

# Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education  
References Committee

## **Inquiry into indigenous training and employment outcomes**

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**Submission no:** 7

**Received:** 24/06/2004

**Submitter:** Mr Douglas Delaney

**Organisation:** Diz Home Improvements Pty Ltd

**Address:** PO Box 1280  
PENRITH NSW 2751

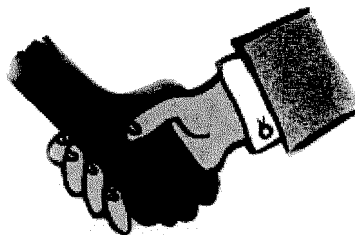
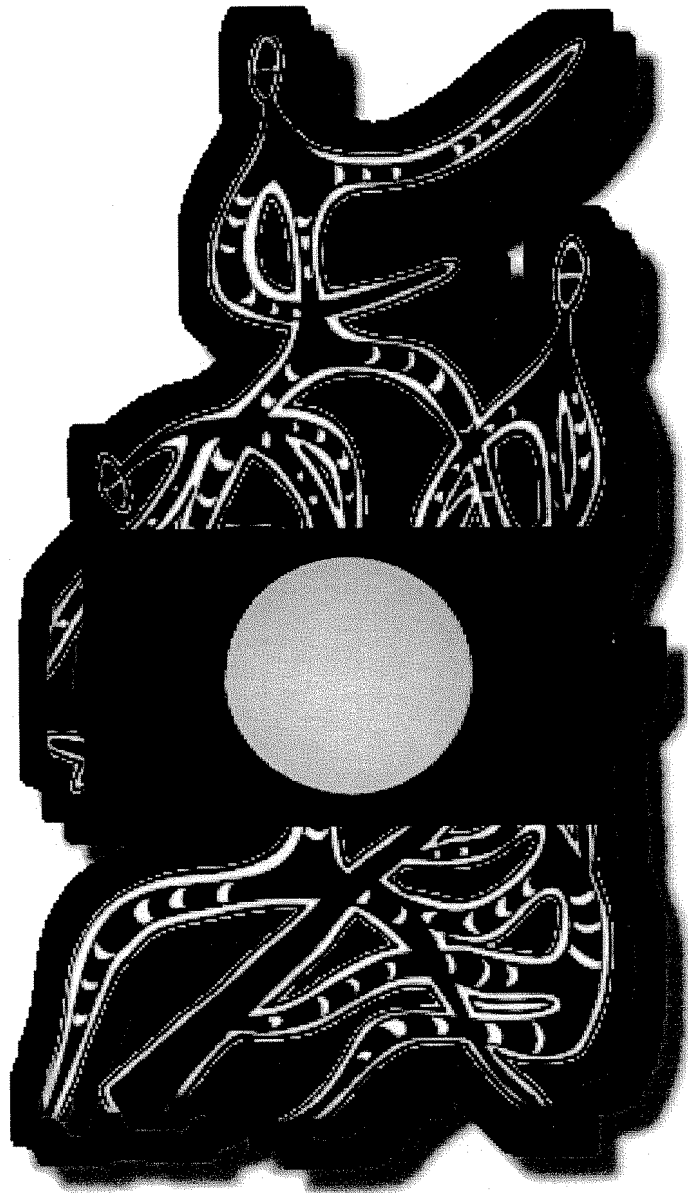
**Phone:** 02 9673 0455

**Fax:** 02 9673 0488

**Email:** [diz@pnc.com.au](mailto:diz@pnc.com.au)

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# Diz Home Improvements



The Way Forward

ABN: 53 096 986 202  
Building Licence 126474C  
PO Box 1280  
Penrith 2751

Phone: 9673 0455  
Fax: 9673 0488  
Email: [diz@pnc.com.au](mailto:diz@pnc.com.au)

## Submission

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References Committee

### **Inquiry into indigenous training and employment outcomes**

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**Submitter:** DOUGLAS DELANEY

**Organisation:** DIZ HOME IMPROVEMENTS PTY LTD

**Address:** PO Box 1280 Penrith 2751

**Phone:** (02) 9673-0455

**Fax:** (02) 9673-0488

**Email:** [[diz@pnc.com.au](mailto:diz@pnc.com.au)]

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NSW Aboriginal Housing Office  
Award Winner 2003  
"Employer of the Year"



NSW State Government Aboriginal  
Business & Employment Awards  
2003 Winner - "Emerging Business"

**Submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and  
Education Reference Committee**

**From:  
Diz Home Improvements**

**Contact Details**

This Submission is made by Diz Home Improvements Pty Ltd, an Aboriginal owned organisation concerned with Aboriginal employment in the construction industry in New South Wales, whose contact details as required are:

Mailing address: PO Box 1280 Penrith 2751

Telephone: (02) 9673-0455

Facsimile: (02) 9673-0488

E-mail: [diz@pnc.com.au]

**Key Messages**

1. Diz Home Improvements has developed an "Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy and Project Aboriginal Participation Plan" for the period 2004-2008 that aims to provide 18 Traineeships per year across three highly populated Indigenous communities within Sydney.
2. This Strategy is consistent with major policy documents, including the NSW Government approved *Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines January 2001*. ( the NSW Government is to be commended for establishing this initiative )
3. Diz Home Improvements is being frustrated in applying its "Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy" through decision-making practices in the NSW Department of Housing that do not hold large contractors accountable to their employment obligations under the *Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines January 2001*.
4. Because large contractors have been allowed to avoid their Aboriginal employment obligations, Diz Home Improvements is being precluded from access to contracts of commercial significance that can provide Traineeships for Aboriginal people in the construction industry.

5. Diz Home Improvements attaches its "Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy" and invites the Committee to validate its grievance with the NSW Department of Housing and recommend suitable contract compliance and re-allocation procedures where contractors fail to meet their Aboriginal employment obligations.
6. Diz Home Improvements would hope that the NSW Department of Housing might adopt such compliance and re-allocation procedures.

### **Relevance to References**

This Submission has direct relevance to several of the Committee's References, including:

"(d) the effectiveness of Commonwealth, state and territory-based initiatives to engage more Indigenous people in training and to encourage higher level skill acquisition in skilled trades and professions..."

"(e) models for engaging industry and Indigenous communities in partnerships to develop long-term employment opportunities for Indigenous people – in infrastructure development through to the arts – and the limitations and opportunities these confer."

### **Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy**

Diz Home Improvements has been trading since July 2001. Since 2003, Diz Home Improvements has completed total refurbishments of more than 360 homes and 289 kitchens for the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO), under their Housing for Aboriginal (HFA) upgrading program. In this year, Diz Home Improvements won The Employer Of The Year Award at the NSW Aboriginal Housing Board's Annual Awards, as well as The Emerging Business Award for the NSW Aboriginal Employment and Business Awards sponsored by the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

In 2004, with the winding down of the Aboriginal Housing Office NSW Housing For Aboriginals upgrading program, the Department of Housing offered Diz a limited amount of properties (70) to support a pilot Indigenous Traineeship program. Whilst this falls way short of the number of properties requested and required to sustain such an initiative DIZ agreed to the number of properties with 6 Aboriginal Trainees being employed. DIZ felt it was imperative that the company show leadership and commit to providing opportunities to local Aboriginals at any cost! Diz Home Improvements is seeking pre-qualification with the NSW Department of Commerce to be able to employ a further 6 Aboriginal Trainees within the Public Works Program.

Diz Home Improvements is an Aboriginal owned company based in St Mary's in Western Sydney. Western Sydney is its priority regional focus; inner Sydney and South Western Sydney are its other two regions for growth. The Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy and Project Aboriginal Participation Plan have developed statistical profiles of the

Indigenous communities in all three regions. Refer to pp. 11-16 inclusive of the attached Strategy.

The Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy is based on five goals. Refer to pp. 17-22 of the attached Strategy. They are:

- ❖ Recruitment
- ❖ Retention
- ❖ Training and Development, in conjunction with TAFE
- ❖ Cultural Competence
- ❖ Transparency

A detailed Operational Plan is provided at pp. 30-34 of the attached Strategy.

### **Contract Compliance**

Construction companies in NSW are obliged to comply with the *Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines January 2001*. This is one of those State initiatives that come within the ambit of Reference (d) of the senate Committee's inquiry and report. These *Guidelines* apply to large, medium and small construction firms. The NSW Department of Commerce has overall policy responsibility for these *Guidelines*.

In August 2003 it was stated by Senior Executives of the NSW Department of Housing at a meeting with Diz representatives that a number of large contractors to the NSW Department of Housing failed to comply with their obligations under these *Guidelines*. Operationally, the NSW Department of Housing was responsible for ensuring contract compliance in terms of the *Guidelines*. In January 2004, the NSW Department of Housing came to arrangements with these large contractors that effectively discharged the substance of their Aboriginal employment and training obligations.

The course of action that the NSW Department of Housing should have taken was to re-allocate the contracts to competent and complying competitors, such as Diz Home Improvements. This course of action was not taken. In effect, non-compliance with the *Guidelines* was waived whilst compliance was not rewarded.

### **Commonwealth Involvement**

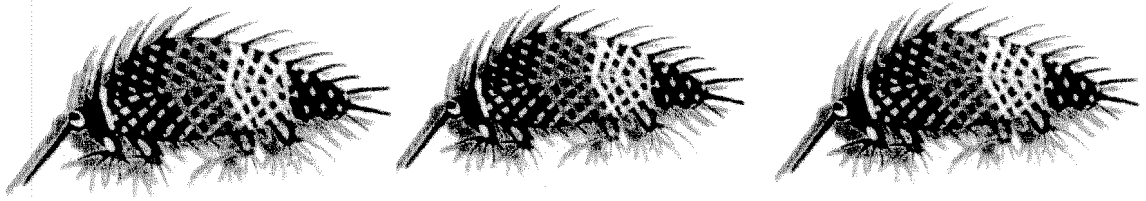
Where Commonwealth expenditures are involved, and by policy are linked to Aboriginal employment, education and training obligations, it is absolutely essential for the integrity of the policy that there be rigorous adherence to policy obligations. It would be outrageous if corporations were to win contracts from the government in part on the basis of their commitments towards Aboriginal employment, education and training, and for the corporations then to dishonour those commitments.

