



A Cultural Inclusion Framework for South Australia

Document One Guide to the Framework

A guide to assist agencies in the public sector
to deliver culturally inclusive programs
to Aboriginal peoples in South Australia

When the term Aboriginal people is used it should
be read as an inclusive term of Torres Strait Islander
people's culture and language

December 2006



Government of South Australia
Department of the Premier
and Cabinet

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1 Foreword

The *Cultural Inclusion Framework* is an initiative of the Social Inclusion Board and was produced by Cheryl Axleby and Dennis C. Rigney of the Aboriginal Consultancy Unit from the Office of Public Employment in June 2005. The framework is a timely guide because the social, economic, health and cultural wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples within the public sector service settings need special attention.

Aboriginal people are the most socially and economically marginalised peoples in Australia and experience greater barriers in accessing government and government-funded services in comparison to the rest of the community. Some of these barriers are related to poor linkages and coordination across the system, cultural misunderstanding by service providers, socio-economic issues, racial discrimination and some are about the availability and distribution of services.

The purpose of the *Cultural Inclusion Framework* is to assist South Australian government agencies to develop services that are culturally inclusive and thus more accessible to Aboriginal people.

There is a growing understanding that a comprehensive response to addressing the marginalisation of Aboriginal peoples must sharpen the focus on improving the performance and accountability of agencies' service provision¹. The availability of government services that are culturally equipped to provide services to Aboriginal peoples is one of the key factors that will contribute to improved social, economic and wellbeing outcomes.

Cultural inclusion is achieved when the agencies' services demonstrate a commitment to the principle that the development and provision of services offered will be inclusive of the legitimate cultural rights, practices, values and expectations of Aboriginal peoples.

The *Cultural Inclusion Framework* should be seen as a complementary document to existing key national or local frameworks or strategies addressing the social, economic and wellbeing needs of Aboriginal peoples.

The tools and approaches described in this document will assist policy-makers and planners to be inclusive of the needs and expectations of Aboriginal peoples during the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of services provided.

By embracing the framework, agencies will also make positive and practical contributions to reconciliation between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal South Australians.

¹The remaining text of this sub-section has been adapted from the 2004 'AHMAC Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, 2004 – 2009'. The changes relate to adapting the specific health context of the AHMAC document to a more broadly defined service system context.



2 Statement from the Premier of SA

I want South Australia to be a place where Aboriginal people are able to achieve their potential, to lead happy and fulfilling lives and to share in the State's prosperity.

In order to do this, they must be given a fair go and treated respectfully – just like everyone else.

Because government has a special responsibility to help indigenous people, I believe it should do everything it can to understand them and cater to their needs.

This *Cultural Inclusion Framework* is designed to help the State's public sector do just that.

The framework allows agencies to assess their 'cultural competence' in regard to Aboriginal people and then to provide better quality and more appropriate services.

Not only is this the right thing for us to do, it will also help our State achieve two targets we have set for ourselves in *South Australia's Strategic Plan* in relation to Aboriginal wellbeing.

The first target aims to 'reduce the gap' between Aboriginal people and the rest of South Australia's population – particularly in relation to health, life expectancy, employment, school retention rates and imprisonment.

The second aims to increase the percentage of the Aboriginal population in the State's public sector from 1.2 per cent to 2 per cent by 2009.

This is a thoughtful and comprehensive document – one that promises to ultimately improve the lives of Aboriginal South Australians.

I commend the framework to all members of the State's public sector and I look forward to it bringing about long term, practical change for the better.

The Honourable Mike Rann MP
Premier of South Australia





3 SA Aboriginal Elders Executive Committee

The voice of Elders is imperative to the preservation of Aboriginal culture and is an integral role in providing leadership and direction for our communities and for our children's future.

We welcome the efforts to address the disadvantages that we as Aboriginal people have lived and experienced for many generations.

We, as members of the Council of Aboriginal Elders of South Australia, support the initiative of the Cultural Inclusion Framework for South Australia.

We see this as a great opportunity to ensure that the needs of our people are culturally acknowledged and receive the appropriate recognition within the provision of valued services for our people by the public sector.

We look forward to a brighter future for our people and encourage the sector to implement the Cultural Inclusion Framework to remove the many barriers we face in accessing and receiving these services for ourselves, our families and our communities.

Janice Rigney
Chairperson



4 Acknowledgements

We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander² peoples of South Australia.

We acknowledge the prior ownership of all South Australian lands and acknowledge the long history of the ongoing work undertaken by Aboriginal peoples in the past and present in their quest to achieve justice, equity and equality.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the following individuals:

Indigenous Executive Consultative Committee Members:

Peter Buckskin	Chief Executive – DAARE
David Rathman	Executive Director – DFEEST & DECS
Roger Thomas	(Wilto Yerlo, University of Adelaide)
Brian Dixon	Executive Director – Aboriginal Health Division
Sandy Miller	Director – Aboriginal Health Division
April Lawrie Smith	Director – Attorney General's Department
Nerida Saunders	General Manager – Aboriginal Housing Authority
Jeff Walsh	Commissioner – Office of Public Employment and Chair
Anne Pattel–Gray	Executive Director – Tauondi College Incorporated
Klynton Wanganeen	Zone Commissioner – ATSIC
Wendy Edmondson	Chief Executive – Aboriginal Health Council of SA

Working Group:

Debra Axleby, Cheryl Cairns, Elaine Golding, Sharon Meagher, Catherine Morgan, Fred Tanner, Joyleen Thomas, Deborah Walker and Bill Wilson.

The authors acknowledge the representatives from the following agencies consulted throughout the consultancy project for their support and feedback into the development of the framework.

