

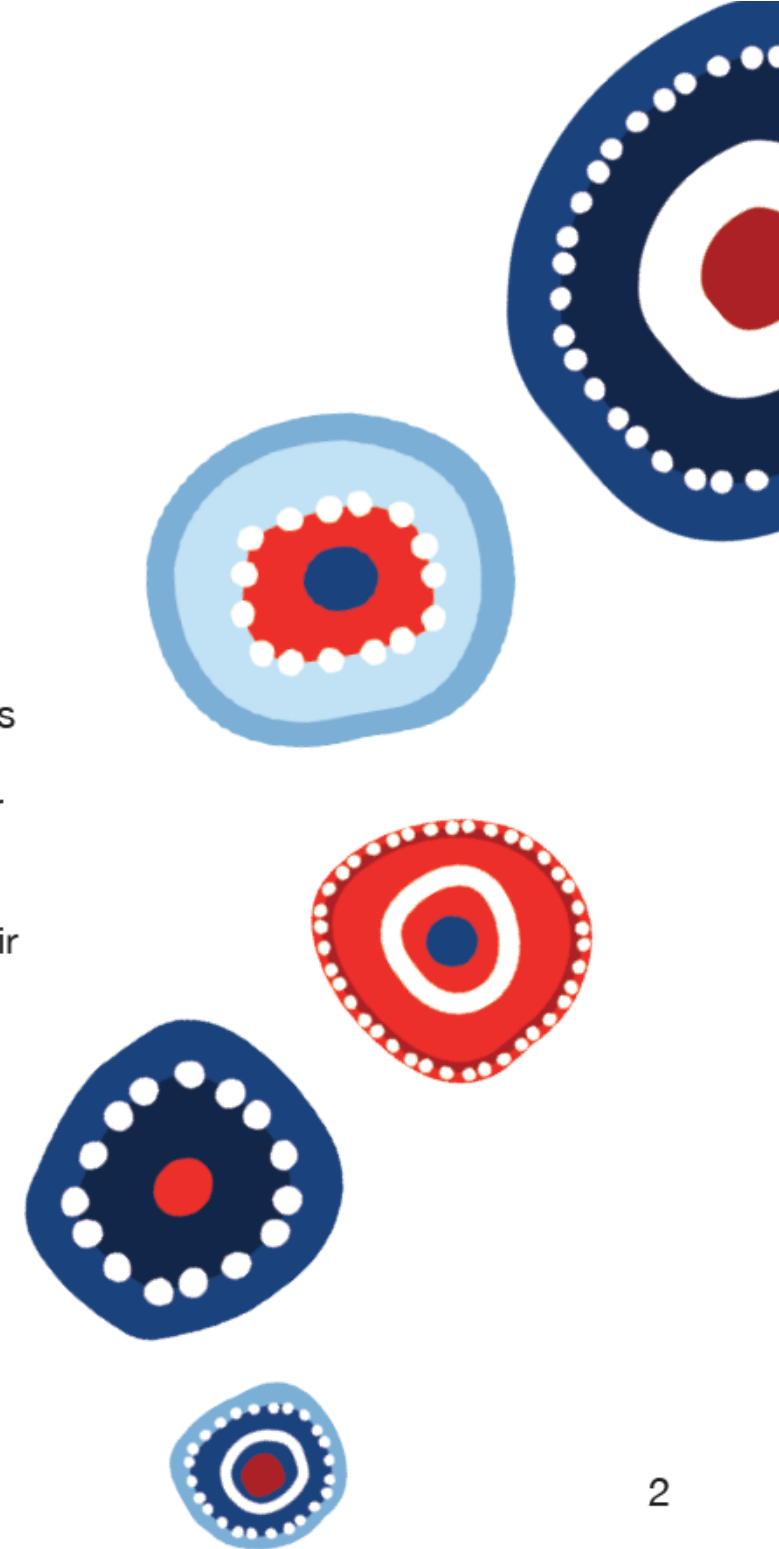
DHA's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-25

OFFICIAL



Acknowledgement of Country

Defence Housing Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures, as well as to their Elders - past, present and emerging.