Diz Home Improvements is concerned that such practices are occurring in NSW with the NSW Department of Housing, which is a recipient of Commonwealth Government funding.

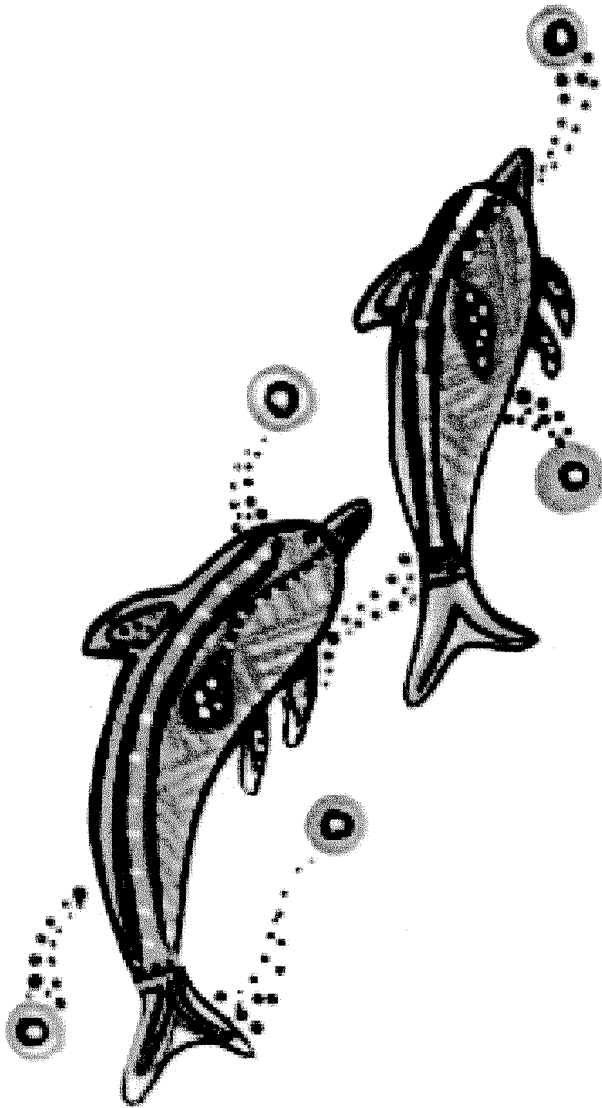
Diz is also concerned that the Department of Housing and the Department of commerce are exploiting CDEP numbers as fulltime employment outcomes.

Diz Home Improvements urges the Committee to enquire thoroughly into contract compliance practices for Aboriginal employment, education and training in NSW and to recommend appropriate, effective compliance procedures.

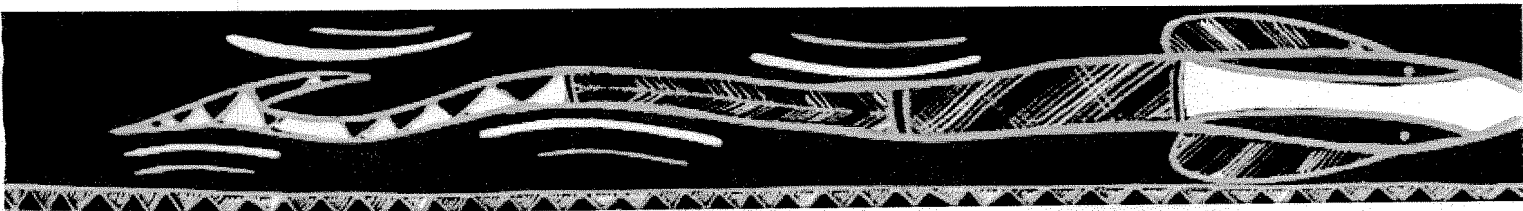
21<sup>st</sup> June 2004



## Diz Home Improvements Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy 2004-2008



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## Cover note:

The cover depicts the Aboriginal communities across the Sydney Basin and surrounding areas that the Diz Home Improvements Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy will be implemented in.

The Dolphins symbolise the ocean people in the East, with the Stingray representing the fresh water people of the West and the Echidnas represents the South Western area of Sydney. The Ochre colours accompanying the stingray image reflects the brackish waters of the extensive River systems of Sydney.

The artworks depicted on the cover and throughout this document are reproduced from the Culcha Disc Australian Aboriginal Images Volume 1.

### Artists:

Dolphins: Estelle Weeks

Echidna, Goanna and Hunter: Errol Roberts

Stingray: Lionel Phillips

Culcha Disc

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<sup>1</sup> Diz Home Improvements Aboriginal Enterprise Participation Strategy Compiled by DoddyWorx on behalf of Diz Home Improvements [doddy69@hotmail.com](mailto:doddy69@hotmail.com)

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## **Diz Home Improvements Policy Statement**

**Diz Home Improvements (DIZ) is committed to championing the reconciliation process, facilitating sustainable Aboriginal community directed development and community capacity building through the provision of training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in all facets of the building industries.**

**DIZ will not achieve this in isolation, it will however, continue to actively engage and encourage external partnerships with Government Departments, Government Construction Agencies, Training providers, contractors and the Aboriginal community to ensure long term employment and training outcomes.**

**Furthermore, DIZ is committed to increasing and improving the employment opportunities and the accessibility to on-going training for the Aboriginal communities of the Sydney, South Western and Western Sydney Metropolitan Regions. DIZ will employ a minimum of six Aboriginal trainees annually within both it's Public Works and Housing Upgrade Programs, whilst ensuring on-going employment for trainees after completion of qualifications with its extensive networks of contractors and job market specialist. DIZ will provide support mechanisms to ensure 100% retention rates of Aboriginal Trainees in the programs.**

**The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Company will manage the implementation of this Enterprise Aboriginal Participation Strategy. The CEO will ensure quality workmanship within the required timeframes and will encourage and instill a sense of community pride and community responsibility within and amongst the Trainees and employees through culturally competent and culturally safe strategies.**

**A generic Project Aboriginal Participation Plan, which is strategic and performance based supports this strategy. The plan has been developed to be flexible enough to be portable across projects and programs. Community development philosophies and frameworks underpin both the strategy and the plan.**

**Management is totally committed to ensuring the implementation of the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody Recommendations 307 and 326, and unequivocally supports the implementation of the Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation guidelines January 2001. DIZ will ensure regular review and evaluation of this strategy to measure outcomes and performance.**

***DIZ, the way forward!!***

**Douglas Delaney  
CEO  
Diz Home Improvements 04/02/04**

## **Introduction**

The DIZ Enterprise Aboriginal Participation Strategy 2004-2008 has been informed by:

- the *Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines January 2001*;
- The NSW Construction Policy;
- The Recommendations of The Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody.

The Strategy has been developed in accordance with the Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines January 2001. It has been specifically designed to integrate and fall in line with key areas within the guidelines, in particular the areas of Commitment, Enhanced Prosperity for Aboriginal Communities and Cultural Sensitivity.

The strategy outlines the commitment of DIZ to the advancement of Aboriginal people, whilst also providing the foundation and framework for training and employment initiatives across the company's two work programs, the Department of Housing Upgrade Program and Public Works Program.

The major aim of this strategy is *"to empower the Aboriginal community to attain sustainable community development with a focus on capacity building through traineeship and employment programs"*.

The Strategy targets five major areas:

- ◆ **Recruitment:**  
To increase the number of skilled Aboriginal people employed in the Construction Industry.
- **Retention:**  
To ensure ongoing support mechanisms and career opportunities exist for the Aboriginal workforce.

- **Training and Development:**

To ensure a highly skilled, trained and professionally developed Aboriginal workforce with career development opportunities throughout the Construction Industry.

- **Cultural Competence:**

To ensure that DIZ provides a culturally safe and culturally competent environment for Aboriginal staff and Aboriginal clients.

- **Transparency:**

To ensure opportunities for transparency, participation and involvement of the local Aboriginal communities.

The strategy seeks to target Aboriginal Youth, providing support for improved life outcomes and focuses on capacity building. The Strategy will enable Aboriginal Youth to obtain selected key competencies of national competency standards for the general construction industry. Trainees will be guided through a series of trades (as part of their accredited workplace training) with the goal of assisting them to make informed decisions about future apprenticeship, employment and training options.

This strategy will support DIZ's commitment to Aboriginal Youth, as reflected in our current practice. DIZ currently employs six Aboriginal trainees within the Housing Upgrade Program and are looking to maintain this across the two programs and the life of the strategy. One trainee per program will be offered an apprenticeship in their chosen trade with DIZ. The remaining trainees will be supported by DIZ to find apprenticeships via our extensive networks of private contractors and employment companies (engaged and vetted by us).

We envisage that support of our apprentices does not stop with the attainment of their trade certificate. We would like to support our apprentices to extend their qualifications to professional levels, therefore providing a career pathway for Trainees.

The Strategy also promotes the ideals of civic responsibility, cultural awareness and cultural competence. As part of their training, DIZ trainees are encouraged to participate in community working bees. Community working bees are integral to the outcome of increasing self-esteem and community pride. Therefore giving trainees not only trade skills to generate income, but also an enhanced capacity to be involved in community projects, hence giving the community both social and economic capital and there by building their capacity to achieve sustainable community development.

