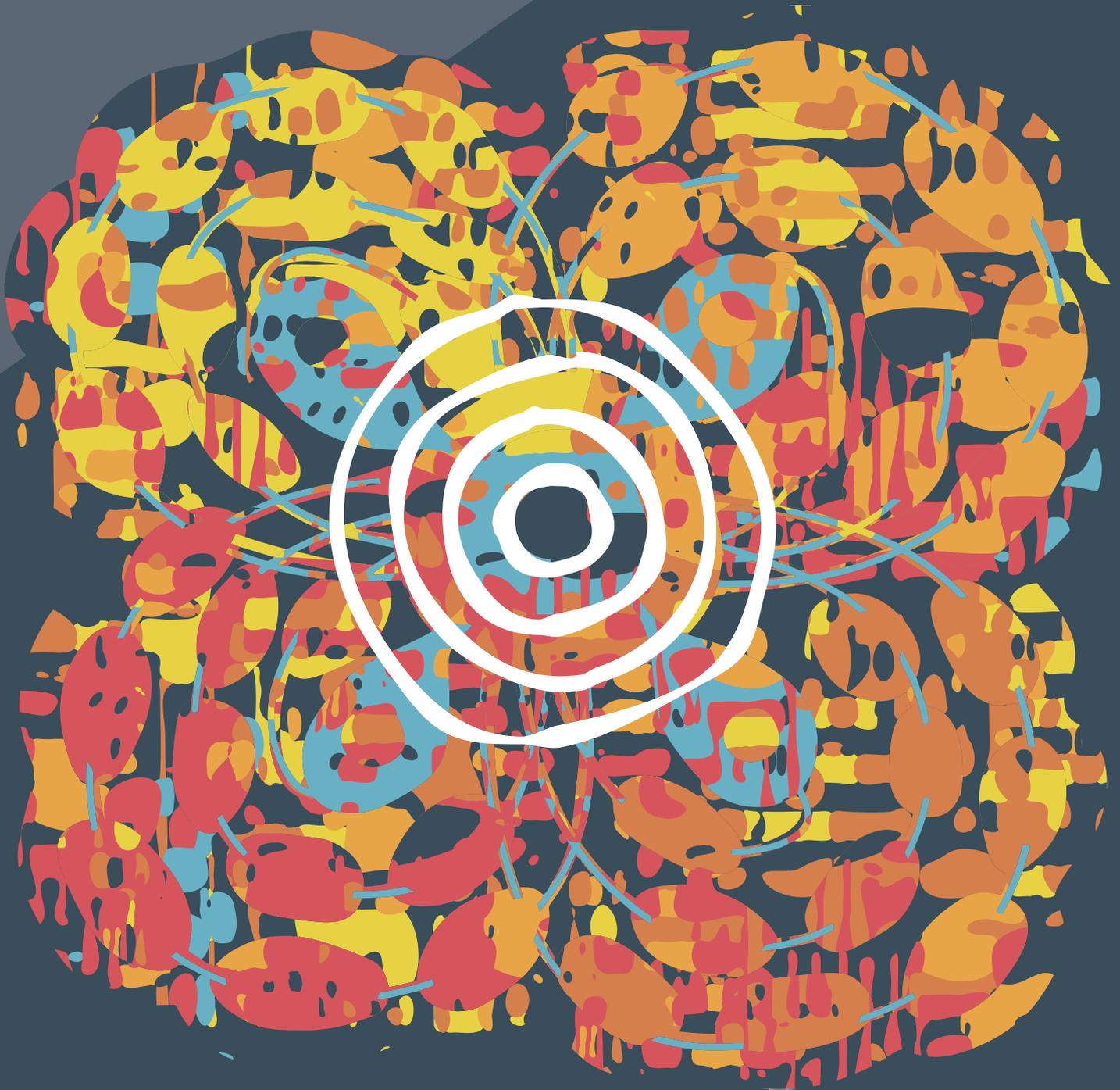


# Parklands Project Indigenous Participation Plan Evaluation

Evaluation insights, implementation toolkit  
and recommendations for moving forward



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### Prepared by Strategy & Research, **yourtown**, 2018

#### Visual Communication, artworks and design layouts:

Relative Creative: Tristan Schultz (Gamilaroi descendant)

Please be aware that this publication may contain the names or images of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who may now be deceased.

