

Coopée



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Information

Contributions are sought for this newsletter. If you have an interesting article or information on an event or activity please contact:

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For more information about the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment please visit www.nt.gov.au/ocpe

Indigenous employment in OCPE

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) is continuing to implement the Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy (IECDS). As part of this process, the Office developed a working party to oversee the implementation phase. The role of the working party was to develop an IECDS implementation plan for OCPE.

Our aim is to keep the Strategy simple with actions that are achievable under six key areas. These are:

- OCPE as an "Employer of choice"
- Recruitment
- Retention and Career Development
- Data Management
- Cultural Security
- Reporting and Evaluation

Like most agencies we have struggled with developing meaningful strategies that would advance our commitment to having a workforce that is representative of the community.

However, some of the successful strategies that have been implemented throughout 2003/04 include:

- External consultants who are engaged by OCPE are invited to advance our Strategy by providing a skills transfer to our Indigenous staff.
- Targeted advertising - all

vacancies are distributed to a variety of Indigenous networks and media outlets

- The Office entering into a secondment arrangement with an Indigenous organisation for an Indigenous project officer for six months.
- A senior Indigenous employee represented on our Management Board
- The Office participating in career and expo days to promote the Office as an employer
- HR policies and practices reviewed to ensure they are culturally sensitive.
- Indigenous representation on working parties and committees to provide input into policy development and decision making.
- Study assistance, including HECS, being provided to Indigenous staff.

Some 28 per cent of the NT population is Indigenous. In terms of having a workforce representative of the community it serves, OCPE's current staffing profile is represented by 14 per cent Indigenous staff. This is a combination of cadets, apprentices and temporary and permanent staff.

So, as you can see we still have a long way to go but with commitment and enthusiasm from all employees we are confident that our targets will be achieved.

From strategy to reality!

Indigenous forums enter phase II

Katherine Forum

Following on from the highly successful Phase I of the Indigenous Employment Forum, which was held in Darwin on 3 & 4 September 2003, the commencement of Phase II in Katherine on 9 & 10 December 2003 provided a good indication of the level of interest from regional participants in the series of forums scheduled to be rolled out to Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and Nhulunbuy during 2004.

The Katherine forum attracted 75 participants, drawn from a range of Indigenous community groups and organisations, the three tiers of government and



interested individuals. The theme for the Katherine forum was 'Mentoring, other effective retention strategies, and the manager's role'.

Mr Robert Lee, Chair of the Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation, presented a Welcome to Country address at the pre-conference dinner function, which also included a traditional dance ceremony performed by Tommy Lewis and the Jarraluk Dancers from Wugularr and Gapuwiyak.

His Honour the Administrator of the NT, Mr Ted Egan, and Ms Evans attended the dinner function, which was hosted by Jason Bonson (DHCS) as Master of Ceremonies.

Richard Hayes (DEET, Alice Springs) chaired the forum, to which local Indigenous employees were invited to participate as facilitators for the small interactive group workshop sessions. From all accounts, they found the experience a valuable personal and professional development opportunity (even the very shy ones!).

Keynote speakers included Don Christophersen (DHCS), Annette Bailey (Wugularr Community), and Phil Hall (Burridj) and brief snapshot presentations provided forum participants with an overview of mentoring strategies from an individual, as well as an organisational perspective.





Tennant Creek Forum

The Tennant Creek forum was held at the Adult Education Training Centre on 25 & 26 February.

The theme was 'Creating role models: developing partnerships that work.' With 75 participants attending from as far away as Borrooloola, this third forum in the series was successful with positive feedback indicating that important benchmarks were established, particularly relating to the small group workshop sessions, where the use of 'trigger papers' proved useful in encouraging discussion.

A pre-conference dinner function was held at Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre with a Welcome to Country address provided by Mr Michael Jones. Following this was a special presentation by Mr Joe Carter on behalf of the Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation. Mr Carter talked about Julalikari's contribution to various Indigenous programs targeting the social and economic development of Tennant Creek.

The cultural performance by Waramungu Pujali and Waramungu Yawula was a highlight of the evening and forum dinner guests were privileged to enjoy the inclusion of men and women elders of the community in the dancing and singing performance. Joe Fitz (Menzies School of Health Research) whose family are Traditional Owners of the Tennant Creek region was Master of Ceremonies at the dinner function.

Mr David Curtis, of Southern Barkly Aboriginal Corporation, chaired the forum and once again local Indigenous employees were invited to participate as facilitators for the small group workshop sessions. Several of these facilitators had never spoken in front of a group before, so this was a great personal achievement for them. Ongoing support from agencies for the release of Indigenous staff to assist as facilitators is very much appreciated.

Keynote speakers included Don Christophersen (DHCS), Janeen Bulsey (Southern Barkly Aboriginal Corporation), Burri Butler (Anyingingy Aboriginal Corporation Sport and Recreation) and Debbie Simpson (Tennant Creek High School). They provided forum participants with their own unique perspectives and personal insights into role models and partnerships, as did the brief snapshot presenters.

To date targets are being met to ensure the progression of quality outcomes for the Indigenous Employment Tool Kit.

The next forum is scheduled to be held in Alice Springs on 22 & 23 April, followed by Nhulunbuy on 28 & 29 June, and concluding in Darwin on 11 & 12 August 2004.