A generic Project Aboriginal Participation Plan, encompassing flexibility and adaptability between projects will enable trainees to attain the identified outcomes. Performance indicators and responsibilities will be tailored to specific projects.

This strategy provides DIZ and their Program and Project partners with a strategic framework with which to provide real culturally safe on the ground training for Aboriginal people. It provides an overview of how DIZ will ensure the provision of sustainable training and development and employment opportunities for Aboriginals in the building industry up to 2008 (See Appendix 1&2). Furthermore, this strategy if embraced provides the NSW Government with a cost effective blue print for the culturally competent implementation of the Aboriginal Participation in Construction Guidelines across the Sydney Basin region.

## **Background**

Monumental amounts of monies have been allocated to Public Works and Department of Housing programs over the years, however we can affirm by illustration that little has been done for Aboriginal Enterprises in our communities to establish real accession to self-management and self-sufficiency. This is no where more evident than in the Aboriginal communities of Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney.

In response to the low rates of Aboriginal people involved in the construction industry and Government projects, the NSW Government launched the Aboriginal Participation In Construction Guidelines 2001. The purpose of these guidelines is to:

*“Facilitate the achievement of positive Aboriginal participation in the form of training, employment, and enterprise development on government construction projects; and, Make Aboriginal participation a common feature of Government projects, which significantly impact on Aboriginal communities”.*<sup>1</sup>

The development of these guidelines coupled with the high unemployment rates of Aboriginal people have been the driving force and motivation behind the establishment of DIZ Home Improvements PTY. LTD.

DIZ Home Improvements PTY LTD has been trading since July 2001. It is an Aboriginal owned and operated building and Construction Company. DIZ Home Improvements PTY LTD has been developed by Aboriginals for Aboriginals. The keynote is “SUPPORT”, not direction.

Although DIZ is a private Aboriginal enterprise, and is not an Aboriginal community controlled organisation, it does however incorporate community development philosophies and frameworks, of which are overriding factors in the way DIZ conducts its business. Furthermore, social justice issues underpin our business philosophy and management plans.

With this in mind DIZ has made a commitment to engage the NSW Government and it's agencies involved in the construction industry and training and development, with the specific intent of collaboratively providing training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in the Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western regions.

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<sup>1</sup> NSW Aboriginal Participation Guidelines 2001

DIZ is well positioned in this regard, firstly DIZ has access to the Aboriginal communities within these regions, and furthermore we have the capacity to offer training and employment opportunities.

### **Traineeship Program**

In keeping with DIZ guiding principles and its commitment to community capacity building, in 2002 the company engaged NSW TAFE to develop in partnership an on the job training program specifically targeting Aboriginal youth. The training was realised in December 2003 with the recruitment of 6 Aboriginal Trainees to participate in **Certificate 2 in Construction**. (See Appendix 3)

The Traineeship Program has been developed in collaboration with NSW TAFE, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Resitech Australia and the N.S.W. Aboriginal Housing Office. The trainees enrolled in this course attend UWS Nirimba campus for the theoretical component of the trade course. DIZ facilitated the practical component of the course, through work placement training. On completion of training, DIZ will offer students positions (apprenticeships) within the company, whilst also engaging other companies who deal with DIZ to employ trainees. It is envisaged that on completion of their certificate, students will have had a broad experience of trades through the on the job component of the course and possess a tertiary qualification. The combination of diverse experiences and Certificate based qualifications will ensure DIZ Trainees are very competitive in the building industry apprenticeship market.

Initially the pilot program will be concentrated on the Aboriginal communities of the Western Sydney Metropolitan Region and then extend to the Aboriginal communities of the Sydney and South Western Sydney region. It is envisaged that it will address in part the high unemployment rate amongst Aboriginal Australians in the Western Sydney Metropolitan Region, and in the long term give the Aboriginal communities across the Sydney Basin the capacity to self determined sustainable community development. This initiative directly links into the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody Recommendation: 326.

### **Housing Upgrade Program**

Resitech Australia and the N.S.W Aboriginal Housing Office have both lead the way in promoting sustainable Aboriginal community development and self-management by embracing a contract appointment model for Aboriginal builders, in particular DIZ. This model of negotiating contracts through their upgrading program falls under the banner of positive discrimination.

This contract model is an innovation for Aboriginal enterprises and Aboriginal people to establish a real accession to self-sufficiency and self-management within our communities. It allows Aboriginal companies such as DIZ to access contract work without participating in the tendering process.

Since 2003 DIZ has completed total refurbishments of over 360 homes and 289 kitchens for the New South Wales Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) under their Housing For Aboriginal (HFA) upgrading program. In 2004, the HFA upgrading program is winding down with the majority of upgrades having been completed. With this in mind, DIZ approached the NSW Department of Housing through Resitech Australia with a view of collaboratively providing work programs for an Aboriginal traineeship program.

The Department of Housing provided 70 properties for the 2004 traineeship program. Whilst this falls way short of the number of properties requested and required to sustain such an initiative (See table 2 Appendix 2), DIZ agreed to the number of properties and 6 Aboriginal Trainees have now been employed. DIZ felt it was imperative that the company show leadership and commit to providing opportunities to local Aboriginals at any cost! "From Little Things Big Things Come".

### **Public Works Program**

DIZ has grown since it's inception with a growth in skilled staff, assets and equipment. With this growth comes a greater capacity to diversify across the construction industry. With this in mind, DIZ aims to gain pre-qualification with the Department of Commerce to tender for single-trade projects, multi-contract construction projects being managed by the Department of Commerce. It is envisaged that DIZ will be provided with projects that will enable another 6 Aboriginal Trainees per year to be employed within its Public Works Program. Therefore increasing employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal people across Sydney and highlighting it's commitment to the Aboriginal Participation in Construction Guidelines. By providing work programs to support the DIZ Traineeship initiative, quality work can be achieved whilst also providing real social outcomes for Aboriginals.

### **Aboriginal Land Corporation**

At the time of writing this strategy, DIZ applied to the Aboriginal Land Corporation (ILC) to support the acquisition of land under the ILC Social Program. The ILC is a statutory authority set up by the Commonwealth Government to assist Aboriginal people to acquire and manage land in a sustainable way.

DIZ has a long term commitment to building the capacity of Aboriginal communities across Sydney Basin. To achieve the company's major aims and goals it is imperative that DIZ provide long term culturally competent training and development, and employment opportunities to Aboriginal communities. To facilitate this, DIZ will endeavor to acquire land with the specific intention of building a multi purpose facility, incorporating a factory area for sustainable enterprise activities and a building industry specific training and development centre.



The primary purpose will be to facilitate and support the development of a youth program that provides training and employment opportunities for young Aboriginal Australians, therefore creating a vehicle for sustainable Aboriginal community directed development and community capacity building.

## Current Position

### DIZ Home Improvements

From inception, through to the 2003 financial year DIZ had completed total refurbishments of over 360 homes and 289 kitchens for the New South Wales Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) under their Housing for Aboriginal (HFA) upgrading program. The company is based in St Marys and conducts business from a 650 square metre factory. The company owns and operates a panel saw and an edge bander, allowing us to build kitchens and other cabinet making furniture in house. Currently DIZ has 6 vehicles in its fleet. Including a 4 ton Pantec truck, a large van, 3 x 1 ton utes and one delivery Ute.

Being an Aboriginal owned company which is locally based in the Western Suburbs, whilst having extensive networks across the Aboriginal communities of the Sydney Basin, ensures the company is very well positioned to create employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal people in the construction industry. There by giving DIZ access to a potentially very large Aboriginal applicant pool.

Currently DIZ employs 18 staff, 10 (56%) of which are Aboriginal. At the time of writing this strategy 10 (56%) of the staff were employed as permanent, 2 (11%) as casuals and 6 Trainees (33%).

Table 1 Ethnicity of staff

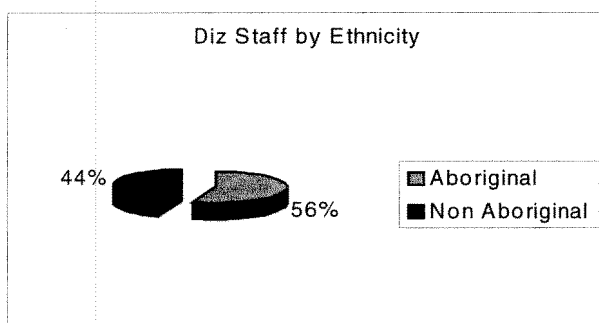
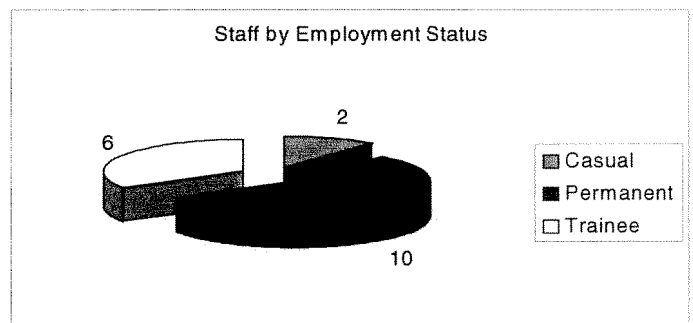


Table 2 Employment Status of staff



In 2003, DIZ won two industry awards.

- **The Employer Of The Year Award**  
Department of Housing/ NSW Aboriginal Housing Board's Annual Awards
- **The Emerging Business Award**  
NSW Aboriginal Employment and Business Awards are was sponsored by the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

## **Aboriginal Profile**

### Data

For the purpose of this document Indigenous Australians refer to people who have identified as being of either Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage. The data we have tabled is based on the DIZ Project areas of the Aboriginal communities of Sydney Metropolitan (Eora) area in particular, South Western Sydney (Tharawal) and Western Sydney (Deerubbin), including the specific suburbs of interest of which are the focus of the DIZ Traineeship Program.

