flexible Work Arrangements Working Party to refocus on flexibility for women in senior management roles.	It is considered that appropriate strategies will be developed in the context of the new Workforce Diversity strategy. Members noted the importance of flexible work arrangements to ensure equity and increase opportunity for all staff.
Action 5.4: Annette Richards to contact Leah Mertens regarding workplace-based equity contact officers	Members were advised that school-based ECOs were considered during development of the ECO network, however a regional-based model was adopted to utilise HR officers' existing skills sets and ensure a non-workplace based contact point for small workplaces. DET will continue to consider appropriate models for the delivery of this function in the context of Mercer Report recommendations.
Action 5.5: Part-time teaching policy to be reviewed to ensure consistency with Industrial Relations Act provisions for parental leave-related part-time arrangements.	Members were advised that this policy is listed for review but that work was delayed due to the prioritisation of certified agreement negotiations. Craig advised that as these are now complete, there should be no further delays to the policy update.
Action 5.6: Clarify outcomes and future actions for Diversity framework Actions 11 (EEO outcomes included in performance review for senior management) and 27 (celebrate diversity champions)	Completed. The reinforcement of diversity principles in leadership practice and the celebration of diversity are proposed as key objectives of the next workforce diversity strategic plan.
Action: WID to reschedule next meeting to avoid school holidays	Completed

ACTION 3.1 Workforce Diversity to provide further report on status of part-time teacher policy update at next meeting.

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4: Data analysis

Statistical reports were tabled. Reg Burns – A/Assistant Director, Workforce Planning and Performance provided explanatory information to assist interpretation of the data.

ACTION 4.1 Workforce Diversity to circulate updated data on classroom teachers out of session

5: Updates of Network/ Reference Group Activities

• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's Reference Group

Marion Healy provided the following update:

- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference group met on 30/07/09
- There were 27-28 attendees including 11 representatives from regional networks
- It was agreed that the CEC Position Description should be updated and then linked to the reviewed CEC award. Workforce Relations has advised that an agreement to review the award will be included in Enterprise Bargaining commitments.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Framework is to be reviewed by a working party with a view to developing a new plan to align strategies with whole-of-government commitments.
- Annette Rutherford outlined details of leadership programs facilitated by Edward B Watkin for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants. These include Certificate II (Learn2lead) and Certificate IV (AILC) programs.

Members discussed the value of Indigenous leadership programs delivered using Indigenous methodology. Workforce Diversity will research the Young Indigenous Leaders' Forum at Parliament House.

The Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) includes a target of 2.6% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees by the year 2012 (with longer timeframes under other strategies). Priorities under these agreements include Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program conversions, utilisation of identified positions, embedding of cultural awareness for all staff and establishment of entry level pathways into employment with the Department.

• Workforce Disability Reference Group

- Workforce Disability Reference Group met on 27th August 2009
- The members discussed that people with a disability often do not identify due to concerns about adverse repercussions. The merits of setting targets were discussed. The strategic plan will include strategies and performance indicators to measure improvements against baseline data.



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Disability Action Week

- 13th to 19th September 2009
- The Debate - "Political Correctness Has Gone Too Far?" on 17th Sep 2009
- Statewide Launch of Disability Action Week
- Disability Action Week Awards

• Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Employees' Networks

- A Brisbane CALD pilot network meeting was held on 18th August 2009. Participation is open to staff from Bracken Ridge to Mt Gravatt to Ipswich. The meeting was well attended. Members discussed the challenges faced by people from non-English speaking backgrounds including addressing selection criteria, cultural and language barriers.
- It was advised that Dewani Nand has resigned from the role of Chair for Brisbane CALD Network. Members thanked Dewani for her work as network Chair.
- A South Coast CALD pilot network meeting was planned for 19th August 2009 but will be rescheduled to early next year due to disappointing attendance.

• Australian South Sea Islander Network

Marion Healy, Nicole Lee and other members are keen to extend the existing Training network across the department.

ACTION 5.1 QIECC to forward contact details for Young Indigenous Leaders Program (Crystilee Louttit) to Workforce Diversity.

ACTION 5.2 Workforce Diversity to forward information on Disability Action Week to Training HR distribution list.

6: Diversity On-line Training

Workforce Diversity is developing on-line diversity training. The disability module is with eLearning for development and should be available by January 2010.

Members agreed that the diversity training needs to be mandated and should be included as part of the training program for all the managers. Workforce Diversity confirmed that a small component of the diversity training will be included as part of induction.





7: Indigenous Economic Participation National Partnership, Qld Government Reconciliation Plan and Australian Employment Covenant

An outline of the Whole of Government strategies impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in the department was provided to members.

Members also discussed issues around the delivery of cultural awareness training. Current training comprises:

- ✓ Crossing Cultures – This is the first part of the training which is mandatory and includes one and half hour presentation by School Principals to their staff
- ✓ Hidden Histories – This part of the training has been developed in both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-history focussed versions. This training is not mandatory and participants can find it very confronting.
- ✓ Local histories
- ✓ Embedding Indigenous perspectives

It was discussed that Embedding Indigenous perspectives in schools includes not only curriculum but also community engagement, organisational environment and personnel development

It was acknowledged that each facilitator has a unique approach to delivering the training. However, Marion Healy's strategy of working through participants' barriers at the start of the session could be useful to engage those who might find the program content confronting. Members also acknowledged that workshops like these help reduce negativity.

The Queensland Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) provides an opportunity for the Department to consider improved ways to embed cultural awareness training. Human Resources will arrange a session of Hidden Histories as a first step to meeting commitments under the RAP.

Members acknowledged the contribution of Muriel Eddleston, facilitator of Crossing Cultures, who is retiring in September.

ACTION 7.1 Workforce Diversity to arrange session of Hidden Histories for Human Resources AND central office staff.

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8: Future strategies

An initial draft of a new Workforce Diversity strategy was tabled for discussion.

The members discussed the following:-

- Strategies have to be of high level rather than operational, worded to reflect concrete and tangible outcomes and be supported by an effective action plan.
- The new strategy should promote the management and resolution of diversity and equity issues by managers at the local and regional level, rather than issues being presented at the Diversity Council or Reference Groups as a first step.
- HR managers are the contact officers for equity in the regions

Action 8.1 Council members to forward feedback on draft strategies to Annette Richards by 16 September.

Action 8.2 Workforce Diversity to convene out-of-session video/teleconference to progress development of new Workforce Diversity strategy.

9: Other business

No other business.

10: Next meeting

Out-of-session Teleconference to progress the development of the new Workforce Diversity strategy will be held as follows:

Date: 22nd October 2009

Time: 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Next Teleconference meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: 16th November 2009

Time: 10am – 12pm

Venue: Room 12.18, Level 12, Education House, 30 Mary St. Brisbane – 4000