Department of Aboriginal Affairs & Reconciliation

SA Public Sector Reform Unit

Office of Public Employment

Social Inclusion Unit

Attorney General's Department

Aboriginal Housing Authority

Courts Administration Authority

Aboriginal Health Division

Indigenous Coordination Centre

Muna Paiendi

Indigenous Affairs and Special Projects Unit

Adelaide Central Community Health Services

SA Aboriginal Elders Executive Committee

Children Youth & Family Services

Department of Employment Further Education Science and Technology

² As a general rule, we use the term Indigenous throughout this document. In this context, the term includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in South Australia, irrespective of their original Country origins.



ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

Names and regions as used in *The Encyclopedia of Aboriginal Australia* (D Horton, General Editor), published in 1994 by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (Aboriginal Studies Press) GPO Box 553 Canberra, ACT 2601

Legend:

- Malpa Tribal/Language group name
- Southwest Region name
- No published information available
- State boundary line

SCALE 1 : 4 700 000

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Acknowledgement

Aboriginal Australia Wall Map, D R Horton, Aboriginal Studies Press, AIATSIS, 1996

Disclaimer and Warning:

Not suitable for use in native title and other land claims
 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.



t h e f r a m e w o r k



6 Expected process and outcomes for agencies

Embedding cultural inclusion into agency culture and services will lead to the following outcomes:

- improved outcomes for clients
- improved equity of access to services
- more efficient and effective services
- more culturally appropriate services
- greater consultation by agencies in relation to the type and quantity of services required
- greater direct accountability to communities by agencies
- a range of benefits to staff including reduced workload, greater job satisfaction, enhanced learning opportunities
- improved service integration
- improved customer satisfaction.

The intention of the Cultural Inclusion Framework is to focus on several core and common elements of agencies that deliver client services. These core elements are:

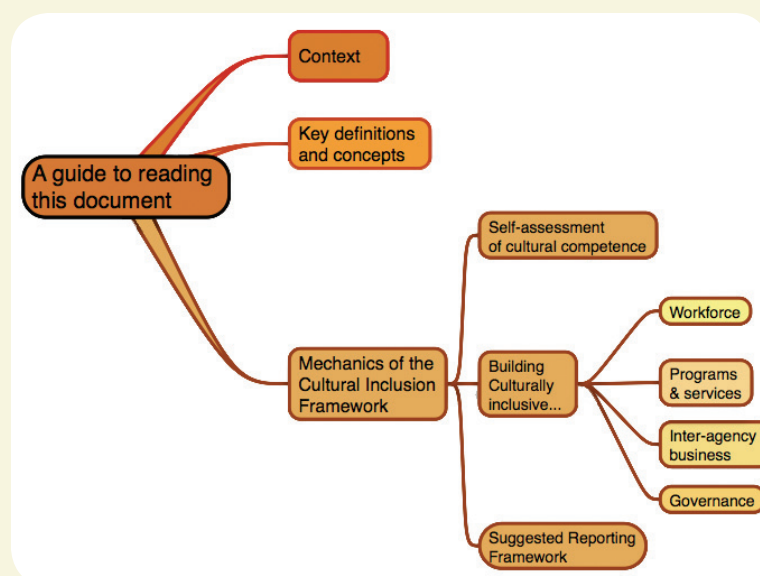
- a culturally inclusive and competent workforce
- culturally inclusive services planning
- culturally inclusive program/service design, including accountability and reporting mechanisms
- culturally inclusive inter-agency collaboration
- culturally inclusive governance.

As these core elements are fundamental to all agencies, the cultural inclusion enhancement and improvement dimensions should be readily able to be incorporated into any underlying or systemic quality improvement mechanisms that may be in place (or contemplated).

This framework (and companion documents) can assist agencies in their strategic and operational planning and will require agencies to **audit or self-assess current arrangements** and initiate **action planning** to support the functional areas within their own agencies.

7 Document guide

The focus of this document is on the core development of a Cultural Inclusion Framework for use by South Australian government agencies and by agencies that receive service delivery related funding from the South Australian Government. The main document is divided into a number of sections, as shown in the following diagram.





8 Context of the framework

The concept of a Cultural Inclusion Framework is not new. For example major efforts have already been made here in South Australia. The South Australian Department of Health recently published³ on behalf of the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC), the 'Cultural Respect Framework For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, 2004–2009'.

The NSW Health Department has implemented an Aboriginal Impact Statement methodology for its health programs. This methodology provides a systematic basis for considering the needs of Aboriginal clients. The South Australian Department of Health is currently developing a similar approach.

A number of government agencies have embraced the principles of reconciliation by developed reconciliation statements and established cultural protocols of welcoming people to country, in recognition of Aboriginal peoples' country. The framework is the next step, to assist agencies to work towards cultural inclusiveness and better service and delivery outcomes to Aboriginal peoples in South Australia.

Three important South Australian initiatives provide a broader context within which the present Cultural Inclusion Framework has meaning. These initiatives are:

South Australia's Strategic Plan (2004).

- This plan includes 79 targets within six (6) broad objectives. A number of general targets focus on improved wellbeing (Objective 2).
- A specific target (under Objective 6: Expanding Opportunity) relates to Aboriginal wellbeing. This target is to '...Reduce the gap between the outcomes for South Australia's Aboriginal population and those of the rest of South Australia's population, particularly in relation to health, life expectancy, employment, school retention rates and imprisonment'.
- A second target within this broad objective is to '...Increase the percentage of the Aboriginal population in the South Australian public sector from 1.2% to 2% within 5 years'.

The Economic Development Board and The Social Inclusion Initiative of the South Australian Government.