DIZ has obtained the following data from a number of sources including the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services Data Shop, the ABS Aboriginal Profiles Census 2001, ABS Community Profile Census 2001 and on the ground local Centrelink staff. It must be noted that data was very hard to come by via Government Departments, of which are politically influenced in regards to what data they will release. This was very evident when the Department of Family and Community Services released only limited benefits information to DIZ, of which was specifically requested for this document. The Officer responsible sited political reasons for firstly delaying and then filtering the data they released to DIZ.

There are also a number of other external variables that may impact on the data and need to be highlighted.

Due to a number of historical factors that have directly and negatively impacted on Aboriginal Australian peoples, some Aboriginal Australians refuse to identify as Aboriginal for Government Departments and ABS Census.

A major component of the data utilised in this section is derived from Census 2001 data, given that the Census data is 3 years old, information may well be outdated. As an example, a large number of the Aboriginal Working age (15 Years and over) informants who were counted as not part of the Labour Force, (n= 8203) across the Aboriginal communities of Sydney Metro, South Western Sydney and Western Sydney areas, may now in fact be in the Labour Force, of which recognises the Unemployed as one of its statistical components.

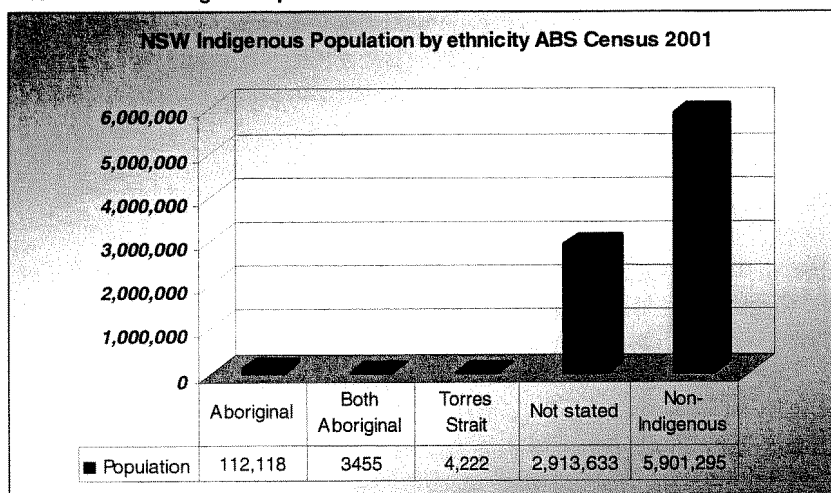
For ease of reading, the unemployment rates presented are based on areas and not specific suburbs, therefore the combined percentage rates on the regional tables may not truly reflect the high unemployment rates of some of the suburbs where significant numbers of Aboriginal people reside within those regions.

Government Departments do not require mandatory identification of Indigenous Australian Heritage. The data is dependent upon participants volunteering to identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Therefore, it is recognised that the data may not be accurate and may under represent the true number of Aboriginal Australians across NSW, Sydney and Australia. However, considerable care has been given to ensure the integrity of the Data.

### People of Aboriginal Origin New South Wales

The total population of New South Wales on Census night 2001 was 6,311,168. Of this number there were 119,865 people (**1.9% NSW Population**) who identified as being of Aboriginal origin in the 2001 Census. 1.7% n= 112,118 identified as Aboriginal, with a further 0.5% n= 3455 identifying as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. Torres Strait Islanders made up 0.6% n= 4222. Non Aboriginal people constitute 66% n= 5,901,295 of NSW population, with 33% not stating their ethnicity. The “not stated” number is quite significant, as it may account for a large number of Aboriginal people referred to earlier as not wanting to identify as Aboriginal.

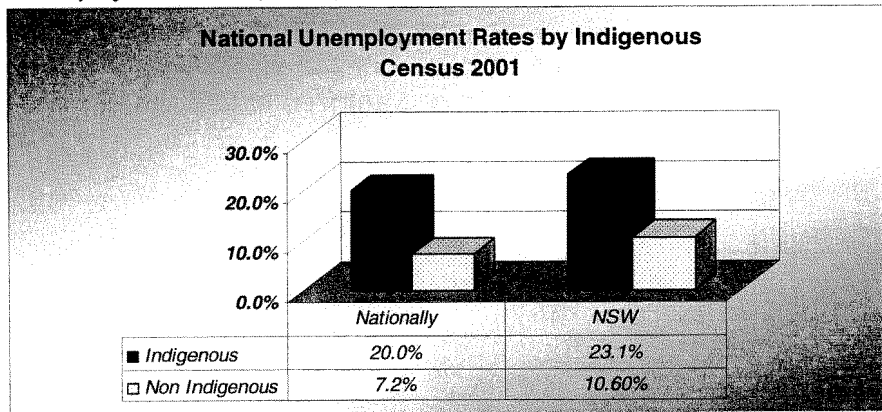
Table 3 NSW Aboriginal Population



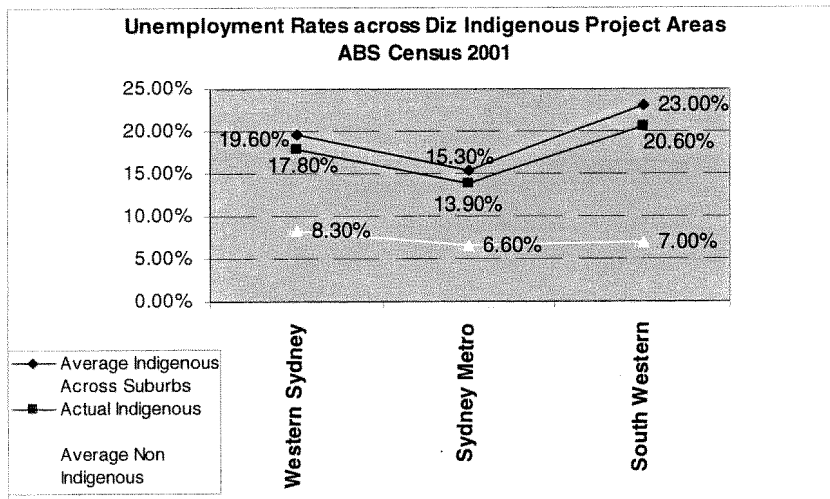
### Aboriginal Labour Force at a Glance

As the statistics below indicate the unemployment rate of Aboriginal people across Australia and across NSW are very high especially compared to the mainstream unemployment rates nationally.

**Table 4:** Aboriginal unemployment rates (20%) were almost 3 times of non Aboriginal people (7.2%), nationally. Across New South Wales, Aboriginal people have over twice the unemployment rates (23.1%) as non Aboriginal people (10.6%).



**Table 5:** The average Aboriginal unemployment rate across the Diz Project areas varied. Sydney Metro area having a rate of 15.3%, the Western Suburbs 19.6% and the South Western area with the highest of 23%. However, this does not reflect a true indication of rates by suburb. (See Suburbs Of Interest Tables, Aboriginal Communities in Diz Project Areas section)



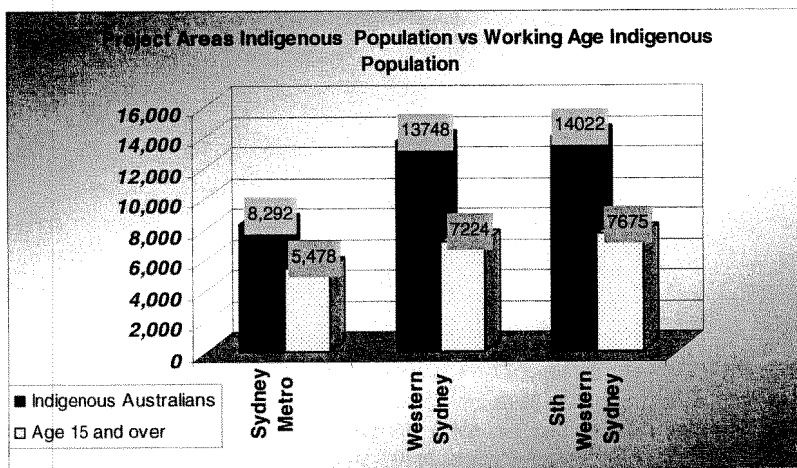
## **Aboriginal Communities in the DIZ Project Areas**

The DIZ Project Areas are the specific geographic areas chosen by DIZ to develop and provide training and employment opportunities in the building industry for Aboriginal communities. The project areas include the Sydney Metropolitan, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney areas.

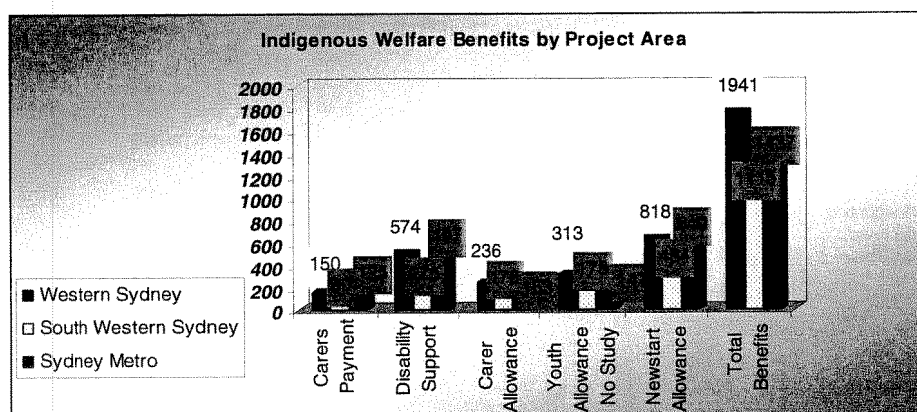
There were 38,749 people (32% of NSW Indigenous) who identified as being of Aboriginal origin in Sydney in the 2001 Census. Of those, the Sydney Metropolitan area had 8,292 people identify as Aboriginal, (21%) whilst Western Sydney had 13,748 (35%) and South Western Sydney 14,022 (36%) of Sydney's Aboriginal population. (ABS Census 2001, Snapshot Sydney).

