



Department of
Environment and Conservation

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

2007 – 2012

DIRECTOR GENERAL'S MESSAGE

The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is an Equal Opportunity employer committed to achieving greater workforce diversity.

We value and recognise that each employee brings their own unique capabilities, experiences and qualities to work. We are committed to creating and fostering a supportive and understanding work environment in which all individuals, regardless of their differences, can realise their maximum potential.

Our Equity and Diversity Management Plan 2007 – 2012 aims for a continued achievement of a corporate culture that embraces and values a diverse workforce, and an inclusive work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Demonstrating our commitment to workplace diversity, DEC has set targets to increase the percentage of all diversity groups. Women in senior management and indigenous employees are two key groups who are both under-represented and unevenly distributed in the department. The department will implement career development strategies for both groups and has set a long term target of 10 – 15 per cent Indigenous employment by 2016.

Strategies in the plan utilise and build on existing talent and all staff are encouraged to support and work towards the implementation of the plan.

We look forward to achieving further advances in equity and diversity and maintaining a work environment that is inclusive of all.



Keiran McNamara
Director General

INTRODUCTION

The department's Equity and Diversity Management Plan 2007 – 2012 builds on the strategies of the EEO and Diversity Management plans of the former departments of Conservation and Land Management and Environment. The plan has been developed to meet our corporate objectives of maintaining community involvement and support, and improving the way we do business. In addition, it has been devised to provide for equitable appointment and effective management of a diverse workforce, to assist us to meet diversity objectives identified in the Government's Equity and Diversity Plan for the Public Sector Workforce 2006 – 2009, and to enable us to meet our statutory obligations under the *WA Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.

Under clause 145(1) of the WA Equal Opportunity Act, the department is required to prepare an Equity and Diversity Management Plan. The objectives of the management plan are to provide a framework to ensure that the department:

- eliminates discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy, race, religious conviction, political conviction, impairment, family responsibility/status, age, sexual orientation and gender history; and
- promotes equal opportunity for all persons.

The department recognises the success of the previous EEO and Diversity Management plans with the following key achievements:

- National recognition by winning the prestigious Diversity@work Award in 2004 for the Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme(MATES). The award recognised the department for encouraging diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- Increased number of youth in the department via programs such as the school-based traineeships, Graduate Recruitment program and the MATES program.
- Increased participation of schools in the Bush Ranger program.
- Ongoing training of employees in Workplace Discrimination and Sexual Harassment via online training.
- All managerial or supervisory positions include an essential criterion of “demonstrated understanding of Equal Employment Opportunity and diversity management principles and practices”.
- Development of family friendly guidelines to assist employees with their work/life balance.

The State Government's Equity and Diversity Plan for the Public Sector Workforce 2006 – 2009 is in line with its commitment to develop a public sector workforce which is representative of the Western Australian community at all levels of employment. The plan requires all State Government organisations to set objectives for improving the representation and/or distribution of Indigenous Australians, women, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities and youth.

The following table contains the department's Equity and Diversity targets for 2007 and 2009.

	2007		2009	
Representation (Percentage)	Public Sector	DEC	Public Sector	DEC
Women in Management Tier 2 and 3 combined	38	17	44	20
People from Culturally Diverse Backgrounds	10.5	4	13	6
Indigenous Australians	2.8	4.4	3.2	6
People with Disabilities	3.6	1.5	3.7	2.5
Youth (<25 years)	7	7.5	8	8
DISTRIBUTION (EQUITY INDEX)				
The equity index shows the distribution of a group across all salary levels				
	Public Sector	DEC	Public Sector	DEC
Women	70	50	78	60
People from Culturally Diverse Backgrounds	100	100	100	100
Indigenous Australians	39	15	45	25
People with Disabilities	100	100	100	100

Definitions of terms and diversity groups contained in the table are provided at the end of the document.

DECs Equity and Diversity Management Plan 2007 – 2012 contains strategies intended to assist the department in achieving these diversity objectives. Indigenous Australians and women have been particularly recognised in the department as two key groups who are under-represented and unevenly distributed in the department. However, it is important to understand that the plan has a broad application that extends beyond the achievement of objectives for specific diversity groups, and includes strategies that aim to maximise the potential and well-being of all employees.

