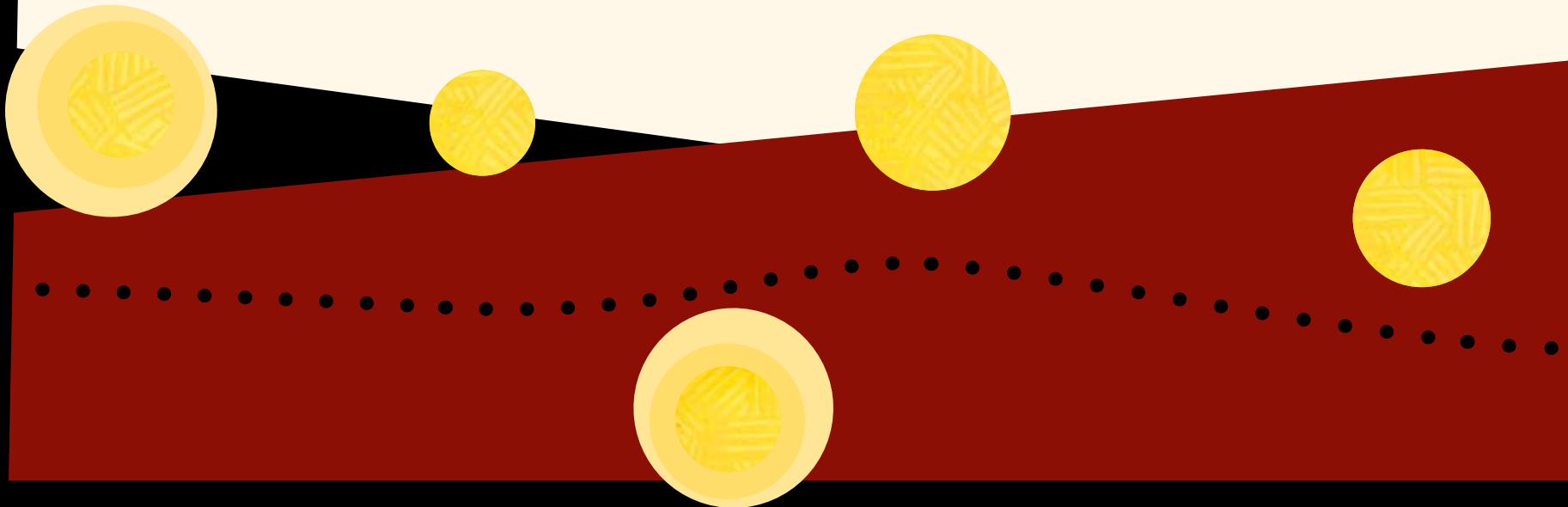


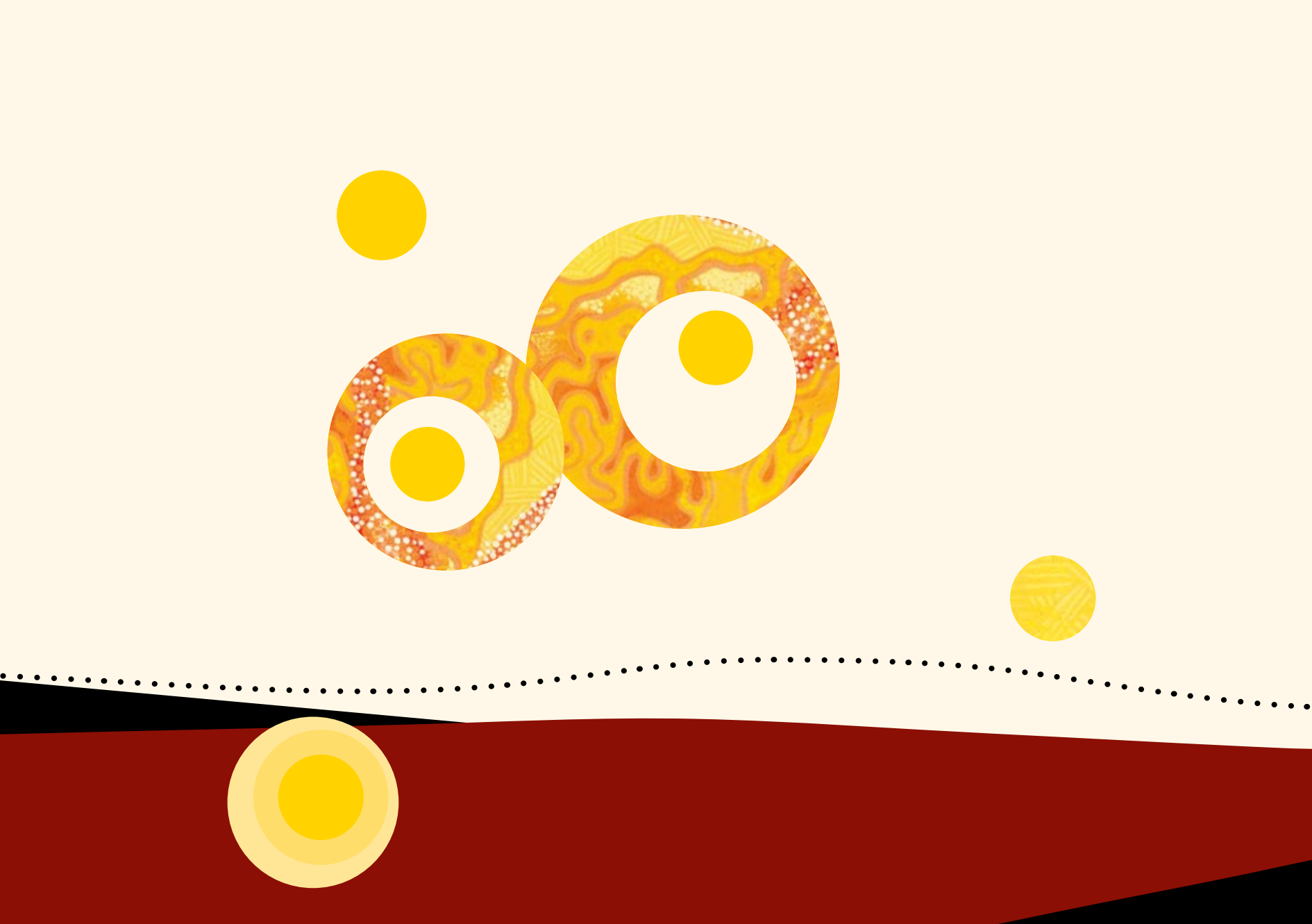


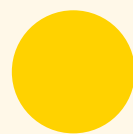
Australian Government
Australian Public Service Commission

Looking Back... Looking Forward

Snapshots of Indigenous Employment in the Australian Public Service

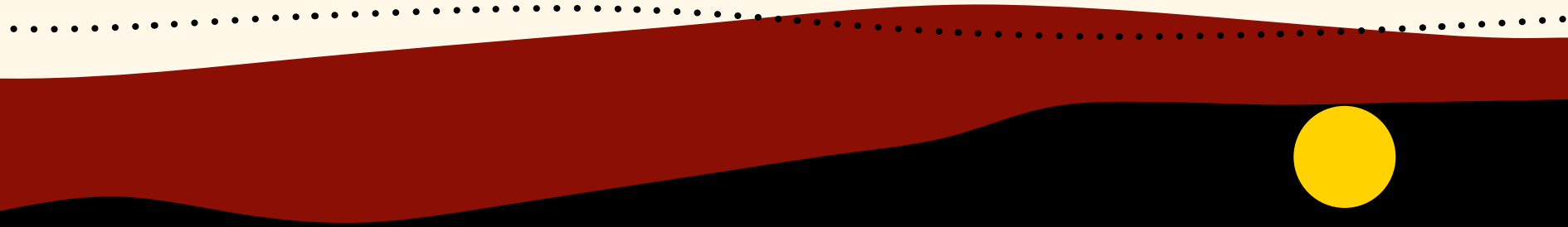
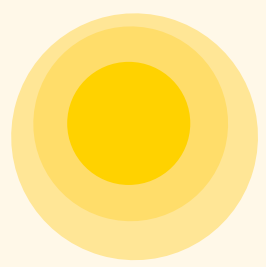






