

# WALK THE TALK

REFRAMING THE RELATIONSHIP AND  
TREATY READINESS PLAN 2023–26



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## Cover artwork by Luke Mallie

'Caring for Country' is representative of the vast and varying beauty of our Queensland landscapes. It depicts our beautiful green pastures, the robust and winding water ways which give life to our red and brown lands and feeds our ancient trees and rainforests. It also highlights our unique and pristine coastlines and our island homes.

'Caring for Country' encompasses the rich and ancient Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture here in Queensland.

Luke Mallie was born and raised in Brisbane and is of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent with ties to the Kuku Yalanji Nation in the Daintree north of Cairns in far north Queensland, and from Kubin Village on Moa Island in the Torres Strait Islands.

Luke completed a Bachelor of Fine Art (Painting) at the Queensland College of Art in Brisbane before moving to Mackay where he worked as a graphic designer, web developer, and TAFE lecturer. He also completed a Bachelor of Multimedia Studies at Central Queensland University to build upon his digital art skills.

Luke's artistic style is very contemporary and diverse, ranging from original paintings, graphic designs, illustrations and caricatures, working with a broad range of mediums. Luke's main inspirations for his work comes from his rich traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, his family and his tropical surroundings influence the beautiful colours that he uses. His art is also influenced by popular culture and ancient cultures throughout the world.

Luke's drive to create, stems from knowing his artwork can inspire and empower others to discover something amazing in their own lives and perform to their own full potential.

He is a national award-winning artist with the NAIDOC Poster Award in 2009 and the Art Lovers Australia Award in 2018.

## Introduction

The Department of Resources (the department) recognises our long history with First Nations Queenslanders, and with a renewed focus, have prioritised Path to Treaty. To start this important journey, all First Nations staff and executive and senior leaders were brought together. This approach created an opportunity to walk, talk and learn together, recognising that we need a foundation of understanding if we are to achieve true equality and reconciliation with Australia's First Peoples.

This approach drew on the ancient practice of storytelling, to engage participants on a journey of truth-telling, building a depth of understanding around cause and effect and how it shapes current day circumstances, our legislation, work systems and practices. This important step was a chance to challenge us to think beyond the rhetoric and move towards a true shared space of understanding and collaboration on what we need to do to move forward **together**.

## Purpose

The WALK THE TALK our Reframing the Relationship and Treaty Readiness Plan 2023–26 (the plan) was developed to deliver on our strategic priority for a reframed relationship with First Nations and non-Indigenous Queenslanders as we continue on our Path to Treaty.

As the lead agency for native title, land rights and mining business, the department's historical and current work practices have at times been lengthy and retraumatising for First Nations peoples.

## Our Vision

We will draw on the ancient wisdom of the world's oldest continuous culture, we will improve our governance systems and we will amplify First Nations voices to reframe our relationship with First Nations and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. In our collective commitment to healing, we recognise the department's role in past acts of dispossession and discriminatory legislation that have left an enduring impact of trauma, cultural and educational loss and economic disadvantages that First Nations peoples continue to experience today.

## Our Focus

We will build a greater understanding of connection to community and country for First Nations peoples, reckoning with our past and present shame through truth-telling and move towards a just, equitable and reconciled future. We will embed our commitment to First Nations self-determination, cultural safety, visible leadership, and accountability throughout the department.

We will:

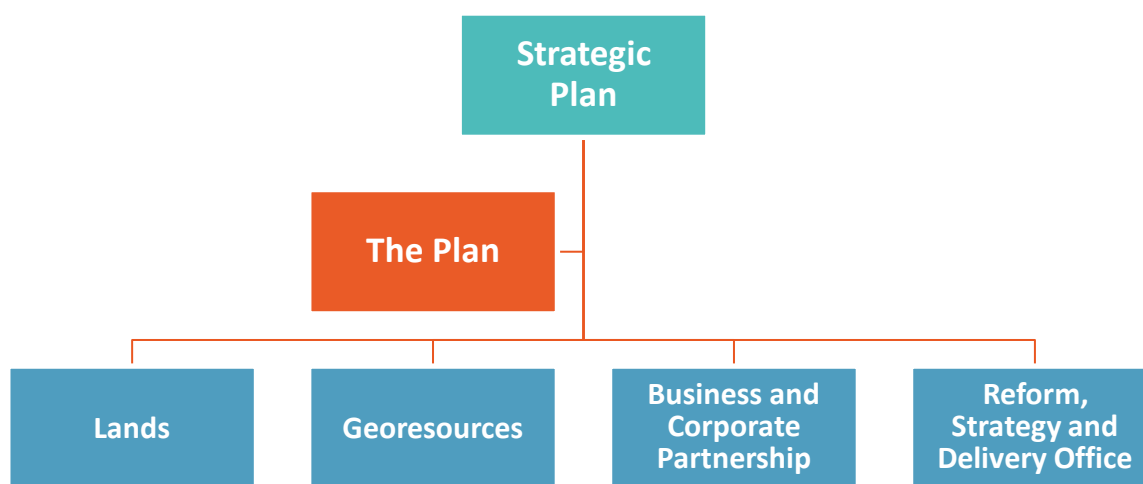
- prioritise employment, retention and development of First Nations peoples
- improve our legislation, process and systems to facilitate opportunities for economic benefits for First Nations peoples
- create culturally safe practices, systems and processes
- have meaningful engagement that respects community led decision making processes, timeframes, and cultural responsibilities.



## Developing the plan

The department recognises that good governance means having a strong First Nations voice to allow informed decision making. This understanding was integral to the creation of this plan. The department formed a cross-functional working group made up of senior leaders who are passionate advocates, and this group walked alongside our First Nations Network to guide and inform the development of the plan. Both the working group and our First Nations Network will play a key role in implementing the plan to ensure it remains culturally relevant, effective, and – most importantly – respectful.

**The Plan will sit alongside Divisional action plans, and more detailed actions and initiatives will be identified and captured in Business Unit plans over the next 12–18 months.**



The plan includes an implementation plan that sets out key activities and outcomes that each division is responsible for achieving over the three-year timeframe. As each division is unique it is expected that Divisional action plans will include additional tailored actions that align with our priorities (see page 8).

In line with whole of government reporting arrangements, each Division will be required to report annually against the KPIs in the plan.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation should also be undertaken to ensure actions continue to remain effective and relevant to achieving the vision of the plan.

The plan embeds the Statement of commitment to a reframed relationship into our work and consolidates the implementation of:

1. Queensland Government Path to Treaty and Treaty Readiness Action Plan
2. Queensland Government Reconciliation Action Plan
3. Queensland Government Closing the Gap Implementation Plan
4. Local Thriving Communities
5. Queensland Government Indigenous Procurement Policy (QIPP)
6. Queensland Government Many Voices: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Policy
7. Queensland Public Sector Act Reforms
8. Queensland Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework

## As we implement the plan, our approach will be underpinned by the following principles.

### SELF-DETERMINATION

Recognising First Nations peoples' right to have agency and the importance of including their perspectives, aspirations and lived experiences in our work.

Working with First Nations people to codesign and deliver policies, programs and services.

Ensuring First Nations people are employed through all levels of the department and on decision making boards.

### CULTURAL SAFETY

Ensuring cultural safety is ingrained into the department's policies and procedures.

Embedding culture and respect for identity

Fostering shared respect, shared meaning and shared knowledge.

Sharing power through equity in resources and leadership (decision making and governance), and resources including design, delivery and evaluation of our services.

### RESPECT AND HONOUR

Understanding we are unique as Australians who can share with and learn from the oldest continuous culture in the world.

Respecting that First Nations peoples are the Traditional Owners of Queensland, independent of native title determinations.

Acknowledging the significant contributions that First Nations peoples have made to Queensland – land, labour, wages and armed forces are just a few.

### CONNECTIONS

Recognising the cultural diversity in our communities – history, cultures, languages, country, societies and ways of knowing, being and doing.