PLANNING FOR THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

Legislation

Principles of equality as espoused in the plan are supported by the following legislation and policies:

- *Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1984*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Affirmative Action Act 1984*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Spent Conviction Act 1988*
- *Public Sector Management Act 1994*
- DEC Good Working Relations Policy
- DEC Equal Employment Opportunity Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- DEC Bullying Policy
- DEC Code of Conduct
- Public Sector Code of Ethics

Plan Review and Monitoring

The Equity and Diversity Management Plan is not a static document. Diversification is a gradual process, and fresh ideas for improved management of diversity are likely to become apparent during the lifetime of the plan. The evaluation component is based on a strategy of monitoring and allowing for continuous improvement, resulting in amendments to the plan in light of experience, new research and better awareness.

Progress will be reviewed on a six monthly basis using the performance measures of stated strategies and target timeframes. Updates on progress will be made available throughout the department via the department's intranet. The effectiveness of implemented actions will be assessed and summarised in the annual report.

A comprehensive evaluation of the plan will be undertaken in 2012 as part of the review process for preparation of the department's subsequent Equity and Diversity Management Plan.

All activities within or outside DEC are underpinned by the values of the organisation. Key strategies within this plan are aligned with these values. Our equity and diversity objectives have clear links to DEC's business imperatives, government policy and the legislative framework.

The Equity and Diversity Management Plan for DEC details specific strategies and responsibilities to ensure the plan meets objectives for specific priority groups, creates a sense of well-being for all employees and is a tool for cultural change.

Responsibility for Successful Implementation

All employees, or groups of employees, such as managers, with responsibilities listed in the plan will receive a copy of the plan. The Equity and Diversity Committee will oversee successful implementation of the plan, including monitoring and reporting on progress and recommending modifications to the plan as appropriate.

Outcomes and objectives for the plan have been grouped under three headings as part of the Outcome Standards Framework provided by the Director of Equal Employment in Public Employment. The three outcomes relate to Workplace Culture and Accountability, Workplace Practices Support Equity and Diversity and an Equitable and Diverse Workforce Profile.

Specific strategies have been developed to encourage women, Indigenous Australians, people with disabilities, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and youth into the organisation, and to increase their representation across all levels of DEC.

While strategies and objectives for specific diversity groups are outlined under each of the three outcomes, it is important to note that the plan includes strategies to improve the workplace and maximise the potential of all employees.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The preparation of the department's Equity and Diversity Management Plan 2007 – 2012 was coordinated by the Equity and Diversity Management Committee, consisting of Ron Kawalilak (Chair), Chantal Laval (Executive Officer), Julie Adams, Cathy Birch, Natalie Burton, John Byrne, Tania Donovan, Helen Ferguson, Graeme Keals, Chloe Shugar and Peng Soong.

The final plan has also benefited from comments and suggestions received from a diverse range of employees throughout the department, and their advice and feedback are appreciated and gratefully acknowledged.

OUTCOME 1

Workplace Culture and Accountability

We value and have clear management accountability for equity and diversity. There is an inclusive work environment that is free from discrimination and harassment due to any of the grounds covered by equal opportunity legislation.

Objective 1.1 To integrate equity and diversity outcomes in the department's corporate, strategic and operational plans.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Integrate equity and diversity principles and objectives into all of the department's corporate, strategic and operational plans and other relevant planning decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity and diversity principles and objectives integrated into all corporate, strategic and operational plans and other relevant planning decisions. 	Directors / Managers	Ongoing	
Measure equity and diversity outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide EEO Yearly Report to the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and report to Corporate Executive. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	Annually	

