



# VCAT Koori Inclusion Action Plan 2017-18

This plan outlines how we will encourage Koori participation at VCAT, whether accessing our services or as part of our workforce. We want our everyday work practices to be culturally sensitive and inclusive.

VCAT welcomes your feedback on this plan - please email [communications@vcat.vic.gov.au](mailto:communications@vcat.vic.gov.au).

## Snapshot of initiatives

### Koori inclusion

Appoint a new Koori Engagement Project Officer to:

- ▶ manage new programs to increase Koori participation, particularly in Residential Tenancies Division
- ▶ ensure VCAT is actively participating in key Indigenous justice forums, including the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement Forum
- ▶ raise awareness of VCAT's role among Victoria's Koori community
- ▶ strengthen partnerships with key Aboriginal stakeholders.

Establish a pool of culturally competent VCAT members to hear Koori matters, particularly in the Residential Tenancies and Guardianship lists

Continue our program of Koori cultural awareness training for members and staff.

### Data collection

Look at ways to gather data on Aboriginal participation to support service improvements. We will:

- ▶ consider the barriers to identification
- ▶ develop strategies to address these barriers when appropriate
- ▶ explore options for formally reporting participation data.

### Koori employment and economic participation

Establish a recruitment and employment strategy to encourage Koori employment at no less than 2.5 per cent, including:

- ▶ creating opportunities for Koori employment within existing programs, for example graduate recruitment programs and traineeships
- ▶ strategies to promote VCAT as a Koori-friendly organisation, through our professional development programs.

### Communication, engagement and partnerships

Promote NAIDOC and Reconciliation weeks.

Acknowledgement of Country to be given at all significant events and forums.

Artwork 'Striving for a Better Tomorrow' reproduced with the permission of the artist, Mr Dixon Patten, a traditional descendant from the Gunnai and Yorta Yorta peoples.



## Action area 1 Koori inclusion

### Objective

- ▶ Driving changes to organisational behaviour, based on principles of cultural safety, respect and responsiveness, to ensure that our processes and practices proactively overcome exclusion through positive participation.

Action	Method	Timelines
<p>Create a new Koori Engagement Project Officer position to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ manage specific initiatives emerging from the PwC Indigenous Consulting report, particularly in the Residential Tenancies Division</li> <li>▶ ensure VCAT is actively participating in key Indigenous justice forums</li> <li>▶ generate a greater awareness of VCAT's role among Victoria's Koori community including creation of specific communications material</li> <li>▶ strengthen partnerships with key Aboriginal stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p>Identify funding for an ongoing Koori Engagement Project Officer role as part of the 2017-18 budget development process, in consultation with Consumer Affairs Victoria as part of the annual funding negotiations.</p> <p>The position would be incorporated into the Residential Tenancies Division but will service the whole of VCAT.</p>	<p>Be ready to recruit to the role in June - July 2017</p>
<p>Demonstrate VCAT's intention to become a culturally safe environment through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ developing and implementing a cultural awareness training program specifically for VCAT members</li> <li>▶ establishing a pool of culturally competent members who can be directed to hear Koori specific matters, particularly in the Residential Tenancy and Guardianship lists.</li> </ul>	<p>Building on the model of Koori cultural awareness training delivered by the Koori Justice Unit, Court Services Victoria (CSV) Koori Cultural Awareness Training, Judicial Officers' Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Committee, and Judicial College of Victoria activities, develop a specific training workshop for VCAT members, with a focus on the Residential Tenancies List, and incorporate into the 2017 Member Professional Development program.</p> <p>Working with Heads of Division, Registrars and Listings, identify where it would be appropriate to list members who have participated in Koori cultural awareness training to Koori matters (for example, residential tenancies matters involving Aboriginal Housing Victoria and the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service).</p>	<p>2017-18 FY</p> <p>2017-18 FY</p>