Of these, 20377 were aged 15 years and over, which represented 52% of the Sydney Aboriginal population. Given the low retention rates of Aboriginal students in the Education system potential employees and trainees of DIZ are as young as 15.

**Table 6 Working Age Aboriginal across Diz Project Areas**



**Table 7 Welfare Benefits:** Data from Centrelink indicate that 1,942 (35%) of Aboriginal people 15 years and over in Western Sydney are on benefits, with Sth Western having 1,115 ( 15.4%) and the Sydney metro area with 1,437 (18.7%)



<sup>1</sup> All Data used in Tables 3, 4,5,6,8 has been sourced from ABS Census 2001 Aboriginal Profiles  
Data used in Table 7 has been sourced from the Department of Family and Community Services, Data Shop 2004

## Suburbs of Interest

The Aboriginal communities in the DIZ Project areas represent a very significant number of the New South Wales Aboriginal population. Scattered across these areas are numerous individual Aboriginal communities, all vibrant and all with very unique identities. Many very well known and some a little more discreet and less known. Unfortunately, a great number of these communities suffer from the usual symptoms of low socio economic areas, including poor health, low educational retention rates and high unemployment rates. Therefore, limiting educational and training opportunities and further reducing real and meaningful employment.

DIZ has specifically developed the Aboriginal Enterprise strategy, with these communities in mind. Whilst our focus will be to involve, recruit, train, employ and support community members from all the Aboriginal communities across the DIZ Project Areas, we have identified a number these communities as "Suburbs of Interest". It is envisaged that Diz will target these "Suburbs of Interest" with a view of facilitating community capacity building through our traineeship program, supported by our Aboriginal Participation Project Plan, building on the wealth of social capital already existing within these communities.

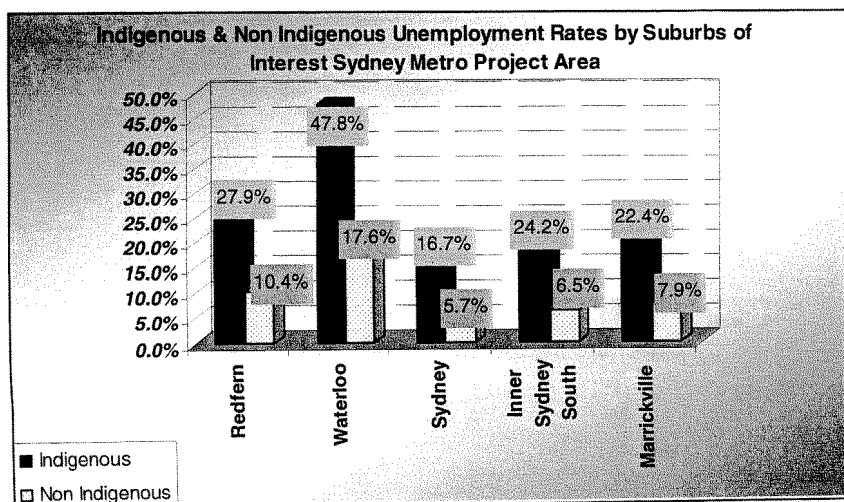
The following 3 tables highlight the unemployment rates and the variance between Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal peoples within "Suburbs of Interests" across DIZ Project areas in 2001.

## **Sydney Metro**

The Sydney Metropolitan area encompasses a number of significant Aboriginal communities, which include Redfern, La Perouse, Marrickville and Waterloo. Although the average Aboriginal unemployment rates for the combined Sydney area was 15.3%, the individual suburbs reflect much higher rates in their own right, especially when you compare them with the non Aboriginal rates in these suburbs.

**Table 8: Unemployment rates Suburbs of interest Sydney Metro**

Waterloo (47.8%), Redfern (27%) and Inner Sydney (24.2%) have between two to three times the unemployment rates of Non Aboriginal populations of these suburbs.

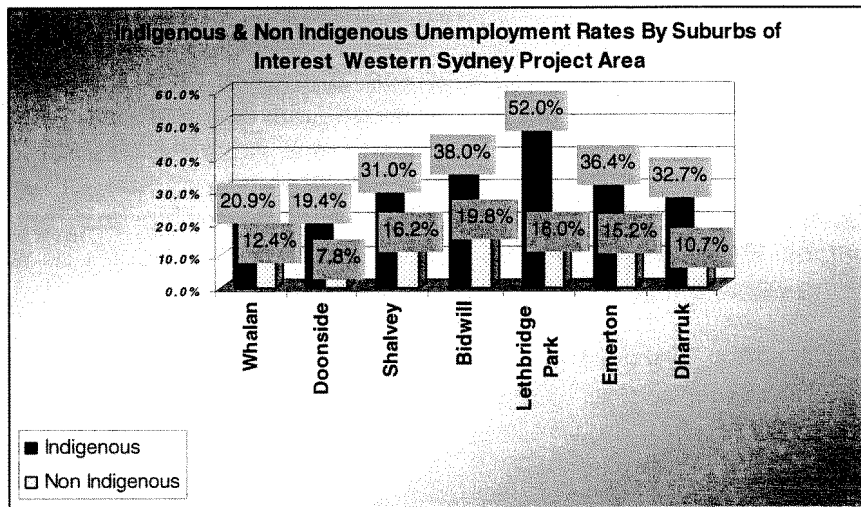


## Western Sydney

The suburbs of Mt DrUITt, Blacktown, Penrith and Parramatta are incorporated in the Western suburbs DIZ Project area, with suburbs in Mt DrUITt contributing to the highest Aboriginal unemployment rates across the Western Sydney Project area in 2001.

**Table 9 Unemployment rates Suburbs of interest Western Sydney:**

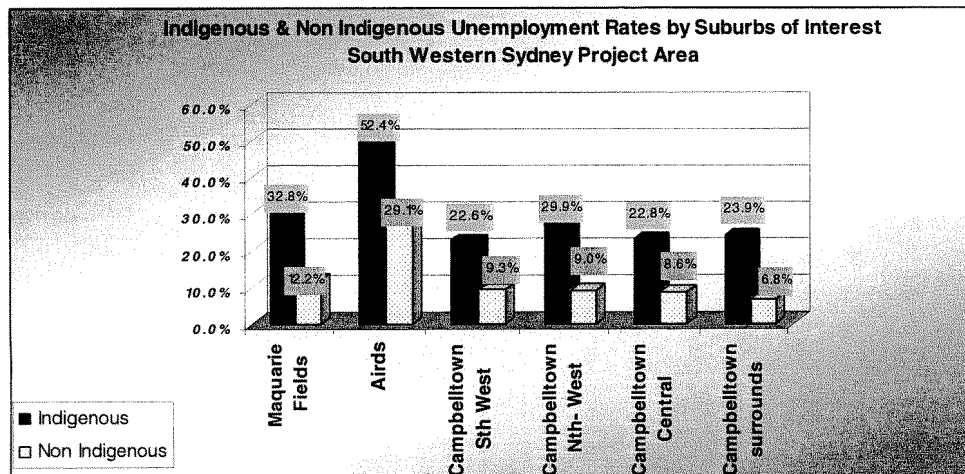
While unemployment rates are very high for all people living in Mt DrUITt, Those Aboriginal people living in Lethbridge Park (52%) had over 3 times the rate of Non Aboriginal people living there in 2001.



## South Western Sydney

The DIZ South Western Sydney Project Area covers the area between Fairfield and Liverpool through to Campbelltown and Camden. All the "suburbs of Interest" in the table below, exhibited high unemployment rates with Airds having a staggering 52% Indigenous Unemployment rate. In Campbelltown Nth West Indigenous people had 3 times (29.9%) the Unemployment rate of Non Aboriginal people in this suburb.

**Table 10 Unemployment rates Suburbs of interest South Western Sydney**



## **The Strategy**

The DIZ Enterprise Aboriginal Participation Strategy 2004-2008 has been developed in accordance with the Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines January 2001. It has been specifically designed to integrate and fall in line with key areas within the NSW Construct Policy, the Royal Commissions Into Black Deaths in Custody Report and the Aboriginal Participation in Construction Implementation Guidelines, in particular the areas of Commitment, Enhanced Prosperity For Aboriginal Communities and Cultural Sensitivity.

### **Aim and Goals**

#### **The major aim of this Strategy is:**

*To empower the Aboriginal community to attain sustainable community development with a focus on capacity building through traineeship and employment programs.*

To achieve this aim five major Goals have been identified in the areas of Recruitment, Retention, Training and Development, Cultural Competence and Transparency.

### **Commitment**

Given that DIZ is an Aboriginal owned and operated company, its commitment to this strategy is two fold. From a company perspective, the Management of DIZ Home Improvements is fully committed to the aims and objectives of this Strategy. Management will ensure the implementation of the Strategy and the Project Plan as outlined within Policy Statement and the Project Participation Plan.

From a cultural perspective management has a cultural obligation to the community, it must ensure that it supports and facilitates the empowerment of the community to reach their full potential as Aboriginals.



## Planning

A generic Project Participation Plan supports the DIZ Enterprise Strategy. It has been developed in this manner to facilitate flexible adaptation across Programs and Projects. The plan was developed through consultations with local Aboriginal community representatives, industry consultants, TAFE, DEWRS and staff of DIZ. The plan outlines key objectives, strategies, milestones and performance indicators, with specific strategies and processes to ensure a culturally safe working environment. A major strategy is to establish Aboriginal Reference groups in all regions identified in the Strategy. The establishment of these Reference Groups will provide a mechanism for the local communities to have input and involvement in decision making.