Objective 1.2 To ensure EEO and diversity information, including achievements, is regularly communicated to all employees, and promoted inside and outside the department.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Promote Equity and Diversity Management Plan and raise EEO awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise all employees of the plan via broadcast email. All employees with responsibilities in the plan are sent a copy of the plan. Use appropriate media and forums to publicly promote equity and diversity achievements and news. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	Ongoing	
Equity and diversity awareness training and best practice workshops and seminars are held on a regular basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 equity and diversity awareness training sessions held per year. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	Ongoing	
Equity and Diversity Committee to meet quarterly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee to meet quarterly to monitor, review and update plan. 	Director Strategic Development and Corporate Affairs	Ongoing	

Objective 1.3**To ensure the diversity of all employees is valued and respected and their needs recognised and supported.**

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Ensure that a diverse range of employees are consulted and given the opportunity to participate in all significant forums and committees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee consultation and participation checked and confirmed prior to approval. 	Directors / Managers	Ongoing	
Maintain departmental database of available projects and other suitable tasks that could be undertaken by employees seeking alternative work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek regular updates from managers on available tasks and projects. Provide information on the department's Intranet. 	Manager People Services Project Officer (PSB)	Biennially Ongoing	
Increase numbers and diversity of Peer Supporters and Good Working Relations Contact Officers (GWRCO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Peer Supporters and GWRCOs is maintained and reflects the diversity of employees in the department. Ensure three Indigenous Peer Supporters and GWRCOs trained. 	Corporate Health Officer Policy and Diversity Consultant	December 2009	
Develop employment and learning guidelines for mature employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines developed 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	June 2008	

Objective 1.4**To have policies and programs in place to ensure our work environment is free from discrimination and harassment.**

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Ensure Good Working Relations (GWR) Policy is reviewed and updated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy reviewed and updated. Policy promoted. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	September 2007	
Develop an online training program on EEO (legal compliance) and diversity that incorporates the Good Working Relations Policy, including grievance procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online training program developed and in place. Include completion of online or alternative training in induction program. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	December 2009	
Conduct training for managers in grievance resolution, including mediation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain record of managers who have completed grievance resolution training. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant / Managers	June 2010	

OUTCOME 2

Workplace Practices Support Equity and Diversity

Our policies and practices support the achievement of equity and diversity objectives and are free from bias and unlawful discrimination against employees or potential employees.

Objective 2.1 To ensure that flexible, family friendly policies and practices are in place and available at all levels in the department.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Within operational requirements, ensure that every effort is made to accommodate employee requests for flexible, family friendly work arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodate flexible work requests where appropriate. Raise awareness of flexible work practices for staff, via broadcast emails, <i>Environment and Conservation News</i> and other suitable forums. 	Managers Policy and Diversity Consultant	Ongoing	

Objective 2.2 To ensure recruitment and selection procedures are based on merit, incorporate diversity principles and comply with the Public Sector Standards and Equal Opportunity legislation.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Simplify selection criteria in all selection processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review selection criteria and duty statements to ensure that they are written in plain English and that they recognise the value of diverse experience and perspectives. 	Recruitment Officer Consultant Workforce Planning and Performance	July 2008	
Conduct selection panel training for all managers, supervisors and other relevant employees that incorporates diversity principles and compliance with EEO legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a record of all employees who have undertaken training. Incorporate need to arrange training in the induction program. 	Manager Workforce Services and Planning Recruitment Officer	June 2009	

Objective 2.3**To ensure that organisational learning opportunities are provided to a diverse range of employees.**

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Promote policies and procedures on organisational learning and other development programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures are promoted throughout the department. • All employees and their development needs are considered when assigning acting, training and special projects, including people from diversity groups. 	Manager Organisational Learning and Development Managers	Ongoing	

Objective 2.4**To collect data to monitor the success of our policies and practices in supporting equity and diversity.**

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Collect and examine data on appointments, reclassifications, criteria progressions, promotions, transfers, secondments, temporary deployment (acting), and retention rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collected and examined and results provided to Equity and Diversity Committee and Workforce Planning and Performance section. 	Manager Workforce Services and Planning	Ongoing	
Exit Interview Analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and analyse exit interview. • Exit interview database established and maintained. 	Manager Workforce Services and Planning	December 2008	
EEO Data Improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Diversity Survey to improve accuracy of demographic data and maintain database for all staff as part of workforce planning and review processes. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	December 2008	

OUTCOME 3

An Equitable and Diverse Workforce Profile

We have an equitable and diverse workforce suited to our business and client needs, consistent with equity and diversity principles and government and legislative frameworks. Employment programs and practices recognise and include strategies to achieve workforce diversity.