Note - Use of the terms 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples', 'Indigenous employees/businesses' and 'First Australians'.

**yourtown** recognises the diversity of the cultures, languages, kinship structures and ways of life of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Throughout this document, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples are referred to as 'peoples'. This recognises that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples have a collective or group identity, although are not homogenous.

At times in this report, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples are also referred to as 'Indigenous peoples' (e.g., Indigenous employees, Indigenous businesses, Indigenous Participation Plan etc) or First Australians. The term First Australians respectfully acknowledges the first place of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The term 'Indigenous' has only been used where it is either (a) consistent with current names of documents/committees or (b) commonly used.





## **Parklands Project Indigenous Participation Plan Evaluation**

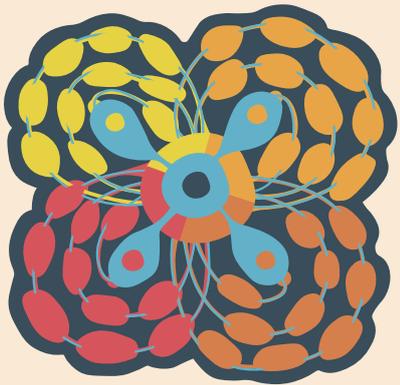
**Evaluation insights, implementation toolkit  
and recommendations for moving forward**



### RAP Plan Diagram

The Grocon Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) artwork tells the story of the origins, foundation and the journey of Grocon as a company, which has made it what it is today. The organic style of the artwork pays respect to the traditional owners past and present on whose country Grocon constructs the buildings of modern Australia.

Artist: Leesa Watego, iscarriot media



### The First Australians' Work Engagement Model

This model depicts the factors identified as likely to facilitate First Australian's sense of work engagement. The factors are all interconnected, shown through the blue lines which represent ripples in water, or thread weaving the sense of cultural safety through the other senses. The First Australians Workplace Engagement, seen in the yellow, reds and oranges, represents that if the blue continues weaving, work engagement will weave back, reflecting that which may occur through investing in Indigenous participation initiatives. The colours of this model are inspired by the colours of the Parklands Project itself. Overall, the Map depicts the value in maintaining strong Indigenous Participation Plans where First Australians feel strong, safe and encouraged to maintain their Connection to Cultural Safety and positive Workplace Engagement occurs.

Artist: Tristan Schultz, Relative Creative



### Parklands Project Indigenous Participation Plan Map

This map depicts the coming together of the First Australians' Work Engagement Model and the Parklands Architectural Silhouette. The buildings are seen interweaving with the senses of cultural safety in the model. The movement and dynamism in the work also depicts both the temporal and spatial sophisticated construction phases and components of the Parklands Project, and the projects legacy as a creating of a living active 'place' for visitors and residents. The inner circles respect the connections with the RAP Plan Map. The map brings three elements together; RAP, Toolkit and the legacy of the buildings.

Artist: Tristan Schultz, Relative Creative

### Parklands Architectural Silhouette

The silhouette graphic featured throughout this report depict the buildings of the Parklands Project in the colourful array. The colours used match the six colours in the First Australians' Work Engagement Model and the Parklands Project Indigenous Participation Plan Map. They also demarcate the beginning, end and five parts in the middle of this document.

