



ARMY INDIGENOUS SUPPLEMENT

to the Defence Indigenous Handbook



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this Supplement might contain images or content referring to deceased persons. It might also contain words or descriptions that are culturally sensitive. The term Indigenous is occasionally used in this Supplement to refer to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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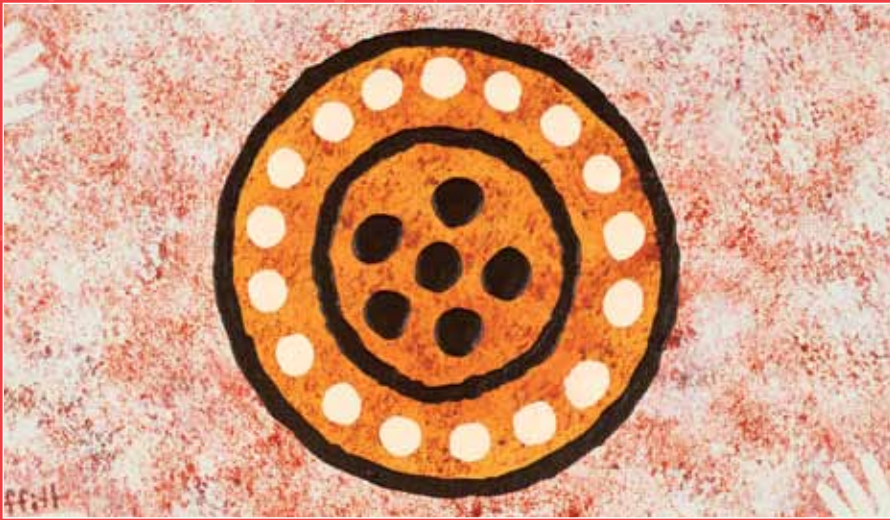
Defence Indigenous Handbook Army Supplement

Foreword

This Army Supplement to the Defence Indigenous Handbook provides commanders with cultural information and specific guidance on how to incorporate Indigenous protocols into Army procedures. It provides additional guidance for Army commanders to consider in the management of cultural requests by Army's Indigenous members. It also aims to close the knowledge gap between commanders and our Indigenous soldiers through the promotion of Army's Indigenous initiatives.

This Army Supplement is to be read in conjunction with the Defence Indigenous Handbook which provides detailed explanations of Indigenous protocols, customs and traditions.

Commanders at all levels have a responsibility to understand the personal and cultural requirements of their personnel. Through greater understanding of the customs and traditions of our Indigenous peoples, Army aims to instil a deep respect and awareness of the cultural needs of those soldiers.



Artwork

The artworks used in this Supplement are original pieces painted by Aboriginal soldier WO2 Darren Moffitt. The images represent groups or organisations. In each image the main feature is the circle in concentric layers - which symbolises 'unity' and the different 'levels' of a group or organisation. The colours used in this artwork are earth rich tones representative of 'country'.

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Message from Chief of Army

Our Indigenous personnel are an important part of our organisation. Their contribution assists our workforce to grow and develop, enhancing our capability.

Indigenous soldiers bring unique skills to Army including experience in dealing with cross-cultural issues and a sense of belonging that melds strongly with Army's culture and core values. Army depends on its ability to recruit, employ and retain soldiers from across the Australian population. Improving Army's Indigenous recruitment and retention effort will assist us in moving towards a more inclusive organisation.

Many Indigenous soldiers have a spiritual connection with the land. This connection provides Army with unsurpassed access to geographical, geological and botanical information that can affect and shape our operations at home. Meanwhile, in complex

environments overseas, improved awareness of Indigenous Australian culture will assist Army's capability to understand other cultures, ethnicities and religions which is essential to support effective engagement with local populations.

We must all work to enhance Army's capability through greater engagement with our Indigenous members and the wider Indigenous community.

I strongly encourage commanders at all levels to use this Supplement when managing Indigenous Affairs. By adopting the protocols in this Supplement we will take significant steps towards building Army's reputation as an integrated workplace now and into the future.

D.L. MORRISON, AO

Lieutenant General
Chief of Army

Army's Indigenous Australians

Indigenous Australians have a long and proud history of serving their country and Army. From the employment of Aboriginal trackers during the Boer War to current operations, our Indigenous soldiers and officers have made significant contributions to Army in peace and at war.