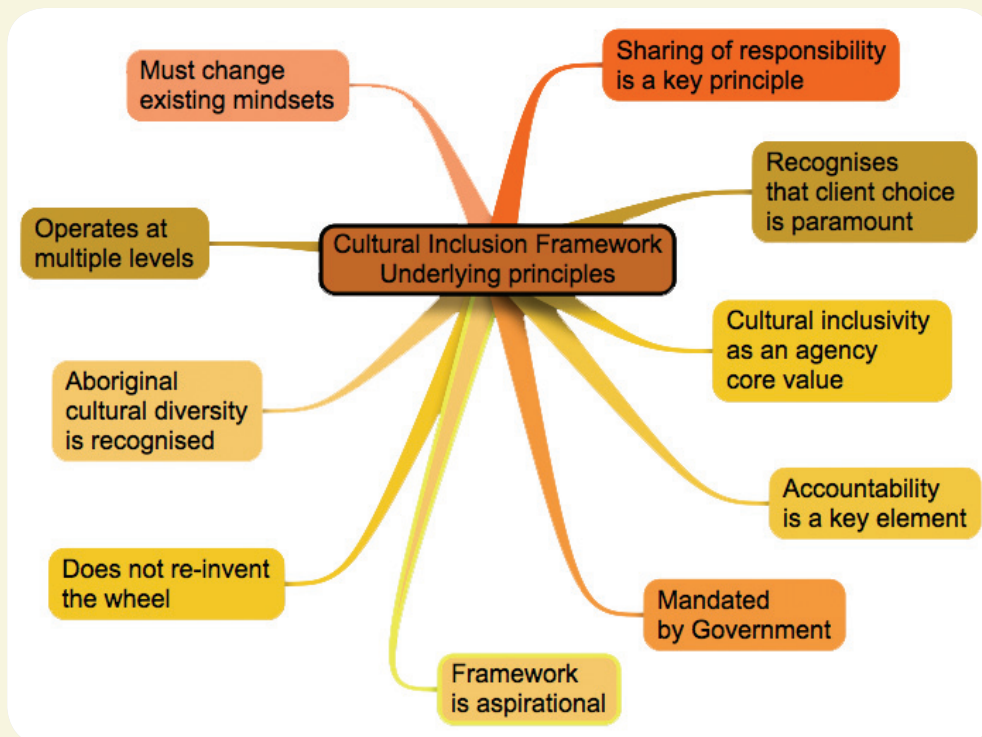
The Economic Development Board and Social Inclusion Initiatives are both key and complementary drivers underpinning the objectives and targets of South Australia's Strategic Plan. The present Cultural Inclusion Framework is a major project of the Social Inclusion Initiative.

³ Published in 2004 by the SA Department of Health. Prepared by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council's Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Working Party (comprising the Northern Territory, Queensland and South Australia).



9 Dimension of the framework

The following figure illustrates key dimensions of the framework. The framework is a positive step for agencies to work towards cultural inclusiveness. The key dimensions outline the objective of the framework.





d e f i n i t i o n s



10 Key definitions and concepts

The following definitions and concepts have been provided to promote a greater understanding by the reader as the following terminology will be used in this document from here on.

10.1 Cultural competency

Cultural competency is variously defined. The following definitions best summarise the concept.

'The ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations and faiths or religions in a manner that recognises, affirms and values their worth and protects their dignity' (CWLA, 2003).

'Cultural competency means becoming aware of the cultural differences that exist, appreciating and having an understanding of those differences and accepting them and being prepared to guard against accepting your own behaviours, beliefs and actions as the norm' (SACRRH, 2001).

10.2 Cultural safety

'Cultural safety involves actions that recognise, respect and nurture the unique cultural identity of Aboriginal people and safely meets their needs, expectations and rights. It is how Aboriginal people are perceived and treated that is relevant, rather than the different things they think or do. It is working from the cultural perspective of the client not from your own perspective' (SA Department of Human Services, 2002).

10.3 Cultural (social) exclusion and inclusion

Social exclusion is something that can happen to anyone, but some people are more at risk than others. Research has found that people with certain backgrounds and experiences are disproportionately likely to suffer social exclusion.

The key risk factors include: low income, family conflict, being in care, school problems, being an ex-prisoner, being from an ethnic minority, living in a deprived neighbourhood in urban and rural areas, mental health problems, age and disability.

Social exclusion focuses on the needs of groups and individuals who do not have access to services and facilities, or to society's decision-making/power structures.

Social exclusion occurs at a later stage, once socially excluded groups and individuals gain access to the mainstream. However, it is vital that work on inclusion also involves diversity – we are not looking for a society that is *'all the same'*.



10.4 Eliminating discrimination and racism in your workplace

Racial discrimination happens when someone is treated less fairly because of their race, colour, descent, national origin or ethnic origin than someone of a different 'race' would be treated in a similar situation⁴.

Racial discrimination can also happen when a policy or rule that treats everyone in the same way has an unintended unfair effect on more people of a particular race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin than others.

Aboriginal people continue to suffer racial discrimination and racism in its various forms, particularly in social settings and in the workplace.

The South Australian Public Sector Code of Conduct protects its employees from being subject to racism in the workplace.

The Cultural Inclusion Framework encourages services to adopt the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity 'Good Practice Good Business' – checklist that suggests:

- Preparing and promoting a written policy on workplace discrimination and harassment.
- Training staff to identify and prevent workplace discrimination and harassment.
- Establishing an effective internal complaints procedure.
- Appointing trained discrimination and harassment contact officers.
- Treating all complaints seriously and investigate them promptly.
- Ensuring appropriate action is taken to address and resolve the complaint.
- Ensure that staff subjected to racism received counselling and support.
- Ensure staff who are discriminating against their peers in the workplace receive training, counselling to ensure that the behaviour is addressed and stopped.
- Monitoring the workplace environment and culture, such as holding staff surveys or reviewing recruitment practices.

What is not racial discrimination?