Artist: Tristan Schultz, Relative Creative





## Executive Summary

This report presents the evaluation and emergent research of the Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) for the build of the Parklands Project, Gold Coast, QLD, from September 2015 to September 2017. Grocon was the main contractor for the project and this was their first significant experience with working with an IPP. **yourtown**, a non-for-profit organisation with Indigenous participation experience, were invited by Grocon to help support them to implement and evaluate their IPP, and two Aboriginal **yourtown** employees worked on site as the Workforce Development Coordinator and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultant for much of the duration of the project.

The evaluation of the Parklands Project IPP breaks new ground as the first known publically available evaluation of an IPP within the Australian construction industry.

The current report will follow a five-part structure:

Part I presents an overview of the evaluation and research 'Methodology' for the report

Part II 'Stakeholder Insights' presents reflections of the main stakeholder groups involved with Indigenous participation at the Parklands Project.

Part III 'Emergent Research' introduces the First Australian's Work Engagement Model which offers a 'toolkit' for Grocon to use moving forward in selecting and connecting to their Indigenous participation strategies and increasing Indigenous participation on their projects.

Part IV 'Evaluation Summary' is where we sum up the

legacy at Parklands, and also present the 'score-card' on how well the KPIs were met.

Lastly, in Part V 'Moving Forward' we present the key areas (recommendations) for Grocon to focus on in moving forward with Indigenous participation in future work.

### Method

Forty-six stakeholders involved in the Parklands Project were consulted in regards to their perception of the outcomes and learnings related to the project's IPP. Stakeholder groups included:

- Indigenous employees (n = 16)
- Indigenous Businesses/subcontractors (n = 4)
- Non-Indigenous subcontractors (n = 11)
- Grocon employees (n = 9)
- **yourtown** employees (n = 3)
- Parklands Project Indigenous Liaison Committee Members (n = 3)

Face-to-face interviews were conducted by a female non-Indigenous psychologist from the Strategy and Research department at **yourtown**. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and qualitatively analysed, which was partially checked by Aboriginal psychologists from Marumali Consultations. The theoretical model was developed using co-design principles, working with Marumali Consultations and an Aboriginal designer from Relative Creative.

### Findings

Parklands Project has achieved significant Indigenous participation outcomes, meeting or succeeding most of the KPIs for employment, training, and business

procurement it set out to achieve (although stronger business procurement KPIs could be set in the future). The amount of labour hours achieved for a SE QLD metropolitan project has been described by one member of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee as “significant” and “not-typical”.

Some Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees yarned about how the accredited training they had received led them out of entry level positions and improved their quality of life. Three of the four Indigenous businesses who were involved with Parklands, described this contract as their ‘big break’ and have achieved significant business growth as a result, securing their place in the industry.

#### Highlights include:

- Exceeded Indigenous labour and training hour targets, with a total of 120,515 Indigenous employment and training hours achieved (surpassing target of 0.04% of the contract sum)
- Business growth for a number of the 16 local Indigenous Businesses working on the project (procurement spend of over \$3 million) and 15 micro/small Indigenous businesses that took part in a culturally safe business development program (jointly funded by Office of Commonwealth Games [OCG], Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships [DATSIP], Grocon and Gold Coast TAFE) which is believed to have led to over \$1.7 million in new contracts during the course of the program (with more in the pipeline).
- Increased capacity of Grocon and **yourtown** staff to maximise Indigenous participation, and ongoing legacy of the work instigated at the Parklands through Grocon’s Reconciliation Action Plan.

#### What worked well?

Stakeholders identified a range of factors that they feel contributed to successful IPP outcomes. Some examples include:

- Indigenous employees told us how important it was that key Aboriginal community members endorsed the work at Parklands and that cultural events were celebrated.
- Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee members remarked upon the significant legacy of Grocon’s investment (with Gold Coast TAFE, OCG and DATSIP) in the culturally safe Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander business development program: The growth and benefits to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples produced by this program is predicted to continue beyond the Parklands Project itself. Members also noted that through developing a RAP, the commitments and cultural values that have grown through the

Parklands Project will continue to be integrated in future Grocon work.

