FOREWORD

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) recognises that Indigenous Australians are the most disadvantaged group within our labour market. The high levels of unemployment experienced by Indigenous people needs to be addressed through better partnerships with industry and intervention programmes that support Indigenous jobseekers to develop the skills required by industry.

With many industries experiencing significant skills shortages, it is crucial that the vocational education and training system respond to the skills development needs of Indigenous jobseekers with specific skills that create pathways to employment opportunities.

The “Indigenous Employment Strategies Framework for Industry” has been developed in response to the needs of industry to be better informed of the opportunities to partner with Governments, the vocational educational and training systems and those agencies responsible for the delivery of services to Indigenous jobseekers.

I believe that these partnerships will not only create opportunities but be ground breaking for both industry and Indigenous jobseekers.

ACCI would like to acknowledge the assistance and input of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and the Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NTCCI). A great deal of the information contained in this framework was based on research conducted by the NTCCI in the employment of Indigenous jobseekers in the NT.

Peter Hendy
Chief Executive
Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
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INTRODUCTION

This framework has been developed, with the financial assistance of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), as one of a number of ACCI initiatives to promote the benefits of employing Indigenous Australians and to increase Indigenous employment opportunities. The framework is intended to act as a starting point for ACCI member associations to successfully implement an Indigenous employment strategy in their respective industries and businesses.

General Statistics

In the 2001 Census, 410 003 people identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander making up 2.2% of the total Australian population. The majority of Indigenous Australians live in coastal and metropolitan areas, and around a third in remote or regional areas.

While Indigenous people have access to the labour market, they encounter difficulties such as socio-economic conditions, low education levels and some prejudice from employers.

Forty-nine percent of the non-Indigenous population (15 years and older) in Australia have completed at least Year 11 or 12 of high school, compared with only 26% of the Indigenous population.

A Growing Youth Population

The Indigenous community has a very different population spread than the non-Indigenous community, with about 58% of Indigenous people being under 25 years of age, compared with about 34% of the rest of the population.

Unemployment Rates

The unemployment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is now almost 3 times higher than for their non-Indigenous counterparts as reflected in the 2001 census – 20% compared to 7.2% for non-Indigenous. Although the 2001 Census Data shows a small decline in Indigenous unemployment, the stronger decline for other Australians means that the disparity between these two groups is slightly greater.

Further, if participation in Community Development and Employment Projects (CDEP) is excluded from the official unemployment count, the unemployment rate has been estimated to reach as high as 40%.

The expanded version of statistical information on Indigenous Australians is at Appendix.
THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (ACCI)

ACCI is the peak council of Australian business associations. Our member network has over 350,000 businesses represented through Chambers of Commerce in each State and Territory, and a nationwide network of industry associations. That makes ACCI the largest and most representative business association in Australia.

ACCI takes a lead role in representing the views of business to government. ACCI's objective is to ensure that legislation or proposed policy approaches at a national level address the needs of Australian businesses, whether they are one of the top 100 Australian companies or a small sole trader.

For more information please call 61 2 6273 2311 or you can visit our website at: http://www.acci.asn.au/index.html

ACCI’s Indigenous Employment Services

Over the past 12 years ACCI has been at the forefront in developing strategies aimed at increasing Indigenous employment participation rates in the private sector. While it has been a challenge for both industry and jobseekers, many Indigenous jobseekers have gone onto rewarding careers and others have found new exciting career options where they were previously limited.

Through the Indigenous Employment and Training Project (IETP), ACCI is working closely with its member associations and DEWR to promote employment and training opportunities for Indigenous Australians in the Private Sector.

In a joint initiative with the DEWR the main objective of this project is to develop a strategic approach to Indigenous employment and training, through:

- the development of an 'industry specific' approach to Indigenous Employment;
- establishing and maintaining stronger partnerships between Industry and Indigenous jobseekers; and
- the provision of quality advice to stakeholders on Indigenous issues within the private sector.

