Queensland Ambulance Service

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2024

Our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The Queensland Ambulance Service acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands and seas, and pays respect to Elders past, present, and emerging.

This plan uses the term 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rather than 'First Nations' or 'Indigenous' peoples. However, the Queensland Ambulance Service acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's right to self-determination and respects the choice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to describe their own cultural identities, which may include these or other terms, including particular sovereign peoples (for example, Yodinji or Turrbal) or traditional place names (for example, Meanjin Brisbane).

Our commitment to human rights

We will respect, protect and promote human rights in our decision-making and actions.

Caring for our mob together

The QAS Indigenous artwork represents the connection between the QAS and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community with each of the elements having specific meaning. At the centre of the design, traditional and modern health, as well as values of respect and inclusion merge to create a 'healing pathway', representing the journey to better healthcare. The healing pathway is accessible and moves through the diverse communities, sharing knowledge and caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Cover artwork

This artwork, created by QAS officer Louise Sing, represents diversity and inclusivity within the Queensland Ambulance Service and aims to convey features and characteristics that may be portrayed by each of us. Every person is unique; however, the overlap of the hands represents that we all share similarities, and we all have a number of interconnected characteristics. We hope that every person in our organisation can identify with at least one aspect of one of the hands. Diversity unites us.

Queensland Ambulance Service **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan** 2023–2024

Equity, diversity and inclusion in the QAS

The QAS is committed to ensuring an inclusive and supportive workplace that enables all employees to participate, contribute, and thrive.

Workplace equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural safety are key concepts to support the engagement of our workforce and ensure that the QAS is representative of the community we serve. The QAS has made strong commitments to progressing equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural safety by allocating resources, developing plans, and undertaking initiatives to build and mature our approach.

As the principal provider of pre-hospital emergency medical care and ambulance services in Queensland, the QAS remains committed to purposefully work towards building a workforce that better reflects the community we serve and will foster diverse and inclusive workplaces where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued.

The QAS Strategy 2022-2027 (QAS Strategy) and QAS Workforce Plan 2023-2028 (QAS Workforce Plan) frames our commitment to achieving a diverse and inclusive workplace and are supported by two action plans:

- QAS Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2023-24 (Action Plan)
- the QAS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2023–2026

Cultural Capability Action Plan

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2023–2026 is the third Plan released by the QAS. The Plan identifies and prioritises key cultural capability strategies and actions for the next three years and complements the QAS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2023-24.

The Plan is aligned with the Queensland Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework, and the Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010–2033, which provides the strategic direction for cultural capability planning.

The Plan is underpinned by the abovementioned frameworks guiding principles:

1. valuing culture;
2. leadership and accountability;
3. building cultural capability to improve economic participation;
4. engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and business; and
5. culturally responsive systems and services.

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Commissioner's foreword

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) is committed to creating an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace culture where every employee can contribute and thrive.

As acknowledged through the recently released QAS Workforce Plan 2023-2028, QAS recognises that equity, diversity, inclusion and respect are core components of a contemporary workforce and are vital to improving our peoples' experiences, patient care and connection with our communities.

Equity, diversity and inclusion help us build our organisational capability by promoting safety and respect, driving innovation and allowing greater collaboration. This assists us in supporting the diverse needs of the Queensland communities and the patients we serve. The QAS wants to leverage off the experiences and perspectives of all our employees to foster an inclusive workplace, where employees feel like they belong, are valued and are meaningfully engaged.

Embracing equity, diversity and inclusion is a key part of facilitating significant culture change and ensuring that the service evolves to be reflective of the Queensland population. We aspire to be truly illustrative of a contemporary workforce that is adaptive to change and that is representative of our state. Together, we will be able to deliver more appropriate and responsive healthcare services to our patients and communities.

The QAS's equity, diversity and inclusion landscape is complex and relies on strong leadership, advocates, and governance to drive sustainable change and continuous improvement. As leaders and individuals, we all play a significant role in driving this change.

We are fortunate that within the QAS, there is more that unites us, than divides us. We aim to embed equity, diversity, and inclusion into our business-as-usual to ensure better outcomes for the Queensland communities we serve and contribute towards the QAS vision of *Excellence in ambulance services*.