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A message from the Chief General Counsel and Diversity and Inclusion Champion

Lisa Barlin



Diversity and inclusion in our workplace is not a ‘nice to have’ strategy. It is fundamental to DHA’s success and to delivering truly inclusive services to the Defence community we serve.

As DHA’s Diversity and Inclusion Champion, I’m excited to present DHA’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022–25. This strategy sets out what we will do to create a more diverse and inclusive workplace. It is our commitment to create a work environment where everyone feels free to bring their whole self to work – where everyone feels they belong and can collaborate, innovate, and celebrate difference. This strategy will guide us to achieve impactful and sustainable cultural change at DHA – and help us build a diverse and thriving workforce.

Creating and maintaining a workplace culture built on inclusion and respect doesn’t stop with HR, or with me. It is the responsibility of each one of us. I encourage everyone to get involved in implementing this strategy. Let’s build change together!

About the strategy

This strategy represents DHA's commitment to providing a respectful and inclusive workplace where all its employees feel safe and confident to bring their whole selves to work and can perform to their best.

This strategy has been developed in consultation with our Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, affinity groups, and Staff Consultative Group. It includes best practices shared by Diversity Council Australia, Pride in Diversity and Australian Network on Disability.

This strategy aligns to DHA's People Strategy 2022–25 and DHA's employee value proposition and also includes actions recommended by the Australian Public Service Commission in their [Commonwealth ATSI Workforce Strategy](#), [APS Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26](#) and [APS Disability Employment Strategy 2020–25](#).

What is diversity and inclusion and why are they important?

Diversity refers to a mix of different people and the way they identify in relation to their age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation and socio-economic background (social identity), and their professional, educational and work experiences and organisational role (professional identity).

Inclusion refers to creating an environment where people feel safe to bring their authentic selves to work. It means valuing our differences and developing a culture and a sense of community where everyone can participate and thrive. This means individuals are respected, supported and engaged, have a voice, and have opportunities to contribute.

A diverse and inclusive workplace is important to help DHA evolve, innovate, problem-solve, and be more efficient. It contributes to our employees have a greater feeling of being valued and recognised at work, be more engaged and enjoy a more supportive and respectful workplace culture.

Our Workforce (2022)



68.4%
Female*



31.6%
Male*



2.62%
Person with
disability*



1.74%
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait
Islander*



8.55%
Culturally and
linguistically
diverse*



5%
LGBTQI+**



39%
People with
caring
responsibility**

*Data collected from DHA Payroll system as at 30 August 2022

**Data collected from APS Annual Census results 2022

Work underpinning this strategy

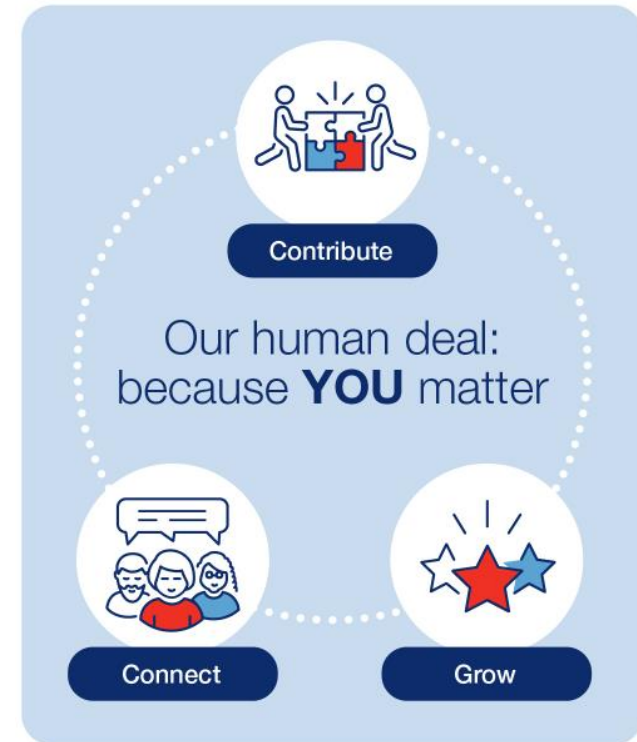
DHA People Strategy 2022–25



HR focus, strategic objectives, and the DHA guiding principles

Focused on building and embedding an inclusive culture

DHA employee value proposition



Focused on the 'human deal' centred around the whole person's identity, connects the organisation with employees' life experiences