Looking Back... Looking Forward

Snapshots of Indigenous Employment in the Australian Public Service



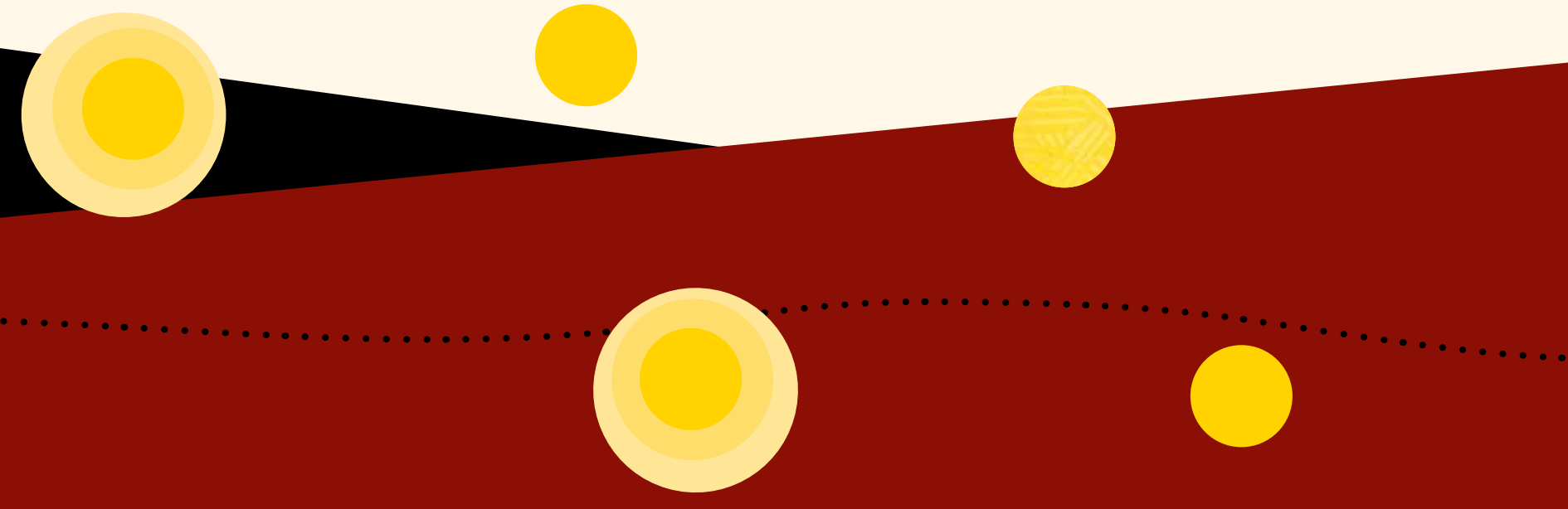
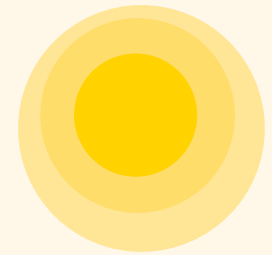
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ISBN 0 9775591 7 3

This booklet provides snapshots of some of the important events in the story of Indigenous employment in the Australian Public Service. It is not intended to be a complete and comprehensive history.

Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers of this publication should note that it contains images of deceased persons.



Snapshots of Indigenous Employment in the Australian Public Service

Looking Back

The Australian Public Service (APS) came into being at Federation in 1901. The APS has always included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, although discriminatory laws and social attitudes limited the roles and numbers of Indigenous APS employees in the first part of the twentieth century.

The successful 1967 Referendum allowed the Australian Government to enact laws for Indigenous Australians and to count Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in the census. This paved the way for changes to policy, legislation and attitudes that have significantly influenced Indigenous employment in the APS.

Looking Forward

Today, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public servants work in a huge diversity of roles in the Australian Public Service, adding much value to what the APS does and the way it does it. This booklet provides snapshots of some of the milestone events that have helped to increase Indigenous employment in the APS over the years.

Looking back, it's clear that the APS has come a long way. But looking forward there is still much more to be achieved in order for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be strongly represented as employees in all agencies and at all levels within the Australian Public Service. This is the vision and challenge for the future.



1901 - Federation

On 1 January 1901 Australia's six colonies were joined together in one 'indissoluble federal Commonwealth' and the Australian Constitution established the Commonwealth Government.

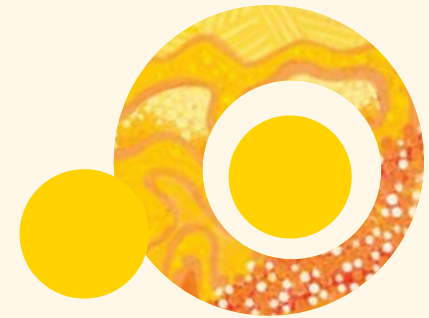
1902 - Commonwealth Franchise Act

Specifically excluded Indigenous Australians from voting unless they were enrolled before 1901.

1914–18 - World War I

Indigenous Australians have fought in every war since the Boer War (1899–1902). Despite the *Defence Act 1909* which prohibited inclusion of people who were not 'substantially of European descent', over 400 Aboriginal people fought in WWI.

1937 - The first Commonwealth/State conference on 'native welfare' adopted assimilation as the national policy—'*the destiny of the natives of aboriginal origin, but not of the full blood, lies in ultimate absorption ... with a view to their taking their place in the white community on an equal footing with the whites*'.



Federation
1901

World War I
1914–18

1901 - Although present in the federal public service since its inception, Indigenous Australians were termed 'exempt staff'. This referred to employees who were exempted from the full provisions of the Public Service Act and included people described as 'minor officials' whose unskilled duties meant that it was not considered appropriate for them to 'enjoy the same security of tenure or receive the same rate of remuneration' as permanent officers. Indigenous Australians were grouped together with other such exempt staff as female office cleaners and charwomen, line repairers, horse drivers and cooks. No data is available on the actual numbers of Indigenous employees.

1939–45 - World War II

At the start of WWII Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders were allowed to enlist and many did so. But in 1940 the Defence Committee decided the enlistment of Indigenous Australians was 'neither necessary nor desirable' partly because white Australians would object to serving with them. However, when Japan entered the war the increased need for manpower forced the loosening of restrictions. Torres Strait Islanders were recruited in large numbers and hundreds of Aborigines enlisted as soldiers.

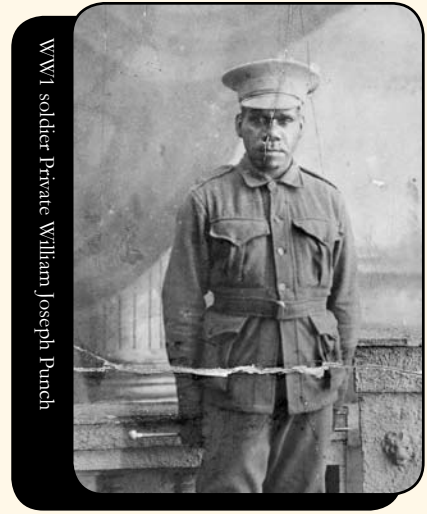
1948 - The UN General Assembly agreed upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provided internationally recognised criteria from which to lobby for Indigenous rights.

'My view is... that the only thing to be done with the Australian aboriginal, full-blood or otherwise, is to give him the benefit of the same laws as apply to every other Australian.' Herbert Vere Evatt, Leader of the Opposition, 1957

World War II 1939–45

1949 - Commonwealth Electoral Act

Granted the right to vote in Federal elections to Indigenous Australians who had completed military service or who already had the right to vote in their State. Indigenous people had had the right to vote in state elections in South Australia, NSW, Victoria and Tasmania since the 1850s.