Army recognises that the diversity of our people enhances our capability. The recruitment and retention of Australia's first people, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, play an important part in *Closing the Gap*, a Commonwealth Whole of Government initiative.



Army Indigenous Strategy

The Army Indigenous Strategy (AIS) was first released in November 2008, and is refreshed biennially. The current AIS is authorised under CA Directive 02/12 (27 February 2012). The AIS reflects Army's commitment to the Whole of Government approach to Closing the Gap between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians. Army is fully committed to improving Indigenous participation rates as part of Army's broader plan to enhance Army capability.

The AIS focuses on five key goals:

- Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation rates
- Improve Army capability
- Contribute to the development of Indigenous communities

- Be more culturally aware
- Enhance Army reputation as an integrated employer of choice

Army has a dedicated AIS Desk Officer who is responsible to the Chief of Army for the implementation and management of the AIS. The AIS Desk Officer duties are held by SO2 Workforce Strategy - Army in Personnel Branch, Army Headquarters. Contact details are available on the Army Indigenous Strategy Intranet site.

Formation Indigenous Liaison Officer Network

Headquarters Forces Command (HQ FORCOMD) has established Formation Indigenous Liaison Officers (FILO) across the Command in Formation Headquarters and isolated units. These individuals form part of a national liaison officer network and allow commanders to leverage cultural information, local Indigenous protocol and Community networks.

The duties of the FILO include championing the goals of the AIS; building relationships with local Indigenous communities and providing advice to commanders on Indigenous matters in the local area. They provide a single point of contact for local Indigenous communities. This ensures that support requests are managed appropriately and Indigenous communities are able to engage effectively with Army Units.



The FILO Network is an initiative of the 2012 AIS. The FILOs have been implemented as extra regimental appointments within Formation Headquarters; however, the positions may be executed by ARES members or as a permanent position depending on demand and availability. Note that permanent unit positions are yet to be established for this purpose. Cultural competency training will be available for FILOs in 2013.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Culture

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are distinct from each other, both ethnically and culturally. While there are some similarities between the cultural protocols of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, it is important to remember that the history, culture and traditions of each are unique and differ across the country.

The protocols described in the Defence Indigenous Handbook and the Army Supplement are intended as a guide only and do not reflect the total diversity amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It is essential that Commanders develop a relationship with the local Indigenous community organisation, through the local FILO, to verify correct protocols and procedures for the area.

More than 250 languages existed across Australia at the time of colonisation. Although many of these languages are no longer spoken fluently, many Indigenous people continue to identify with their ancestral language groups and the “Country” (traditional areas of the language group) that they originate from. Even if Indigenous people live outside their community they may still use these terms to identify their origins.

The Stolen Generation are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were removed as children from their families, through official government policy from 1909 to mid-1970s. Even today, there are many Stolen Generation people who do not know where they originate from, or who their relatives are. It is important to acknowledge that for many people the affect of removal policies are ongoing and have impacts on their daily lives. In addition, the ongoing anxiety resulting from removal and assimilation polices have left many Aboriginal people feeling suspicious of all levels of Government and, in some cases, out of touch with their cultural heritage.



Understanding, Respecting and Incorporating Indigenous Cultural Protocols

Observing Indigenous cultural protocols demonstrates respect for the cultural traditions, history and diversity of a community. An understanding of Indigenous terminology and protocols will enable commanders to communicate respectfully with the local Indigenous Community and provide their unit with a greater knowledge of the local Indigenous landscape.



Traditional Custodians of the Land

The term Traditional Custodians is used to describe the original identified Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander group who inhabited an area of land at the time of European colonisation. In the current context the term refers to the descendents of the identified original inhabitants of the area, having a continuing spiritual and cultural connection to the land and waters of their ancestors.

Indigenous Elders

Elders are members of the community who have been through various levels of initiation. They are the custodians of their people's traditional knowledge, history, kinship systems, cultural lore and customs. Elders provide guidance on all matters including the ceremonial and cultural obligations of their people. The term Elder does not always refer to men and women who are older. Relatively young people may be given the status of Elder. The recognition is connected to specific skills and knowledge that they may have which increase their status or position of respect in the community.