Our Diversity and Inclusion journey


DHA has taken positive steps forward in establishing a diverse and inclusive workplace. While we continue to build our capability and strengthen our efforts in this space, we also need to recognise and celebrate the progress we have made so far:

- We have a dedicated and active Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (D&I WG) with representation from various regions, business areas and sections of our workforce. The D&I WG provides strategic advice and support in implementing our D&I agenda.
- We have an established Reconciliation Action Plan working group (RAP WG) with representation from Indigenous workforce that helps build and implement our RAP.
- We have 3 active affinity groups that provide social and professional networking and support, celebrate important days, host events with guest speakers, and increase awareness to ensure continued learning.
- Our D&I Champion and RAP Champion actively advocate and demonstrate senior leadership commitment to support and promote workplace diversity and inclusion.
- We are a proud member of peak representative bodies for diversity, including the **Diversity Council Australia**, **Pride in Diversity**, **Australian Network on Disability**, and **Reconciliation Australia** which provide us the right advice, guidance and expertise on inclusion best practices.

Our D&I efforts are not a result of compliance requirements. They are driven by an authentic intent to create strategic and meaningful actions for making our workplace better for everyone. We are actively working towards shifting mindsets and building a culture that promotes better performance and the wellbeing of all our people.

Our Diversity focus areas

Our APS Census results help us recognise the unique and varied needs of the diverse sections of our workforce. Accordingly, our D&I strategy identifies the following focus areas :

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A culturally safer working environment• Increased representation in the workforce• Opportunities for career advancement
	Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased representation in leadership roles• Structured coaching and mentoring programs to support career advancement
	LGBTQI+	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced awareness amongst employees to ensure a respectful and inclusive working environment• Visible and active support by senior leaders
	People living with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved organisational understanding and skills to support people with disability• Improved career opportunities and recognition at work
	Culturally and linguistically diverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A culturally safer working environment• Increased opportunities for employees to share stories and experiences

Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Objectives

DHA's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022–25 is based on the Diversity Council Australia's Inclusion@Work Index, which says that inclusion occurs when all people are respected, connected, progressing, and contributing to organisational success. It focusses on the following 4 strategic objectives:

Respected. Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people at work feel valued and respected for who they are.

Connected. Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people feel connected to their co-worker, treated as an insider, and so have a sense of belonging.

Progressing. Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people at work have opportunities to develop their career and progress.

Contributing. Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people can contribute their talents and energies to the organisation.

Importantly, this definition of inclusion focuses on characteristics which have a demonstrable link to positive business outcomes (e.g., productivity, performance, engagement, innovation).



*Image source: DCA Inclusion@Work Index Report 2020-21

How will we achieve our strategic objectives

Strategic objective	Actions / Initiatives	Indicative Timeframe
Respected - employees feel valued and respected for who they are.	Communicate and promote DHA's recently refreshed Bullying and Harassment Policy to all employees to ensure there is shared understanding of expected behaviours at workplace.	Dec 2022
	Remove barriers for employees to report unacceptable behaviours to ensure our workplace is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.	Dec 2022
	Introduce a facilitated 'unconscious bias' training as part of the current learning and development offerings for all employees, and an online training to complete before participating in a recruitment panel.	Dec 2023
	Provide targeted learning opportunities to senior leaders through programs offered by PiD, AND and DCA that help them enhance their awareness and understanding of diverse workforce and their needs.	Sep 2023
	Promote and reinforce APS values and expected positive behaviours with senior leaders demonstrating zero tolerance towards non-inclusive behaviours.	Sep 2023
	Review mandatory Diversity and Inclusion learning programs offered via DHA learning portal and encourage employee participation	June 2023
	Refresh Intranet and Internet pages to include diversity and inclusion information including representation in images and inclusive language.	Mar 2023