Kind regards,

Craig Emery ASM
Commissioner
Queensland Ambulance Service

Our vision

Strengthen the services we provide for our Queensland communities by intentionally embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion into our workplace, so all our people feel safe, supported, reflected, and respected.

Our workforce

QAS is strengthened by our diverse workforce, across Queensland and across workstreams and disciplines.

QAS Workforce Profile as at PPE 2 July 2023	Full Headcount 6,415	Operational 5,995 (93%)	Public Service 420 (7%)
Service Delivery Type	Frontline 5,995 (93%)	Frontline Support 242 (4%)	Corporate 178 (3%)
Gender Identity	Female 3,380 (52.7%)	Male 3,028 (47.2%)	Non-Binary/Gender Diverse 7 (0.1%)
Generational Diversity	Under 25yrs Old 465 (7%)	Between 25-45yrs Old 3,722 (58%)	Over 45yrs Old 2,228 (35%)

Culturally & Linguistically Diverse	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander 150 (2%)	Australia South Sea Islander 10 (0.2%)	Born Overseas 92 (1%)	Language other than English* 187 (3%)

* Language other than English spoken at home.

QAS Aurion EEO and Workforce Data as at pay period ending 2 July 2023.

Our audience

Everyone!

We all play a crucial role in shaping our workplace culture.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion supports every single QAS employee, as well as the communities we serve. QAS recognises that there are diverse groups that are underrepresented within our workforce and communities and further commits to implementing initiatives to increase employment and improve our employee workplace experiences in these areas:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Gender equity
- People with disabilities
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people (CALD)
- LGBTIQA+ community, and
- Generational diversity (under 25 and over 45 years of age).

Please refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2023-2026, which outlines our commitment and initiatives for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Whilst we acknowledge that we have a responsibility to provide a safe workplace for underrepresented groups, we also recognise that each and every person brings with them a unique set of characteristics and perspectives that continuously betters QAS and, ultimately, drives excellent patient care.

Individual diversity

Diversity is an all-encompassing term that incorporates every single person and should be reflective of our populations and the communities that we serve. Not only does diversity and inclusion include intrinsic characteristics, such as age, ethnicity, intellectual/physical ability, cultural background, sexual orientation, and gender identity; it is also inclusive of education level, socioeconomic status, faith, marital status, caring and family responsibilities, work experience and languages spoken.
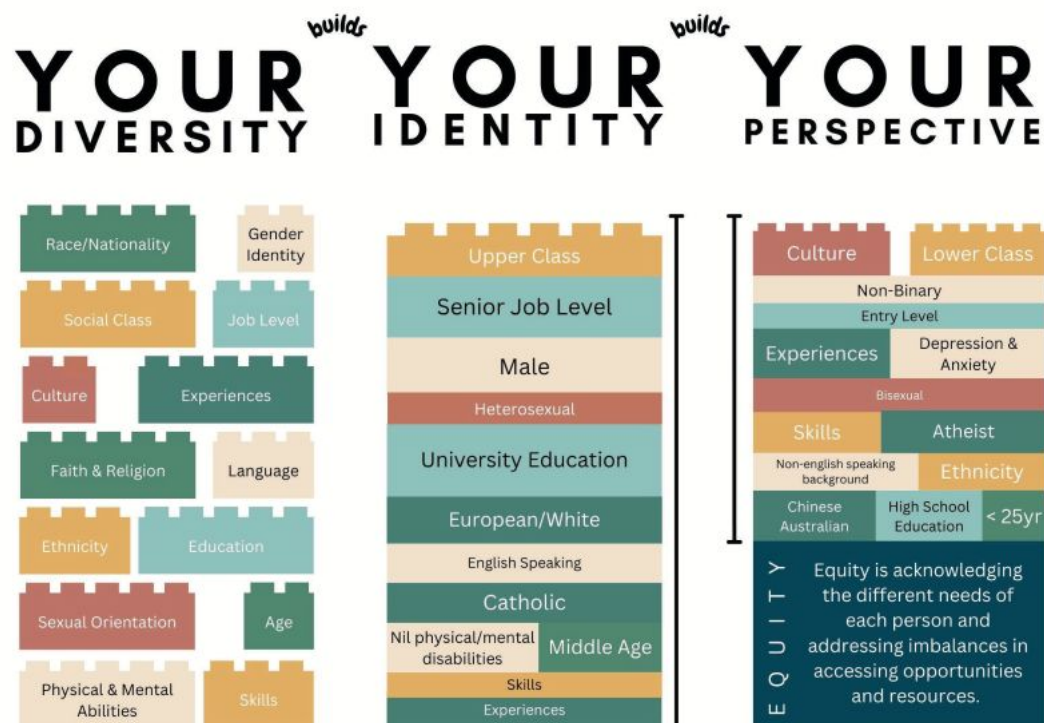
Our commitment