WWI soldier Private William Joseph Punch



WWII Indigenous soldier Sergeant Reg Saunders

1958 - Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) founded

FCAATSI included Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in its membership. One of FCAATSI's major campaigns was for constitutional change—a campaign that led to the 1967 Referendum.

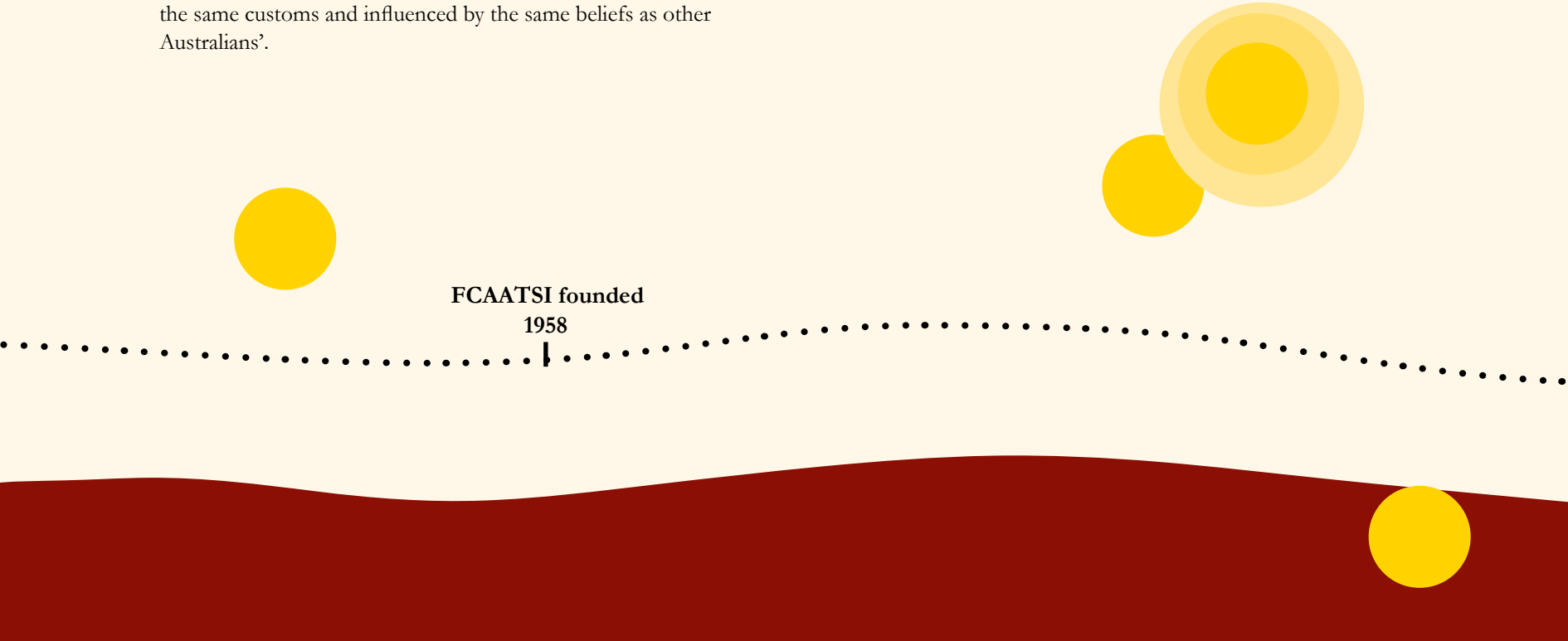
1961 - The policy of assimilation was defined at the 1961 Native Welfare Conference of Federal and State Ministers as:

‘The policy of assimilation means that all Aborigines and part-Aborigines are expected to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community, enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs as other Australians’.

1962 - Commonwealth Electoral Act amended

This allowed Indigenous people to enrol to vote in federal elections if they wished. Unlike other Australians it was not compulsory for them to enrol.

1962 - Western Australia gave Indigenous Australians the right to vote.



FCAATSI founded
1958

1964 - Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies established

This was the first APS agency with a specific focus on Indigenous Australians. In 1989 it became the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), which still exists today. 1965 - Queensland was the last state to give Indigenous Australians the right to vote.

1965 - Freedom Ride

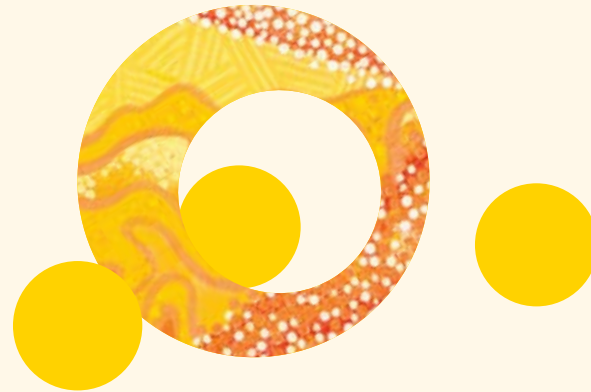
Thirty Sydney University students including two Aboriginal students, one of whom was Charles Perkins, began a 3200 km bus ride to expose discrimination.

1966 - Wave Hill walk-off commenced

Aboriginal employees from the Gurindji tribe walked off in protest against the work and pay conditions at Wave Hill cattle station in the Northern Territory.

1966 - United Nation's General Assembly approved two covenants as the second stage of the International Bill of Rights. These provided a benchmark to lobby for Indigenous equality in Australia.

Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies established
1964



1967 - 'Yes' Referendum

The 1967 Referendum approved Commonwealth Constitutional changes to allow the Commonwealth Government to make laws for Indigenous Australians and to count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the census.

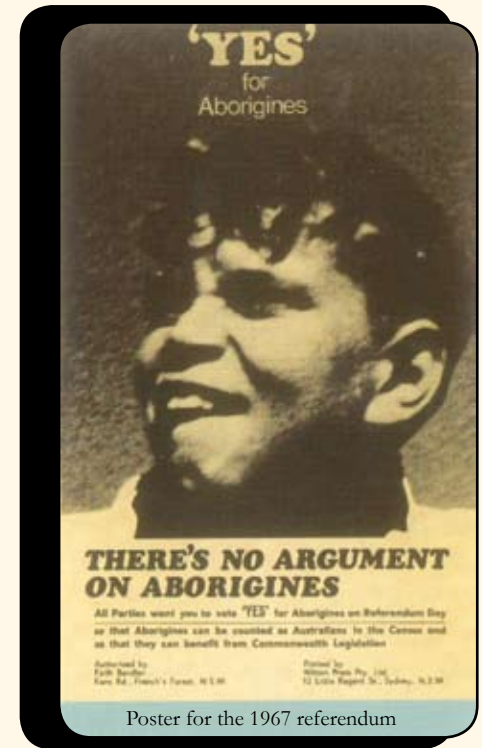
This referendum saw the highest YES vote ever recorded in a Federal referendum—90.77 percent of Australians voted for change. This was an overwhelming statement by non-Indigenous Australians that they supported equality for Indigenous Australians.

The proper significance of the referendum has been obscured to some extent by popular myths, which include that it gave the vote, equal wages and citizenship to Indigenous Australians and that it ended legal discrimination. It did none of these things.



