

# KOORI INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

APRIL 2014



OFFICE of  
PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS  
VICTORIA

The OPP acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land. The OPP also acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

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Front cover image:

Copyright © This painting titled **Hunting Kangaroos** is reproduced with the permission of the artist, Mr Bradley Brown. Mr Brown is a GunaiKurnai man.

*“Kangaroos are prominent figures in Aboriginal culture and art; they were hunted for food, to craft bones into hunting tools and fur for clothing. ‘Hunting Kangaroos’ depicts a story about Aboriginal men making and using traditional tools to hunt and gather kangaroo for their community. The colours in the background represent the diverse landscape of their hunting grounds, the dots are the journey they took to find the kangaroo and the line work, the spears they carried. This painting shows the strength and ability of Aboriginal people and our connection to country.”*

— Bradley Brown

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# FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the OPP's Koori Inclusion Action Plan (KIAP).

The development of the KIAP has highlighted a number of ways the OPP will provide a more inclusive and accessible service to Koori people involved in criminal prosecutions.

Following the establishment of the County Koori Court in regional Victoria, the OPP began to focus on Koori issues. A County Koori Court Working Group was established ahead of the Court's rollout in metropolitan Melbourne. OPP advocates were specifically trained to appear in the court and OPP staff were offered Koori Cultural Awareness training.

The OPP KIAP addresses four key areas directed towards promoting Koori inclusion. But the plan's main focus is on data and service improvement and those action items are ultimately designed to help us create more culturally responsive services for the Koori community.

I am pleased that the OPP's KIAP identifies a number of actions that can be implemented to the benefit of the Koori population. The resulting actions detailed in this plan range from displaying the Aboriginal flag in our foyer to improving our data collection to ensure Koori victims and witnesses are identified.

The OPP KIAP will improve the understanding of Koori issues across the OPP and result in tangible improvements to how the OPP engages with the Koori population.

I look forward to promoting the KIAP within the OPP, and to seeing the actions implemented.

**Craig Hyland**  
**Solicitor for Public Prosecutions**

# ACTION AREA 1

# SYSTEMIC KOORI INCLUSION

How we will implement organisational change to create a shared responsibility for Koori outcomes.

What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
<p>Induction materials provided to new staff will include information on Koori initiatives relevant to the OPP, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ information on Magistrates' and County Koori Court processes</li> <li>■ relevant Director's policies</li> <li>■ Koori Cultural Awareness Training</li> <li>■ information that highlights the importance of collecting data on accused persons and witnesses who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</li> <li>■ the OPP KIAP.</li> </ul> <p>These resources will also be published on the staff intranet.</p>	<p>A package of materials, including information on Koori specific initiatives, is routinely provided to all new starters at the OPP and is available to all staff via the OPP intranet.</p> <p>These materials highlight the importance of collecting Koori data and its flow on consequences for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ensuring that Koori specific courts are considered as a possible avenue in appropriate cases</li> <li>■ the OPP's ability to appropriately support Koori witnesses, and</li> <li>■ the application of specific legislation e.g. section 3A of the <i>Bail Act 1977</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Human Resources Manager</p>	<p>1 July 2014</p>
<p>Create an inclusive and Koori friendly workplace.</p>	<p>Display the following in the ground floor foyer/witness conferencing area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Aboriginal flag</li> <li>■ Posters/brochures advertising Koori specific agencies available to witnesses and victims of crime.</li> </ul>	<p>Victims Strategy and Services (VSS) Manager</p>	<p>1 June 2014</p>

# ACTION AREA 2

# DATA AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

How we will make evidence-based decisions to create increasingly culturally responsive programs and services.

What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
<p>Implement better data collection systems to identify Koori victims and witnesses involved in prosecutions conducted by the OPP.</p> <p>Train staff on the importance of this data collection and how to properly record this data.</p>	<p>The new OPP case management system (OPPtic) will be capable of recording the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status of victims and witnesses.</p> <p>All staff trained on how to record this data as a part of OPPtic training.</p> <p>The recording process is simple to encourage compliance.</p>	<p>OPP Projects Team</p>	<p>At the time of OPPtic roll out in 2014</p>
<p>All witnesses who are referred to the OPP Victims Support Service (Witness Assistance Service [WAS]) will be asked whether they identify as a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island descent and this response is to be recorded in the case management database.</p>	<p>All referred Koori witnesses are recorded in the OPP case management database accordingly, supported appropriately by WAS support workers and, where appropriate, referred to other relevant support agencies.</p>	<p>OPP solicitors and VSS</p>	<p>At the time of OPPtic roll out in 2014</p>