Continuing to observe and uphold cultural values, including:

- ancestral connections, survival and cultural continuity
- the cultural authority of our elders and others
- First Nations knowledges and lived experiences
- place and time – past and present
- honourable relationships and reciprocity.

### CELEBRATE

Participating at key community events and activities e.g., NAIDOC, Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week, Mabo Day

Showcase Blak excellence including our historical departmental artifacts.

## **Our principles are complemented by the following concepts, commitments and ways of operating**

### **Culture and connection**

We recognise the diversity of First Nations peoples' history, cultures, languages, and ways of knowing, being and doing. We observe and uphold cultural values in the way we operate and share this widely with our colleagues. We ensure respect for:

- ancestral connections, survival and cultural continuity
- the cultural authority of our Elders and others
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and lived experience
- place and time – past and present
- honourable relationships and reciprocity – connection to country is intrinsic to our values.

### **Listening**

We prioritise deep and respectful listening to create understanding, reflection, healing and justice. Deep listening also means hearing the strength, resilience and continuity of First Nations peoples and sharing with our non-Indigenous colleagues.

### **Honesty and respect**

We value integrity and truth and healing. True healing comes from deep honesty. We recognise the dignity of all people and the resilience and survival of our First Nations peoples in the face of past injustices. We will continue to deliver the Building on the Strengths of Our Stories cultural agility program to create a safe forum to facilitate truth-telling, cultural safety and healing. Our work is predicated on human rights and First Nations peoples' rights to truth, justice, equality, reparation and self-determination. These rights are recognised in the Human Rights Act and international law including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which guides our work.

### **Sharing**

We welcome all peoples' stories and lived experiences and invite everyone – First Nations people and non-Indigenous Queenslanders – to be part of our journey toward truth, treaty and healing.

### **Our cultural ways**

We will observe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of decision making and governance through:

- respectful communication, and respect for each other's expertise, lived experience and opinions
- respecting self, our colleagues and community voice
- building honourable relationships
- our approachability
- honesty and openness
- consensus decision-making and, where possible, taking the time needed to work through issues
- finding common ground and holding ourselves accountable to these values and principles.

## Our priorities and objectives

### GOVERNANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION

- Proactively and genuinely embed First Nations perspectives in our governance structures, policy work and program design.
- Visible leadership and support.
- We uphold the principles of free, prior and informed consent.

### OUR PEOPLE

- Attract, retain and develop a First Nations workforce.

### HONOUR AND RESPECT

- Celebrate, connect to and learn from the world's oldest continuing culture, through language and ways of knowing, being and doing.

### CULTURAL CAPABILITY AND SAFETY

- Skilling our workforce to effectively employ, develop, support, and engage with First Nations people.
- Provide development to meet the future needs of treaty making and truth-telling e.g., negotiation, respectful engagement skills.

### STRUCTURAL REFORM

- Removing structural bias and eliminate racism in our policies, programs and legislation and all our transactions.
- Returning Indigenous reserve land to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies as Indigenous freehold.
- Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge and data sovereignty.
- Co-design and develop legislation in partnership with First Nations people.

### PROCUREMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Attract, retain and enable First Nations people to have their traditional connection to country recognised and gain benefit from their lands.
- First Nations involvement in procurement.
- Recognising First Nations peoples and languages through place naming.

### CONNECTIONS

- Work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the agency.
- Engage with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a coordinated and sustainable approach to reduce consultation fatigue.
- Commitment to collaborating with First Nation peoples at the outset of all process to enable genuine and ongoing networking.
- Promote respectful cultural engagement (internal and external).