'Special measures' are not unlawful. These are programs with the objective of securing the adequate advancement of a group, or individual members, affected by historic disadvantage to help them enjoy and exercise their human rights in full equality.

For more information on this subject please refer to the following link:
http://www.hreoc.gov.au/racial_discrimination/index.html

⁴ The information in this subsection has been adapted from material produced by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC).



10.5 Competency and competency standards

Agencies can access specific competencies that assist with the training of staff to be culturally sensitive, particularly in community and human services work. Agencies should use these competencies for training and also work towards developing 'cultural competencies' within their Job and Persons Specifications.

Agencies can seek assistance from the Office of Public Employment (OPE) for guidance in developing cultural competencies, as they have taken a leadership role in developing these within their own agency.

10.6 Definition of competency

The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) defines competency⁵ as *'...the ability to perform tasks and duties to the standard expected in employment'*.

10.7 Definition of competency as a standard

ANTA defines **competency standard** as *'...an industry-determined specification of performance which sets out the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to operate effectively in employment. Competency standards are made up of units of competency, which are themselves made up of elements of competency, together with performance criteria, a range of variables and an evidence guide. Competency standards are an endorsed component of a training package'*.

⁵ see: <http://www.anta.gov.au/gloatoe.asp#c>



u s i n g t h e f r a m e w o r k



11 The framework

The following sections of the Cultural Inclusion Framework focus on how agencies can:

- Assess your organisation's cultural competence
- Work towards building and maintaining a culturally inclusive and competent workforce that has the capacity to provide culturally inclusive services
- Plan, design and run programs that deliver culturally inclusive services (including appropriate use of in-house Aboriginal sections/units)
- Work better with other agencies
- Use governance strategies that can assist in delivering the equity outcomes intended by the framework
- Develop an overall reporting framework that allows agencies to monitor and improve their performance in embedding a cultural inclusive approach to practice.



12 Assessing your agency's cultural competence

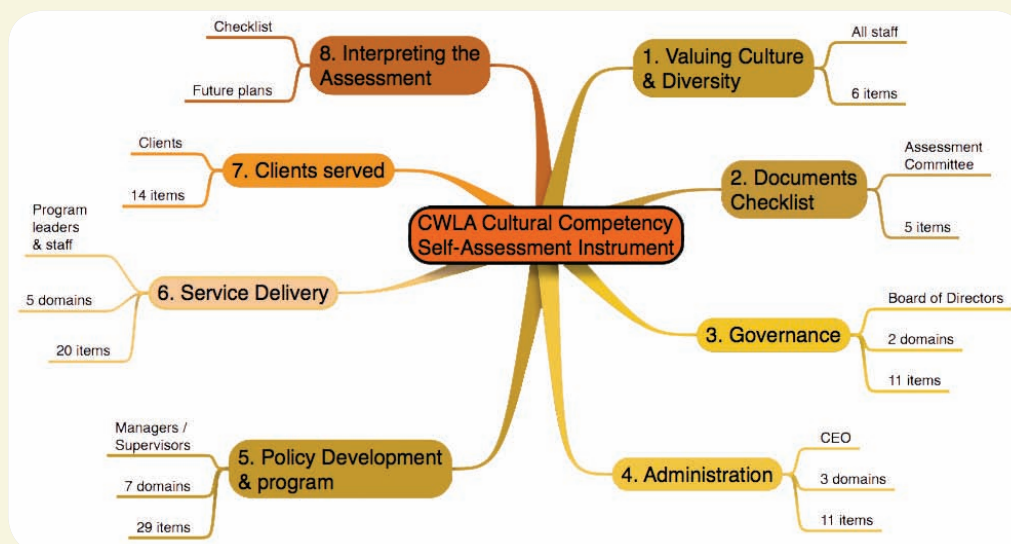
The purpose of self-assessing for cultural competence is to better equip agencies to develop and implement strategies to incorporate cultural competence and inclusiveness into the overall strategic planning processes of an agency.

The framework's authors consider that the Child Welfare League of America's (CWLA) approach to be comprehensive and straightforward⁶.

The tool has been amended with the permission of CWLA to specifically target cultural competency for Aboriginal peoples in South Australia.

The CWLA approach includes a number of steps (see below for more details). For each of the steps in the process, the CWLA Guide suggests person(s) responsible and suggested procedures.

The self-assessment instrument (see Companion Document Number Two for a copy of the locally adapted CWLA tool, includes a number of content areas (see following figure).



- In each major section of the instrument, the target respondent group is identified (eg all staff, CE only, clients etc).
- In some sections, several domains of interest span a range of mainly categorical response type questions.
- There is provision for additional narrative in each section.

⁶Child Welfare League of America Inc. Cultural Competence: A Guide for Human Service Agencies (Revised); 2003. CWLA Press



The recommended process for conducting a whole-of-organisation cultural competency self-assessment is described in the following steps.

Step 1

Conduct the cultural competence self-assessment

A detailed process for conducting the cultural competence self-assessment is located in the *Companion Document Two Cultural Competency Self-Assessment Instrument*. This document has been adapted with permission from CWLA: Child Welfare League of America Inc. publication: *Cultural Competence: A Guide for Human Service Agencies (Revised)*; 2003. CWLA Press. Please note that this assessment tool cannot be reproduced in any format without written permission from CWLA Press.

Step 2

Interpreting the self-assessment

Consolidate the responses to the questionnaire commenting specifically on the following (but not limited to these) questions. To further assist, a *Cultural Inclusion Checklist* (CIC) has been developed (See Companion Document Number Three). This may be useful when examining response patterns that are at variance with expected response patterns. The CIC closely follows the content and sequence for the self-assessment instrument. Complete the narrative summary of your agency's self-assessment results, commenting specifically on the following (but not limited to these) questions:

- What did the assessment indicate about your agency's overall response to the culturally diverse clients and communities served?
- What did the assessment indicate about the way your agency manages organisational issues relating to cultural competency?
- What specific strengths did your agency identify?
- What specific challenges did your agency identify?
- Were there any cultural topics or issues that surfaced during the assessment that were not addressed in the questionnaire?