Acknowledgement protocols

Incorporating a "Welcome" or "Acknowledgement" protocol into official meetings and events recognises Indigenous Australians as the Traditional Custodians of the land. It promotes an awareness of the ongoing connection of Indigenous Australians to the country of their ancestors and is an important step in the reconciliation journey. A guideline for the conduct of these protocols is contained in the Defence Indigenous Handbook.



Welcome to Country

A Welcome to Country is a welcome speech performed by an Elder or an appropriate representative of the Traditional Custodians of the area. It can consist of a single speech, or it may include song, dance, ceremony or a combination of these activities. For large scale events such as Open Days, Freedom of the City, major sporting events etc, the provision of a Welcome to Country should be discussed with the local Indigenous Elders/Community group. The Elders will advise what format is appropriate and available to be performed at the event. It is important that event organisers allow enough time to discuss what form of Welcome to Country will be undertaken at an event and if any particular protocols or customs need to be observed by those in attendance with the Traditional Custodians of the land. If a local Indigenous representative is unable to attend, an Acknowledgement of Country should be delivered by the Master of Ceremonies.

Army commanders are encouraged to invite local Elders to provide a Welcome to Country at the start

of major events e.g. at the welcoming of guests to Army parades, Open Days, Unit events and major Army coordinated meetings where invited guests are attending. A suggested format and protocol is contained in the Defence Indigenous Handbook.

Acknowledgement of Country

It has become standard practice in many public sector agencies and private organisations to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which events are held. A very important aspect when performing the acknowledgment is that the gesture be genuine and that it not be overused at any one event.

Army commanders are encouraged to make an “Acknowledgement of Country” at the start of major events e.g. at the welcoming of guests to Army parades, meetings where invited guests are attending and at the commencement of a Unit’s Annual Mandatory Induction Training. A suggested format and protocol is contained in the Defence Indigenous Handbook.



Smoking Ceremony

Smoking ceremonies are conducted by Indigenous people with specialised cultural knowledge. The ceremony aims to cleanse the space in which the ceremony takes place and to ward off bad spirits. A Smoking Ceremony is most commonly used in the burial process to cleanse the burial site and to provide safe passage of the deceased spirit to the next world. Smoking Ceremonies can also be performed for the opening of a new building, graduations, special events and the commencement of activities for the New Year.

Smoking ceremonies are usually only performed at major events due to the significant nature of the ceremony. Commanders who wish to include Indigenous ceremony into major Army events are to seek advice from local Elders, through their FILO, on whether a smoking ceremony is culturally appropriate for the activity.





Fees for Service

Elders or Traditional Custodian groups may quote a nominal fee to cover costs for a ceremonial service. A 'Welcome to Country' that includes traditional dance and smoking ceremonies will generally involve a more substantial payment; however, this should be negotiated with the relevant group and factored into Unit or event expenditure when planning the activity. These fees recognise the intellectual property and time of the performers and support Elders and Traditional Custodian groups in carrying out work in the Community.



Other aspects of support to consider include:

- The provision of travel to and from the event. This may be required when the Indigenous group are requested from more rural and remote areas where transport is a major issue. In this instance consideration should be given to supplying appropriate transport, especially for Elders attending the event.
- The provision of healthy refreshments during rehearsal, the event and any post event activities.
- The public profile of the event and whether or not Indigenous Elders endorse advertisement of their support to the event.

Flags

The origin and relevance of both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags is contained in the Defence Indigenous Handbook. Army units are encouraged to fly the Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag with the Australian National Flag during NAIDOC Week (first week in July) as authorised by the VCDF Group.

Army Formations and Units are also encouraged to fly the Flags during National Reconciliation Week (27 May – 3 June), Unit events, or significant occasions that promote unity between the Unit/Army, and the local Indigenous Community. Army support to significant Indigenous Community activities that are apolitical and represent Army's involvement and dedication to Indigenous communities may also be celebrated on approval through the flying of the Flags at Unit level. An example would be a Construction



Squadron supporting the Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program.

Authority to fly the Flags for all Unit events must be requested from RSM Ceremonial - ADF (ADF Flag Marshal) using the Request Form, which can be found on the Army Indigenous Strategy Intranet site.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags will be available to Army units through MILIS under Block Scale 07/02, Issue 5, Flags and Associated Equipment - Ceremonial and Special Display Purposes.