All twenty five participants on the Kigaruk Indigenous Men's Leadership Development Program have successfully completed the academic requirements to qualify them for a Diploma of Business (Frontline Management).

The concluding element of the program is the action learning component, which includes Group Project Presentations by six teams on 13 & 14 April and individual Personal Learning Discussions, scheduled for 13 & 15 April 2004. Graduation at Charles Darwin University is confirmed for Friday, 21 May 2004.

From the Regions

Scholarships for remote employees

As part of the Remote Workforce Development Strategy which was launched by the Employment, Education and Training Minister Syd Stirling in November 2003, the NT Government has established a Scholarship and Grants program for NT Public Sector employees living in remote areas of the Territory.

Scholarship Program

Under the Scholarship Program, funding has been made available to employees living and working in remote areas to participate in professional development activities, such as:

- Research on special projects relevant to employment
- Online and distance education learning
- Courses, training, workshops and amenity fees
- Travel & accommodation costs
- Text books

Grants Program

The Grants Program is designed to provide Government agencies with financial support to improve workforce development opportunities for their remote employees.

This new program is part of Government's commitment to improving the working and living conditions for staff and their families in remote and rural areas.

The selection process is through a panel of management. The panel is comprised of three members of the Remote Workforce Development Committee and one NT Trades and Labor Council Member.

Further information and application forms can be accessed via the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment website www.nt.gov.au/ocpe or by telephoning 8999 3757.

“Agencies will be able to provide financial incentives and assistance in the delivery of staff development programs and strategies for improved recruitment and retention of employees in remote localities,” Mr Stirling said. “If we are to improve outcomes in remote areas it is crucial that we strengthen the links between remote service delivery and workforce development”.

Students gain insight!

Crowne Plaza gives students a tour

Crowne Plaza Hotel Darwin hosted 16 students (10 Indigenous) for a three day tour of the business. Referred to as the Insight Program, students gained experience as an employee and guest throughout most areas of the hotel, under teacher supervision. The program also involved cross-cultural awareness training for Crowne Plaza staff.

Ms Jenny Da Silva from Kormilda College said, “The program complements Certificate I and II in hospitality that the students are studying and provides an excellent grounding for further training and employment prospects”.

The program is part of the Indigenous employment strategy for Intercontinental Hotels Group (parent company of Crowne Plaza Darwin) and is the result of a partnership between the Hotels Group, YouthWorxNT and Kormilda College.

Friday 9 July 2004 is Indigenous Employment Day - part of NAIDOC celebrations. Employers wishing to showcase their business to Indigenous people on this day can contact:

Mark Noonan
NT Chamber of Commerce Indigenous Adviser
Tel: 8936 3113
Email: indigenous@chambernt.com.au

Professional Development Group let's make a *difference!*



The NT branch of the International Public Administration Australia (IPAA) wants to add value to the professional development of public sector Indigenous employees.

John Carroll, President of IPAA (NT branch) is interested in establishing a regular network where Indigenous employees could come together for mutual support and professional development.

The first meeting of the Indigenous Professional Development Group was held in Darwin in March 2004. Indigenous employees attending were from a range of agencies.

Issues the group discussed included Indigenous employees needing access to professional development opportunities and for Indigenous leaders and role models to share their experiences. This was seen as important in providing support for Indigenous employees in their ongoing professional development.

The group also felt it was important to get Indigenous employees motivated to advance in the workforce and to move up the corporate ladder.

Questions on how to get Indigenous employees motivated and interested in participating in development opportunities to assist them in their career advancement were raised.

The group would like your ideas on motivational speakers who would be good to give an address to the group. The next meeting will be planned in the near future.

If you are interested in being involved with the next Indigenous Professional Development Group meeting, or if you would like to nominate a motivational speaker, please contact:

John Carroll
President, IPAA (NT)
Tel: 8999 5598
Email: john.carroll@nt.gov.au

Regional Area Consultative Forums

Over the next 3 months the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment (OCPE) will be visiting all the regions to meet with NTPS Indigenous employees to discuss key issues impacting on their recruitment, retention and career development.

Tentative dates for the regions have been set, with a visit to Katherine and Nhulunbuy in April and May, Alice Springs in June and Tennant Creek in August 2004.

If you are interested in attending a forum in your region, or to find out more, please contact:

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Capacity Building

Calling for new expressions of interest

In 2003 the Department of Chief Minister implemented the *Indigenous Policy Capacity Building Program*. The program offers six month policy work placements to interested Indigenous employees. Salary costs remain the responsibility of home agencies however, placements provide on-the-job training at no cost to home agencies.

Three Indigenous participants were selected in 2003: Luke Morcom, Katarina Skene and Shaelene Cubillo. Luke has been extended to work for a further 12 months in the Department [at the Department of Chief Minister's cost]. Katarina has also been extended pending the birth of her second child. Shaelene has been successful in obtaining a temporary promotion in her home agency. So, in terms of professional

development, the program has been a success. We are now advertising the second intake of participants for the program. Further information on the program is available on the Department of Chief Minister's website www.dcm.nt.gov.au Interested Indigenous employees can forward expressions of interest and a copy of their CV to:

Tina Lambert
HR Manager
Department of the Chief Minister
Tel: 8999 6080
Fax: 8999 7404
Email: tina.lambert@nt.gov.au

Expressions of interest close 16 April 2004.