- Indigenous Businesses noted how much they valued the non-traditional ‘tender’ process and extra support Grocon has provided to help their business meet the required standards for a contract with a Tier I organisation.
- Grocon and **yourtown** staff saw the link between site leadership support and the drive of expert partners (onsite Aboriginal **yourtown** staff and Committee members) with the outcomes that were achieved. **yourtown** stakeholders in particular saw the valuable role that onsite training (provided by Gold Coast School of Construction) played in contributing to Indigenous participation outcomes.
- Subcontracts think the ‘simple’ strategy of utilising a professional Indigenous labour hire company helped them achieve Indigenous labour hours, especially given that very few had prior experience with employing Indigenous staff or IPP projects.

#### What could be done differently next time?

Opportunities to address the things that impeded the success of the IPP were seen by stakeholders, some impediments are more or less within Grocon’s control. Key themes include:

**Start earlier and do more planning** – Get expert partners involved earlier, make the IPP a focus during tendering and even consider making contract decisions based on how well business propose they can meet IPP requirements. Consider developing ‘set-asides’ wherein money for particular project components (e.g., earth works) is set aside to be used with Indigenous businesses.

**Communicate with more impact** – Help make sure Grocon staff and subcontractors learn early on why the IPP exists, how they can benefit people personally and also what it can mean for the community: This will help to support people to find their role, be confident, and feel motivated to contribute.

**Analyse the barriers that have been identified in this report and try to develop work-arounds** – For example, accredited training, traineeships and apprenticeships can change lives and it is likely that even more Indigenous employees could take part if key obstacles are mitigated. The more accredited training Indigenous employees receive, the more likely that the number one barrier identified by subcontracts will be addressed over time (i.e., they require staff with experience or specific skill sets, not entry level labouring).

Similarly, it appears Indigenous businesses require specialised support and alternate pathways to

tender, so consider what can be done to make this an embedded rather than an 'add on' process in future projects. Additionally, Indigenous businesses contracted on the Parklands Project were primarily 'peripheral' (non-critical; low risk) to the construction industry (e.g., photographer, cleaning, stationary, catering, cultural training etc) but Aboriginal 'construction' businesses do exist, and other Tier 1s are de-bundling contracts to make it possible for smaller businesses to tender, suggesting it is worth revisiting Grocon's procurement commitments and strategies.

### Overarching recommendations

Five high level recommendations are offered by **yourtown** for Grocon to consider in moving forward with their Indigenous participation:

1. **Engage in more forward planning to fine tune and deepen the effect of the key strategies that are likely to have the most impact on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation**
2. **Develop a 'Theory of Change' that represents what Grocon wants to contribute through their Indigenous participation activities**
3. **Use the theoretical template offered in this report to align workplace strategies to fostering what we now know is linked to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' work engagement and most likely their retention**
4. **Keep doing those things you know are working well (e.g., expert partners, leadership support, etc)**
5. **Realise your potential as an influencing power (i.e., to influence the attitudes of subcontractors)**

### Recommendations from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees' insights

Indigenous employees' comments suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Investigate ways to improve mechanisms for advertising and signing up Indigenous staff for training opportunities
- Investigate 'scholarships' or 'student loan' options to enable Indigenous workers who do not have the resources to undertake training (not only the course costs, but the loss of income while undergoing training)
- Consider further developing subcontractors' Indigenous participation capacity (see later sections)
- Consider investing in a site mentor/s for pastoral care and career mentoring
- Consider developing protocols that better monitor workflows which can provide staff adequate pre-warning when their labour will no longer be required, or manage these expectations.