(See also below for further details/aspects to be included in the analysis and reporting.)

Step 3

Report the findings

Present an assessment report to the governing body and agency staff. Include:

- A summary of responses (simple tabulations; cross-tabulations)
- Comments
- The Cultural Inclusion Checklist
- The Committee's response to the questions listed above and below.

Step 4

Devise an action plan

Develop a plan for future action to address challenges and describe the plan using the following basic checklist: How does your agency plan to build on identified cultural strengths?

- How will your agency develop a plan to address the identified cultural challenges?
- How will you organise this work and monitor its progress?
- What can the Office of Public Employment (OPE) and Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (DAARE), or your own Aboriginal Unit do to assist your agency in addressing cultural competence challenges, building on the agency's strengths and working on other issues related to culture?



13 A culturally inclusive workforce

12.1 Outcomes and indicators

The key outcomes that agencies may consider relate to the following:

- Your agency's workforce
- Your agency's policies, programs and services including:
 - Inter-agency relations and activities
 - Use of in-house Aboriginal service units
- Your agency's governance structures and business practice as it relates to cultural inclusivity
- Your agency's current strategic and operational planning structures and practice as its relates to cultural inclusivity
- Your agency's forward strategy for strategic and operational planning that assures/embeds cultural inclusivity into normal agency practice.

This section focuses on the development of a culturally inclusive workforce. The core aim of building a culturally inclusive workforce is to enhance the capabilities and practices of staff in the delivery of culturally sensitive and inclusive services to clients.

Cultural competencies may be attained in many ways – for example, as part of undergraduate university courses and post-graduate vocational training programs (eg medical specialists). The largest source of material is available through the National Training Information Service (NTIS). Competency standards relating to 'cultural diversity' are used in the NTIS for community services, health, business services and the community recreation industries.

For an example of a NTIS unit of competency relating to cultural diversity please refer to the following website:
<http://ntis/cgi-bin/waxhtml/~ntis2/unit.wxh?page=80&inputRef=29217&sCalledFrom=std>

A recommended process for building a culturally inclusive workforce is as follows.

Step 1

Identify the relevant findings of the cultural competency self-assessment that relate to your agency's workforce.

It is recommended that the Cultural Inclusion Checklist be used when reviewing the findings from the self-assessment process. The process outlined in the next step may also be used when reviewing the findings from the self-assessment process. It is possible that some of the items listed in the checklist may not have been identified as 'issues' or 'challenges' in the self-assessment.



Step 2

Apply the Cultural Inclusion Checklist (CIC) to the agency workforce issues

It is recommended that the CIC method is a useful framework for examining cultural competency and inclusiveness in the agency workforce. It is recommended that workforce issues be assessed against the relevant categories of the checklist. The format is shown in the Companion Document Number Three.

Step 3

Develop a costed program for addressing existing gaps, deficiencies

Some of the key areas to be considered could include:

- Identify programs and staff where cross-cultural awareness training (or other training) may be required (and provide training)
- Revise staff position descriptions where these may be deficient – eg are they current? Are they appropriate for the role?
- Incorporate the relevant units and elements of cultural competency into duty statements as essential requirements in senior positions and minimum requirements in the administrative stream (AS01/AS02)
- Do your remuneration processes incorporate a component for cultural competency/inclusiveness?
- Where there is a requirement for Aboriginal-identified positions, execute necessary approvals, appoint to positions etc
- Address any gender composition issues relating to client cultural needs
- If your agency lacks a human resources database, establish one that can provide flexibility in terms of generating reports and ad hoc information relevant to cultural inclusion. At a minimum, the database should be able to provide current information about:
 - Staff demography (age, gender, disability, qualifications etc)
 - Aboriginality, CALD status etc
 - Induction history
 - Training history, including participation in any training programs relating to cross-cultural competencies etc.

Step 4

Implement your agency's forward approach to maintaining cultural inclusiveness in the workforce

Key items to consider in your forward approach are:

- Developing and implementing a policy for maintaining, nurturing (including rewards and sanctions as appropriate) and improving the cultural inclusiveness of your workforce. For example, your policy may explicitly acknowledge culturally important events such as NAIDOC Week, provisions for cultural obligations, leave etc
- Develop and implement a policy that explicitly addresses all forms of racism in the workplace. This policy should exist as a discrete policy and not be subsumed within a general 'behavioural standards' policy. The anti-racism policy should include provisions for independent review, nature and extent of any sanctions/penalties, independent representation on any committee, Aboriginal representation on the committee and specified time frames for resolution of complaints
- Ensure that the agency recruitment policy reflects the SA Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy
- Your agency's policy and practice in relation to new staff induction and training in cross-cultural competencies
- Performance appraisal procedures that include assessment of cultural competencies
- An ongoing strategic planning process for your agency's workforce that includes an evaluation and monitoring component.