Objective 3.1 To collect demographic data so as to identify the distribution of diversity groups across the department.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Provide demographic data showing distribution of diversity groups within each division to Corporate Executive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic data provided. Divisional diversity objectives set and met. 	Workforce Systems Analyst	Quarterly	

Objective 3.2 To actively encourage Indigenous Australian employees in the workplace, and increase the representation of Indigenous Australians across all levels of the department.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Continue to develop and implement strategies to support Indigenous employment through the Strategy for Aboriginal Employment and Development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies are developed and implemented through the Strategy for Aboriginal Employment and Development. 	Manager Organisational Learning and Development	Ongoing	
Conduct interviews/focus groups with Indigenous employees to identify particular needs, barriers, and other relevant issues and report results to Corporate Executive and the Equity and Diversity Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews/focus groups conducted and needs, barriers, and other issues identified. 	Manager Organisational Learning and Development in conjunction with the Aboriginal Heritage Unit	June 2008	
Provide Indigenous Australian cross-cultural training for all employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrangement for training incorporated into induction program. Records maintained. 	Managers Manager Organisational Learning and Development	Ongoing	
In consultation with local communities and regional offices, increase the participation of schools with high numbers of Indigenous students in the Bush Ranger Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased participation of schools with high numbers of Indigenous students in the Bush Ranger Program. Records maintained and reported. 	Bush Rangers Coordinator	Ongoing - report annually	

Objective 3.2

To actively encourage Indigenous Australian employees in the workplace, and increase the representation of Indigenous Australians across all levels of the department.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Continue to conduct Indigenous traineeship and cadetship programs with a view to increasing the number of trainees and cadets in the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs are continued. • The number of Indigenous trainees and cadets in the department is increased. 	Manager Organisational Learning and Development	Ongoing	
Ensure the department is projected as an employer of choice among Indigenous Australians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All career expos and other suitable forums attended by the department to include Indigenous representatives. • Where relevant, advertise jobs in Indigenous media and through Indigenous networks. 	Manager Organisational Learning and Development. Managers and Recruitment Officer to liaise – Managers to approve	Ongoing	
Allocate at least one Graduate Program position to an Indigenous Australian.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a position in Graduate Program is available exclusively to Indigenous applicants. 	Manager Organisation Learning and Development	December 2007	
Create career opportunities for Indigenous employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous employees represented at Leadership and Development training. • Indigenous employees provided with acting opportunities where appropriate. 	Manager Organisation Learning and Development Managers	Ongoing Ongoing	
Increase distribution of Indigenous Australians across all levels of the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous employees provided with acting opportunities where appropriate. • Provide interagency secondment opportunities. • Contact Indigenous Liaison Officer at all Universities and TAFE Colleges for placement of graduates. • Where relevant, advertise jobs in Indigenous media and through Indigenous networks. 	Managers Policy and Diversity Consultant Recruitment Officer	Ongoing	

Objective 3.3

To actively encourage women in the workplace, and increase the representation of women across all levels of the department, particularly in senior management.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Ensure women are adequately represented on all departmental committees and working groups, particularly decision-making groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check gender balance before finalising membership. 	Directors / Managers	Ongoing	
Target women in recruitment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise in alternative media and promote flexible work practices. 	Recruitment Officer	Ongoing	
Create career opportunities for women in senior management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure 40% female representation at DEC Leadership and Development training. • Ensure acting and secondment opportunities for females in senior management. • Seat on Corporate Executive for senior female staff member. 	Managers Directors Corporate Executive	Ongoing Ongoing December 2008	

Objective 3.4**To actively encourage people from culturally diverse backgrounds in the workplace, and increase the representation of people from culturally diverse backgrounds across all levels of the Department.**

