

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Strategic Plan

The Commission respects the extraordinary knowledges and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise the unique impact laws had, and continue to have, on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

The Commission understands the importance of genuine and respectful engagement with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all of our work.

This Strategy is designed to guide the Commission in effective consultation and engagement with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

Our goal is to build genuine opportunities for Aboriginal




peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities to engage with the Commission and Queensland’s law reform process.

This Strategy supports the [QLRC Strategic Plan](#). That Plan guides the work of the Commission and includes the objective of encouraging and supporting all people across Queensland to contribute to law reform. This includes Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the original lore makers of this country.

Ensuring avenues and opportunities for effective engagement with all Queenslanders is a core part of the Commission’s role and underpins the efficacy and validity of our work.

This plan will be reviewed and updated every 2 years.

Objectives

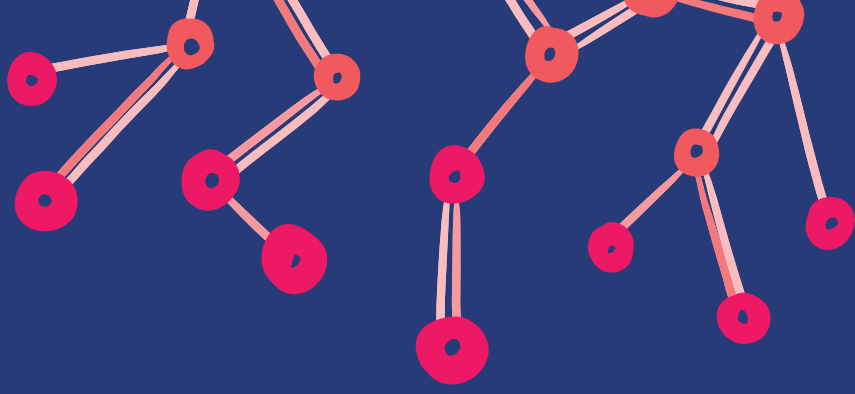
<p>Cultural capability</p> 	<p>The Commission is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increasing our understanding and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledges and rights increasing our understanding, and recognition of the contribution of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to the reform of Queensland laws and developing our cultural capability.
<p>Engagement</p> 	<p>The Commission is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> building and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, across Queensland engaging in ongoing and meaningful collaboration across all reviews ensuring our work includes listening to and consulting with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and engaging in culturally appropriate ways. <p>The Commission aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Queensland to engage in law reform reviews.
<p>Accountability and transparency</p> 	<p>The Commission is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewing our past practices to better understand our impact on the lives of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and reporting on this review <p>The Commission aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be transparent about how it uses information provided to the Commission by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, explain how this input has supported the Commission’s work and explain the recommendations made.



Activities

The Commission's achievements since April 2023 include:

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATE COMPLETED
<p>Initial consultations conducted with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples</p>	<p>Initial consultations have been conducted with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Central Queensland and in North-West Queensland for the Commission's mining lease objections review.</p> <p>These initial consultations have assisted in refining the Commission's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Engagement Commitment.</p>	<p>July and September 2023</p>
<p>Appointed an Aboriginal Commission member</p>	<p>Having an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Commission member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensures there is a First Nations voice contributing at the highest level of the Commission assists the Commission develop cultural capability and assists in building and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations. <p>Mr Joshua Creamer, a descendant of the Waanyi and Kalkadoon people, with connections to North-West Queensland and the Gulf of Carpentaria, was appointed in September 2023. He is a barrister and specialises in class actions, human rights and native title. Mr Creamer retired on 30 June 2024 to assume his position as Chair of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry.</p> <p>On 1 July 2024, Ms Avelina Tarrago, a Wangkamahdla woman from central-west Queensland, commenced as a Commission member. Ms Tarrago is a barrister with a practice focused on inquests and inquiries, health, regulatory and administrative law jurisdictions. Ms Tarrago previously had a 17 year career in the public service as a Government Legal Officer for the Coroners Court of Queensland, Office of the Health Ombudsman and Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. In 2014, Ms Tarrago completed an Indigenous Fellowship with the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights. In 2023, she was also appointed to the Board of Legal Aid Queensland.</p>	<p>October 2023</p>
<p>Created the Commission's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Engagement Commitment</p>	<p>This document explains the Commission's commitment to culturally safe consultation. See annexure 1.</p>	<p>October 2023</p>
<p>Cultural agility training</p>	<p>The Chair and all Commission Secretariat staff completed a cultural agility program – 'Building on the strength of our stories' delivered by the Department of Resources.</p> <p>'Building on the strengths of our stories' aligns with the Queensland Government's Path to Treaty commitment 'Truth Telling' and further strengthens our responsibility to reframe our relationship with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>Mr Joshua Creamer conducted a one-hour cultural training session for Commission members and Secretariat staff.</p>	<p>June 2023, and November 2023</p> <p>3 November 2023</p>
<p>Consultation Paper 2 (mining team) with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus</p>	<p>The mining lease objections review team published a consultation paper with a particular focus on issues from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective.</p>	<p>July 2024</p>
<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities consultations</p>	<p>The Commission traveled to the North-West Minerals Province, North-East Minerals Province and Central Queensland to hear from Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, for both the mining lease objections and criminal defences reviews.</p>	<p>August 2024</p>



We commit to doing the following:

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	DATE COMPLETED
Establish the Commission's Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples Reference Group	The advisory group will be comprised of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples from the legal profession and members of the judiciary. The Group will provide strategic guidance to the Commission.	First meeting will be scheduled in Q3 2024
Accessibility	The Commission will publish accompanying documents to the consultation paper for the criminal defences review, providing accessible information.	October 2024
Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples representation	The Commission will invite Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to speak at, and participate in, external events. The Commission invited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avelina Tarrago, a Wangkamadla woman from Central-West Queensland, to speak at the launch of the mining lease objections review (July 2023) • Melia Benn, a Mamu and Gunggandji woman, to speak at the launch of the criminal defences review (February 2024). • Avelina and Melia are the only two Aboriginal women barristers practicing at the Queensland Bar. 	Ongoing

Annexure – [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities engagement commitment](#)