'Yes' Referendum

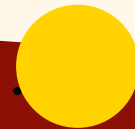
1967



Poster for the 1967 referendum

'We had to change the Federal Constitution if we wanted the resources of the Federal Government and the rights that the government protected, the people's rights and we needed the state laws to be abolished for this reason, that they created such tremendous confusion. You could be a relatively free person, walking around Victoria and you come to New South Wales and you find you've got to go up to Bridge Street in Sydney to get permission if you can go and see your uncle and aunt, if you please.' Faith Bandler, FCAATSI member, on why the Referendum was important

'We've taken his lands, decimated his tribes, degraded his women, taken away his dignity and forced him to live in squalor. This is our chance to make some sort of amends. We still have a long way to go. But at least we can make a start at treating him as an equal.' Editorial, Sydney Daily Mirror, 22 May 1967



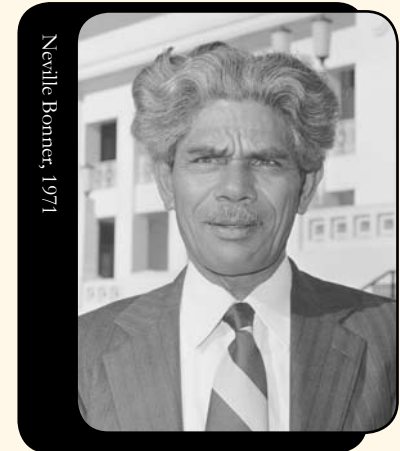
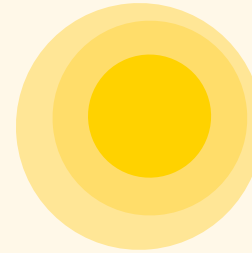
1968 - Commonwealth Office of Aboriginal Affairs established

Its purpose was to implement support schemes for the advancement of Aboriginal people. Its creation indicated a significant change in the federal approach to policy on Indigenous issues.

1969 - Charles Perkins joined the Commonwealth Office of Aboriginal Affairs

'I wanted to sort of stimulate Aboriginal people and white people to reflect on Aboriginal people and what can be done about the situation, which was very bad at that time, on a national level and so the only place to go for that was Canberra.' Charles Perkins

1971 - Neville Bonner sworn in to the Queensland Parliament as Australia's first Indigenous Senator



**Commonwealth Office of
Aboriginal Affairs established**

1968

Pre 1970s

There is an absence of any data on the employment of Indigenous Australians in the Public Service before the 1970s.



1972 - Aboriginal Tent Embassy set up on the lawns of Parliament House protesting the McMahon Government's refusal to recognise land rights. It still stands today.

1972 - Department of Aboriginal Affairs established

The Whitlam Government changed the overall policy for Indigenous citizens from assimilation to self-determination.

1973 - First national elections for the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee

Elected 41 members to the NACC (1973–77) to assist the Minister and Department for Aboriginal Affairs in consulting with Indigenous communities.

1973 - Aboriginal Hostels Limited opened

Aboriginal Hostels Limited is an Australian Public Service agency. The hostels provide a welcoming place for Indigenous people to stay in cities and towns. By 2006 Aboriginal Hostels was the second top employer of Indigenous people in the APS employing 269 people or 80.5% of its workforce and 9.8% of all Indigenous employees in the APS.

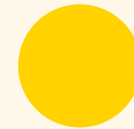
1973 - Identified positions and identified criteria introduced into the APS

Identified positions began to be used for jobs that involved working on policy, programmes or services targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Identified positions are open to all eligible applicants, not just Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders. They are still in use today in the APS. They included two common identified criteria:

- knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies and cultures and the issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and
- ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Only 0.3% of permanent APS employees were Indigenous

1973



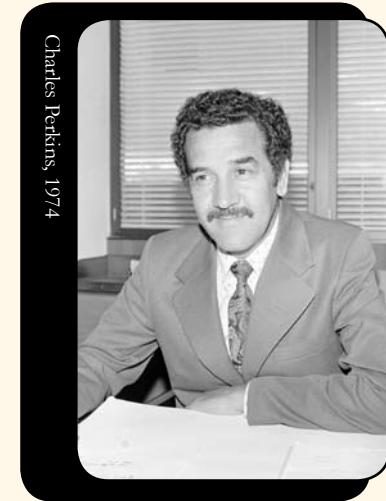
1973 - First systemic attempt to count Indigenous staff in the APS made by the Public Service Board

This survey identified that a mere 0.3% of permanent APS employees were Indigenous. This data was based on supervisors identifying Indigenous employees, rather than individuals identifying themselves. The results of the survey led to the introduction of measures to increase Indigenous participation in the APS.

1974 - Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration commenced

Under the chairmanship of Dr H C Coombs, this was the first independent, wide-ranging inquiry into Australian Government administration since 1919, and included consideration of Indigenous issues.

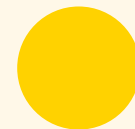
1974 - Aboriginal Loans Commission (1974–80) established to provide housing and business loans to Indigenous people. The Aboriginal Land Fund Commission (1974–80) was also established for the purchase of land.



Only 12% of Indigenous APS employees were permanent officers

1974

1974 - Only 12% of Indigenous APS employees were permanent officers. The remainder were temporary employees.



1975 - Racial Discrimination Act and special measures provisions introduced

Special measures provisions allow particular employment opportunities to be open only to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, in recognition of their employment disadvantage.

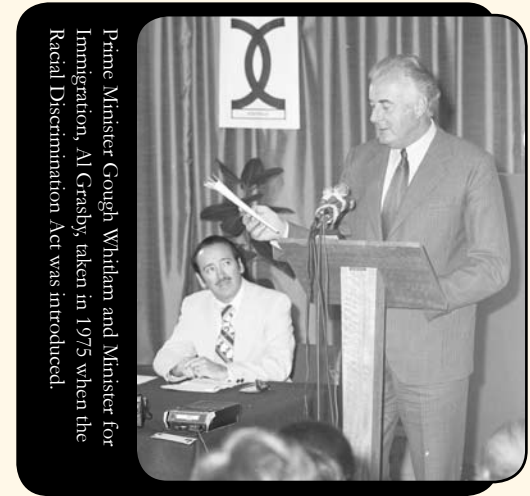
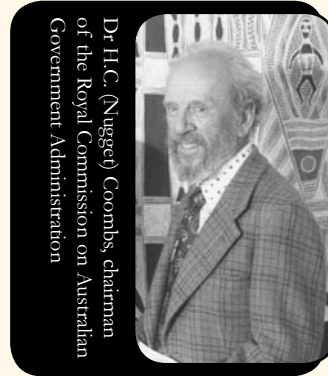
1976 - Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration report released

The Coombs Report stated that special and urgent effort was needed to achieve substantial Aboriginal participation in the APS within a few years and to ensure fair and reasonable opportunities were available for Aboriginals in Commonwealth employment. The Commission recommended that programmes relating to recruitment, training and education for Aboriginals should be implemented in the APS.



1976 - Commonwealth Land Rights Act (Northern Territory)

This Act was implemented as a result of the seven year protest by the Gurindji people and gave Indigenous Australians freehold title to traditional lands in the Northern Territory.



1975 - Only one fifth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander APS employees had educational levels of school certificate (Year 10) or higher, and only four Indigenous employees had a university degree or higher. A quarter had no formal schooling. Nearly half (48%) had less than one year's continuous service.

1976 - 0.4% of permanent APS employees were identified as Indigenous Australians. Most Indigenous employees (94%) were employed in the Fourth Division (mainly word processors and support staff) usually as temporary or exempt staff.



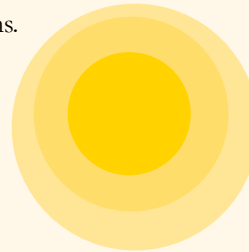
1978 - National Aboriginal Conference established

The National Aboriginal Conference (1978–1985), a national advisory body comprising 35 elected members, replaced the NACC.

1978 - National Employment Strategy for Aboriginals (NESA) introduced

NESA sought to expand the range of employment opportunities available to Aboriginals in both the public and private sectors, including addressing under-representation of Indigenous people in the APS. NESA aimed to:

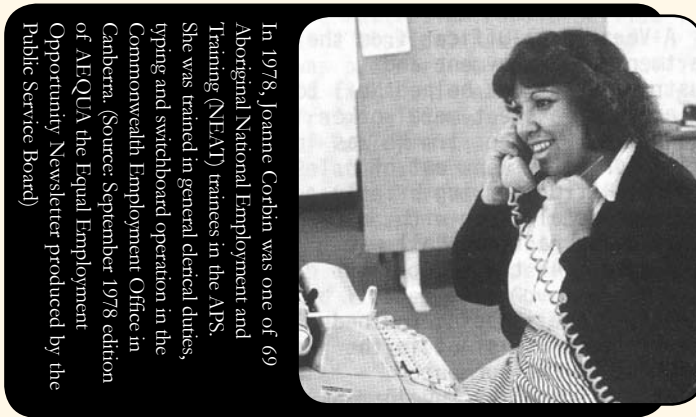
- provide vocational training for unemployed Aboriginals through the National Employment and Training (NEAT) programme
- meet the development needs of Aboriginal staff including through the Aboriginal Staff Sponsorship Program and the Aboriginal Undergraduate Study Award
- renew efforts to 'identify' positions
- increase recruitment beyond the staffing of 'identified' positions.