## Our implementation plan

Our priorities	Our objectives	Key activities and outcomes	KPI
Overarching activity and initiative		Embed the principles and priorities of the plan into the Strategic Plan and Divisional action plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic plan continues to recognise the principles and priorities of the Plan.</li> <li>Divisional action plans are developed and implemented.</li> </ul>
<b>GOVERNANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION</b>  Driver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSA</li> <li>RAP</li> <li>Treaty Readiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively and genuinely embed First Nations perspectives in our governance structures, policy work, and program design.</li> <li>Visible leadership and support.</li> <li>We uphold the principles of free, prior and informed consent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the readability, language and interpretation of our content creates a positive customer experience for First Nations.</li> <li>Ensure Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations are included in the routine evaluation of policy and program initiatives.</li> <li>Include First Nations representation in governance structures and boards for equal decision making.</li> <li>Establish a Path to Treaty working group.</li> <li>Ensure First Nations contribution in decision making.</li> <li>Ensure the department's internal and external websites reflect the approach, principles and priorities of the plan.</li> </ul>	To be developed as part of Divisional action plans.
<b>OUR PEOPLE</b>  Driver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSA</li> <li>RAP</li> <li>Treaty Readiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract, retain and develop a First Nations workforce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver recruitment activities targeting First Nations.</li> <li>Employ First Nations employees at all levels including senior leadership roles.</li> <li>Monitor and support First Nations employee career progression, including into leadership and executive roles.</li> <li>Recruit for specific expertise in inclusive behaviours, cultural capability and treaty readiness.</li> <li>Identify opportunities to utilise the workforce management principles guide, and where possible, to 'identify' roles.</li> <li>Increase the use of the QG Career Pathways Service including participant access to cross-agency and external career development opportunities.</li> <li>Commit to ongoing sponsorship of Indigenous Pathways traineeships, cadetships and graduates.</li> <li>Ensure ongoing sponsorships of professional development opportunities for First Nations (PSM, AIM, UMelb micro certs and ANZSOG programs).</li> </ul>	To be developed as part of Divisional action plans.  PSA, RAP and Treaty Readiness KPIs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increase in First Nations people employed in the department at all levels.</li> <li>Access to the Queensland Governments Career Pathways Service, other recruitment channels and targeted strategies to increase employment.</li> <li>Include cultural safety in Professional Development Agreements.</li> <li>Implementation of IMPACT Mentoring program.</li> <li>Ongoing promotion of a pool of trained staff.</li> </ul>

Our priorities	Our objectives	Key activities and outcomes	KPI
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop a pool of trained First Nations staff to sit on recruitment panels and the Talent Manager Network.</li> <li>Provide application and interview support to First Nations staff and applicants.</li> <li>Develop, promote and use targeted marketing and online material targeting First Nations (as part of our employee value proposition).</li> <li>Support ongoing network meetings for First Nations staff and include partner agencies.</li> <li>Expand the IMPACT Mentoring Program to include sponsorship, coaching and career counselling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment panels reflect the community, including First Nations representatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CULTURAL CAPABILITY AND SAFETY</b></p> <p>Driver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSA</li> <li>RAP</li> <li>Treaty Readiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skilling our workforce to effectively employ, develop, support, and engage with First Nations people.</li> <li>Provide development to meet the future needs of treaty making and truth-telling for example, negotiation and respectful engagement skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit for inclusive behaviours, cultural capability and treaty readiness specific expertise.</li> <li>Use Indigenous Psychological Services (IPS) tools to better understand where we are on our cultural capability and safety journey.</li> <li>Ensure ongoing sponsorships of professional development opportunities for First Nations (PSM, AIM, UMelb micro certs and ANZSOG programs).</li> <li>Review internal awareness, policies, and complaints procedures to eliminate racism.</li> <li>Support ongoing truth telling through the delivery of Building on the Strengths of Our Stories cultural agility program and develop a specific Torres Strait Islander component.</li> <li>Continue 'Starting the Journey' online program.</li> <li>Continue to deliver cultural component in onboarding sessions.</li> <li>Ensure cultural capability and creating a culturally safe workplace is embedded in all of our policies and practices.</li> <li>Support the health, safety and wellbeing, and cultural safety of our First Nations employees.</li> <li>Ensure respectful cultural engagements with Elders, including recognition of Elders in the department.</li> <li>Develop and implement an internal and external First Nations Communication and Engagement Strategy, with dedicated resourcing.</li> <li>Co-develop and implement the Respectful Language Guide.</li> </ul>	To be developed as part of Divisional action plans.