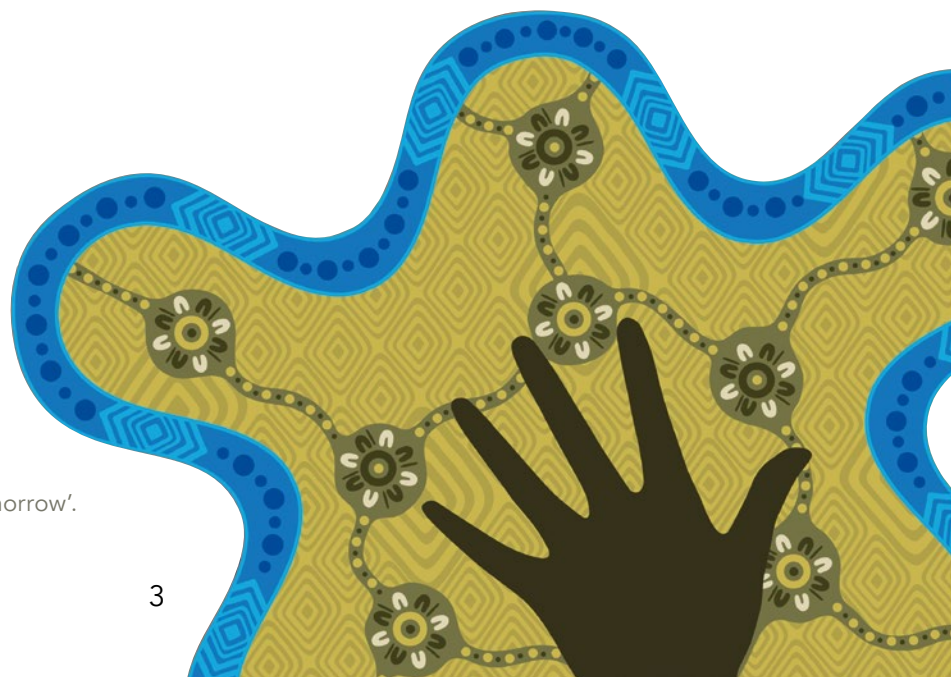
## Action area 2 Data collection

### Objective

- ▶ Quality data is a foundation to effective service design and delivery. It informs demand expectations and needs and is essential for analysing the effectiveness of programs.

Action	Method	Timelines
<p>Ensure that data on Aboriginal participation (applicants and respondents) is captured and used to inform specific initiatives and service improvements.</p> <p>Consider the barriers to identification, measures to increase identification and assess the value to VCAT and Koories of identification in this jurisdiction for users and employees.</p>	<p>Ensure all forms, both online and PDF, provide an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identifier.</p> <p>Consider the barriers to identification and strategies to address these barriers.</p> <p>Consider ways to formally report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation at VCAT through, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ the Diversity Committee's report to the President's Advisory Committee</li> <li>▶ regular performance reports</li> <li>▶ VCAT's annual report.</li> </ul>	<p>2017-18 FY</p>

Detail of the artwork 'Striving for a Better Tomorrow'.





## Action area 3 Koori employment and economic participation

### Objective

- ▶ The economic outcomes for Koori and non-Koori Victorians differ substantially and are reflected across a number of key indicators. Improving economic outcomes is fundamental to breaking cycles of disadvantage and supporting social and economic participation.

Action	Method	Timelines
<p>Institute recruitment and employment procedures which encourage Koori employment to a level of no less than 2.5 per cent at VCAT.</p> <p>As part of VCAT's Workforce Plan, develop an Aboriginal Employment Strategy that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ creation of internships and traineeships to Koories seeking to have experience in the justice system</li> <li>▶ broad strategies to promote VCAT as a Koori-friendly organisation and actively encourage Koori applications for employment opportunities at VCAT.</li> </ul>	<p>Identify existing opportunities or programs that facilitate Koori employment (such as graduate recruitment programs).</p> <p>Promote VCAT employment opportunities to the Koori community.</p>	Ongoing
<p>In 2015-16 FY, VCAT provided Koori Cultural Awareness training, delivered by the Koori Justice Unit, to all VCAT staff.</p> <p>VCAT will continue this program of Koori Cultural Awareness training to all new recruits as part of our standard Learning and Development Program.</p>	<p>Incorporate as part of VCAT's annual Learning and Development Program.</p>	2017-18 FY





## Action area 4 Communication, engagement and partnerships

### Objective

- ▶ Effective communication and partnerships with the Koori community underpins the principle of engagement and inclusion and directly improves service delivery.

Action	Method	Timelines
Develop and implement a communications strategy to raise awareness of VCAT's role and services in the Koori community.	<p>Develop communications targeted specifically at Aboriginal audiences.</p> <p>Distribute communications through channels known to be effective at reaching Aboriginal audiences.</p> <p>Leverage existing justice frameworks for engaging Aboriginal communities (for example, Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees and the Aboriginal Justice Forum).</p>	2017-18 FY
Actively participate and promote cultural events.	Promote NAIDOC and Reconciliation weeks.	2017-18 FY
Acknowledgement of Country to be given at all significant events and forums.	Working with CSV, ensure an appropriate Acknowledgement of Country is readily available for members and staff to use at all significant events and forums.	Ongoing

Detail of the artwork 'Striving for a Better Tomorrow'.