1977 - A review carried out by the Public Service Board concluded that the request for departments to create identified positions had not occurred. Only 19% of Aboriginal staff were permanent officers compared to 75% of all staff.

1978 - 23% of Indigenous employees were now permanent officers in the APS. Large numbers of Indigenous employees were working as teaching assistants, cleaners/janitors, handymen, storemen, hospital assistants, nursing support, and domestic and laundry staff.

1979 - At the end of January, 323 Aboriginals had begun training in departments under NEAT. By the end of September 782 Aboriginals had received training, 208 had completed their training and 146 had obtained employment; 103 of these were employed in the APS. In 1979 over 630 positions had been identified in the APS where 'ability to communicate with Aboriginals' was desirable.



In 1978, Joanne Corbin was one of 69 Aboriginal National Employment and Training (NEAT) trainees in the APS. She was trained in general clerical duties, typing and switchboard operation in the Commonwealth Employment Office in Canberra. (Source: September 1978 edition of AEQUA the Equal Employment Opportunity Newsletter produced by the Public Service Board)



As executive officer for the National Aboriginal Education Committee, Lillian Holt was one of the senior Aboriginal women in the APS in 1979. (Source: June 1979 edition of the Equal Employment Opportunity Newsletter of the APS) 'My time in working with the NAEC and thus the Public Service was to inform my life's work in Aboriginal education', Lillian Holt, 2007

Indigenous employees represented
0.5% of all permanent APS employees

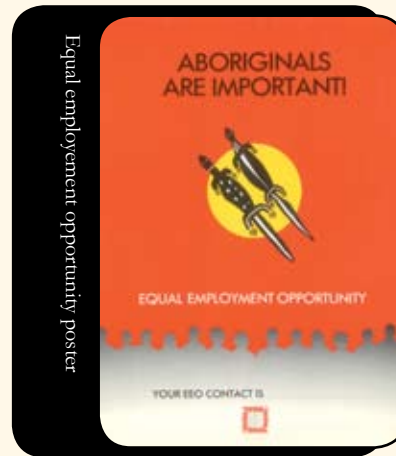
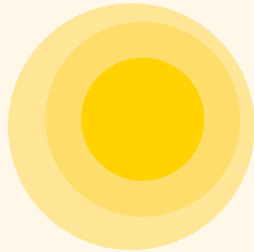
1979

1979 - Indigenous employees represented 0.5% of all permanent APS employees. 55% of all Indigenous employees were now permanent employees. Indigenous employees were increasingly represented in the Third Division (18.4% compared to 6.0% in 1976).

The number of Indigenous employees in the APS dropped due to the transfer of functions and people to the Northern Territory Public Service. This primarily impacted on temporary and exempt staff. Impact on permanent staff was offset by increased recruitment.

1980 - Aboriginal Development Commission established
The ADC (1980–90) took over from the Aboriginal Loans Commission and the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission, to provide advice to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on matters pertaining to Indigenous social and economic development.

1980 - Clerk (Aboriginal Services) Program introduced by the Public Service Board



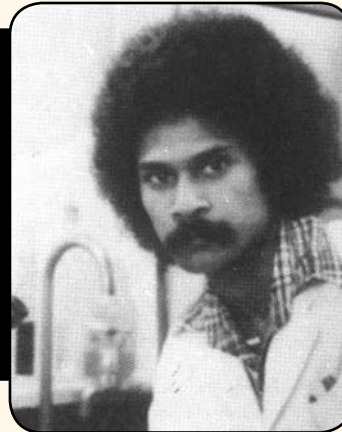
1980 - There was strong growth in the number of Indigenous employees in the APS during 1980. This growth was due in part to Aboriginal NEAT trainees obtaining permanent jobs at the end of their vocational training. Departments also took steps to inform Indigenous Australians about 'identified' job vacancies.

66.3% of Indigenous Australians employed in the APS were permanent officers. The majority of Indigenous Australians were still in the fourth division. Roles included clerical assistants, gardeners, labourers, and typists, accountant machinists and other keyboard operators.

1983 - Reforming the Australian Public Service paper set out the Government's commitment to a policy of equal employment. The two targets for the Affirmative Action Strategy for Aboriginals were:

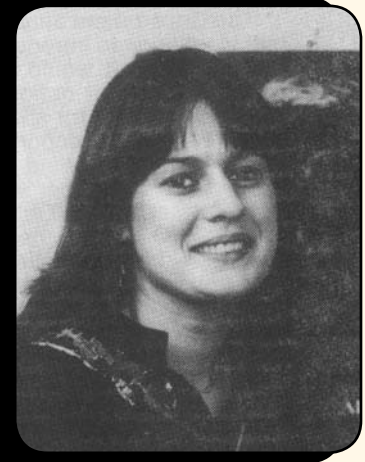
- Aboriginal participation in Commonwealth employment to be equal to their representation in the community.
- Aboriginal people must be employed at sufficiently senior levels to influence matters of concern in the community.

In 1976, Mark Wenitong completed an Associate Diploma under the Aboriginal Study Grant, and then became a Trainee Technical Officer with the Department of Health under the NEAT Scheme. He is now a qualified doctor and has been involved in numerous peak health bodies including the Indigenous Doctors' Association. He is currently the Senior Medical Officer at Wuchopperen Health in Cairns. His training in the APS gave him 'the right background and confidence to successfully study medicine and have a more direct impact on Indigenous health. It may seem like a relatively insignificant thing to support some kid in this way, but it helps build Indigenous leadership in the long term'. Mark Wenitong, 2007



1983 - The Office of the Status of Women in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet announced a taskforce to seek Aboriginal women's views on a range of issues, including land rights, culture, health, housing and education. Two Indigenous women, Phyllis Daylight and Mary Johnstone, headed the taskforce.

Barbara Causon started in the APS in 1983 through the Clerk (Aboriginals Services) Scheme. In 2007, she is a Senior Executive Service officer with Centrelink and Area Manager for Northern Australia.



'Affirmative Action is a systematic approach to identifying and eliminating the barriers that disadvantaged groups encounter in employment. Numbers, however, are not in themselves enough. Aboriginal people should be at a sufficiently influential level to be able to play a significant part in Aboriginal self-management'.
Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, 1983

1984 - Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) legislation introduced

EEO made affirmative action policies for Indigenous people possible.

1984 - Public Service Reform Act introduced

The Reform Act led to increased rates of employment of Indigenous people in the APS and at higher levels. It required each department to have action plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

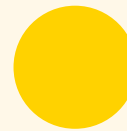
The Public Service Board asked departments to work towards specific EEO outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including representation of Aboriginal people in the APS equal to their representation in the community and increases in the proportions of:

- 'identified' positions
- exempt jobs in areas of high Aboriginal population
- Aboriginals in mainstream positions
- Aboriginals in permanent employment in clerical/administrative positions
- Aboriginal men and women promoted to the Class 6 level and above
- Aboriginal women in Aboriginal field office positions.

1984 - Charles Perkins became Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs

1985 - Assistant Research Officers - Aboriginal Services Recruitment Programme introduced

The intake of Aboriginal staff through this programme reached 4.9% of total recruitment to base grade clerical (non-keyboard) positions in 1985–86.



80.2% of Indigenous employees were permanent officers

1984

1984 - 80.2% of Indigenous employees were now permanent employees, a significant shift over 10 years (from only 12% in 1974). Representation as permanent employees was similar to that to the overall proportion of APS permanent employees (82.4%).

