



## This NAIDOC Week, employers encouraged to help close the (work) gap

Posted 4 July 2012

**NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. During this week, Diversity Council Australia encouraged employers to reflect on how they can better support their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by putting employment and community engagement on their business agenda.**

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the unemployment rate for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is more than three times higher than that for the non-Indigenous population. Nareen Young, Diversity Council Australia's Chief Executive Officer said NAIDOC Week is a reminder for Australian businesses to do more:

"Some progress has been made on creating employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples but organisations have yet to fully capitalise on Indigenous talent and realise significant, sustainable and meaningful employment outcomes. It's time to change this to help close the gap," said Nareen.

DCA, Reconciliation Australia and Lend Lease are partnering on a new research project to establish leading practice guidance on how organisations can better inter-relate their diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and community engagement agendas to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Leah Armstrong, Chief Executive Officer of Reconciliation Australia said the exploratory research, called *Closing the (Work) Gap: Workplace Respect & Inclusion for Indigenous Australians*, is innovative and will shed light on best practices:

"Having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people fully participate in the workforce is crucial to deliver economic benefits to all Australians. This research will help identify how our Reconciliation Action Plans work with other policies to build

and strengthen that participation and deliver thriving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities,” said Leah.

Chris Lamb, Head of Human Resources for Lend Lease, a major sponsor of the project, said Lend Lease is committed to closing the work gap for Indigenous Australians:

“We are excited by the opportunity to partner in this research project which we believe will provide important insights and ideas as to how we, and other organisations, can be more effective in our practical efforts to close the work gap for Indigenous Australians,” said Chris.

The results of the research are expected to be released in February 2013.

[Read more about how you can celebrate NAIDOC Week.](#)