Through a more strategic approach to industry needs, ACCI aims to develop an "industry best practice" approach to employment and training for Indigenous jobseekers. Recognising that each industry has specific requirements and training needs, ACCI is developing partnerships between industry, the Indigenous community and key service providers. IETP priorities include:

- assisting in the development of employment and training strategies;
- supporting Indigenous Employment Centres that have been established to help CDEP participants take up ongoing employment outside of CDEP;
- promoting private sector employment opportunities to Indigenous communities and organisations; and
- promoting the Indigenous Employment Programme including Wage Assistance and other Indigenous employment initiatives to employers, Indigenous communities, Indigenous students and jobseekers.
Improved access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) is critical for Indigenous Australians to enhance career prospects and boost individual confidence, and in order to stimulate the Indigenous employment sector. It will assist Indigenous unemployed and CDEP participants to have the opportunity to access permanent employment in Private Sector industries and fill vacancies created by skill shortages.

**Indigenous Employment, Education and Small Business Development Policy**

As part of its new directions, ACCI has adopted an Indigenous Employment, Education and Small Business Policy. The underpinning principles of this policy recognise the shared responsibility of all Australians in developing responsive employment, education and training systems, which takes account of:

- the importance of Indigenous community leadership seeking genuine employment, education and training outcomes;
- the support of education and training initiatives which strengthen the focus on sound basics, such as English language, literacy and numeracy at primary and secondary school level;
- a reduction in welfare dependency through mutual obligation and development of appropriate strategies to encourage employment in the general labour market;
- the recognition of the diverse location of Indigenous peoples in Australia, particularly in rural and remote communities;
- the considerable potential that Indigenous Australians have in contributing to the national economy; and
- the role business can play in offering more jobs and career opportunities to Indigenous jobseekers.
THE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYING INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

The average size of Australian families is in decline and the flow on effect is the overall decline in the working age population. In contrast Australia’s Indigenous population is growing at a faster rate than that of the non-Indigenous population.

Indigenous Australians have often been overlooked as potential employees. Now an increasing number of companies are recognising that a commitment to employing Indigenous Australians makes good business sense. The current skills shortages in most industries and the growth in the number of young working age people who are Indigenous Australians makes them a valuable untapped labour source.

Strategic Issues

Emerging labour and skill shortages mean employers need to think strategically about building the workforce for the future.

Industry needs to build on its current milestones and achievements, and capitalise on its potential. An effective support infrastructure needs to be in place to attract and retain Indigenous staff.

Affirmative action is required to enable Indigenous people to take up and move into mainstream academic and general staff positions. Retention of existing staff is a critical factor to achieving the employment goal.

Utilising the unique skills and perspectives of Indigenous Australians

The unique skills and knowledge of Indigenous Australians can add significant value in the marketplace and can play a major role in helping enterprises to take advantage of local opportunities. General specialised Indigenous employment services can help find recruits who are job ready and suitable for your organisation.

Finding new markets and networks

Because of their long history and extensive contacts in urban centres and communities across rural and remote regions, Indigenous Australians can provide insights into niche market opportunities that may not be obvious to non-Indigenous Australians.

Establishing a stable and dedicated local workforce

Many employers see Indigenous employment as a pathway to building a sustainable, local, and dedicated workforce. It can also help to address the current skill shortages, labour shortages, and staff turnover, especially in rural and remote areas.

Expanding the knowledge and awareness of non-Indigenous staff

Deeper understanding of cultural issues among non-Indigenous staff can be the key to new opportunities for enterprises. Indigenous employees can play a major role in developing this understanding.
Meeting corporate social responsibilities and objectives

Improving employment outcomes for Indigenous job seekers is a key element in providing the economic independence, which will address the long-term disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians. Employers have a critical role to play in supporting this process – for example – by employing local people in local jobs. Employers can also support better education and training outcomes for Indigenous Australians by making links with local communities and involving them in accredited employment based training such as traineeships and apprenticeships.
MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES

Planning

If you have thought about the possible benefits of employing Indigenous Australians, you may want to use the following questions to help with your planning process.

1/ Why do you want to employ Indigenous Australians?

Which potential benefits are most relevant to your business? Some may have been mentioned in the previous section. You may be able to identify other benefits that are unique to your situation.

2/ How is your business promoted to Indigenous Australians?

Many people find it difficult to make those initial career path decisions. How your business and industry is promoted may have an influence on these decisions. Think about how you might inspire Indigenous Australians to want to work for your business.

3/ What success have you already had in working with Indigenous Australians?

Reflecting on positive experiences is one way to build a foundation for further success. If you can identify the positives in your working relationships with Indigenous Australians until now, you can pave the way for further progress.