1985 - The representation of Indigenous employees in the Third Division had increased dramatically and was almost on par with representation in the Fourth Division. The majority of Indigenous Australians filled clerical/administrative positions from clerk class 1 to clerk class 6 in the Third Division and clerical assistant grade 1–3 in the Fourth Division.

1986 - Miller Report released

The Miller Report revealed that while Aboriginals with qualifications were employed at similar rates to similarly qualified Australians, Aboriginals without qualifications were employed at less than half the rate of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. It recommended that establishment of an APS Aboriginal cadetship programme to help Aboriginals to secure qualifications. This evolved into the National Indigenous Cadetship Project that still exists today.

1986 - Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (HREOC) established

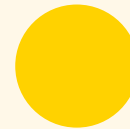
1987 - Public Service Board abolished and Australian Public Service and Merit Protection Commission established

Most areas of responsibility of the Board were devolved to departments. This resulted in stalling of the affirmative action plans targeted at Indigenous people. Although there had been a steady increase in the numbers of Aboriginals employed in the Service from 1979 to 1986 there was little increase between 1986 and 1988, with a marked drop in Aboriginal recruitment after the 1987 administrative changes.

1987 - Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP) introduced

The AEDP stated the Government's commitment to 'a strategy to achieve employment equity for Aboriginals by the year 2000 in terms of both numbers permanently employed and representation at all levels of Commonwealth employment'.

1987 - Northern Territory elections held and for the first time in any election voting was compulsory for Aboriginal people.



Aboriginal Employment Development Policy

1987



1987 - The Government reaffirmed its employment target for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, increasing it from 1% to 2% of total employment.



1988 - Commonwealth Training Programmes provided training for 148 Indigenous Australians

- Training Aboriginal Programme (TAP) - 39.9%
- Aboriginal Undergraduate Study Award (AUSA) - 17.6%
- Aboriginal Scholarship Study Programme (ASSP): 12.2%, and
- other - 32.4%.

1988 - Three departments, the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), the Department of Social Security (DSS) and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA), employed 70% of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the APS.

1989 - There was a marked rise in representation over the decade (1979–89) increasing from 0.54% to 1.4%. Separation rates for Indigenous staff were similar to those of other staff with the same length of service, or at the same classification levels during the period 1988–89. However, there was a marked drop in Indigenous recruitment to the APS after the administrative changes in July 1987.

The representation of Indigenous Australians in the ASO structure above ASO Class 6 was lower than might be expected. However, representation at lower levels may be influenced by a concentration of identified position at the ASO 3, 4 and 6 levels.



**Indigenous employees represented
1.4% of all permanent APS staff**

1989

1988 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff represented 1.2% of all permanent APS staff. Among permanent staff, Indigenous representation was highest in the ASO structure (1.6%) and very low in technical (0.4%), professional (0.2%), SES (0.4%) positions.

The intake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through the Aboriginal Services Recruitment Programme dropped to 2.2% of total recruitment to base-grade clerical (non keyboard) positions. It subsequently rose to 7.1% in 1989.

Of the 1099 identified positions within the APS, 42.5% of them were filled by Indigenous Australians, 31.48% by non-Indigenous Australians and 26.0% were vacant.

1990 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) established

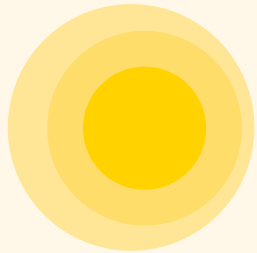
ATSIC replaced the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Development Commission. Elected Regional Councils and a Board of Commissioners made decisions on policy and funding for Indigenous peoples. Every three years from 1990 to 2002 Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders elected local representatives to a network of 35 Regional Councils around Australia. The Australian Electoral Commission conducted ATSIC elections. ATSIC was considered a 'bold experiment' in terms of it combining both public administration and elected arms.

1991 - Release of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

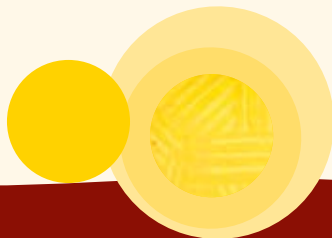
The report helped to focus national attention on Indigenous issues.

1991 - Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation established

Patrick Dodson was appointed to chair a 25-member council of distinguished Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians to advise the Government on reconciliation.



1991 - In 1991 Glenda Humes was the Director of the Office of Indigenous Women, ATSIC. "During that time there were some good programs around getting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the APS. ATSIC was always trying to encourage staff to undertake training to be in a position to move up the ladder. As a senior manager I was offered some great opportunities to attend senior management courses that have held me in good stead throughout my working life. I was also very fortunate to be offered a study grant from ATSIC where I attended the ANU and obtained a Bachelor of Laws". Glenda Humes, Chief Executive Officer, South West Aboriginal Medical Service, 2007



1992 - Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to the National Commitment to Improved Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. This provided a framework for bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and State/Territory governments to improve programmes and services for Indigenous people.

1992 - An Aboriginal Women's Taskforce was formed as a reference group to the Aboriginal Advisory Council to provide advice to the Minister on matters affecting Aboriginal women and families.

1992 - High Court decision on Mabo

The High Court of Australia ruled in *Mabo v Queensland* that the common law of Australia recognises native title to land, and rejected the doctrine that Australia was terra nullius (land belonging to no-one) at the time of European settlement.

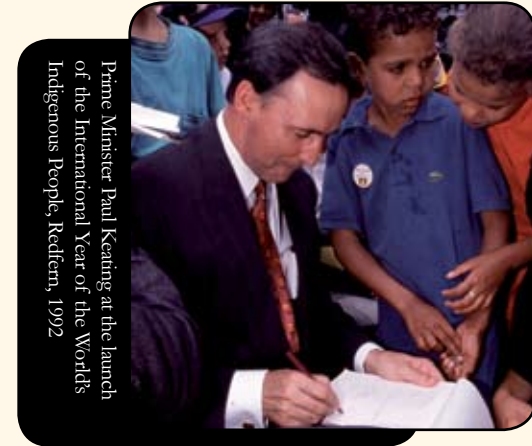
1992 - Prime Minister Keating's Redfern speech

At the launch of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, Keating acknowledged past wrongs and called for reconciliation.

'Ever so gradually we are learning how to see Australia through Aboriginal eyes, beginning to recognise the wisdom contained in their epic story. I think we are beginning to see how much we owe the Indigenous Australians and how much we have lost by living so apart.' Prime Minister Paul Keating, Redfern Park, December 1992

Mabo decision

1992



1993 - The Wik decision

Under the Native Title Act the High Court held that native title rights could co-exist on land held by pastoral leaseholders.

1993 - Office of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner established

This was in response to issues of discrimination and disadvantage highlighted by a National Inquiry into Racist Violence undertaken by HEREOC in 1991. Mick Dodson was appointed the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner.

1994 - Torres Strait Regional Authority established

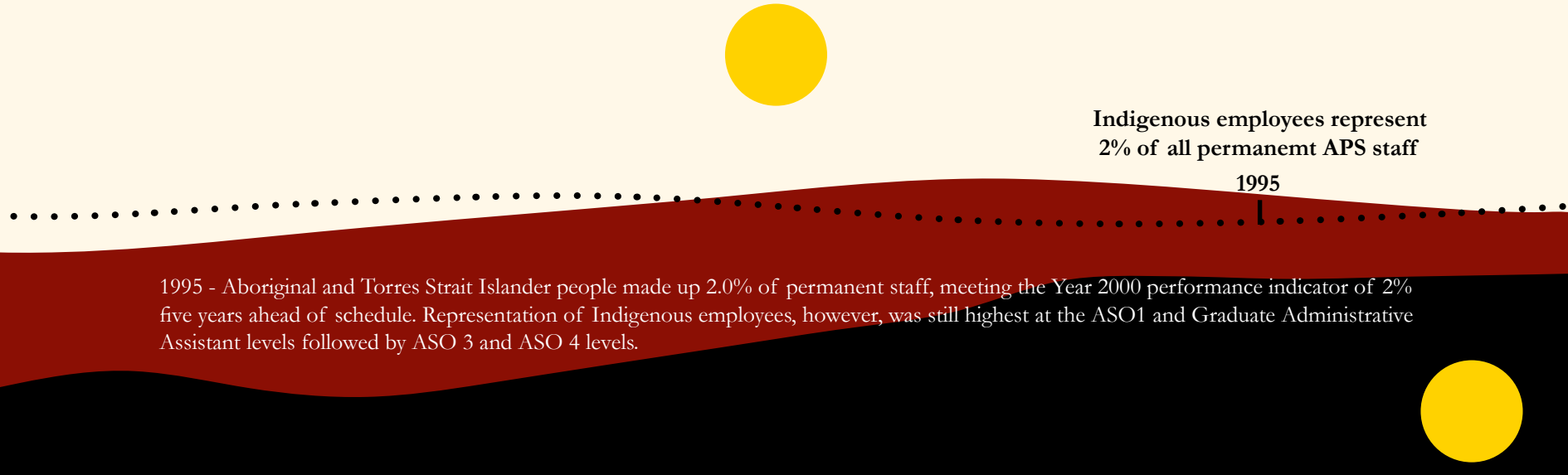
This independent statutory authority replaced ATSIC's Torres Strait Regional Council.