Army Indigenous Strategy Steering Committee

The AIS Steering Committee was formed to monitor and review Army's progress against the Strategy. It is chaired by an independent Senior Army Officer and comprises representatives from Army Headquarters and Forces Command. The main body of the committee comprises six Army Indigenous members from the ARA and ARES, with a mix of ranks and genders. Our Indigenous members provide significant comment and advice on Indigenous initiatives outlined in the AIS.

Commanders are encouraged to promote active involvement by Indigenous personnel in the AIS Steering Committee; whether it is through comment on Army initiatives outlined in the AIS, or involvement in the Committee through future activities.

All Army personnel are encouraged to, and can provide direct input on the implementation of AIS initiatives through the AIS Steering Committee by contacting their local area FILO or the AIS Desk Officer.



Community Engagement

Commanders are encouraged to build strong relations with Indigenous communities through their FILOs in order to gain a mutual understanding and respect of local Indigenous Elders, their people, culture and protocols. By investing in relationships through the FILOs, commanders will be positioned to consider the integration of Indigenous cultural protocols and ceremonies in Unit general business and extraordinary activities, such as Unit Open Days.

FILOs and commanders are to note that initial contact; including introductions to Indigenous Elders and their community, may be established through the local council/government. Local governments will usually have established protocols and contacts within their local Indigenous communities, including Indigenous Elders and people of influence.



It is important to ensure that appropriate consultation, acknowledgement and support are provided to the relationship-building process. The local FILO will assist commanders in building these relationships and providing cultural advice. It is important for FILOs and commanders to maintain consistency in their contact with their local Indigenous communities in order to build trust and an ongoing relationship, noting that 'trust' in Indigenous cultural circles, is a value that is strongly embodied and not easily established without first gaining a mutual respect.

Regular community engagement by commanders will contribute to Army achieving the five goals outlined in the AIS through promoting Army as an employer of choice for Indigenous peoples, building solid core relationships, encouraging Indigenous participation and contributing to Army's capability through the employment of diverse leadership.



Army Regional Indigenous Network



The development of the Army Regional Indigenous Network (RIN) was directed as a priority task of the AIS 2012. The Army RIN builds on the success of the Defence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network (DATSIN) by providing an informal and fluid forum for Indigenous members to contact, mentor and support each other.



The aim of the Army RIN is to:

- Provide a source of information from Army HQ on activities, events, initiatives and progress against the AIS;
- Provide a forum for exchange of ideas and consultation with Indigenous members across Army; and
- To facilitate an informal, regionally-based networking and mentoring program where Indigenous soldiers can communicate socially, building strength in Army's Indigenous community.

A trial electronic forum has been launched on the Defence Alumni Network at www.dan.gov.au. All Indigenous Army members are encouraged to join by completing the following steps:

- Log into www.dan.gov.au
- Create an account with either your civilian or DRN email address.

- Click on 'Groups' and type in the search "Army Regional Indigenous Network".
- Request Admin to become a member of the group (Army RIN).
- The site administrator will review and accept your request ASAP.



Army Indigenous Lapel Pin



The Army Indigenous Lapel Pin was designed in 2011 to promote Army's commitment to Indigenous Australians and celebrate the long and proud history of Indigenous service in Army.

It represents Army's significant connection to its Indigenous soldiers and to the communities where Army units are located, especially the Regional Force Surveillance Units in Northern Australia. The Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag fly proudly 'under the Rising Sun'. The Rising Sun Badge is an iconic symbol of Army tradition and commitment to service.

The Army Indigenous Lapel Pin will be distributed to all Indigenous Army members who identify themselves to the Army RIN. Additional Lapel Pins may be presented to family and friends on request. Lapel Pins can be sourced through the AIS Desk Officer in DGPERS-A.

The Lapel Pin celebrates Army's support of its Indigenous members and confirms Army's continued commitment to improving opportunities for all Indigenous Australians.

The pins are issued for members to wear proudly on special Indigenous occasions and during Army events. Army members are authorised to wear the lapel pin on their uniform during NAIDOC Week. Members wishing to display the lapel pin on their uniform on other occasions may apply by drafting a minute through their Chain of Command for approval by DGPERS-A.