Unity in diversity

Inclusive workplaces value diversity as an asset and utilise it to improve performance. Having a diverse and inclusive organisation is conducive to being more coherent and effective at sharing ideas, further promoting a sense of safety. Embedding equity within an organisation ensures that all individuals have access to a full range of organisational opportunities to be successful and drive organisational performance.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion have been found to have profound impacts on service delivery and improved outcomes in a vast array of sectors. Wider healthcare research demonstrates that having the following traits in an organisation has a positive impact on patient care. These traits include strong leadership and an inclusive workplace culture underpinned by equity, diversity, and inclusion, and free from bullying, discrimination, harassment, and racism[1,2,3].

DIVERSITY
QAS being available to all of our diverse QLD communities

EQUITY
All patients being able to access care safely, without barriers or fears

INCLUSION
Feeling seen and heard, being asked for input or feedback

BELONGING

Further research strongly links diversity and inclusion to employee engagement, workplace culture, improved patient experiences and better health outcomes. Flexibility, trust, workplace belonging, cohesion and internal resources to support staff are also linked with improved patient satisfaction[4].

Awareness of diversity has great advantages when delivering healthcare to the community. A lack of diversity results in communication breakdown[5], limited perspectives, bias[6], lack of future diversity and lack of role models.

In line with the five-year QAS Workforce Plan, the QAS aspires to also embed equity, diversity, and inclusion into our business-as-usual, in that time frame. We commit to safer workplaces and practices where our people can feel empowered to speak up, have meaningful connections, feel valued, and be reflective of the diverse communities we serve. Through our actions, herein, we will ultimately enhance the provision of healthcare to the Queensland public.
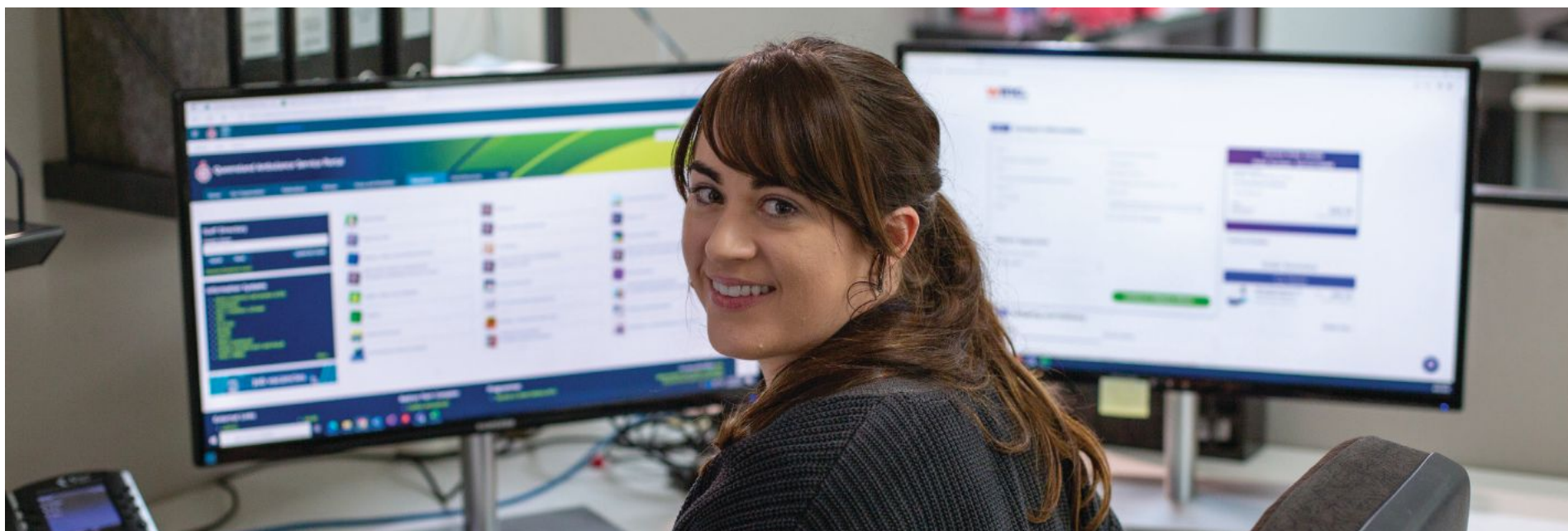
[1] Association between organisational and workplace cultures, and patient outcomes: Systematic review. Braithwaite, J., Herkes, J., Ludlow, K., Testa, L., Lamprell, G. s.l. : BMJ Open, 2017, Vol. 7.