13.1 Outcomes and indicators

The range of possible process and outcome measures is potentially vast. Some of the key areas that you may wish to measure and monitor could include the following areas. Annual reporting of:

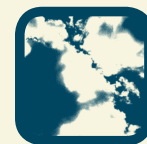
- Workforce-related specific actions arising from your agency's cultural competency self-assessment findings that have been:
 - Resolved
 - Remain unresolved (and why)
- Numbers (and proportions) of your agency's existing workforce that have undergone cultural diversity training (or similar)
- Numbers (and proportions) of your agency's new workforce that have undergone cultural diversity training (or similar)
- Numbers (and proportions) of staff position descriptions reviewed/revised to incorporate cultural competencies
- Numbers (and proportions) of your agency's workforce-related policies that have been reviewed/revised to incorporate cultural inclusiveness related content
- The existence or absence of explicit policy and procedures relating to racism in the workplace
- The number of notifications/complaints relating to racism within your agency and the outcomes of those notifications/complaints
- The number Aboriginal-identified positions that require creation and your agency's status in relation to filling those positions
- The number of staff positions in your workforce that need to be established to meet the specific cultural, gender, or other ethno-specific requirements of your clients and your agency's status in relation to the establishment and staffing of those positions
- Details of your agency's human resources information management system's capacity to report and monitor the current status of the workforce in terms of demography, training and induction needs and training provided, Aboriginal staff numbers etc.

14 Building culturally inclusive programs and services

Agency programs and services should be designed and operated in culturally inclusive and competent ways so that external barriers to access by Aboriginal clients are reduced or eliminated.

The Cultural Inclusion Checklist will assist agencies to incorporate the needs and interests of Aboriginal people in the development of all new policies, programs and initiatives by assisting staff to produce a statement of how any new initiative will impact on Aboriginal communities. Ideally (as in NSW Aboriginal Health Impact Statement) this statement is to be used to accompany all proposals submitted to agency executive management for approval. The checklist represents a declaration that appropriate Aboriginal consultation and or negotiation processes have taken place and that the service needs and interests of Aboriginal people have been properly considered in the proposed policy.

The checklist will help ensure that the diverse needs of Aboriginal people are respected and supported. Acknowledging and supporting the needs of Aboriginal people will contribute to achieving departmental reconciliation objectives, departmental strategic directions and ultimately better opportunities for Aboriginal people.



Step 1

Identify the relevant findings of the cultural competency self-assessment that relate to your agency's programs and services (see above)

It is recommended that the information in Step 2 below supplement the data and findings from the self-assessment process. It is possible that some of the items listed in the checklist may not have been identified as 'issues' or 'challenges' in the cultural competency self-assessment.

Step 2

Apply the Cultural Inclusion Checklist (CIC) to existing programs and services

The CIC methodology is a useful framework for evaluating existing programs and services as well as those that may be proposed for the future. It is recommended that each existing program and service be assessed against the broad categories of the checklist. The format is shown in the Companion Document Number Three.

Step 3

Consolidate the findings of Steps 1 and 2 into an action plan for culturally competent program and service development

The findings from the organisational cultural competency self-assessment and from the application of the CIC should be consolidated. The consolidated findings should be translated into an action plan that includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- An ongoing Aboriginal stakeholder consultation strategy
- A process that ensures that Aboriginal service needs are incorporated into the design, management and practice of service delivery
- An evaluation strategy that adequately incorporates Aboriginal stakeholder interests.

Step 4

New program and service initiatives should implement the CIC methodology

It is recommended that all new or modified initiatives should adopt the CIC approach.

Step 5

Devise and implement accountability and reporting measures that meet the needs of all stakeholder groups

Although program and services planning and design may have varying degrees of participation by Aboriginal stakeholders, the nature and extent of accountability and reporting to those stakeholders is less satisfactory.

Accountability and reporting processes in a culturally inclusive organisation should aim to include culturally appropriate methods for ensuring that Aboriginal stakeholders are informed about programs and services. Aboriginal people seek accountability of service delivery equally from service providers and Aboriginal specific units in the public sector.

14.1 Aboriginal service units

The framework aims to ensure that Aboriginal service units particularly in the sector be used in the most effective ways for providing services to Aboriginal clients. The objective is that these units should not be inappropriately used by public sector services as a referral destination when the client's needs could be met through the mainstream service. Client choice however, must be respected.

Acknowledgement and development of respectful and supportive partnerships with both Aboriginal public sector and community agencies are imperative to successful outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.



These units are a valuable and a key resource and possess in-depth knowledge about local communities. These units must be included in every policy, planning and service delivery aspect if your agency is committed to cultural inclusiveness. It is imperative that any advice and guidance provided by these units are respected and implemented.

14.2 Outcomes and indicators

As with the workforce section – 12. A Culturally Inclusive Workforce, a wide range of possible process and outcome indicators is possible. Recommended indicators include the following. Annual reporting of:

- Program and service-related specific actions arising from your agency's cultural competency self-assessment findings that have been:
 - Resolved
 - Remain unresolved (and why)
- The number (and proportions) of existing programs and services that have been reviewed or re-appraised against the CIC criteria
- The number (and proportions) of new programs and services that have been assessed against the CIC criteria
- The number of programs and services in your agency that been evaluated or reviewed during the year. Describe the nature and extent of participation by Aboriginal stakeholders in the evaluation processes
- The number of programs and services where your agency has provided an appropriately written report and/or presentations to Aboriginal stakeholders
- Describe the nature and extent of your agency's review or appraisal of how any separate Aboriginal service units/departments are used within your agency. Comment specifically on client referral protocols, mentoring and workforce support of Aboriginal staff within those units and resource adequacy of the units – eg, are identified funds being directed to the units? etc.

15 Working with other agencies

The framework aims to ensure that inter-agency service delivery to Aboriginal clients is provided in a culturally inclusive way.

A major area of potential risk to the cultural inclusiveness of service delivery to Aboriginal clients is the interface between your agency and others providing services to the same clients.

Step 1

Identify the relevant findings of the cultural competency self-assessment that relate to your agency's interaction with external agencies

It is recommended that the information in Step 2 below (and through the CIC checklist process) supplement the data and findings from the self-assessment process. It is possible that some of the items listed in the checklist may not have been identified as 'issues' or 'challenges' in the cultural competency self-assessment.