4/ Have staff completed training in cross-cultural awareness?

Cultural awareness must be a two-way street. Effective and equitable community access and relationships need to be established and maintained through:
- Increasing community awareness;
- Providing affordable opportunities;
- Incorporating Indigenous forms of knowledge and ways of learning or applying that knowledge;
- Demonstrating awareness and appreciation of Indigenous culture; and
- Supporting Indigenous research through collaborative approaches.

Cross-cultural awareness can play a major role in developing better understanding among staff. It can build the foundation for workplace cohesion, and it can play a major role in managing cultural factors in the workplace.

Cultural Awareness Training can help your organisation:
- Understand issues that are specific to Indigenous people;
- Develop a plan for increasing your organisation's effectiveness in recruiting Indigenous people;
- Enhance your skills and knowledge needed to assist Indigenous people gain and retain employment; and
- Recognise situations that could lead to discrimination.

Benefits of training to all employees include:
- Upgrading skills and knowledge for future career development;
- Protecting yourself from unknowingly discriminating in your day to day work; and
- Access to a supply of motivated Indigenous applicants.
5/ What is your current capacity to provide support for Indigenous employees?

As with all employees, it is also important to make sure that new Indigenous employees have skills matched to the jobs for which they have been recruited and that, if necessary, they are given appropriate training. Sometimes this support may need to take account of cultural obligations. See “Support” for more information.

6/ Do you have an employment strategy with set targets and goals?

Every business will make its own decisions about the strategies that are most appropriate given its size and circumstances. A documented strategy for Indigenous employment can help to identify goals and targets, and the actions that are needed to achieve them. A sample Indigenous Employment strategy has been included at Attachment A for your information.

Support

Depending on specific needs, businesses seeking to employ Indigenous Australians, as a first step may be able to access support services and funding.

Service providers may include:

- **Employment agencies and Job Network members** – some specialise in Indigenous employment;

- **Group Training Organisations** - recruitment of apprentices and trainees, including Indigenous Australians;

- **Training Providers** – help with work placements of Indigenous Australians in training, and recruitment of those who have completed accredited training;

- **Indigenous Employment Centres** – for Indigenous Australians who have been participating in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP); and

- **Industry Associations** – such as the local Chamber of Commerce.

Financial assistance may be available direct from government or via services for:

- On-the-job training (which includes training provided by the employer);
- licences, uniforms and equipment for the new employee;
- mentoring and other workplace support;
- employing apprentices and trainees; and
- wage assistance.

Assistance is available to help get started. For a listing of support services and financial assistance, visit the Australian Employment Services website at www.workplace.gov.au.

Recruitment

When recruiting Indigenous Australians it is possible for print advertisements to state that you are seeking Indigenous applicants. Alternately you may wish to explore other approaches to recruitment, such as:
• developing relationships with organisations specialising in Indigenous employment;
• advertising on Indigenous radio and television;
• showcasing your business to Indigenous jobseekers;
• using word of mouth; and
• talking with school career advisors. Offering your business for work experience placements can also provide a means of showcasing your business to Indigenous jobseekers.

Make sure job advertisements and position descriptions are written so they have the best chance of attracting interest from Indigenous Australians. For example, you may want to talk about the abilities needed to do the job, rather than specifying qualifications.

Despite having substantial abilities, some Indigenous jobseekers may lack industry awareness and confidence. Take this into account when recruiting. For example, create a relaxed environment for interviews. Consider providing interview questions to applicants prior to the interview and allowing a support person to attend the interview. Sometimes the support person may speak on behalf of the applicant.

The selection of the person should be based on their capability or potential to perform the job adequately. As well as their experience, consider their passions and interests. Clearly communicate your expectations while maintaining flexibility in relation to cultural issues.

Induction

Induction is an important opportunity to clearly communicate your expectations and to advise new staff of their responsibilities. It is also a time to inspire new staff to work with you. First impressions are important.

Inductions should also cover:

• occupational health and safety;
• wages and conditions of employment;
• introducing new staff to others in the workplace;
• identifying mentors and workplace buddies; and
• explaining any training and employment options available to new staff.

Retention

Like other new employees, new Indigenous staff may not necessarily be familiar with the workplace practices and culture of your business. Give people time to settle in and see how things are done. The human factor is often the key to retaining Indigenous employees and helping them to make their contribution to your business. Many of the following suggestions make good sense for all employees, irrespective of culture.