1994 - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey undertaken

The Australian Bureau of Statistics conducted the survey, the results of which highlighted the huge disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health, education and training, employment and income.

1995 - Indigenous Land Council (ILC) established

The ILC is a Commonwealth statutory authority with national responsibilities to assist Indigenous peoples to acquire land and manage Aboriginal-held land.



**Indigenous employees represent
2% of all permanent APS staff**

1995

1995 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 2.0% of permanent staff, meeting the Year 2000 performance indicator of 2% five years ahead of schedule. Representation of Indigenous employees, however, was still highest at the ASO1 and Graduate Administrative Assistant levels followed by ASO 3 and ASO 4 levels.

1997 - Bringing them Home Report released

This was the report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families, undertaken by HREOC.

1998 - Aden Ridgeway elected to Parliament

He became the second Indigenous person elected to the Australian Federal Parliament, as a Democrats Senator for New South Wales

1998 - First national 'Sorry Day'

Sorry Day was held on 26 May to commemorate the release of the 1997 Bringing them Home Report

1999 - Public Service Act and workplace diversity concept introduced

The *Public Service Act 1999* included the concept of workplace diversity, which encompasses but goes beyond the EEO concept of rectifying disadvantage. Workplace diversity focuses on the positive contribution that a diverse workforce can make to organisational effectiveness and morale.

1999 - Government's Indigenous Employment Policy (IEP) established

The goal of the IEP was to generate more employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians in the private sector.

**Indigenous employees represent
2.7% of all permanent APS staff**

1998

1998 - Indigenous representation in the APS peaked at 2.7% of ongoing employees.



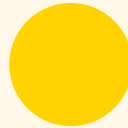
2000 - Reconciliation Australia established

Reconciliation Australia, an independent body, was established to replace the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and carry on the process of reconciliation.

2001 - Carol Martin became the first Indigenous woman to be elected to a State Parliament when she won a seat in the Parliament of Western Australia.

2001 - The main industries in which Indigenous people were employed across all of Australia were government administration and defence (20%), health and community services (12%) and retail trade (9%). The main industries in which non-Indigenous persons were employed were retail trade (15%), manufacturing (12%) and property and business services (11%).

2002 - Between 1994 and 2002 the national unemployment rate for Indigenous adults decreased from 37 percent to 20 percent.



2000 - Overall representation of ongoing Indigenous employees dropped to 2.5%. Indigenous Australians were concentrated at the APS 1–2 levels and their representation at the APS 3–4 level was declining, even though the number of APS 3–4 positions had increased over the preceding few years.

2003 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS) established

ATSIS took the place of the administrative arm of ATSIC.

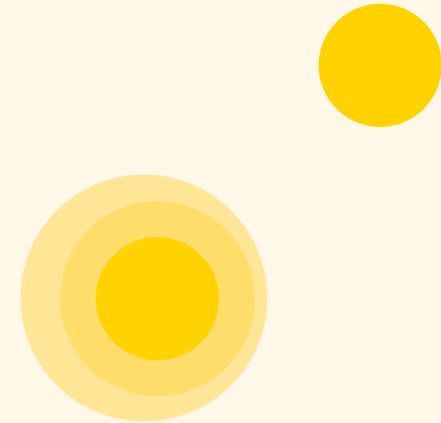
2004 - New arrangements for the administration of Indigenous affairs introduced

The Government announced the intended abolition of ATSIS and of the elected arm of ATSIC, and put in place new arrangements which included:

- appointment of a National Indigenous Council to advise a Ministerial Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs
- devolution of Indigenous-specific programmes to mainstream departments
- creation of Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICC's)
- adoption of Shared Responsibility Agreement and Regional Partnership Agreement approaches, and
- creation of the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination (OIPC) within the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, to coordinate a whole-of-government approach.

2004 - Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) established

IBA replaced the Commercial Development Corporation



**Indigenous employees represent
2.4% of all ongoing APS employees**

2004



2004 - The State of the Service Report found a trend of declining recruitment levels and falling retention rates for Indigenous employment in the APS. Indigenous representation dropped to 2.4% of ongoing employees. The report identified this as a critical business challenge facing the Australian Public Service, because it reduced agencies' ability to draw on the perspectives and abilities of a diverse workforce that reflected the needs and views of the whole Australian community.

2004 - An ABS study found that the employment rates and starting salaries for Indigenous graduates were higher than for non-Indigenous Australians.

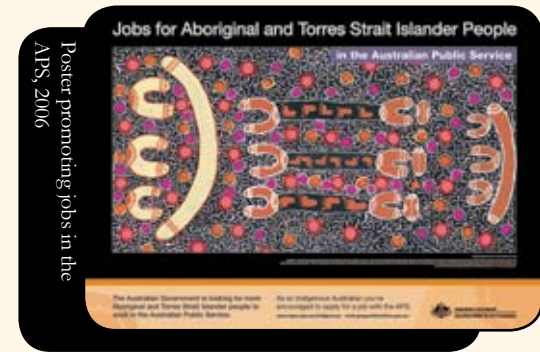
2005 - ATSIIC's elected arm and ATSIIS abolition bill passed by Parliament

2005 - Australian Public Service Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees commenced

The strategy was introduced in response to the challenges for Indigenous employment identified in the State of the Service Report. It includes five elements:

- supporting whole-of-government work on Indigenous policies and programmes
- pathways to APS employment
- supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS
- helping agencies be good employers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- partnerships

'Of course, we want the same opportunities for our people as everyone else gets – this should be a given not a privilege. But having the same opportunities is different from being the same and national inclusiveness is about creating space for our cultures to live alongside all other Australians.' Aden Ridgeway on leaving the Senate, 2005



2005 - Indigenous representation varied across agencies, with those that predominantly deliver services to or with Indigenous communities generally having higher proportions of Indigenous employees. The majority of Indigenous employees were engaged at the APS 3–4 and APS 5–6 classification levels. Representation at the EL classification continued to show growth, doubling over the last ten years.

2006 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian Public Service Employees Census Survey published

The Survey was undertaken by the Australian Public Service Commission to research the views of Indigenous APS employees. It showed that Indigenous employees were generally very positive about their work in the APS, with high levels of job satisfaction and pride in their roles as well as a belief that they were making a positive difference to the lives of Indigenous Australians.