Step 2

Conduct a systematic review of your agency's business relationship with other agencies

The following checklist of items is not exhaustive and should be considered as a starting point.

- What kind of formal or informal arrangements does your agency have with other service providers? Are your joint or integrated programs covered by:
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?
 - A service agreement?
 - How specific is the service agreement?
- Are staff in the other agency required to have the same competencies (especially cultural competencies) as staff within your agency?
 - If not, what risks arise?
 - How will you address these?



- To what extent do the relevant agencies use shared policies, protocols and practices?
 - Identify any policy and practice conflicts
 - What is the likely impact on client outcomes?
 - How can you address any identified policy and practice conflicts?
 - What potential is there to develop a joint agency approach to resolving any difficulties?
- How adequate are the client referral protocols in use by the relevant agencies?
 - Do all agencies use common data items, assessment tools and cultural protocols during client assessment etc?
 - What mechanisms can you suggest to ensure that referral processes are culturally competent?
- To what extent do the relevant agencies undertake joint service planning, joint staff training, inter-agency staff secondment/rotation etc?
- Do the agencies have a common vision and approach to the cultural dimensions of their business?
- What mechanisms are in place to address difficult inter-agency relations? For example, how do the agencies address:
 - Inappropriate referrals?
 - Inappropriate staff practices (eg racism policy).
- Number of informal (or absence of) agreements between your agency and other agencies where common clients are involved. Comment on the adequacy and risks to your agency arising from an absence of any formal arrangements
- Describe the nature and extent of any jointly developed client-related protocols currently used (eg referral, joint service delivery etc) and how these protocols add to the cultural inclusiveness of service delivery to Aboriginal clients. Comment on the adequacy, gaps, weaknesses if any and how your agency proposes to address these
- Describe the nature and extent of any joint agency staff training, staff development, staff rotation, staff sharing etc where cultural inclusiveness is explicitly included in these joint agency arrangements. Comment on the adequacy, gaps, weaknesses if any and how your agency proposes to address these
- Describe the processes that your agency and other agencies have in place to resolve issues arising from inadequate cultural sensitivity or inclusiveness. Comment on the adequacy, gaps, weaknesses if any and how your agency proposes to address these
- Describe the processes that your agency and other agencies have in place to measure client experiences of any joint services provided, inter-agency referrals etc. Is there an inter-agency approach to the measurement of client experiences? Comment on the adequacy, gaps, weaknesses if any and how your agency proposes to address these.

15.1 Outcomes and indicators

It is recommended in annual reporting that the indicators include the following:

- Inter-agency related specific actions arising from your agency's cultural competency self-assessment findings that have been:
 - Resolved
 - Remain unresolved (and why)
- Number of formal agreements (MOU, service agreements etc) between your agency and other agencies. Comment on the nature and extent of explicit reference to cultural inclusivity of staff, programs etc in any such agreements.



16 Culturally inclusive governance

It is recommended that a culturally inclusive organisation must aim to include Aboriginal representation and/or consultation processes in its governance processes.

Step 1

Identify the relevant findings of the cultural competency self-assessment that relate to your agency's approach to culturally inclusive governance

It is recommended that the information in Step 2 below (together with the CIC checklist) supplement the data and findings from the self-assessment process. It is possible that some of the items listed in the checklist may not have been identified as 'issues' or 'challenges' in the cultural competency self-assessment.

Step 2

What is your model of governance and how can it accommodate Aboriginal input?

Depending on your agency's model of governance, the process for inclusion of Aboriginal voices may differ somewhat. Aboriginal interests may be represented in agency governance through direct representation on the senior management group, or indirectly through other mechanisms such as the appointment of an Aboriginal Advisory Group to provide input to the governing body.

If the governing body includes direct Aboriginal representation, the following issues should be addressed:

- How will the organisation choose⁷ an individual Aboriginal for inclusion on the governing body?
- A variety of approaches are possible, including seeking input from a range of Aboriginal communities. The requirements of the role need to be clearly defined and articulated in advance
- The governing body needs a clearly understood policy relating to how inherent conflicts of interest are managed. For example, an Aboriginal governing body member may represent both a particular constituency (ie the Aboriginal community), as well as the broader constituency of the agency
- Governing body members require support and training.

Step 3

What is your agency's strategy for the governing body to provide feedback to the Aboriginal community?

Direct Aboriginal representation on the agency governing body creates a direct link between the agency and the Aboriginal community. Nevertheless, the agency may elect to develop a formal mechanism and associated protocols for reporting to the Aboriginal community. In doing so, the agency is demonstrating that it is formally respectful of the Aboriginal communities serviced by the agency.

16.1 Outcomes and Indicators

Some suggested indicators include the following. Annual reporting of:

- Governance-related specific actions arising from your agency's cultural competency self-assessment findings that have been:
 - Resolved
 - Remain unresolved (and why)
- Describe your agency's model for including Aboriginal interests in the broader governance of the agency. Is this model appropriate for the cultural inclusiveness ethos that your agency has embraced? If there are deficiencies, gaps, or other issues, please comment on these and describe the process by which these issues will be addressed
- Describe the nature and extent of support provided to Aboriginal governing body members
- If there are deficiencies, gaps, or other issues, please comment on these and describe the process by which these issues will be addressed
- Describe the processes by which your agency's governing body formally and explicitly reports back to and informs its Aboriginal constituency. If there are deficiencies, gaps, or other issues, please comment on these and describe the process by which these issues will be addressed.

⁷ The same considerations apply to the selection of Aboriginal Advisory Committees or similar.



17 Recommended reporting framework

The aim of the cultural inclusive reporting framework is to assist agencies to **monitor ongoing performance**. This monitoring in turn will assist agencies to plan for continuous improvement in its cultural inclusion practice.