• Build good working relationships and two-way communication. Have realistic expectations and communicate them clearly.

• On occasions, an Indigenous employee may experience cultural obligations that impact on work. Trust, respect and clear communication can help sort out these situations.
Some enterprises also develop strong connections with local communities and Indigenous support structures, such as families and elders.

- Outside service providers can be useful, for example, in providing third party mentoring. Be prepared to include them when things are going right as well as wrong. For example, if you have recruited an Indigenous employee from a Job Network employment service provider, the Job Network member will generally provide post employment support.

- Some businesses choose to employ a number of Indigenous staff. This can be helpful in building shared participation and links with Indigenous communities. It can also provide support when individuals are under pressure, including pressure that may arise from meeting the needs of two cultures.

- Make it easy as possible for staff to ask questions and learn from one another. Always ensure that staff have had sufficient training and support to allow them to perform their duties to the level you expect.

- Show an interest in the work that is being performed and provide regular feedback and praise. Celebrate success.

- Be flexible.

**Mentoring**

Establishing mentors within the workplace has assisted many organisations to improve the recruitment and retention of Indigenous employees.

Mentoring is a partnership that supports development and learning in the workplace by the sharing of experience and knowledge. This often includes helping staff to identify their own learning needs and ways of meeting them through a more experienced person.

As an employer considering the possible benefits of a mentoring approach to support Indigenous employees, you may want to think about:

- the importance of building relationships between mentor and trainee based on mutual respect and trust;

- the mentor’s capacity to communicate effectively and work across cultures; and

- any cultural factors that may impact on the mentor-trainee relationship.

Some enterprises adopt a workplace buddy system, providing hands-on practical support to Indigenous employees. Third party mentoring by an outside service provider may also be an option. It may also be useful to provide mentoring for other staff, particularly supervisors and managers.
COMMON ISSUES

Equality and Discrimination

The Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission points out that equality does not necessarily mean that everyone is treated the same way. It is often appropriate to treat groups differently so that, in the end, they can participate and benefit from opportunities.1

Stereotypes

It is easy to fall into the trap of stereotyping people from other cultures. The reality is that Indigenous Australians have a great diversity of language, knowledge and experience. For example, in remote parts of Australia significant numbers of Indigenous people speak multiple languages.

As with all employees, the more you get to know people individually, the more you will learn about them and about the ways of communicating your expectation for the workplace.

Urban and remote areas

The impact of culture on Indigenous employment is often greater in remote communities, where traditional authority and practices tend to be stronger. However, there are no hard and fast rules about this, especially given that many Indigenous people move between urban and remote areas.

Communication

Communication aims to achieve shared understanding. In some situations, staff may be less inclined to ask questions. This may mean taking a little more time, avoiding jargon and complex terminology, and creating opportunities where people can learn by doing.

Family

The vast majority of Indigenous Australians would list their family, and extended family, as the number one priority in their lives. Balancing the demands of family and career can be a challenge for some Indigenous Australians in the workplace and can often lead to conflicts. Some employers have found that showcasing the business to families of Indigenous staff can help to overcome the challenge of conflicting demands.

Role models and pressure to perform

Indigenous role models are best defined and recognised by Indigenous communities. Indigenous Australians are sometimes encouraged to be high achievers as examples of what their people can achieve in mainstream culture. This can lead to significant stress for the individuals involved. Employers can sometimes contribute to this kind of pressure without intending to. Issues of workplace performance are best treated as part of the normal employer-employee relationship, including performance assessment.
Absenteeism

As with non-Indigenous staff, there can be any number of reasons why an Indigenous employee might be absent from work. While these reasons are usually legitimate, some employees may be uncomfortable about informing their non-Indigenous supervisor or manager, and may then be worried about returning to work to face the music. Building trust with individuals, as well as developing systems and strategies that help employers to know what is happening in the wider family or community, may help to address these issues. Mentors can also help.
SAMPLE INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Developing a written Indigenous Employment Strategy will help to make Indigenous employment an established part of your enterprise. Every business will make its own decisions about the strategies that are most appropriate given its size and circumstances. This sample strategy provides some guidelines and an example.

