



Creating an inclusive work environment

Equity and Diversity Plan
2023–26 (updated June 2025)



Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country. We recognise the ongoing spiritual and cultural connection Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have with land, water, sea and sky. We pay our deep respects to their Elders past and present, support future leaders, and acknowledge First Nations Peoples' right to self-determination.

Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers

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General acknowledgments

The Queensland Government would like to thank and acknowledge the Queenslanders who took part in the consultation process which was central to developing this document.

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Message from the Acting Director-General

‘To get real diversity of thought, you need to find the people who genuinely hold different views and invite them into the conversation.’



These words (from Adam Grant, Author and professor at Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania) highlight that diversity within a workforce isn't just a moral or social value. Inclusion, diversity and equity are directly tied to business

performance and our ability to deliver innovative and quality outcomes for all Queensland communities.

Diverse teams future proof business outcomes. By disrupting conventional thinking, diverse teams drive continuous innovation, open new pathways for talent to grow, and bring sharper, more inclusive decision-making to the table. In an ever-evolving world, diversity is essential for staying relevant and resilient.

As Acting Director-General, I am very pleased to present our updated departmental Equity and Diversity Plan 2023–2026, and to work alongside our Executive Champions to ensure the delivery of this important initiative.

Our department has continued to evolve and strengthen our foundations and frameworks across the cycle of this plan. We are well placed to build on our actions to ensure our workforce reflects the communities we serve, and our people feel comfortable bringing their whole selves to work and contributing their unique perspectives. Creating a safe, supportive and inclusive work environment will enhance our ability to deliver our important work across the state.

I look forward to continuing to promote, support and progress equity and diversity in the department, and to ensuring an inclusivity focus is present in all that we do.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joshua'.

Joshua Hannan
Acting Director-General

Messages from our Executive Champions

DLGWW is committed to building a gender-diverse workforce and providing the support each staff member needs to contribute most effectively to delivering our Strategic Plan.

Bernadette Zerba
Gender Equity Champion



I'm proud to be supporting a workplace where everyone can bring their whole self to work, feel respected, and contribute fully. I'm committed to working closely with our LGBTIQ+ staff and allies to help foster a truly inclusive environment that delivers better outcomes for Queensland communities.

Jarrold Cowley-Grimmond
LGBTQ+ Executive Champion



Together, we have the power to create lasting change and contribute to a departmental culture where staff can safely and confidently identify and respond to the challenges of domestic violence.

Stephen Robbins and Hamish Butler
Domestic and Family Violence prevention Executive Champions



I genuinely believe our workplace will be more dynamic and innovative by understanding and valuing the unique strengths and ways of working for every individual working at the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (DLGWW). Acknowledging that diversity is what brings us together as people applies equally to the workplace as it does to human society more widely.

Ian Gordon
Neurodiversity Executive Champion



Supporting disability in the workplace isn't about extra work. It's about unlocking extraordinary potential, making small adjustments with big impact, and building inclusive spaces where everyone can thrive.

Ingrid Fomiatti Minnesma and Peter Floyd
Disability Executive Champions



I've seen firsthand the strength that increased First Nations representation brings to our Strategic Water Initiatives branch, and I believe true diversity goes beyond recruitment—it's about creating a culturally safe environment where everyone can thrive.

Steph Hogan
Cultural Capability Executive Champion



Equity and Diversity just makes sense — working together by understanding and respecting differences creates better performing teams and better outcomes.

Stewart Saini
Acting Multicultural Executive Champion



Background

The Queensland Government is committed to achieving greater equity and diversity in its public sector workforce.

The government's vision for a public sector for all, where everyone feels safe, respected and included, is outlined in the [Queensland Public Sector Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021–2025](#). A number of sector-wide strategies and action plans are in place to support the delivery of this vision.

At the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers (DLGWV), it is our goal to ensure our workforce represents the community we serve. Under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the department has an obligation to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and, when making a decision, to give proper consideration to human rights.

We are committed to raising awareness and taking action through delivery of our:

- ✓ Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2024–25 to 2026–27
- ✓ Disability Service Plan 2023–2026
- ✓ Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan (July 2023–June 2025)
- ✓ The Reframing Relationships with First Nations Peoples Plan (2023–2026).

From 1 March 2023, Queensland's *Public Sector Act 2022* (PS Act) also introduced new obligations for chief executives to progress equity, diversity, respect and inclusion in their organisations. This includes the requirement to have an equity and diversity plan that establishes objectives, strategies and targets for the employment of people who are members of one or more diversity target groups and conduct annual equity and diversity audits.