2006 - OIPC became part of the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA)

2007 - 40th Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum

2007 - Ongoing implementation of the APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees



**Indigenous employees represented
2% of ongoing APS employees**

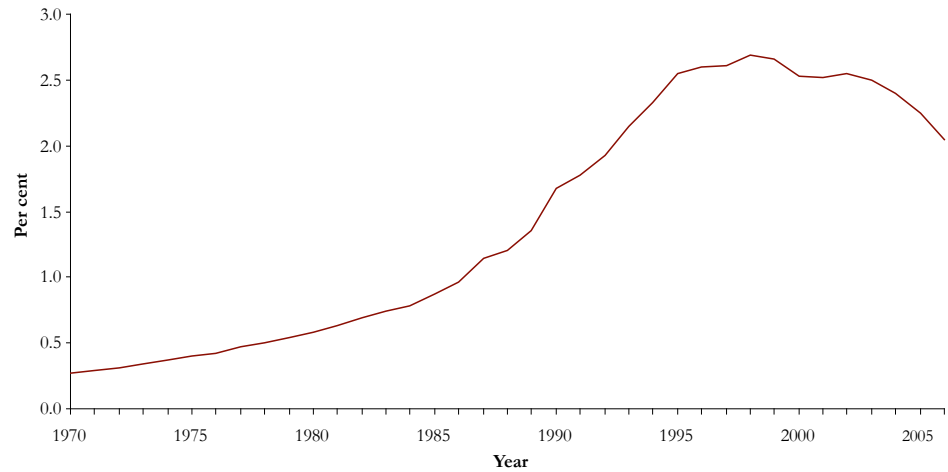
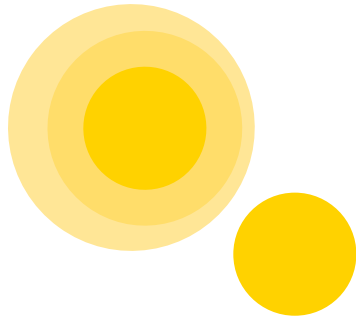
2006

2006 - Indigenous Australians represented 2% of the APS workforce. The number of Indigenous employees rose at EL, SES and Graduate trainee classifications. The employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people in the APS, however, continues to be a challenge for agencies.

Overall three agencies employed half of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees—Centrelink, Aboriginal Hostels and the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.



Ongoing employees - proportion who have identified as Indigenous, 1970 to 2006



Ongoing Indigenous employees by classification - 2006

2006			
	No.	% of class'n who are Indigenous	% of Indigenous employees
APS 1-2	287	4.8	10.4
APS 3-4	1278	2.6	46.5
APS 5-6	817	1.8	29.7
EL	293	0.9	10.7
SES	19	0.8	0.7
Trainee	30	6.7	1.1
Grad APS	26	2.7	0.9
Other	-	-	-
Total	2750	2.0	100.0



Source: APSED

APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees

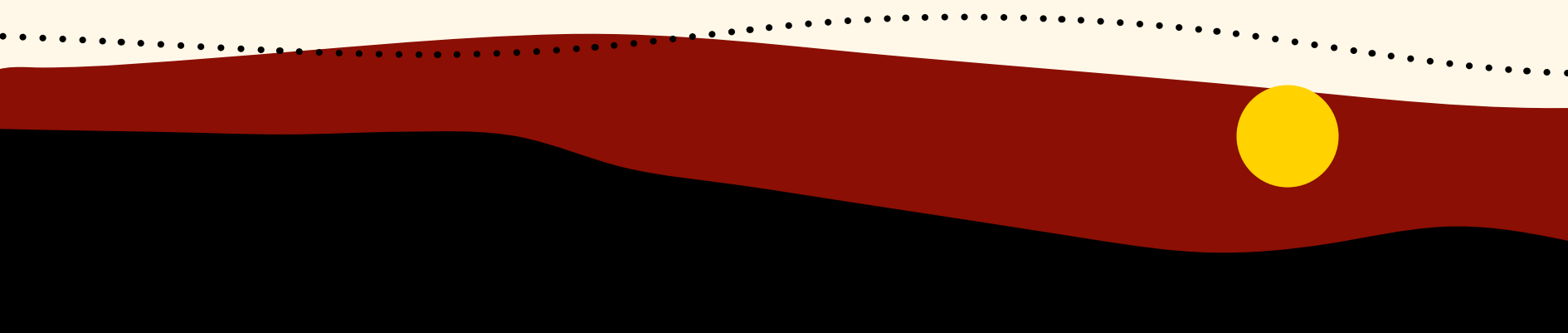
A suite of initiatives is currently being implemented under the auspices of the APS Employment and Capability Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employees.

Pathways to Employment

- *Indigenous Graduate Programme*—placed 25 Indigenous university graduates into ongoing positions with various APS agencies in both 2006 and 2007, with another intake planned for 2008.
- *Indigenous Cadetship Programme*—provided 32 university students with cadetships in various APS agencies in both 2006 and 2007, with a similar intake expected for 2008. Cadets are supported in their full-time studies and undertake 12 weeks of work experience during their study breaks.
- *Indigenous Entry Level Recruitment Programme*—placed 60 entry level recruits into various APS agencies in 2007, with a similar intake anticipated for 2008. Recruits are employed as ongoing officers and supported to complete Certificate level training.

Supporting Employees

- *Indigenous Career Trek*—delivered career development training workshops for 340 Indigenous employees in 14 locations around the country.
 - *Indigenous Capability Fund*—provided funding to support small to medium sized agencies to provide career development opportunities for Indigenous employees.
 - *Horizons—APS Indigenous Mobility Scholarship* – supports Indigenous employees to take up 4-6 month secondment opportunities with other APS agencies to assist in their career development.
 - *Indigenous Leadership Workshops*—provide leadership skill development and networking for Indigenous APS managers.
 - *Indigenous APS Employees Networks*—IAPSENs are located in capital cities and regional centres and provide Indigenous APS employees with a support and networking mechanism.
- Supporting Employers



Supporting Employees

- *Not Just a Job* and *Getting a Job in the APS*—booklets that aim to promote the APS as a good place to work, and to encourage and assist Indigenous Australians people to apply for jobs in the APS.
- *Cultural Competence Training Package*—including a training programme and e-learning managers' guide to help increase the capacity of APS managers and supervisors to manage Indigenous employees.
- *Indigenous Employment Strategy Better Practice Kit*—to assist APS agencies to develop and implement Indigenous employment strategies within their own agencies.



Promotions

- *Drawing Together*—sponsorship of a national art competition exploring reconciliation and promoting the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the APS.
- *Public Calling*—*APS Indigenous Career Ambassadors Campaign*—utilising Indigenous employees as Ambassadors in a radio, print and electronic media campaign focused on attracting Indigenous people with professional work experience into the APS.



Contacts:

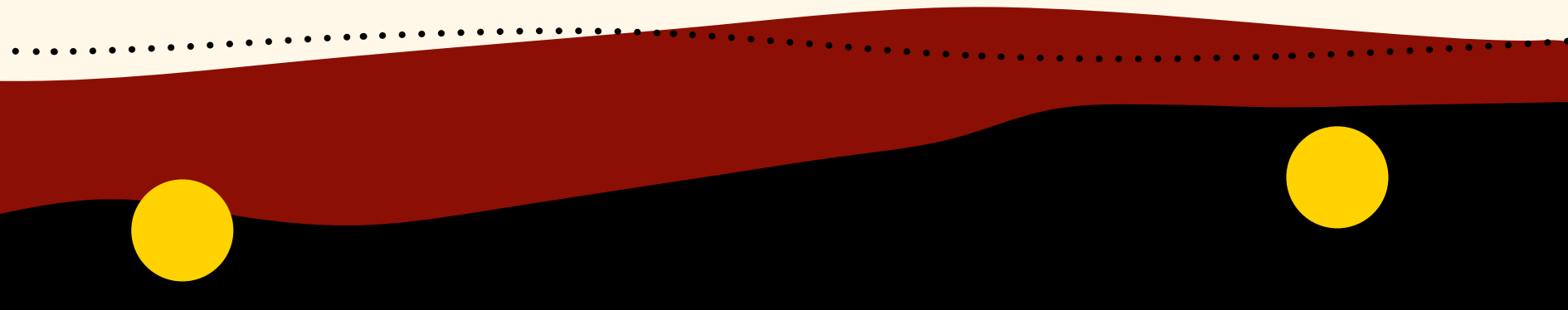
Australian Public Service Commission
Indigenous Employment Team

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For more information see:

www.apsc.gov.au/indigenous





Australian Government

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