

# Aboriginal Economic Participation

The State Government's spending and procurement practices can provide a massive opportunity for the State to leverage Aboriginal economic participation outcomes. In recognition of this the State Government has recently established the Aboriginal Economic Participation Initiative which will focus on developing a whole-of-government procurement strategy utilising the Industry Participation Policy as the primary framework. This initiative will have far reaching and positive impacts for South Australia as a whole, and will create incentives for the range of industries and sectors to create opportunities for Aboriginal employment and enterprise.

To complement the procurement activity, it is proposed there will be a dual focus on ensuring there is a supply of capable Aboriginal businesses with the capacity to deliver on projects or subcontracting opportunities by bringing together a package of supports for the Aboriginal business sector.

In April 2016, two Industry Participation Consultants - Aboriginal Business were appointed and will be based within the Office of the Industry Advocate. One of the first priorities for the Industry Participation Consultants will be identifying Aboriginal businesses in various regions of the State capable of supplying goods or services to government. The Industry Participation Consultants will then work with those businesses identified to assess their current level of experience and their capacity to take up opportunities to work with government either directly or in-directly as a supplier or subcontractor. The Office of the Industry Advocate will assist in delivering the Aboriginal Economic Participation Initiative.



Further to this, a priority will be to work with Agencies to identify opportunities within their forward procurement plans for each region and encourage those Agencies to lift the industry participation assessment weighting from the recently announced 15% to 20% or greater. This means tenders with high level Aboriginal employment or subcontracting from Aboriginal businesses would receive a better Industry Participation score.

The first of a number of the Meet the Buyer – Aboriginal Business events to support this initiative was held on 15<sup>th</sup> June supported by Aboriginal Business Industry Chamber of South Australia (ABICSA). It provided Aboriginal businesses the opportunity to meet face to face with senior government buyers and project managers to present their capabilities and discuss how they can assist government agencies to meet their purchasing and contracting needs. A series of Supplying to Government Workshops for individual business will be facilitated by the Office of the Industry Advocate. These Workshops are designed to build awareness of what is required when quoting or tendering for government work and to improve the success rate of Aboriginal businesses winning State Government work.

If you would like more information about the Aboriginal Economic Participation Initiative and future workshops please contact the Office of the Industry Advocate.

## Office of the Industry Advocate

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