DLGWV's Equity and Diversity Plan 2023–2026 outlines our aim to:

- › develop a diverse workforce
- › actively promote and progress equity and diversity
- › demonstrate equal conditions and equal access to employment, including in leadership roles
- › foster a respectful and inclusive workplace culture
- › create a workplace free from unlawful discrimination.

Drivers for inclusion and diversity

This plan supports Objective 4 of the Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers Strategic Plan 2024–28: ‘Embed a safe, healthy, respectful, inclusive and positive workforce’.

The plan also supports the department in achieving our responsibilities under Section 28 of the *Public Sector Act 2022*: to improve equity and diversity within the department in relation to employment matters.

The plan also aligns with the following focus areas from the Queensland Public Sector Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021–2025:

1. Leadership and accountability: Inclusive, authentic and compassionate leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence are essential to addressing intractable challenges and inequities, by leading structural reforms and setting out strategies and targets.

2. Human capital investment (Capability, Safety and Culture): It remains important for organisations to foster inclusion and diversity through purposeful policy and responsive strategy design, and implementation.

3. System levers (Workforce Diversity, Collaboration and Reporting): In an environment of increasing complexity and interdependence it is more important than ever that we operate across boundaries. Developing system level strategies requires inviting multiple people to contribute and foster multiple perspectives to resolve complex issues and contribute to decision-making.

Equity and diversity audits

Our performance in delivering this plan will be reviewed annually through the equity and diversity audit.

The department has actively progressed equity and diversity planning through audits and data analysis, which directly inform new initiatives and support continuous improvement. Following participation in Queensland's 2022 Pilot Equity and Diversity Audit, the department reviewed its draft findings in early 2023 using updated OSCE data (Sept 2021–2022) and the 2022 Working for Queensland Survey.

The 2023 Audit Report, submitted on 28 April 2023, established a baseline for the Equity and Diversity Plan. Subsequent audits in 2024 and 2025 (submitted 1 May 2024 and 30 April 2025), along with the 2023 and 2024 Working for Queensland Survey results, have refined the plan and shaped targeted, intersectional initiatives. These insights underpin the department's annual update, driving stronger outcomes in equity and diversity.

Key strengths and opportunities identified in the report are outlined ahead.