Self Identification

Identification of ethnic background across Army is generally poor, as more than 75 per cent of Army personnel have not provided details of their cultural background on PMKeyS. The category 'Choose not to give this information' is the default setting for ethnicity data; therefore many members are probably unaware that they have not provided accurate data in this PMKeyS field.

Declaring Indigenous heritage is voluntary; however, all Indigenous Army members are encouraged to consider self-identification. Accurate self-identification will highlight the truly diverse nature of Army and helps to:

- Collect accurate data for identifying trends in Indigenous recruitment and retention issues; and
- Provide greater opportunities to develop effective policy, programs, strategies and initiatives for Indigenous Defence members.

Army commanders are encouraged to promote all Unit personnel to input accurate cultural background data on PMKeyS by promulgating the following steps:

- Bring up PMKeyS Self-Service homepage
- Go to 'My Personal Details'
- Select 'Workplace Equity and Diversity'
- Select 'Ethnic Background'
- Go to 'Ethnic Group' and select the most appropriate category code from the list provided. If you are unsure, the 'Click here for assistance with your ethnic group' link is helpful in deciding the most appropriate category.

Units are encouraged to use the yearly audit and/or pre-exercise/deployment admin checks to monitor declaration of ethnicity and promote self-identification.

Indigenous Cultural Personnel Policy Considerations

Indigenous soldiers can often face work-life-balance challenges due to their unique cultural heritage. Extended Indigenous families can often place specific cultural obligations and demands on individual family members. These demands may relate specifically to culture and are difficult to define in personal entitlements.

With a greater knowledge of an Indigenous soldier's cultural and traditional family responsibilities, commanders are better able to prevent the emotional anxiety or frustration that can be evident in these soldiers

due to misunderstandings. While there is no specific policy guidance for cultural entitlements, commanders at all levels are to consider the use of normal personal leave entitlements and flexible work arrangements to enable Indigenous soldiers to meet cultural and family responsibilities. The FILO and padre network may assist in providing commanders with guidance on matters of cultural importance.

Commanders are encouraged to seek guidance from the Recommended Policy and Reading List:

Summary

Australian Indigenous culture is a complex environment of tradition, ceremony and history.

The AIS, Defence Indigenous Handbook and the Army Supplement have all been created to broaden the understanding of Indigenous Culture in Army. They

provide direction to ensure Army becomes a more diverse workforce through the recognition of the qualities, skills and capabilities that these cultures bring to the workforce, and strengthen our relationship with the Indigenous and wider Australian communities.

Recommended Policy and Reading List

Defence Indigenous Resources

Defence Reconciliation Action Plan (DRAP)

<http://intranet.defence.gov.au/people/sites/IndigenousAffairs/docs/DRAP2010-14.pdf>

Defence Indigenous Handbook -

For Commanders, Managers and Supervisors

<http://intranet.defence.gov.au/home/documents/data/DEFPUBS/DEFMISC/INDHANDBOOK/IndigenousHandbook.pdf>

CA Directive 02/12 - Army Indigenous Strategy

<http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/DWSA/docs/R10383841.pdf>

Defence Policy

PACMAN

Chapter 5 – Part 7 Division 2 – 1 - Compassionate Leave
Chapter 5 – Part 9 Division 1 – 1 - Short absence from Duty

DI(G) PERS 49-4 Flexible Work Arrangements

http://intranet.defence.gov.au/home/documents/DATA/ADFPUBS/DIG/gp49_04.pdf

The Guide to Religion and Belief in the Australian Defence Force

http://intranet.defence.gov.au/People/sites/Diversity/Docs/Guide_to_Religion_and_Belief_in_the_Australian_Defence_Force.pdf

The Decision-maker's handbook

<http://intranet.defence.gov.au/dsg/sites/DSGroupHumanResources/docs/Decision%20makers%20handbook.pdf>

Other Resources

Army Indigenous Community Internet Website

<http://www.army.gov.au/Who-we-are/Army-Indigenous-community>

Army Indigenous DRN Intranet Website

<http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/dwsa/comweb.asp?page=226081>

Defence Force Recruiting Indigenous Overview

<http://www.defencejobs.gov.au/indigenous/default.aspx>