What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
<p>Koori victims and witnesses to have access to WAS support workers who have completed Koori Cultural Awareness Training (KCAT).</p> <p>100 per cent of all WAS support staff to attend KCAT.</p> <p>KCAT training to be offered once a year by the OPP. WAS support staff to receive priority in enrolment for that training.</p> <p>In the interim, all new WAS staff will be encouraged to visit the Koori Heritage Trust in King Street while awaiting training.</p>	<p>All WAS support workers have completed KCAT and are capable of supporting Koori victims and witnesses in a culturally sensitive manner.</p> <p>Any new WAS support workers who join the OPP will be enrolled in the next KCAT. They will not be allocated as the support worker for Koori victims and witnesses until they have completed KCAT.</p> <p>If places in KCAT training are limited, priority is to be given to those support workers who service communities with large Koori populations (e.g. Mildura, Swan Hill, Latrobe Valley).</p> <p>All Koori victims and witnesses have access to WAS support workers who have completed KCAT.</p>	<p>VSS Manager and Training Manager</p>	<p>Annually</p>
<p>Implement better data collection systems to identify prosecutions involving Koori accused.</p> <p>Train staff on the importance of this data collection and how to properly record this data.</p>	<p>OPPtic will be capable of recording the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status of accused persons.</p> <p>All staff trained on how to record this data as a part of OPPtic training.</p> <p>The recording process is simple to encourage compliance.</p>	<p>OPP Projects Team</p>	<p>At the time of OPPtic roll out in 2014</p>

What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
<p>OPP solicitors to record the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status of an accused person in the OPPtic case management database.</p> <p>This information is to be obtained from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the accused's record of police interview</li> <li>■ the police informant</li> <li>■ the accused's legal representative, or</li> <li>■ via forms/checklists submitted for court hearings (e.g. Form 32).</li> </ul>	<p>OPP solicitors will routinely record in OPPtic whether an accused has identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.</p>	<p>OPP solicitors and Managers (at point of file allocation)</p>	<p>At the time of OPPtic roll out in 2014</p>
<p>All OPP solicitor advocates who appear in the County Koori Court must first complete KCAT.</p>	<p>All OPP solicitor advocates appearing in the County Koori Courts across Victoria have completed KCAT.</p>	<p>Advocacy/Training Manager</p>	<p>1 May 2014</p>
<p>Establish an internal OPP standing committee that meets regularly to discuss issues relating to the County Koori Court.</p>	<p>The OPP County Koori Court Working Group comprised of solicitors, advocates and WAS support workers will meet on a regular basis to discuss any issues arising from prosecutions in the County Koori Courts.</p>	<p>County Koori Court Working Group</p>	<p>1 May 2014</p>
<p>Develop a template report for prosecutors to complete when appearing in the County Koori Court.</p>	<p>All prosecutions in the County Koori Court will be the subject of a post-hearing report to be discussed at the Working Group meetings.</p> <p>Where issues with OPP or court processes are identified in the post-hearing report the Working Group will discuss ways to address these issues.</p>	<p>Advocacy LPS/ County Koori Court Working Group</p>	<p>1 June 2014</p>

# ACTION AREA 3

# KOORI EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

How we will support economic participation through employment.

What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
Engage with the Department of Justice's Koori Employment Team and learn how to best promote OPP employment opportunities to the Koori community.	The OPP HR team has established a partnership with the Koori Employment Team and is able to seek advice on aspects of Koori employment where necessary.	Human Resources Manager	1 May 2014
Collect information on the OPP Koori workforce.	All new starters will be asked whether they identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.	Human Resources Manager	1 May 2014
One HR recruitment officer to be trained in culturally appropriate recruitment and selection processes relevant to Koori applicants.	A HR recruitment officer nominated by the HR Manager will attend training directed towards culturally appropriate recruitment and implement this training as necessary. The HR recruitment officer will develop an understanding of the Koori community within Victoria and of key Koori organisations.	Human Resources Manager	31 December 2014
Include a positive statement in each job advertisement that the OPP is a culturally diverse employer and welcomes applications from applicants from multicultural backgrounds.	Each job advertisement includes a statement welcoming applicants from culturally diverse backgrounds.	Human Resources Manager	1 June 2014
Promote OPP policies and processes to staff, particularly those in relation to racism, bullying and harassment.	Policies relating to racism, bullying and harassment are available to all staff via the OPP intranet and promoted via an article in the bi-weekly OPP newsletter, 'Briefcase'.	Human Resources Manager	1 May 2014

# ACTION AREA 4

# COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

How we will increase Koori community knowledge of, and engagement with, justice services.

What will we do?	What will success look like?	Who will be responsible?	When will this be achieved?
Explore opportunities, both mutual and one-way, for staff to undertake secondments to Koori justice services and related organisations.	OPP staff and/or staff from other justice services or organisations will undertake a secondment to enhance their understanding of Koori justice issues and/or the OPP's core business.	Human Resources Manager/ Executive	1 December 2014
Ensure that OPP witnesses and victims publications are Koori friendly when they are next revised for publication.	All OPP witnesses and victims publications are Koori friendly.	Communications Officer	As and when the next publications are revised
Communicate with and provide support to the Koori Court Unit with respect to the operation of the County Koori Court in Melbourne and other Regional County Koori Courts.	Strong links have been established between the OPP and Koori Court Unit to assist with the day to day operations of the County Koori Courts, both in Melbourne and the Regions.	County Koori Court Working Group	1 May 2014
Increase engagement with the Koori community and key education and employment stakeholders.	Build partnerships with Tarwirri (Indigenous Law Students and Lawyers Association of Victoria) and the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service.	Human Resources Manager/VSS Manager	1 June 2014



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