Where we are doing well

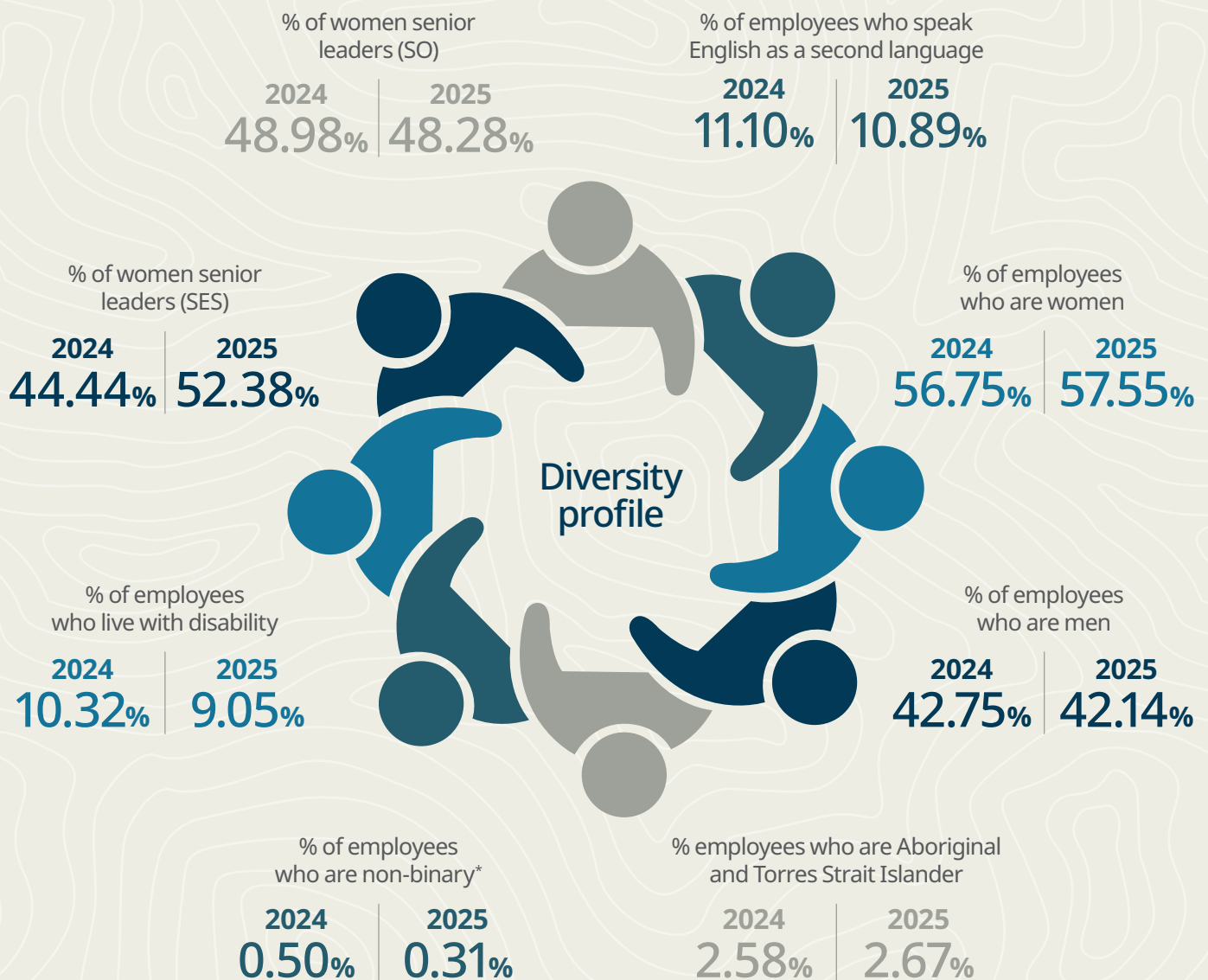
- ✓ The pay gap has decreased to 4.22%.
- ✓ 93% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees feel culturally safe at work.
- ✓ Positive progress towards some diversity targets, with metrics increasing in the last 12 months for representation of Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees and reaching the 50% target for women at the SES level.

Where we can do better

- › Representation of people who identify as Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples at all classification levels, particularly leadership levels.
- › Support women into executive leadership levels.
- › Continue to improve staff wellbeing especially within workgroups.
- › Continue to increase workforce diversity across all groups.

These positive results have been supported by actions completed through the Equity and Diversity Plan. This includes appointment of Executive Champions and establishment of Common Ground: Inclusion and Diversity Network, review of SES and SO contracts for gender parity, allyship programs and implementation of a promotion program for the EEO Census.

Our workforce profile as identified through our January 2025 EEO Census data



Source: EEO Census data at January 2025.

*Recent Machinery of Government changes in November 2024 reflect a change in some of our diversity profiles. We note that our Local Government employees do not yet have access to the payroll EEO Census reporting campaign.

Our action plan

Leadership

What we want to achieve



Leaders at all levels role model and demonstrate behaviours that encourage a culture of equality, respect and belonging, healthy work-life balance, and wellbeing strategies



Greater workforce participation of diversity groups in leadership and executive roles



Gender pay parity for Senior Executive Service and Senior Officers



Improved gender parity on departmental boards

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Develop a leadership commitment statement acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	EDLT			Completed
Review all AO8, Senior Officer and SES positions for targeted recruitment opportunities and accessibility prior to recruitment commencing	DLT	Increased representation of diversity cohorts at AO8, SO and SES levels	RRP	Ongoing
			RAP	
			DSP	
Incorporate diversity target measures into senior executive performance agreements	DLT		QMAP	Yet to commence
Undertake a review of SES profile and s155 contracts in consultation with PSC for gender parity	Human Resources	Review completed		Completed
Undertake a review of SO increment levels for gender parity	Group Executives	Gender parity of SES contract arrangements		
		Gender parity for SO increments	Workforce Strategy	Completed
Support career development of DLGWW women and other diversity groups through targeted Leadership Development initiatives.	Human Resources	Number of women attending programs		
		% of women AO7 and equivalent and above		Ongoing

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Develop a leadership capability framework which focuses on: › Leading self to support wellbeing and capability › Leading others with compassion › Psychological health and psychosocial risks › Cultural awareness and safety › Delivery and accountability	Human Resources	Training participation rates	Workforce Strategy RRP RAP	Completed
Improve gender parity on boards within the portfolio to meet required targets	Human Resources CLLO	Gender parity is reached at 50% for women on boards		Ongoing
All AO8, Senior Officer and SES position descriptions and PDAs to include obligations regarding equity and inclusion	EDLT	Updated PDA template Updated position description template		Completed
Establish Executive Champions across a range of employee diversity groups Support Executive Champions to engage with diverse employee cohorts and raise visibility and awareness across the department. Executive Champions include a diversity and inclusion goal in yearly performance reviews. Create employee support resources to progress DEI outcomes	Human Resources EDLT	Executive Champions active engagement, and participation in key events throughout the year Executive Champion profiles available		Completed Completed In progress In progress

Our action plan (Cont.)