The outputs of agency reporting will also assist the South Australian Government in measuring how culturally inclusive practice is contributing to South Australia's Strategic Plan generally and more specifically to more equitable outcomes for Aboriginal peoples of this State.

Step 1

Identify the relevant findings of the cultural competency self-assessment that relate to your agency's approach to ongoing planning and performance reporting

It is recommended that the information in Step 2 below (together with the CIC checklist) supplement the data and findings from the self-assessment process. It is possible that some of the items listed in the checklist may not have been identified as 'issues' or 'challenges' in the cultural competency self-assessment.

Step 2

Produce and publish a consolidated annual report of the outcomes and indicators suggested in the preceding sections of this framework

It is recommended that the consolidated annual report of the agency's cultural inclusiveness be a public document that is prepared in two forms:

- A formal report that may include statistical and other relevant data
- A plain language report suitable for broader public and Aboriginal community release.

Step 3

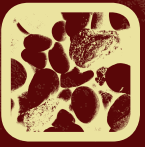
Produce a whole-of-agency analysis of the agency's contribution to the South Australia's Strategic Plan through its approach to cultural inclusiveness

It is recommended that a common reporting framework should be developed over time. Such an approach will assist the development of a comparative performance assessment framework that would allow for scrutiny of relative performance of agencies and portfolios (when aggregated upwards).

Step 4

Develop an annual plan that describes your agency's strategy for the following twelve months in terms of embedding culturally inclusive practice in your agency

This annual plan will be initially driven mainly by the findings of the first agency cultural competency self-assessment.



further information



18 Appendix A – questions

Why is there a need for the framework?

The aim of the cultural inclusion framework is to introduce measures in government that eliminate some of the barriers faced by Aboriginal people in accessing services. A major issue in the daily life of many Aboriginal people is being able to access essential government services. The evidence for this is overwhelming and is contained in numerous documented sources.

Don't we have enough 'out there' already?

It is acknowledged that some agencies have made direct efforts towards improving service delivery to Aboriginal people. However, there is a lack of consistency within agencies and this inconsistency is also seen across the spectrum of government services.

Why does this document focus on Aboriginal people?

The principles, tools and materials contained in this document are equally valid for all South Australians. The Cultural Inclusion Framework has been produced as an initiative of the South Australian Social Inclusion Board, which confirmed that there needed to be a shift in the way agencies do business if they are to improve the well being of Aboriginal peoples in South Australia. In addition to being an initiative of the Social Inclusion Board, there is widespread demand by agencies for guidance in how they can do business better for Aboriginal clients.

How will my daily work change?

In your daily work you will be better able to provide services in a culturally inclusive and respectful way. Cultural competence and inclusive practice will become an accountable part of your job. In addition to your own enhanced cultural competence, your employer will ensure that services planning and programs recognise the needs of Aboriginal peoples.

I think that we're doing OK, why do we need a framework?

Many agencies may feel that they are doing OK in providing services for Aboriginal clients. They may justifiably feel this way, however, current statistics show that Aboriginal peoples are continually under-represented in agencies' success statistics. The framework aims to assist agencies through providing guidance, checklists and pointers to useful resources for agencies to achieve better outcomes.

How can we be sure that the framework will make a difference?

The core elements of the framework should lead to improved access to services and more effective service delivery. The evidence for the core components of the Cultural Inclusion Framework is sound. The core components of the framework focus on workforce competency, services planning, culturally appropriate service design and delivery methods, inter-agency service delivery with joint protocols, improved accountability and inclusive governance arrangements.



19 Appendix B – useful resources and websites

Aboriginal websites and information

Provided by Cheryl Axleby and Dennis C. Rigney, Aboriginal Consultancy Unit, Office of Public Employment.

These links have been selected to assist in the further development of knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal people.

* **DAARE website**

www.dosaa.sa.gov.au

* **Indigenous profile information**

EMBED Package

* **Indigenous links**

<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/sp/spindigenous.htm#government>

* **Social Justice website**
– Bringing them home report & stories...Native Title...

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/stolen_children/index.html

* **General history and information**
– Adnyamathanha website

<http://www.wilderness.com.au/Thinkquest/adnyamathanha/text/Perspectives.html>

* **Aboriginal health**

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/ihw/hwaatsip03/>

* **Rebutting the myths**

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/special/rsjproject/rsjlibrary/parliamentary/rebutting/index.html>

* **Human rights website**

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/info_sheet.html

* **Reconciliation website**

<http://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

* **New Indigenous Affairs**

<http://www.indigenous.gov.au/>

* **SA Aboriginal Services**

<http://www.service.sa.gov.au/indigenous.asp>

* **Charter of Public Service in Culturally Diverse Society**

http://www.immi.gov.au/multicultural/_inc/publications/charter/charter.htm

* **Indigenous protocols**
(Queensland document – but very informative about protocols etc.)

<http://www.indigenous.qld.gov.au/pdf/Protocols.pdf>

* **Cultural competency**

http://www.phs.utoronto.ca/cultural_competency/glossary_1.htm

* **Indigenous timeline**

<http://www.dreamtime.net.au/indigenous/timeline.cfm>



20 Appendix C – guide to companion documents and CD-Rom resource

The following companion documents support the current framework document:

- Companion Document Two



The Cultural Competency
Self-Assessment Instrument

- Companion Document Three



Cultural Inclusion Checklist

- A CD-Rom resource is available for agency use.

Content includes:

An introductory booklet (printed)

A Cultural Inclusion Framework for South Australia

- Document One – Guide to the Framework (PDF only)
- Document Two – Cultural Competency Self-Assessment Instrument (PDF & Word file)
- Document Three – Cultural Inclusion Checklist (PDF & Word file)

Agencies are encouraged to use this electronic resource to form the basis of their work towards cultural inclusion.