Guidelines

An Indigenous Employment Strategy may cover a range of issues including:

- why the business has the strategy;
- the importance of the strategy to the business;
- promotion of the strategy to Indigenous stakeholders including potential employees;
- advice of how to gain commitment to the strategy from everyone in the business;
- how to link the strategy to performance management systems; and
- establishment of monitoring and review systems.

Strategy

Principles for the strategy

Many businesses base their strategies on a set of principles. For example:

This company:

- Values an inclusive and diverse workforce;
- Values the diverse knowledge, skills, histories, traditions and cultures of Indigenous Australians; and
- Seeks to maximise employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

To help with getting started, an Action Plan with goals for implementing an Indigenous Employment Strategy is provided.
Goals and Strategies

Goal one: Become an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians

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| Promote employment opportunities to Indigenous Australians. | • Identify what area of the workforce that may be of interest to Indigenous Australians.  
• Give presentations to jobseekers, through on-site tour or off-site presentation.  
• Talk to schools so as to attract young people.  
• Provide work placements for two school students. | | |
| Establish links with Indigenous employment service providers. | • Arrange for a Job Network member to visit at least twice per year.  
• Talk to the local Indigenous Employment Centre and Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP).  
• Email an outline of operations to preferred service providers. | | |
| Increase cross-cultural awareness throughout the business. | • Ensure that all staff completes cross-cultural awareness training.  
• Acknowledge important Indigenous Australian celebrations, such as, NAIDOC week and other events. | | |
| Develop systems to meet the special needs of Indigenous staff. | • Determine special needs of Indigenous employees with the help of a Job Network member or mentoring agency.  
• Encourage mentors to visit the workplace regularly in the initial period after recruitment. | | |
**Goal Two: Increase employment of Indigenous Australians at all levels**

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| • Review recruitment processes to ensure they are culturally appropriate. | • Develop a recruitment checklist.  
• Develop protocols for recruiting and employing Indigenous Australians.  
• Where appropriate, assign a workplace buddy to Indigenous staff. | | |

| Recognise the skills and contributions of Indigenous staff. | • Establish job descriptions to reflect the skills and knowledge of each employee, by clearly defining the value of practical skills and knowledge. Also including skills that reflect Indigenous community knowledge.  
• Conduct annual staff performance appraisals. | | |

| Support staff development. | • Provide opportunities for staff to undertake training. | | |

| Enable Indigenous employees to develop their own career strategies, goals and objectives. | • Provide goal-setting opportunities for staff annually at performance appraisals. | | |

| Have a succession plan that gives Indigenous Australians opportunities to move into management positions. | • Acknowledge the career aspirations of staff.  
• Select key positions to job share with Indigenous Australians.  
• Assign Indigenous employees to divisions where they have opportunities for career development. | | |

| Goal Three: Develop systems to maintain Indigenous employment | | | |

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<td>Set Indigenous employment targets.</td>
<td>• Review Indigenous employment targets annually.</td>
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| Assign an Indigenous employment officer (if your organisation is big enough). | • Assign an appropriate Indigenous employment officer.  
• Ensure the officer is sufficiently briefed on their duties and the expectations of the business. | | |

| Evaluate the Indigenous employment strategy. | • Assess Indigenous employment performance annually. | | |
GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Where to find employees

*Job Network* organisations help eligible job seekers, including Indigenous job seekers, find and keep a job. The help provided by Job Network varies, depending on the skills, work experience and personal circumstances of the job seeker. There are over 100 Job Network organisations, with offices throughout Australia. Information about Job Network and how to access it can be found at [http://workplace.gov.au/workplace/jobnetwork](http://workplace.gov.au/workplace/jobnetwork) or by phoning 13 62 68.

*Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants (IYECs)* assist Indigenous young people with the transition from school to work. From July 2005 consultants will be engaged by some Job Network providers in selected Employment Service Areas across Australia.

Working with communities — Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP)

CDEP provides employment and training opportunities for Indigenous Australians, who voluntarily forego their income support from Centrelink in return for a CDEP wage. CDEP also offers opportunities for Indigenous people and communities to establish their own businesses to create employment. Projects are managed by Indigenous organisations and communities in remote, regional and urban regions right across Australia for over 37,000 participants.


Working with employers


*Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP)* create employment opportunities for Indigenous people by supporting employers with access to packages of tailored assistance, including structured and accredited training for their Indigenous employees.