## Measurement, Evaluation, and Review

In 2003 Resitech Australia instituted a new evaluation and monitoring process, which required all contractors to be regularly reviewed on a quarterly basis. The assessments are conducted over a broad range of criteria; with a score given from a possible perfect score of 120 points. At the time of writing this Strategy, Diz had participated in two of these reviews, and had improved their score from an initial score of 86 to a positive performing 105.

To ensure that DIZ continues to improve and maintain a high level of service and workmanship, the company has a number of quality assurance processes in place. These include policy and procedures, financial management systems, time in motion systems and on the job assessment tools. DIZ employs a consultant to assist with the regular 6 monthly internal review of the program and strategy. All objectives are measurable with realistic performance indicators. Staff and trainees are also given an entry and exit survey.

## Implementation Strategy

The Implementation Strategy broadly outlines the aims and objectives; DIZ has set itself to achieve the major aim of this Strategy. It forms the foundation for the more specific Aboriginal Participation Operational Plan. This model is currently being implemented through the Diz DOH program. In December 2003, DIZ employed 6 Aboriginal Trainees for the DOH Program. The implementation of this strategy is the responsibility of the CEO. Although day to day supervision of trainees is the responsibility of tradesmen and general staff. All of DIZ's resources are allocated to the strategy, as it is explicitly intertwined within the core business of the company. All sub contractors are made aware of their obligations in regards to the Enterprise Strategy and are required to sign an agreement with DIZ.

**Recruitment:****Objective 1:**

DIZ demonstrates an ongoing commitment towards the recruitment, retention, training and career development of Aboriginal peoples.

**Strategies**

- Develop a Memorandum Of Understanding with TAFE NSW
- In collaboration with NSW TAFE, develop appropriate courses such as Carpentry and Joinery, Painting, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpet and Vinyl Floor laying, Wall and Floor Tiling, Fencing, Financial Administration and Real Estate.

**Objective 2**

To increase the number of Aboriginal students from the Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Metropolitan Regions participating in and completing trade and other relevant courses.

**Strategies**

- Offer at least 6 Traineeships per year in both Public Works Program and Department Of Housing Program
- In conjunction with TAFE course provide on the job training such as Carpentry and Joinery, Painting, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpet and Vinyl floor laying, Wall and Floor Tiling, Fencing, Financial Administration and Real Estate.
- Promote Traineeship programs in local High schools and TAFE.
- Target advertisements for vacancies to Aboriginal groups and in Aboriginal media.

**Retention:**

[REDACTED]

**Objective1**

To ensure a 100% retention rate of Aboriginal Trainees

**Strategies**

- Provide transport and support for students to attend TAFE and on the job training;
- Facilitate career path planning and culturally appropriate support mechanisms (formal and/or informal);
- Develop a mentoring program, utilising senior staff;
- Provide a culturally sensitive Orientation Program.

**Training and Development:**

[REDACTED]

**Objective 1**

To increase and improve the employment opportunities and access to on-going training for the Aboriginal communities of the Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney Metropolitan Regions.

**Strategies**

- Offer at least one apprenticeship per year for one of the Certified Trainees;
- Find Apprenticeships for Trainees with other firms and job market professionals who deal with DIZ each year;
- Encourage and support students to complete further Tertiary studies. eg. Engineering, Architect.

- Conduct regular Performance review, inclusive of training needs analysis for current and future DIZ staff;
- Audit staff and Trainee performance reviews;
- Develop strategies to promote participation in training;
- Provide opportunities for staff to participate in training and development programs;
- Apply to ILC to buy land and build Multipurpose enterprise and training centre.

**Cultural Competence:**



**Objective 1**

To increase the number of culturally competent workers in the building industry.

**Strategies**

- Provide Cultural Awareness training for all Trainees;
- Promote and provide Diz Cultural Awareness Program to other contractors and Government Departments in the construction industry.

**Objective 2**

Encourage and instill a sense of community pride and community responsibility within the Trainees.

**Strategies**

- Encourage trainees to participate in community projects;
- Have local elders visit periodically;
- Conduct regular working bees in the community as part of on the job training;
- Promote trainee achievements locally and nationally.

## **Transparency:**



### **Objective 1**

To improve participation of Aboriginal peoples in the planning, development and implementation of construction programs within their communities, there by better positioning them to attain sustainable community development.

#### **Strategies**

- Establish 3 Aboriginal Reference Groups across Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney;
- Ensure reference groups are reflective of communities in the area;
- Develop terms of reference for Groups.

### **Objective 2**

To review strategy and develop an evaluation framework to measure project outcomes.

#### **Strategies**

- Engage a consultant to develop framework and to analyse data;
- Conduct periodic review of pilot (6 monthly);
- Survey stakeholders (Trainees, senior staff, TAFE and DEWRSB);
- Audit Trainee performance reviews;
- Audit Entry and Exit surveys.

## **Project Aboriginal Participation Plan**

The Project Aboriginal Participation Plan is in fact the Strategy's operational guide for implementing the Strategy. It is the tool utilised by DIZ as a framework to implement the DIZ Enterprise Strategy. It highlights the more specific strategies, timeframes and indicators that will support the effective implementation of the Strategy. It outlines in detail how DIZ will increase and improve Aboriginal Training and employment opportunities across the Sydney Basin.

The working model presented in this document is the current Aboriginal Participation Operational Plan used by DIZ for the implementation of the Department of Housing Traineeship Program. This model is very generic and will be used across Programs and Projects. It has been developed to be flexible enough to be adapted across projects and programs, with time frames, performance indicators and responsibilities needing only to be tweaked for specific projects.

A flow chart has been attached (Appendix 1) to highlight how DIZ will establish three working sites across the DIZ Project Areas highlighted in the strategy.

# APPENDICES

## **Appendix 1: Page 26, Project Flow Chart**

Chart highlights the expected timeline and progression of Trainees across the Project Areas. It clearly identifies how DIZ will ensure local input through the establishment of local Aboriginal reference groups.

Each year at each site another 6 Trainees will be employed. It is envisaged that over the life of project 72 Trainees will have participated, 9 of whom will have been employed specifically with DIZ as Apprentices, with the remainder having been supported to be placed in Apprenticeships within the industry.

General staff will increase from 18 to 39 across the Project Areas.

## **Appendix 2: Page 26: 2 Tables**

### **Table 1: A Graph highlighting potential staffing for Traineeship program across Project Areas.**

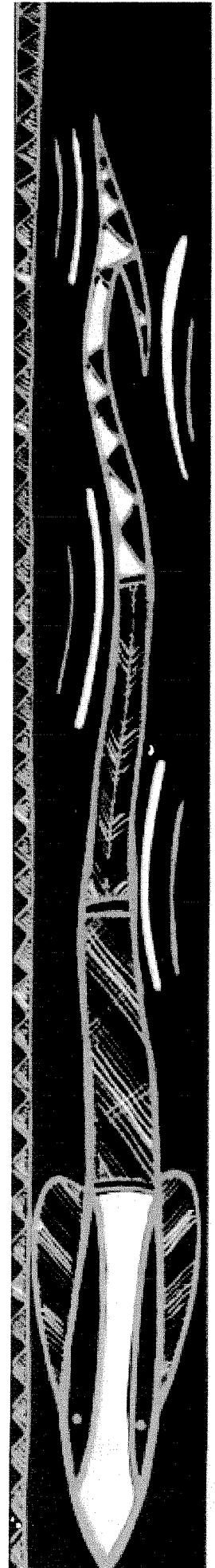
Graph with breakdown of actual Traineeships and Apprenticeships available over time of project.

### **Table 2: A graph with Work Required across DIZ Project Areas, for sustainable Aboriginal Employment and Traineeship initiative.**