Human Capital Investment (Capability, Safety and Culture)

What we want to achieve



Recruitment and selection processes are developed that value transferable skills and lived experience, and invite and accommodate diversity



Quality learning and education are available to foster inclusive cultures and embed behavioural change



Flexible work options and blended workplaces are embraced



Wellbeing and physical and mental health are actively prioritised

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Review and redesign existing recruitment process, guidelines and templates to be more inclusive and to ensure they are accessible for all diversity groups.	Human Resources			Completed
Develop an Employee Value Proposition to showcase the department as an inclusive workplace and create a compelling reason to view the department as a potential employer.		Updated recruitment and selection process		Yet to commence
Develop and implement recruitment and selection training package which focuses on equity and diversity considerations and inclusive selection methodologies.		Recruitment and selection training available through iLearn	Workforce Strategy DSP RRP RAP QMAP	In progress
Review external web presence to promote the department's approach to equity, diversity, inclusion and respect .		Training participation rates		Yet to commence
Create a suite of resources to promote workforce participation: › First Nations recruitment › Disability recruitment › Neurodiversity recruitment › LGBTQ+ recruitment		% increase in applications from diversity groups		Yet to commence

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Implement a suite of capability initiatives to foster a safe and inclusive workplace culture including: › Cultural capability › Disability awareness › Unconscious bias › Anti-Racism and anti-discrimination strategies › Human Rights › Respectful relationships › Psychological safety and psychosocial risks › LGBTQ+ awareness	Human Resources	Training participation rates Benchmarking where available	CCAP RAP DSP QMAP Mental Health Strategy	Ongoing
Promote gender equity awareness and demonstrate respect and understanding for diverse cultures by observing significant events, dates and campaigns: DFV › International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women › 16 Days of Activism › Darkness to Daylight › Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month Gender Equity › International Women's Day › Equal Pay Day › International Day of the Rural Woman › International Men's Day › Men's Health Week Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander › Anniversary of the National Apology › National Close the Gap Day › National Reconciliation Week including National Sorry Day and Mabo Day › Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum › Coming of the Light › NAIDOC Week › International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples › Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People	Human Resources Media and Communications	Number of Activities undertaken % staff participating	RRP DSP Racism. It Stops With Me. Implementation Plan QMAP RAP	Ongoing

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
CALD › Multicultural Queensland Month › Harmony Week › Racism. It Stops With Me. Disability › Disability Action Week (Qld) › Disability Accessibility Awareness Day › Disability Pride Month › Carers Week LGBTQ+ › IDAHOBIT › Wear it Purple Day › Pride Month › Brisbane Pride March	Human Resources Media and Communications	Number of Activities undertaken % staff participating	RRP DSP Racism. It Stops With Me Implementation Plan QMAP RAP	Ongoing
Consider access for people with a disability when owned buildings and leased tenancies are being refurbished or a new lease is being entered into Engage Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW) as consultants to undertake Building Act Compliance review (including mobility access) at the remaining 7 x DLGWV-owned properties with a view to assessing compliance	Accommodation and Asset Management	Completion of the Building Act Compliance Review	DSP	Ongoing In Progress
Review all printed and online materials, including training content, to ensure materials are in formats that are accessible to people of all abilities and WCAG 2.1AA compliant Establish accessibility guidelines for creation of new training courses and procurement of external courses	Media and Communication Human Resources	All new key DLGWV information / materials are provided in accessible formats and comply with guidelines	DSP	Completed In progress
Develop and implement a Flexible Work Policy and Guideline aligned with the Public Sector Commission FlexConnect framework to promote the benefits and principles of flexible work arrangements for all staff Deliver training and support materials to assist managers in navigating the complexities of managing flexible, hybrid teams	Human Resources	WfQ results regarding flexible work arrangements % flexible working arrangements in place	Workforce Strategy DSP	Ongoing