Some of Australia’s leading businesses have signed up to the *Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project (CLIEP)*. Participating businesses typically have plans in place to train and hire Indigenous people.

*Wage Assistance* is wage subsidy paid to employers for up to 26 weeks when they employ an eligible Indigenous job seeker. Job seekers receive an eligibility card from Centrelink that they can use when they approach employers.

The *National Indigenous Cadetship Project (NICP)* links Indigenous Australian students with employers who can give them work skills and professional employment.
Indigenous business services and programs

The government has a range of programs designed to help Indigenous people own and run their own businesses. Support is available for small one person businesses to large enterprises. To find out which program best suits your needs visit: http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Organisation/Businessassistance/ or phone the Indigenous Employment Line on 1802 102.

Indigenous Business Development Programme (IBDP) provides Indigenous Australians with market intelligence, business skills and alternative funding.

Indigenous Small Business Fund (ISBF) provides funding for incorporated Indigenous organisations for business development initiatives.

Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme (ICAS) provides Indigenous businesses with access to commercial finance and culturally appropriate professional and mentoring support services.

Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) assists and enhances Indigenous self-management and economic self-sufficiency.
GLOSSARY

**Group Training Organisations** employ new apprentices and hire them out to businesses. This is for businesses that cannot provide New Apprentices with ongoing or sufficiently varied employment or do not have the time to undertake all employment and training functions.

**Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICC)** coordinates the delivery of Indigenous specific programmes in the regions. Under the new whole-of-government approach, all engagement with local Indigenous communities by Australian Government agencies – including economic development, education, community services, housing, legal aid and health – will be coordinated through the ICC Network. For more information see the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination website - [www.oipc.gov.au](http://www.oipc.gov.au).

**Job Placement Organisations (JPOs)** provide an employer-focused recruitment service that meets the recruitment needs of employers and provides the opportunity for eligible job seekers to gain employment through access to a large number of diverse vacancies. Job Placement Organisations will advertise vacancies, screen and refer job seekers. See [www.jobsearch.gov.au](http://www.jobsearch.gov.au).

**Land Councils** assist with land management issues involving Indigenous Australians. In addition to this, land councils such as the Northern Land Council offer Indigenous employment support and advice.

**New Apprenticeships** is terminology that replaced apprenticeships and traineeships. It is a system of apprentice style training that covers a broad range of occupations including trades, business services, environmental health, land management, child care, sport and recreation, etc. This training is delivered under the VET system. The **New Apprenticeship Centre (NAC)** manages this system and the financial incentives that go along with it. See [www.newapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.newapprenticeships.gov.au).

**Practice Firms** are simulated businesses run by trainees with support from an educator and an actual business. Practice firms conduct business with other practice firms in a simulated environment on a local, national or international basis. Their form, function, products and services reflect those of the real business partners. See [www.anpf.cit.act.edu.au](http://www.anpf.cit.act.edu.au).

**Registered Training Organisations (RTO)** are companies or education institutions certified to deliver training under the VET system. 5,000 Australian RTOs each offer different products and services.

**School Based New Apprenticeships** are New Apprenticeships (generally at Certificate 2 level) that form part of secondary studies. Students: (a) stay at school up to 4 days a week; (b) average 10 hours paid employment per week; and (c) receive nationally accredited training at little or no cost to the employer. Training programs are delivered by Registered Training Organisations in partnership with employers. See [www.newapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.newapprenticeships.gov.au).
Structured work placements (VET in schools) are blocks of on-the-job training for students in years 10, 11 and 12 who are undertaking a nationally accredited VET qualification (usually up to a Certificate 2) as part of their school curriculum. Most students do 2 or 3 work placements each year that generally coincide with the last week of each term (week 10). Businesses are advised to register their interest in work placements well ahead of time.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an industry driven national system that develops and recognises skills in the workplace. Generally it is an alternative to university higher education. Increasingly, however, VET is involving secondary schools and universities.

Work experience consists of weeklong blocks of on-the-job experience for students in years 9 and 10 that do not contribute to any formal qualification. Work experience is negotiated between employers and the individual school and can happen at any time throughout the year. Businesses are advised to arrange all work experience allocations at the start of the year. This will avoid phone calls from schools throughout the year.
FURTHER READING

Aboriginal Australia Map, Printed 2000, Compiled by Dr David Horton, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Edition 3.