[2] Workplace bullying and its impact on the quality of healthcare and patient safety. Al Omar, M., Salam, M., AL-Surimi, K. 89, s.l. : Human Resources for Health, 2019, Vol. 17.

[3] Houck, N., Colbert, A. (2017). Patient Safety and Workplace Bullying- An Integrative Review. J Nurse Care Qual. 32(2), 164-171

[4] Braithwaite, J., Herkes, J., Ludlow, K., Testa, L., Lamprell, G. (2017). Association between organisational and workplace cultures, and patient outcomes: Systematic review. BMJ Open. 2017 (7).

[5] Laschinger, H.K.S (2014) Impact of Workplace Mistreatment on Patient Safety Risk and Nurse-Assessed Patient Outcomes. The Journal of Nursing Administration. 44(5), 284-290

[6] Gomez, L.E., Bernet, P. (2019). Diversity improves performance and outcomes. Journal of the National Medical Association. 11(2)
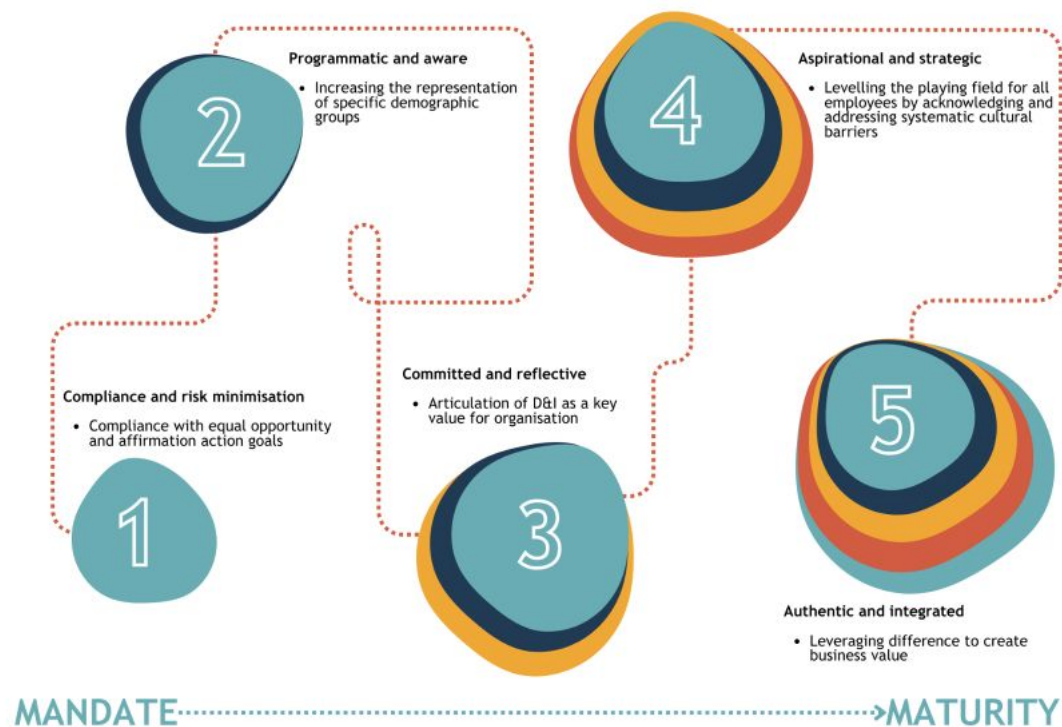
Our journey

The QAS is proud of what we have achieved so far. We have been on a journey to formally embed diverse and inclusive workplaces for several years and remain committed to continuing this journey with our people.