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Increase visible support and allyship for diverse identities across the department by adding to our suite of available support materials Communicate a suite of targeted messages to employees regarding flexible working, such as: promoting shared care responsibilities and entitlements; building manager capability to implement flexible working where possible; profiling senior leaders engaging in flexible working; and raising awareness around cultural leave	Human Resources Media and Communication	Materials available to staff	DSP RRP RAP QMAP	Ongoing
Review intranet content available on diverse groups to ensure accuracy of information and visibility of appropriate supports Continuity plan for this to be reviewed regularly	Human Resources Media and Communication	Intranet content reviewed and updated	DSP RRP RAP QMAP	Ongoing
Promote initiatives to support men's wellbeing	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Initiatives supported and communicated		Ongoing
Create a manager toolkit with resources to progress DEI outcomes, inclusive of DEI initiatives, contingency planning and grievance officer training	Human Resources	Induction materials available for new employees Managers toolkit available on the intranet	DSP RRP RAP QMAP	Yet to commence

Our action plan (Cont.)

System Levers (Workforce Diversity, Collaboration and Reporting)

What we want to achieve



A workforce that reflects the diverse community we serve



Greater workforce participation of diversity groups across all levels of the business, including recruitment of identified First Nations positions



Organisational strategy, business planning and internal policy-making that build a shared sense of identity, values and goals to which every employee can contribute



Ways of working that bring employees together to promote a greater sense of belonging, understanding and appreciation



Diversity metrics that accurately reflect our workforce participation rates

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Develop a talent sourcing strategy focused on region/cultural/diversity specific requirements and consider establishment of identified and targeted positions and entry pathway opportunities	Human Resources DLT	% appointments from diversity groups % identified and targeted positions advertised	Workforce Strategy RRP DSP QMAP RAP	Yet to commence
Establish relationships with diversity employment providers to widen the reach of job listings beyond traditional recruitment channels	Human Resources	% applicants from diversity groups	RRP DSP QMAP RAP	Ongoing

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Partner with JobAccess to conduct a review of DLGWV policies and procedures to support career development of DLGWV employees with disability	Human Resources	JobAccess review complete	DSP	Yet to commence
Continued participation in Career Pathways Program to progress career development for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples Explore options for dedicated Employee Assistance Program (EAP) support for Aboriginal employees and Torres Strait Islander employees	Human Resources	Participants engaged in Careers Pathways Program	RRP RAP	Ongoing
Establish a DLGWV Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employee network, including regular meetings	Human Resources	Meetings held	RRP RAP	Completed
Continue to incorporate staff co-design and consultation opportunities for key departmental strategies, policies and business plans	DLT	Staff consultation undertaken		Ongoing
Develop a suite of HR metrics for executive leaders to support accountability for achievement of diversity targets across all business groups	Human Resources	HR Dashboard developed	RRP DSP QMAP RAP Workforce Strategy	Completed
Implement a communication awareness program to promote the EEO Census and explore options to increase completion rate	Human Resources Media and Communications	% EEO data being completed		Completed

Action	Division/team responsible	Metrics to monitor progress and success	Linkages to other plans	Status
Establish LGBTQ+ Allyship Program	Human Resources	Program established		Completed
Assess membership participation in relevant organisations supporting diversity practices Access and renew yearly	Human Resources	Assessment completed of available memberships and benefits to DLGWV in participating Relevant memberships purchased Membership benefits promoted and access to resources available to staff		Ongoing
Scope establishment of Inclusion and Diversity Network and gauge interest of departmental employees Continue to promote and run Common Ground: Inclusion and Diversity Network and associated subcommittees	Human Resources	Interest assessed Employee network available Quarterly meetings held Workplans co-designed and delivered with network participants		Completed Ongoing

Acronyms

CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CLLO	Cabinet Legislation and Liaison Officer
DFV	Domestic and Family Violence
DLT	Departmental Leadership Team
DSP	Disability Service Plan
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EDLT	Extended Departmental Leadership Team
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
IDAHOBIT	International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning and others
MOHRI	Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
OSCED	Office of the Special Commissioner, Equity and Diversity
PDA	Performance and Development Agreement
PSC	Public Sector Commission
QMAP	Queensland Multicultural Action Plan
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RRP	Reframing Relationships with First Nations Peoples
SES	Senior Executive Service
SO	Senior Officer
WfQ	Working for Queensland

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