



TSRA Cultural Policy Document

February 2011



Australian Government



TSRA
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The Torres Strait Regional Authority (**TSRA**) Cultural Policy has been developed to assist the organisation to achieve its vision statement:

Empowering our people, in our decision, in our culture, for our future

TSRA Development Plan 2009-2013

To realise this vision, the **TSRA** Cultural Policy aims to promote understanding of the cultures of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region including Bamaga and Seisia on the Northern Peninsular Area (NPA) and provide a guide for **TSRA** staff. The policy has been developed within a cultural policy framework, strengthened with guiding principles and will be used in conjunction with **TSRA** Cultural Policy Procedures and **TSRA** Cultural Protocols Guide for **TSRA** Staff.

Purpose

The purpose of the **TSRA** Cultural Policy is to;

- Improve understanding of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region and their culture; lifestyle, aspirations and perspectives;
- Improve **TSRA** relationships and partnerships with all the communities in the Torres Strait region to develop new and consistent standards in remote area service delivery as a step towards "Closing the Gap" of Indigenous Disadvantage and requirements of the National Integrated Service Strategy; and
- Provide a new benchmark/model for community engagement in the Torres Strait region.

TSRA Cultural Policy Framework

The **TSRA** Cultural Policy Framework is based on a holistic approach incorporating six elements;

People, Places, Practices, Protocols, Partnerships and Promotion. The core of the circle is 'Ailan' which represents the communities where **TSRA** provides services. The term 'Ailan' is used to refer to the physical island communities and is inclusive of Kaurareg people who live in these island communities and the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people who reside in the communities of Seisia and Bamaga on the NPA.



This framework uses generic and common terms for a consistent method of communication between the **TSRA** and Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region. There will always be different perspectives and requirements of both sides however the framework will assist to develop practical understanding and management of these relationships.

Guiding Principles

Ailan People

Recognise and respect Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region and their rights to make decisions about their lives and their future in line with their Customary Lore such as Ailan Kastom.

Ailan Places

Respect and acknowledge the Customary Lore and Native Title rights of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region in relation to 'place', 'ailan' and 'sea'.

Ailan Practices

All **TSRA** service delivery activities will respect and protect the cultural practices of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region.

Ailan Protocols

Encourage open and transparent communication methods between Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region with non-Indigenous people through appropriate cultural protocols.

Ailan Partnerships

Establish quality and realistic partnerships with each of the region's communities to meet the needs of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region.

Ailan Promotion

Promote the cultures and languages of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region in an appropriate way to promote respect and understanding of the people and the region.

These principles form the foundation of the **TSRA** Cultural Policy, the development of the **TSRA** Cultural Policy Procedures and the **TSRA** Cultural Protocols Guide for **TSRA** Staff. The **TSRA** is therefore committed to adhering to these principles when delivering its services to Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region and when representing the region to its partners, and stakeholders.

TSRA Commitment

Ailan People

Through strong governance and leadership, empower Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region to participate in all decisions that affect them, especially in the preservation, maintenance, and revitalisation of their culture.

Ailan Places

Respect and acknowledge the rights of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region to 'place', 'ailan' and 'sea', in all decisions, interactions and plans, and seek their permission, guidance and inclusion in these processes. Empower Ailan People to direct how **TSRA** or other agencies provide services on or for Ailan Places in cultural, natural and environmental management practices.

Ailan Practices

Ensure that Customary Lore is considered in all services, activities and interactions with Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region. Respect, protect, develop and incorporate cultural knowledge through **TSRA** programs and events. Dedicate ongoing support for Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region in cultural, artistic and heritage matters.

Ailan Protocols

Ensure that all communications and relationships developed between **TSRA** and the Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region, is done according to cultural protocols that are appropriate to the different Places, People and Practices.

Ailan Partnerships

Ensure that all partnerships developed are appropriate, respectful and beneficial to Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region. All partnerships are developed according to the principles of this policy and ensure that all protocols and procedures are communicated to potential and current partners.

Ailan Promotion

Support, market and promote the culture of Torres Strait Islanders, Kaurareg people and Aboriginal people in the Torres Strait region as the unique and accepted lifestyle and identity of the region. Respect the unique cultures and languages of each of the communities in the region when engaging in promotional activities.



The **TSRA** Vision

Ngalpun yangu kaaba woeydhay, a ngalpun muruygaw
danalagan mabaygal kunakan palayk, bathayngaka
(KALA LAGAW YA)

Buaigiz kelar obaiswerare, merbi mir apuge mena obakedi,
muige merbi areribi tonarge, ko merbi keub kerkerem
(MERIAM MIR)

Ngalpan moebaygal thoepoeriwoeyamoeyn, ngalpan ya
kuduthoeraynu, ngalpan igililmaypa, sepa setha wara
goeygil sey boey wagel
(KALA KAWAW YA)

Empowering our people, in our decision,
in our culture, for our future