The QAS underwent significant consultation with numerous diverse groups in order to create an Action Plan that highlights the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion, and the current existence of it in our workplaces. The feedback we received was aligned with the new legislative requirements, which will strengthen our culture of respect and inclusion.

The development of this Action Plan was also underpinned by the extensive workforce consultation for the QAS Workforce Plan. This Action Plan established that representation of the diversity of Queensland was highly valued and was considered a priority in providing contemporary ambulance services.

As part of our journey, we have developed a maturity model to assist us to strategically plan for the future. Based on feedback from our people, we are placed between Level 2 'Programmatic and Aware' and Level 3 'Committed and Reflective'. Long term, the QAS strives to achieve Level 5 'Authentic and Integrated' and truly embed equity, diversity and inclusion within our organisation.

Programmatic and aware
- Increasing the representation of specific demographic groups

Aspirational and strategic
- Levelling the playing field for all employees by acknowledging and addressing systematic cultural barriers

Compliance and risk minimisation
- Compliance with equal opportunity and affirmation action goals

Committed and reflective
- Articulation of D&I as a key value for organisation

Authentic and integrated
- Leveraging difference to create business value

MANDATE ·· ➤ MATURITY

Our plan

The intent of this Action Plan is to set us on a clear path to achieving our vision, recognising the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion as foundations of our workplace culture. The Action Plan also supports organisational culture change that aligns with the QAS Strategy and the QAS Workforce Plan.

The actions have been purposely designed to support the QAS Workforce Plan and incorporate employee feedback through our Working for Queensland surveys, complaint pathways, forums, working groups and networks, ensuring we create the best environments for our people and the communities we serve.

This Action Plan introduces a contemporary and integrated approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion. It prioritises co-design, shared responsibility, and the advantages of diversity in delivering improved healthcare to our patients and communities.

We are committing to four key long-term actions to be achieved in the same five-year timeframe as the QAS Workforce Plan. These five-year actions will be supported by clearly defined yearly activities. These activities are courageous but achievable, and aim to promote relevant change with responsibility and ownership of each activity shared throughout all levels and units of the organisation.

Our people

Our leaders

Our organisation

Our communities

Our people

Our people

We will leverage off the diverse perspectives and experiences of our people, ensuring they feel welcomed, valued, and respected. We will embed fair, equitable and inclusive workplace practices that will strengthen our unity and drive innovation, performance, and resilience across the services we provide to communities.

Our people will feel like they are:

- Valued and will be treated fairly and equitably
- Informed, educated, and encouraged to locally influence positive and sustainable change
- Supported with their wellbeing prioritised
- Safe and empowered to speak up within their workplace.

Spotlight on our commitment:

- Provide resources on how to promote inclusive practices and visible displays of diversity and allyship for underrepresented groups, including but not limited to the Acknowledgement to Country, use of pronouns, languages (including AUSLAN), and accessibility considerations and cultural/religious days of significance
- Create a QAS Knowledge Hub and Resource Centre, providing an online platform for our people to access current information, resources, articles, and support services
- Deliver diversity awareness packages that assist our people in understanding our diverse people and communities, including but not limited to pre-retirement, accessibility, multiculturalism, people with disabilities, LGBTIQA+, neurodiversity, carers, parents, and our young people
- Promote the QAS Diversity and Inclusion Calendar through our communication avenues, recognising days of significance and local events for our diverse people and communities
- Further develop the QAS Fair and Inclusive Practice Network within Districts, providing an alternative avenue to seek confidential advice, information, and support, to collaboratively drive state-wide and local workplace reform
- Investigate avenues to share information and resources related to inclusion, provide insights, and connect our people with each other, empowering and supporting passionate people to support local change
- Promote shared ownership of the QAS RESPECT initiative, through providing education and resources to empower our people to feel safe to speak up and address inappropriate workplace behaviour
- Embed equity, diversity and inclusion in practices designed to support equity and inclusion during return-to-work processes, parental leave, lactation breaks, keeping in touch days, caring and transition to retirement
- Refresh strategies for the Equity and Diversity Census on Aurion to better engage our people and minimise barriers to disclosing their diversity information, assisting us to implement the right programs for our people.