How will we achieve our strategic objectives

Strategic objective	Actions / initiatives	Indicative Timeframe
<p>Connected – employees feel connected to their co-workers and have a sense of belonging.</p>	<p>Revive our affinity groups with renewed membership from interested employees along with a dedicated Executive Champion from the leadership team to ensure we provide a networking platform to our employees across all diversity areas and a group for the business to consult with when driving change.</p>	<p>Dec 2022</p>
	<p>Celebrate specific diversity days with a focus on creating awareness, understanding, support and allyship amongst employees to help them get recognised and respected for their diversity.</p>	<p>2022- 25</p>
	<p>Offer opportunities to employees to participate in initiatives to support external community / charity organisations and undertake shared learning from diversity events.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Encourage employees to update their diversity information in Aurion and regularly participate in employees surveys (like the APS census, pulse survey and Inclusion@work index) to help us better understand their experience and tailor our support accordingly.</p>	<p>June 2023</p>
	<p>Improve return to work experience from parental/carers leave with a keep in touch program and welcome back pack maintained.</p>	<p>June 2024</p>
	<p>Ensure all job advertisements promote DHA flexible work arrangements, commitment to diversity and inclusion and include inclusive language.</p>	<p>Jan 2023</p>

How will we achieve our strategic objectives

Strategic objective	Actions / initiatives	Indicative Timeframe
<p>Progressing - employees have opportunities at work to develop their career and progress</p>	<p>Make managers accountable in performance plans for identifying how they will support development of team diversity and a culture of inclusion.</p>	<p>July 2023 onwards</p>
	<p>Provide managers and leaders with resources and support tailored for different diversity groups, to help them undertake regular performance and career conversations with their team members.</p>	<p>Mar 2023</p>
	<p>Provide and promote development opportunities, including projects, secondments and mobility opportunities internally and externally, to employees across diversity groups to develop capability.</p>	<p>Sep 2023 onwards</p>
	<p>Provide and promote targeted coaching and mentoring programs to support the career progression of employees across diversity areas of focus.</p>	<p>Jan 2024</p>
	<p>Create diversity workplace dashboard in Tableau to improve senior leaders access to workforce diversity metrics.</p>	<p>Sep 2023</p>
	<p>Commit to transparency and accountability through Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) reporting.</p>	<p>Sep 2022</p>

How will we achieve our strategic objectives

Strategic objective	Actions / initiatives	Indicative Timeframe
Contributing – employees can fully contribute their talents and energies to the organisation	Review our policies and frameworks to ensure all employees are adequately supported in their roles and have access to the right tools, systems, information and knowledge to perform to their best levels	Mar 2023
	Develop and implement the reasonable adjustments policy and framework to provide an accessible and inclusive work environment to enable people with disability, injury, or illness, to participate fully in all aspects of employment.	Dec 2022
	Participate in affirmative measures, RecruitAbility and similar programs to provide targeted employment opportunities to diverse sections of workforce and increase their representation at DHA	Start Mar 2023 and ongoing
	Complete an accessibility review of layout and facilities to ensure an inclusive work environment.	June 2024
	Provide assistive technologies to enable full work participation and support work life balance for all employees	Dec 2024
	Review and ensure our awards and recognition framework is accessible to all employees and promotes our commitment to diversity and inclusion	June 2023
	Provide tailored support programs for diverse sections of the workforce through EAP	Jan 2023

What will success look like?

In line with our strategic objectives, success for us would mean that we develop inclusive teams, inclusive managers and an inclusive DHA:



Inclusive teams

DHA has inclusive teams where a diversity of people feel that they:

- are respected and valued team members
- are connected to their team
- can contribute and progress at work.