This map indicates only the general location of large groupings of people, which may include smaller groups such as clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. Boundaries are not intended to be exact. For more information about the groups of people in a particular region contact the relevant land councils. The map is available online at: http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/corporate/a8_publish/modules/publish/content.asp?navgrp=default&id=aboriginalaustralia


This publication was instigated and developed by the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Council. They are also qualified in general practice, public health and rural and remote medicine. The book represents explicit acknowledgement that Aboriginal people have different medical needs from non-Aboriginal people.


The main aim of this report is to examine the job search behaviour of Indigenous job seekers and identify the characteristics of successful job search behaviour.

This report examines Indigenous labour market behaviour using the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) longitudinal data on Indigenous job seekers.


Why are we consistently confronted with the failure to achieve statistical equality in critically important areas such as health, housing, and education? This publication examines the relationship between the Pintupi people of Australia's western deserts and western society. The publication challenges many popular assumptions about the way Indigenous groups like the Pintupi interact with western society.


A number of Australian companies are actively engaged with Australian Indigenous peoples and communities. The reasons for this are varied, complex and not always fully articulated. They range from principled commitment to social amelioration or national reconciliation, to a pragmatic meeting of demands for access to land or support of local communities.

Mutual respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples is a requirement of a mature, caring and productive nation. For many Indigenous Australians this means participating more
fully in the mainstream of Australia’s economic and social life. While public policy strategies serve as levers for Indigenous people making the transition from disadvantage to inclusion, the active involvement of Australian business is needed to hasten the process. Many Indigenous leaders are asking business to play a central role in ensuring ‘real jobs in the real economy’.


*The Land is a Map: Placenames of Indigenous Origin in Australia* covers a broad range of issues associated with Indigenous place names. Australia was once a network of Indigenous place names, but while many of these names were taken into an official system, they were often cut off from any understanding of their original meanings. Attempts are now being made to ensure that additions of Indigenous names more accurately reflect the traditions from which they originate.


The enactment of the Workplace Relations Act 1996 by the Howard Government represented acceleration in the pace of industrial relations reform. Amid these significant and widespread legislative developments, little attention was paid to the plight of groups traditionally disadvantaged in the labour market—including Indigenous people. *The Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey (AWIRS) 1995* is the first publicly released data set that permits analysts to directly examine the industrial relations environment in firms that employ Indigenous Australians. Information from the AWIRS employee survey and AWIRS Employee Relations Managers survey are used in the analysis.


The teenage labour market in Australia has undergone massive change over the last quarter of a century or so. As reported in Norris and Wooden (1996), three significant inter-related developments have taken place. First, full-time employment opportunities for young people have collapsed. Second, and in part a direct result of the decline in full-time employment opportunities, there has been a marked increase in participation by young people in education.


Many issues confront central Australian Aboriginal people wanting to take control of their economic destiny. Highly readable and illustrated throughout, this book offers an unusually accessible view of what happens when Aboriginal societies meet mainstream economic and bureaucratic imperatives— and how those meetings can be improved.
In Australia, as in many other nations, there is an emphasis upon paid work as a primary means for achieving economic independence, alleviating poverty and avoiding welfare dependency. Much of this attention focuses on an individual’s skills and attributes, or upon characteristics of the labour market. In this paper, we extend these analyses, by investigating the extent to which an individual’s ‘stock’ of social capital relates to labour force outcomes, over and above more well established determinants. In particular, it examines how family and kinship networks, friends and neighbours relate to individual labour market outcomes, compared with the role of civic ties and institutional networks.

Noel Pearson has recently argued that inclusion in a ‘passive’ welfare system, over the last thirty years, has been to the detriment of Aboriginal society. This paper approaches the inclusion of Aboriginal people in the social security system from a slightly different perspective, while taking seriously Pearson’s concerns. It argues that, despite norms and aspirations of universalism, rules within the social security system are social constructs derived from and intended for the particular social and economic circumstances of the dominant society.

This book was written to provide some answers as to why the Aboriginal people of Arnhem Land face the greatest crisis in health and education since European contact.

The concept of heritage is treated at length, as are the crucial notions of scale and context. This book discusses separately the identification, conservation, and management of heritage items. Relationships with tourism and other commercial activities are considered, along with related matters such as visitor management and interpretation. Australian perceptions, approaches, and legislative and bureaucratic structures are discussed and compared with those of a number of other nations.
ONLINE RESOURCES

The following is a brief list of online web resources that could provide more information on Indigenous culture and communities. This is list is merely an indication of what type of resources that are available on the Internet and is by no means comprehensive.