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Use of migrant work experience program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use migrant resource centres to offer work experience with the view to taking on suitably qualified employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Policy and Diversity Consultant Recruitment Officer	December 2008	
Maintain database of employees who are fluent in languages other than English, and who are willing to act as translators as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advise all employees of the availability and purpose of the database.	Policy and Diversity Consultant	Annually	
Ensure selection panel training and guidelines recognise value of culturally diverse backgrounds in recruitment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include awareness of cross cultural differences, to ensure that selection decisions are not culturally biased.• Training providers advised and inclusion of requirements confirmed.	Policy and Diversity Consultant	June 2008 Ongoing	
Run 'how to address selection criteria workshops' aimed at level one and two positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Run at migrant resource centres.	Recruitment Officer	June 2009	

Objective 3.5

To actively encourage people with disabilities in the workplace, and increase the representation of people with disabilities across all levels of the department.

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Review Job Description Forms (JDF) to ensure that selection criteria are essential for the position e.g. possession of a driver's licence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers to review JDF prior to advertising a vacancy. • Provide advice to managers to identify potential recruitment opportunities for people with disabilities when a vacancy becomes available. 	Managers Recruitment Officer	Ongoing	
Continue the provision of work experience for people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience is regularly provided for people with disabilities. 	Manager People Services / Managers	Ongoing	
Use disability recruitment specialists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use disability recruitment specialists to ensure people with disabilities are included in applicant pools. 	Manager People Services / Managers	Ongoing	
Provide disability awareness training for all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop disability awareness training. • Provide a minimum of four training sessions at DEC seminars/meetings and forums. • Include disability awareness training in the Graduate Recruit Program and the MATES program. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant Disability Access and Inclusion Committee	December 2008	
Continue the provision of the Access and Improvement Fund for staff and volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast email every six months to advise staff of fund. 	Disability Access and Inclusion Committee	Ongoing	
Prepare guidelines regarding working with people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines developed and employees advised. 	Policy and Diversity Consultant	June 2008	

Objective 3.6**To actively encourage youth in the workplace, and increase the representation of youth in the Department.**

STRATEGIES	TASKS REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	PROGRESS
Liaise with other government agencies with offices in rural locations, with a view to developing an inter-agency social support network for young employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social support network for young employees is established and maintained. 	Consultant Organisational Learning Programs	June 2008	
Encourage structured work experience opportunities throughout DEC for high school students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible and practical, requests for work experience are accommodated. 	Managers	Ongoing	
Extend Graduate Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey graduates. • Further develop the Graduate Program to improve the program experience for graduates. 	Manager Organisational Learning and Development	December 2008	
Increase the number of trainees in the department via school based traineeships and participation in the Bush Ranger Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore Traineeship Program opportunities and implement where appropriate. 	Manager Organisational Learning and Development	June 2009	

August 2007

Definitions

By requirement, all definitions are based on those provided by the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity.

Equity Index:

The equity index shows the distribution of a group across all salary levels. An equity index of 100 shows group members are equitably distributed across the salary levels. An index under 100 indicates concentration at the lower levels. An index over 100 shows a tendency for group members to be at the upper levels.

**Management Tier 2:*

Corporate executive management level, i.e. directors and managers who report directly to the Director General.

**Management Tiers 3:*

Managers who report directly to corporate executive – generally, branch and regional managers.

**Indigenous Australians:*

Persons of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

**People from culturally diverse backgrounds:*

People born in countries other than those categorised by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as Main English Speaking countries (i.e. Australia, United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, United States of America).

**People with disabilities:*

Anyone with an ongoing disability who has an employment restriction due to their disability and

- is restricted in the type of work they can do, or needs modified hours of work (either a restriction in hours, different time schedules or flexible hours of attending); or
- requires an employer to provide adaptive equipment, or modified work environment, extra time for mobility or to perform certain tasks, or to make other special work-related arrangements; or
- needs to be given ongoing assistance or supervision to carry out their duties.

Youth (aged < 25):

Persons aged less than 25 years.

** Note that inclusion as a member of one or more of these groups is dependent upon the person identifying as a member and disclosing this information to the department.*