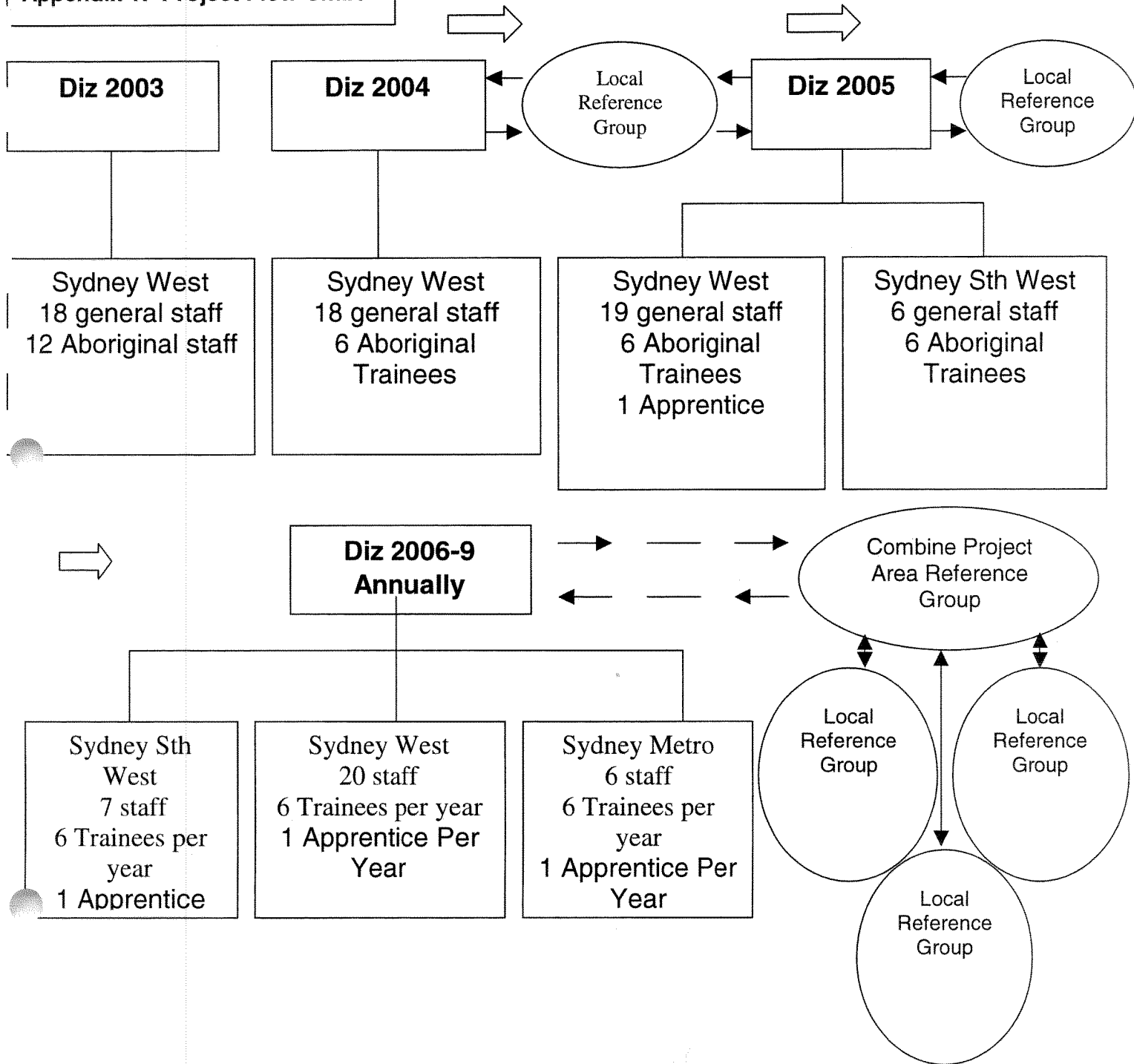
Breakdown of work programs required annually to sustain initiative.

## **Appendix 3: Page 26, Certificate 2 Construction Competencies**

This table outlines the specific competencies and units included in the Certificate 2 Construction TAFE program.