Our leaders

Our leaders

We will empower and support our leaders to collaborate and lead fair, inclusive, and respectful workplaces. Our leaders will unlock potential, value equity and lead highly diverse teams, acknowledge best practice and the embrace the valuable contribution that diversity brings to workplaces. Our leaders will embody our values, creating a shared purpose and space for our people to thrive.

Our leaders will be:

- Informed, educated, and confident to model inclusive leadership, empowering all staff to be themselves
- Able to value the importance of workplace diversity, identify and minimise inequities, and approach situations with empathy and without bias
- Equitable, flexible, accountable, and collaborative in their practices, leading by example and leveraging off their people's perspectives and experience
- Selected for leadership positions based on equity, values, and leadership qualities, ensuring the right cultural fit for the role
- Supported, empowered, and valued in their roles to drive positive and sustainable change, which extends to the people they manage.

Spotlight on our commitment:

- Ensure the QAS leadership capability development framework is flexibly designed and embeds equity, diversity, inclusion, and respect themes, empowering and supporting the growth of diverse leadership candidates
- Provide targeted education and information sessions for upcoming and existing leaders ensuring they understand and can practically apply new or updated organisational strategy, values, plans, legislation, targets, and policy, with emphasis placed on both expected behaviour and rationale
- Update the QAS performance development framework to ensure alignment with the principles of equity, diversity, respect, and inclusion
- Ensure leaders are equipped for meaningful and authentic conversations to support the QAS RESPECT framework and staff professional development
- Highlight the importance and positive impact of leadership visibility and their influence in building inclusive workplaces, through leaders' active participation and promotion of days of significance locally with their people
- Continue to implement values-based recruitment for our supervisory positions, allowing us to find the most suitable person for the job (i.e., Frontline Manager Recruitment Program)
- Progressively review our manager and supervisor role descriptions to include our organisational values and leadership characteristics, which considers the whole person suitability
- Develop strategies to identify emerging leaders from underrepresented groups, including through Frontline Manager Recruitment and consider development opportunities (i.e., Council of Ambulance Authorities Women in Leadership, First Nations Leadership Program)
- Individual regions to consider psychosocial wellness tools for managers and supervisors (such as developed by Cairns and Hinterland Region) to promote a culture of safety leadership and care for the psychological needs of their people.

Our organisation

Our organisation

We will create shared ownership and engage all levels of the organisation, leveraging off key stakeholder insights, lived experience, and best practice. We will be inclusive by design through our fair and innovative systems, which anticipates the needs of our diverse and intersectional workforce.

Our organisation will demonstrate:

- Use of diverse voices in planning, design, implementation, and review of our systems
- Mature and contemporary understanding and implementation of equity, diversity, and inclusion through our systems, education, and communication plans
- A contemporary approach to attract, recruit, progress, and retain diverse employees, creating workplaces that are representative of our communities
- A commitment to understanding the benefits of creating flexible and agile workplaces, as a significant driver of workforce diversity, inclusion, wellbeing, and productivity, positioning us as highly competitive
- Genuine appreciation and value of workforce data and analytics, in strengthening our narrative, building trust and transparency, and designing initiatives to be more in tune with the needs of our people
- The use of valued external partnerships to leverage off best practice, tackle systemic issues, share resources, and design and implement cross sector solutions
- Strong governance framework to create shared responsibility and accountability to continue the momentum for change, including the review of appropriate resourcing to drive the agenda.