Diversity Australia


Australian Government Indigenous Portal


The Australian Leadership Centre (AILC)

The AILC aims to foster the development of leadership ability and skills of Indigenous peoples by:

- conducting educational and experiential courses and seminars in leadership and professional development;
- developing materials for education and training in leadership;
- promoting Indigenous leadership skills and ability; and
- creating forums for Indigenous people to share ideas, experience and skills.


DiversityWork

DiversityWork is a team of specialists that have the practical experience and knowledge to help companies benefit from workforce diversity. Indigenous Australian employment is no the sole focus of DiversityWork. DiversityWork specialise in asisting organisations implement and manage a diverse workforce. [http://diversityatwork.com.au](http://diversityatwork.com.au).

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Website (NATSIEW)

NATSIEW is an Indigenous Education portal that provides a number of links to training and employment online resources. NATSIEW also provides a comprehensive list of useful links to Internet sites that may be of interest to employers. The NATSIEW homepage is at: [http://www.natsiew.nexus.edu.au/lens/index.html](http://www.natsiew.nexus.edu.au/lens/index.html).

Mentoring

APPENDIX

Statistics

In the 2001 Census, 410 003 people identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander making up 2.2% of the total Australian population.

The Indigenous population is as follows:

NSW has the largest Indigenous population with NT having the highest percentage. A breakdown is available for your specific region.


A Growing Youth Population

The Indigenous community has a very different population spread than the non-Indigenous community, with about 58% of Indigenous people being under 25 years of age, compared with about 34% of the rest of the population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Indigenous Population</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>119 865</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>59 571</td>
<td>60 294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>112 772</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>54 582</td>
<td>58 190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>58 496</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>28 970</td>
<td>29 526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>50 785</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>25 222</td>
<td>25 563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>25 078</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
<td>12 367</td>
<td>12 711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>23 425</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>11 516</td>
<td>11 909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>15 773</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>7 866</td>
<td>7 907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>3 576</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1 781</td>
<td>1 795</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Location

While most of the total Australian population is concentrated along the east coast, the Indigenous population is much more widely dispersed, for example, about 90% live in areas covering 25% of the continent. Approximately half of the total Indigenous population lives in disadvantaged areas, including urban areas. The demography and settlement patterns of Indigenous Australians are unique and different to those of mainstream society.

Indigenous Australians comprise 2.2% of the total Australian population with the majority living in coastal and metropolitan areas, and around a third in remote or regional areas. This has a significant impact on access to services, infrastructure and economic activity. While Indigenous people have greater access to the labour market, they encounter difficulties such as socio-economic conditions, low education levels, having to compete with usually higher educated non-Indigenous people and prejudice from employers.

Education Outcomes

Forty-nine percent of the non-Indigenous population (15 years and older) in Australia have completed at least Year 11 or 12 of high school, compared with only 26% of the Indigenous population. Factors such as poverty, poor housing including overcrowding, family violence, and unemployment adversely affect effective educational outcomes resulting in poor literacy and numeracy skills, as well as deficits in other necessary skills and resources.

Unemployment Rates

The unemployment rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders was two and a half times higher than for non-Indigenous people in the 1996 census.

The rate is now almost 3 times higher following the 2001 census – 20% compared to 7.2% for non-Indigenous. Although the 2001 Census Data shows a small decline in Indigenous unemployment from 23% to 20%, the stronger decline for other Australians means that the disparity between these two groups is slightly greater.

Further, if participation in Community Development and Employment Projects (CDEP) is excluded from the official unemployment count, the unemployment rate leaps to over 40%.

Employment Participation Rates

Indigenous people have much lower participation in the labour force than the non-Indigenous community — 52.1% of the Indigenous community over 15 years of age participate, compared with 63.4% for the non-Indigenous community.
Skill Levels

Indigenous workers are disproportionately employed as labourers and related workers, compared with non-Indigenous workers. Alternatively, non-Indigenous workers are disproportionately employed in professional positions compared with Indigenous workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labouring and related occupations</th>
<th>Professional occupations %</th>
<th>Professional occupations - numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Indigenous</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>