Inclusive managers

DHA has inclusive managers who:

- value differences
- seek out and use diversity of ideas
- treat everyone fairly
- actively deal with inappropriate behaviour.



Inclusive DHA

DHA creates an inclusive culture where employees:

- trust they will be treated fairly
- feel diversity is valued and respected
- report that senior leaders demonstrate a genuine and visible commitment to diversity and inclusion.

How will we measure our success?

This strategy will be delivered over a 3-year period from 2022 to 2025. During this time, DHA will implement a range of actions as listed earlier.

HR Strategy Manager along with the D&I Working Group will develop an implementation plan in Q2 of 2022-23 with responsibilities assigned to specific stakeholders and indicative timeframes for each action.

Progress on these actions will be reported to the Leadership Team and People and Culture Committee twice a year.

Some internal targets that would help us measure our success are provided below:

- **Recruitment and retention of people in focus diversity groups** – increased representation from diverse sections of workforce – targets set under the DHA People Strategy 2022–25

Metric	Purpose	Definition	2021 baseline	2025 target	2021 APS
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander*	Indicative of successful diversity promotion initiatives and inclusive workplace culture	Percentage of workforce identifying as ATSI as reported in Aurion (Census)	2% (3%)	3% (4%)	3.5% (4%)
Disability*	Indicative of successful diversity promotion initiatives and inclusive workplace culture	Percentage of workforce identifying as a person with an ongoing disability as reported in Aurion (Census)	2% (7%)	3% (9%)	4.1% (10%)
LGBTIQ+	Indicative of successful diversity promotion initiatives and inclusive workplace culture	Percentage of workforce identifying as LGBTIQ+ as reported in APS Census	5%	6%	7%
Female leadership participation rate	Indicative of successful diversity promotion initiatives and inclusive workplace culture	Percentage of women in positions classified at or above Executive Level 1 as reported in Aurion	47%	50%	53%

*Corporate Plan reportable

How will we measure our success?

- **Census / Pulse results** – increase in results specifically around D&I, workplace culture, senior leadership, wellbeing, flexible work, communications, and innovation and decrease in results around experiencing discrimination, bullying or harassment at work
- **Inclusion@Work survey results** – improvement over the years
- **Diversity data captured in Aurion** – increase in the number of people who update their diversity profiles
- **Training completion rates for D&I specific training** – increase in the number of employees voluntarily completing training related to D&I
- **Engagement with affinity groups** – increase in membership of affinity groups, increase in participation in D&I events, positive feedback on initiatives and communications

What can you do?

Moving towards broader accountability model, we recognise that Diversity and Inclusion is not the responsibility of a single team or area but is owned by everyone at DHA. As employees, managers and leaders we all have a role to play in making our workplace inclusive:

All employees

- Consistently demonstrate our APS values and constructively challenge or call out non-inclusive behaviour at DHA
- Update your own diversity information in Aurion to help us better understand our workforce and tailor our support
- Increase your self-awareness around D&I by participating in learning opportunities
- Show support by joining affinity groups and participating in D&I events
- Regularly provide feedback on your experience through participating in census, pulse and inclusion surveys

All managers

- Role model inclusive behaviours.
- Give visible recognition when staff go above and beyond, demonstrating inclusive behaviours – using DHA's rewards and recognition framework.
- Take action to address behaviour that is not in line with APS Values and Code of Conduct.
- Encourage and support staff to actively contribute to D&I activities in DHA.
- Create a safe space for your team to provide genuine feedback and actively respond to their feedback

All senior leaders

- Exemplify inclusive behaviours and reinforce APS values in day-to-day work
- Regularly talk to your team leaders and collect their feedback on how we can enhance employee experience at DHA
- Become a D&I advocate and provide visible support to all D&I activities at DHA
- Hold leaders and peers accountable
- Reward inclusive behaviours and share good news stories
- Represent DHA in external D&I platforms and promote our best practices

For more information on DHA's diversity and inclusion strategy, reach out to culture@dha.gov.au or call us on extension x6060 option 4