Spotlight on our commitment:

- Continue to review and update the QAS policy framework to remove or minimise any potential barriers for underrepresented employment groups and ensure alignment with the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and respect
- Develop dedicated education programs to promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and respect, with stronger links to workplace culture, patient care and service delivery, and a focus on eliminating unconscious bias
- Regularly include articles in our existing communications which encourages storytelling, showcases inclusive practices, and celebrates our successes
- Progressively review our existing recruitment processes and documentation (i.e., applicant information kit and role descriptions) ensuring our language is inclusive and considers flexible work, accessibility, neurodiversity, and reasonable adjustments
- Pilot new processes informed by best practice to broaden our diverse candidate pools
- Continue the supported study program for Critical Care Paramedics and other roles, to broaden and empower the diversity of applicants applying and qualifying

Spotlight on our commitment:

- Continue our commitment to targeted recruitment campaigns for diverse candidates which lead to ongoing meaningful employment for our underrepresented groups (i.e. QAS Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Paramedic Program)
- Review our systems for implementing flexible work arrangements based on the revised Public Service Commission Flex-Connect Framework, providing updated resources to better support our leaders and people in having positive conversations and experiences
- Continue to analyse the insights from the annual Working for Queensland Survey, providing measures on our inclusion index and employee experiences, with a particular focus on our underrepresented groups
- Continue our active memberships on whole-of-Government committees and with our external partners to align and remain contemporary (i.e., Public Sector Commission Inclusion and Diversity Community of Practice, Diversity Council Australia, Diversity Practitioners Association and Pride in Practice)
- Continue our governance arrangements to lead positive culture reform through the QAS RESPECT Steering Committee, QAS RESPECT Working Group and consider regional QAS RESPECT Committees and the QAS Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group
- Ensure new stations and station redevelopments reflect our diverse workforce, with a focus on inclusion.

Our communities

Our communities

We will positively engage with our communities through communication, partnerships and creating shared understanding, to better support our multi-culturalism and diverse people. Together, we will be able to deliver more appropriate and responsive healthcare services to our patients and communities.

Our communities will feel:

- Safe and supported when accessing our services through a representative workforce, and receive the highest quality clinical care irrespective of background
- Engaged with our service to collaborate and improve service delivery design
- Conscious that our people need a safe and respectful environment, to provide the best individual healthcare in pre-hospital setting

Spotlight on our commitment:

- Each District will develop and promote a resource called 'Our Community Profile,' to better understand who is in their community as well as local services available to improve healthcare, especially for our underrepresented groups
- Provide targeted education for our people based on their 'Our Community Profile,' providing an improved understanding of local customs and healthcare needs
- Encourage collaboration of local supervisory and managerial staff with diverse community leaders to drive positive relationships and better understanding of local community needs and barriers to care
- Develop a QAS Inclusive Communication and Practice Guide to assist our people to better understand and support their diverse community, linking to health equity and implications, assistive technology/translator access, health passports, and disability aligned care
- Promote visible signs of allyship when servicing our community, so patients from our underrepresented groups feel safer to engage and access our service (i.e., using pronouns, stickers, badges, flags, languages spoken, etc)
- Review existing partnerships to ensure meaningful collaboration with communities, Queensland Health, Government agencies, industry, and academic bodies, to better understand local patient health needs and barriers to accessing care, and further codesign ways to improve and contemporise our service delivery models
- Support presence at major cultural events and days of significance within the community and enhance links with partners and services
- Develop targeted media initiatives promoting respect on the frontline, to keep our people safe and free from harassment, abuse, and discrimination from members of the public; driven by need and evidence-based trends
- Ensure any future redevelopment of the QAS website meets appropriate accessibility guidelines and provides visibility of our diverse people
- Ensure engagement with external media platforms is done so with inclusive language and provides visibility of our diverse people.

Responsibility matrix

Ownership and responsibility for implementing our long-term actions and activities is shared throughout the organisation. The below matrix is provided as a guide. Implementation of the specific yearly activities will be supported by an underlying Work Plan facilitated by the QAS Fair and Inclusive Practice Unit. All work groups are expected to embed equity, diversity and inclusion holistically in their business-as-usual practices, processes and workspaces each and every day.