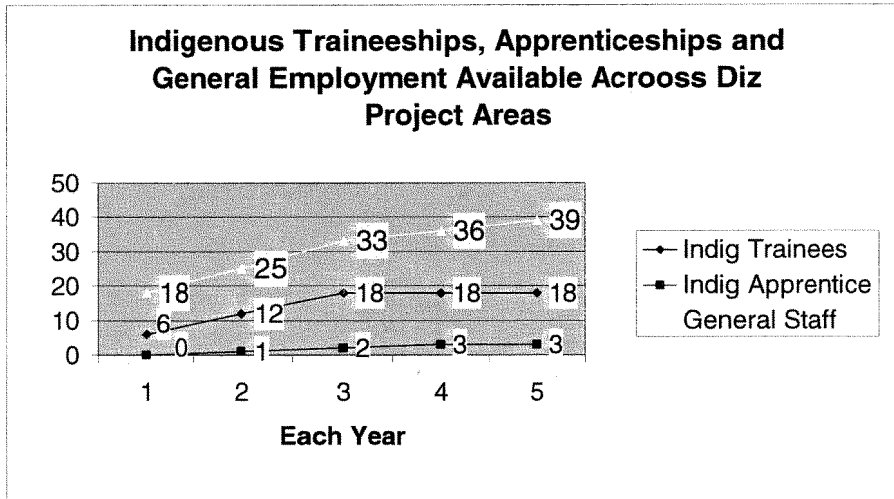
**Appendix 1: Project Flow Chart**



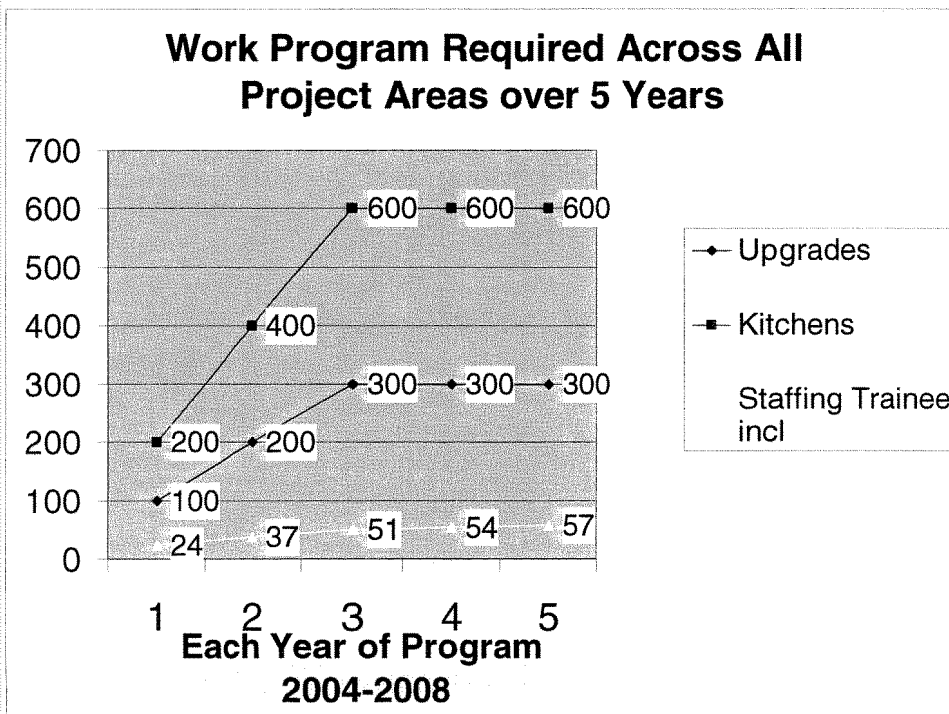


**Appendix 2: Graphs highlighting staffing and Work required over 5 years.**

**Table 1**



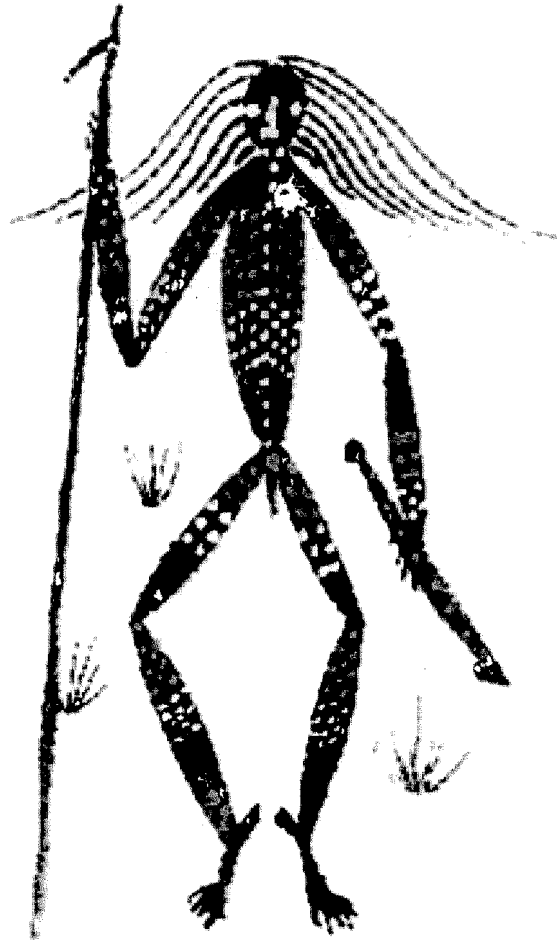
**Table 2**



### Appendix 3: Certificate 2 Construction Competencies

**Table 3**

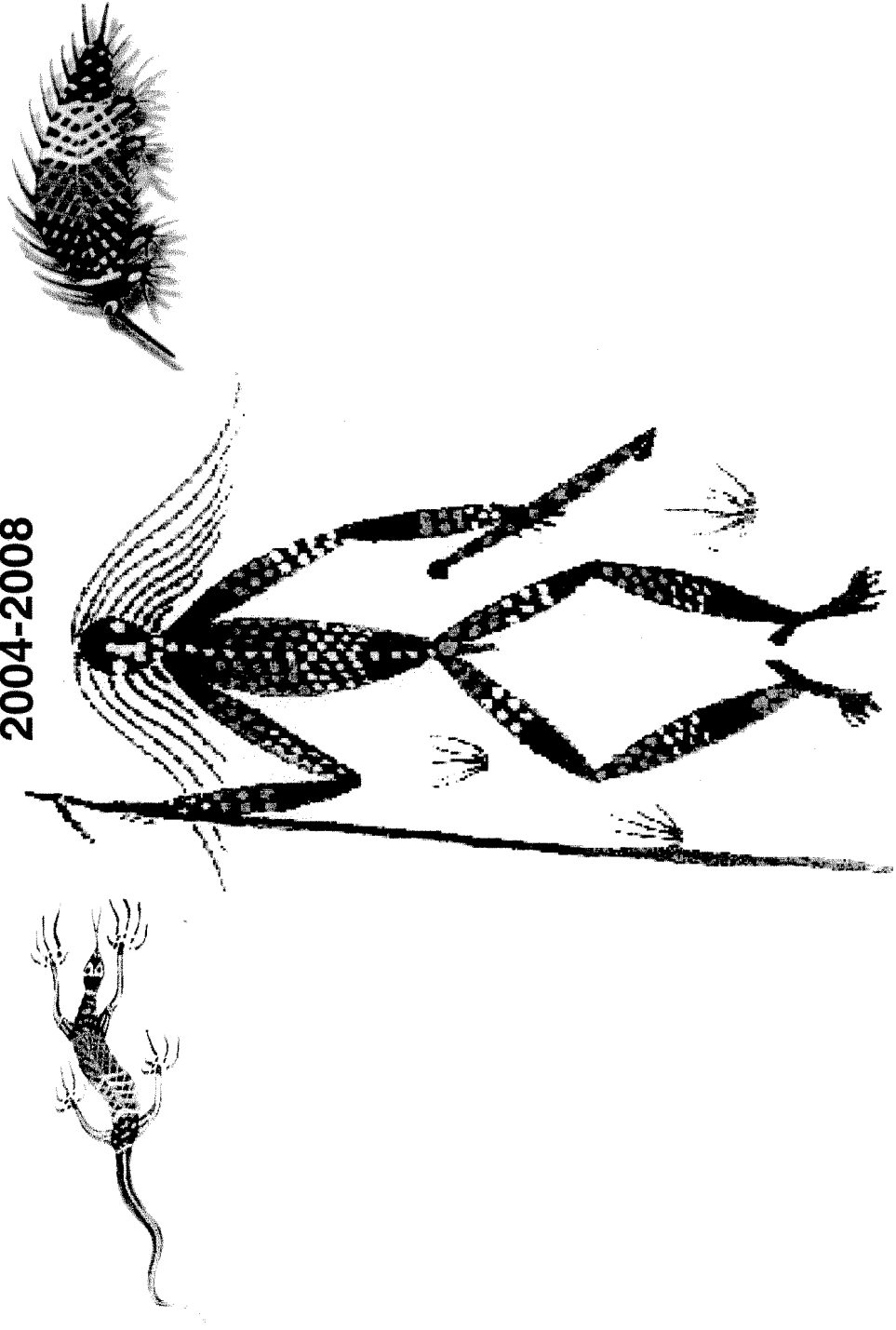
Unit Number	Unit Title	Core/ Elective
BCG1000A	Carry out interactive workplace communication	Core
BCG1001A	Carry out OH7S requirements	Core
BCG1002A	Plan and organise work	Core
BCG1003A	Read and interpret plans	Core
BCG1004A	Carry out measurements and calculations	Core
BCG1005A	Use hand and power tools	Core
BCG1006A	Use small plant and equipment	Core
BCG1007A	Erect and dismantle restricted height scaffolding	Core
BCG1008A	Use simple leveling devices	Core
BCG1009A	Carry out excavation and install support	Core
BCG1010A	Carry out concreting to simple forms	Core
BCG1011A	Handle construction materials and safe disposal of waste	Core
BCG1012A	Prepare for construction process (Wall & Floor)	Elective
BCG1013A	Prepare for construction process (Solid Plastering)	Elective
BCG1014A	Prepare for construction process (Dry Wall Plastering)	Elective
BCG1015A	Prepare for construction process (Brick/ Block Laying)	Elective
BCG1016A	Prepare for construction process (Carpentry)	Elective
BCG1017A	Prepare for construction process (Demolition)	Elective
BCG1018A	Prepare for construction process (Steelwork)	Elective
BCG1019A	Prepare for construction process (Painting and Decorating)	Elective
BCG2001A	Prepare surfaces	Core
BCG2003A	Carry out general demolition	Core
BCG2004A	Carry out leveling	Core
BCG2007A	Operate elevated work platforms (EWP)	Core
BCG2000A	Assemble simple partition frames	Elective
BCG2002A	Oxy/ LPG acetylene cutting	Elective
BCG2005A	Erect and strip formwork for concrete work	Elective



DoddyWorx  
doddy69@hotmail.com

**DIZ Home Improvements Project Aboriginal Participation Plan  
Operational Plan**

**2004-2008**



## DIZ Aboriginal Participation Plan

<b>Goal: Recruitment</b>		<b>Aboriginal people employed in the Construction Industry.</b>	
<b>To increase the number of skilled</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<p>Objective</p> <p>Diz demonstrates an ongoing commitment towards the recruitment, retention, training and career development of Aboriginal peoples</p> <p>To increase the number of Aboriginal students from the Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Metropolitan Regions participating in and completing trade and other relevant courses.</p>	<p>Develop a Memorandum Of Understanding with TAFE NSW</p> <p>In collaboration with NSW TAFE, develop appropriate courses such as Carpentry and Joinery, Painting, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpet and Vinyl floor laying, Wall and Floor Tiling, Fencing, Financial Administration and Real Estate.</p> <p>Offer at least 6 Trainee<sup>1</sup>ships per year in both Public Works Program and Department Of Housing Program</p> <p>In conjunction with TAFE course provide on the job training such as Carpentry and Joinery, Painting, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpet and Vinyl floor laying, Wall and Floor Tiling, Fencing, Financial Administration and Real Estate.</p> <p>Promote Traineeship programs in local High schools and TAFE.</p> <p>Target advertisements for vacancies to Aboriginal groups and in Aboriginal media.</p>	<p>MOU developed by February 2004</p> <p>Development of course by February 2004</p> <p>6 Trainees recruited by February 2004</p> <p>On the Job Training commences March 2004</p> <p>Promote Diz and Trainees at Career Expo</p>	<p>MOU signed off</p> <p>Course developed</p> <p>6 Trainees Recruited</p> <p>Trainees are participating in on the Job training</p> <p>Participation at least 1 Aboriginal Career Expo 2004</p>

<b>Goal: Retention</b>			
<b>To ensure ongoing support mechanisms and career opportunities exist for the Aboriginal workforce.</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
To ensure a 100% retention rate of Aboriginal Trainees	<p>Provide transport and support for students to attend TAFE and on the job training.</p> <p>Facilitate career path planning and culturally appropriate support mechanisms (formal and/or informal)</p> <p>Develop a mentoring program, utilising senior staff</p> <p>Provide a culturally sensitive Orientation Program</p>	<p>Purchase a bus by February 2004</p> <p>Trainee Support Group established by the end of first term</p>	<p>Bus purchased</p> <p>Support Group established</p> <p>100% of students complete trainees certificate</p>

<b>Goal: Training and Development</b> <b>To ensure a highly skilled, trained and professionally developed Aboriginal workforce with career development opportunities throughout the Construction Industry.</b>			
Objective	Strategies	Milestones	Indicators
<p>To increase and improve the employment opportunities and access to on-going training for the Aboriginal communities of the Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney Metropolitan Regions.</p>	<p>Offer at least one apprenticeship per year for one of the Certified Trainees.</p> <p>Find Apprenticeships for Trainees with other firms and job market professionals who deal with Diz each year.</p> <p>Encourage and support students to complete further Tertiary studies. eg. Engineering, Architect.....</p> <p>Conduct regular Performance review, inclusive of training needs analysis for current and future Diz staff</p> <p>Audit staff and Trainee performance reviews</p> <p>Develop strategies to promote participation in training</p> <p>Provide opportunities for staff to participate in training and development programs</p> <p>Apply for ILC Grant to buy land and build Multipurpose enterprise and training centre</p>	<p>Trainee Graduation</p> <p>Offer apprenticeship at Graduation</p> <p>First PPR conducted by July 2004</p> <p>Conduct first PPR</p> <p>Application finalised and sent</p> <p>Funds Granted</p>	<p>100% Trainees employed as Apprentices</p> <p>Trainee enrolled in University</p> <p>At least one PPR conducted for each staff member annually</p> <p>Strategies Developed</p> <p>Number of staff participating in training</p> <p>Centre Built</p>

<b>Goal: Cultural Competence</b> <b>To ensure that DIZ provides a culturally safe and culturally competent environment for DIZ staff, and furthermore to champion Cultural competency across the Construction industry.</b>		
Objective	Strategies	Indicators
<p>To increase the number of culturally competent workers in the building industry.</p> <p>Encourage and instill a sense of community pride and community responsibility within the Trainees</p>	<p>Provide Cultural Awareness training for all Trainees</p> <p>Promote and provide DIZ Cultural Awareness Program to other contractors and Government Departments in the construction industry.</p> <p>Encourage trainees to participate in community projects</p> <p>Have local elders visit periodically</p> <p>Conduct regular working bees in the community as part of on the job training</p> <p>Promote trainee achievements locally and nationally</p>	<p>At least one Cross Cultural Awareness Training Day Conducted 2004</p> <p>Working bee conducted every quarter</p> <p>Provide promotional story on Pilot in Koori Mail and TAFE Publication.</p> <p>100% of staff participate in Cultural Awareness</p> <p>AT least one Working Bee conducted in the community by July 2004</p>



<b>Goal: Transparency To ensure opportunities for transparency, participation and involvement of the local Aboriginal communities.</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<p>To improve participation of Aboriginal peoples in the planning, development and implementation of construction programs within their communities, there by better positioning them to attain sustainable community development.</p> <p>To review strategy and develop an evaluation framework to measure project outcomes.</p>	<p>Establish 3 Aboriginal Reference Groups across Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney</p> <p>Ensure reference groups are reflective of communities in the area.</p> <p>Develop terms of reference for Groups.</p> <p>Engage a consultant to develop framework and to analyse data</p> <p>Conduct periodic review of pilot (6 monthly)</p> <p>Survey stakeholders (Trainees, senior staff, TAFE and DEWRSB)</p> <p>Audit Trainee performance reviews</p> <p>Audit Entry and Exit surveys</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> meeting of Reference Group</p> <p>TOR's developed and signed off</p> <p>Consultant engaged</p> <p>Framework developed</p> <p>Review tools developed</p> <p>Pilot Review conducted</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Reference group established by April 2004</p> <p>Level of involvement from Reference Group members</p> <p>Three reference groups are meeting regularly</p> <p>An evaluation report written and tabled to stakeholders, 1 month after pilot completed.</p>