Our <b>priorities</b>	Our objectives	Key activities and outcomes	KPI
<b>HONOUR AND RESPECT</b>  Driver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSA</li> <li>• RAP</li> <li>• Treaty Readiness</li> <li>• Many languages policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate, connect to and learn from the world's oldest continuing culture, through language and ways of knowing, being and doing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honouring our Resources artefacts in partnership with First Nations community (for example, Dunk Island Map).</li> <li>• Increase the provision of First Nations accessible data and records.</li> <li>• Create and celebrate Resources stories across the department.</li> <li>• Promote the department at key community activities and events.</li> <li>• Celebrate Blak excellence.</li> </ul>	To be developed as part of Divisional action plans.
<b>STRUCTURAL REFORM</b>  Driver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSA</li> <li>• RAP</li> <li>• Treaty Readiness</li> <li>• CtG</li> <li>• LTC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removing structural bias and eliminate racism in our policies, programs and legislation.</li> <li>• Returning Indigenous Reserve Land to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bodies as Indigenous Freehold.</li> <li>• Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge and data sovereignty.</li> <li>• Co-design and develop legislation in partnership with First Nations people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify legislative or policy barriers to treaty making.</li> <li>• Include Treaty goals in department reform programs.</li> <li>• Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' equal voice in policy work and program design for recognition of native title and negotiating Indigenous Land Use Agreements.</li> <li>• Recognise First Nations peoples and languages through place naming.</li> <li>• Contribute towards the development, understanding and awareness of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages.</li> <li>• Ensure First Nations perspectives are considered in media and marketing strategies.</li> <li>• Develop and implement an internal and external First Nations Communication and Engagement Strategy, with dedicated resourcing.</li> <li>• Continue to consult with all stakeholders on First Nations issues, including Path to Treaty readiness.</li> <li>• Continue to implement the actions committed to under the Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan that will achieve strong and genuine First Nations partnerships with Queensland's resources industry by 2050.</li> </ul>	To be developed as part of Divisional action plans.
<b>PROCUREMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>  Driver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSA</li> <li>• RAP</li> <li>• Treaty Readiness</li> <li>• CtG</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract, retain and enable First Nations people to have their traditional connection to country recognised and gain benefit from their lands.</li> <li>• First Nations involvement in procurement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the impact of government holding the title to Indigenous Reserve Land.</li> <li>• Investigate the return of Indigenous Reserve Land to Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders connected with these reserves.</li> <li>• Review funding programs to allow earlier engagement with First Nations peoples for land and vegetation management.</li> </ul>	To be developed as part of Divisional action plans.

Our <b>priorities</b>	Our objectives	Key activities and outcomes	KPI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LTC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising First Nations peoples and languages through place naming.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase procurement services to support First Nations owned businesses.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>CONNECTIONS</b></p> <p>Driver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSA</li> <li>RAP</li> <li>Treaty Readiness</li> <li>CtG</li> <li>LTC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the agency.</li> <li>Engage with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a coordinated and sustainable approach to reduce consultation fatigue.</li> <li>Commitment to collaborating with First Nation peoples at the outset of all process to enable genuine and ongoing networking.</li> <li>Promote respectful cultural engagement (internal and external).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership to seek resolution of native title matters by agreement and support native title claims processes and Indigenous Land Use Agreement negotiations that support the goals and aspirations of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.</li> <li>Review processes for engaging and consulting with First Nations (including identification, timing, and department representation).</li> <li>Elevate the importance of building strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that manage land – PBCs and RNTBCs.</li> <li>Review and refresh the guidelines for preparing and assessing connection material for Native Title claims in Queensland using a co-design approach with native title representative bodies and First Nations peoples.</li> </ul>	To be developed as part of Divisional action plans