	1 Our people	2 Our leaders	3 Our organisation	4 Our communities
Regions	●	●	●	●
Head Office	●	●	●	●
Office of the Commissioner				
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety Unit	●	●	●	●
Compliments and Complaints Unit			●	●
Executive Services				
Fair and Inclusive Practice Unit	●	●	●	●
Public Relations and Media	●		●	●
Staff Support	●	●		
Strategy Governance and Legal				
Office of the Medical Director				
Clinical Policy and Innovation	●			●
Education and Clinical Programs	●	●		●
Evaluation and Service Improvement				
Mental Health Response Program				●
Patient Safety and Quality				●

	1 Our people	2 Our leaders	3 Our organisation	4 Our communities
Office of Deputy Commissioner Corporate and Statewide Services				
Finance Infrastructure and Procurement				
Human Resources	●	●	●	
Information and Communication Technology	●		●	●
Service Planning				●
State Operations Coordination Centre				
Statewide Governance and Assurance			●	
Statewide Services				
Retrieval Services Queensland	●	●	●	●
Health Contact Centre	●	●	●	●

Monitoring our success

The implementation of the Action Plan will be overseen in conjunction with our QAS RESPECT Steering Committee, and the Executive and Senior Leaders across the organisation.

We commit to reviewing, designing new yearly activities and openly reporting on the Action Plan annually, as per the *Public Sector Act 2022*. We welcome this process as an opportunity to remain reflective and contemporary in our everchanging workforce landscape supporting the provision of quality, evidence-based healthcare.

We will monitor our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion through annually evaluating tangible progress that aligns with each of our long-term key actions: our people, our leaders, our organisation, and our communities. We will utilise reporting and workforce data to evaluate trends and continually identify areas for improvement. We will also regularly check in with our people to make sure our actions are making a meaningful difference.

Our success will be apparent thought our workforce engagement and workplace culture, inclusive leaders, fair and responsive systems, and our community partnerships. We acknowledge that all outcomes are interconnected and will assist us in achieving our vision.

Our definitions

To create safe workplaces and communities, it is essential to use appropriate, accurate and inclusive language. Being mindful of our language is paramount in discussing and fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion within our organisation.

Ableism: Discrimination and social prejudice against people with physical and/or mental disabilities, in favour of those who do not.

Accessibility: The practice of making information, activities, and/or environments sensible, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible.

Affinity bias: The tendency to favour people who share similar interests, backgrounds, and experiences with us.

Ally: A person or group that provides advocacy, assistance, support for individuals from underrepresented groups in our community.

Assimilation: The process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society.

Belonging: A feeling of being happy or comfortable as part of a particular group and having a good relationship with the other members of the group, because they welcome and accept you.

Culture: The way of life, ideas, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people within society.

Disability: A total or partial loss of physical or mental functions that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities that is usually permanent or long-term.

Discrimination: When a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics.

Diversity: A range of different things; variety, our individual differences including characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religious beliefs, language, education, values, and beliefs. Diversity allows us to acknowledge that people are a blend of characteristics. The strength in diversity lies in knowing that each blend of characteristics brings unique knowledge, skills, and perspectives to the organisation.

Equality: The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities, providing the same to all.

Equity: Fairness and justice; recognises that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and adjust for imbalances. Adopting an equitable approach means acknowledging that not everyone in the organisation needs to be treated the same, but rather treated in respect of their differences to achieve the same outcome.

Gender: The characteristics, norms, behaviours and roles of women, men, girls, and boys that are socially constructed.

Inclusion: The process of bring people together where they feel valued and respected. Inclusion is diversity that works cohesively. It is successful when a diverse cohort feels heard, respected, and connected and results in increased organisational success.

Intersectionality: The interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender and how they apply to individuals or groups, creating overlapping systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

LGBTIQA+: 'LGBTIQA+' is an evolving acronym which currently stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual.

Neurodiversity: A non-medical umbrella term that describes people with variation in their mental functions. Being neurodivergent means having a brain that works differently from the average or "neurotypical" person.

Non-binary: Denoting, having, or relating to a gender identity that does not conform to traditional binary beliefs about gender (i.e., neither male nor female)

Pronouns: Personal pronouns are particular words a person prefers to be used to refer to them such as she, he, or they.

Sex: Biological differences; chromosomes, hormonal profiles, internal and external sex organs.

Sexual identity/orientation: An individual's self-perception in terms of romantic or sexual attraction towards others.

Unconscious bias: When judgments or decisions are made based on personal prior experience, deep-seated thought patterns, assumptions, stereotypes, or interpretations, without conscious thought or awareness.

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2023–2024

Queensland
Government