### Recommendations from non-Indigenous subcontractors' insights

Non-Indigenous subcontractor comments suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Create awareness early: Place a spot light on the IPP during the tender phase
- Subcontractor previous experience and capacity to engage with IPPs may be low - Consider providing information sessions during tender phase regarding why IPPs exist, available strategies and benefits of Indigenous participation to build subcontractor capacity and motivation
- Ask businesses to submit plans for how they will achieve Indigenous participation at tender phase and use in decision making to award contracts
- Facilitate cultural awareness training that incorporates knowledge of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural lore and responsibilities and how this affects employees, to and implications for supervision styles built subcontractors' workplace cultural capability.
- Continue to recognise and reward subcontractors who achieve IPP requirements
- Consider investigating alternate funding avenues for additional training/increased financial margins for more supervision of workers for organisations that require staff with specialised skill sets
- Consider alternate ways subcontractors may be able to contribute towards IPP goals outside of labour hours (e.g., alternate community investment activities)
- Conduct further analysis and work associated with the barriers/challenges that were either perceived by the subcontractors or the researcher in this evaluation and consider ways that these could be tested or managed. Some of these challenges may require collaboration with expert partners, larger budgets, or advocacy for industry changes.
- Consider developing clarity regarding what the repercussion are for subcontractors not meeting IPP requirements, and communicate these repercussions to subcontractors.

### Recommendations from Grocon and yourtown employee insights

Grocon and **yourtown**'s comments suggest the following high-level recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Start earlier and do more forward planning - Make sure the IPP is evident to subcontractors back in the tendering phase and that there are visible leadership behaviours from the beginning so staff connect and find their role in relation to enacting the IPP
- Do more to build subcontractor's capacity to support Indigenous participation
- Do more to embed Indigenous participation within the site's culture.

### Recommendations from IPPLC insights

Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee members' comments suggest the following high-level recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Do more to embed Indigenous participation within the site's culture
- Broaden the stakeholders involved with Indigenous participation (e.g., attending cultural events, members of the IPPLC etc.)
- Develop more commitment regarding procuring from Indigenous businesses (i.e., consider setting targets, try to engage more Indigenous construction businesses, adapt tender processes further or offer additional supports, consider de-bundling contracts etc.)
- Factor into the decision making to award contracts on a subcontractor's capacity to meet IPP commitments

### Recommendations from Indigenous business' insights

Indigenous businesses comments, and suggestions made by Yolla Consulting's evaluation of the business development program, suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Consider ways to discourage the 'poaching' of staff, which may mean encouraging businesses to be more supportive of staff development opportunities
- Review tendering processes and procurement strategies for engaging Indigenous businesses:
  - o Continue to offer support to businesses during tendering, e.g., provide support to develop required documentation to be eligible to work for a Tier 1 construction company
  - o Consider amending tender processes to cater for businesses that may have lower digital literacy
  - o Advocate for or fund the development of

practical WHS specific development programs to assist Indigenous businesses that are ready to gain WHS/HSEQ accreditation or qualifications to enable them to tender for Tier 1 or 2 contracts

- o Make invitations to tender realistic if encouraging micro-small businesses to apply.

### Conclusion

For what was ultimately a brief moment in time (a two-year build), stakeholders note a significant number of meaningful outcomes which are seen to have resulted from the Parklands IPP. The capacity and commitment of Grocon for Indigenous participation has been significantly increased, and so too has that of **yourtown**. From the leadership and passion that emerged through the Parklands IPP, Grocon have adopted an organisational-wide Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), meaning that they will continue to try to maximise the amount of Indigenous participation in their future work and influence the construction industry. The successful implementation of the Parklands' IPP appears to have affected the lives of individuals and businesses connected to the project, but the legacy of this work could be to help influence the broader industry and community. With the recommendations from this report, Grocon are well placed to move forward with their Indigenous participation agenda.

There are many insights that this evaluation has produced which can be considered not only for future Grocon projects, but also for other Indigenous participation initiatives elsewhere. The theoretical model presented in this report offers the beginnings of an evidence-based, culturally grounded theory for aligning the abundant number of IPP strategies with what will most likely increase Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' job engagement and retention. This theoretical toolkit is most likely applicable for industries other than construction and we encourage its use, interrogation, and development.

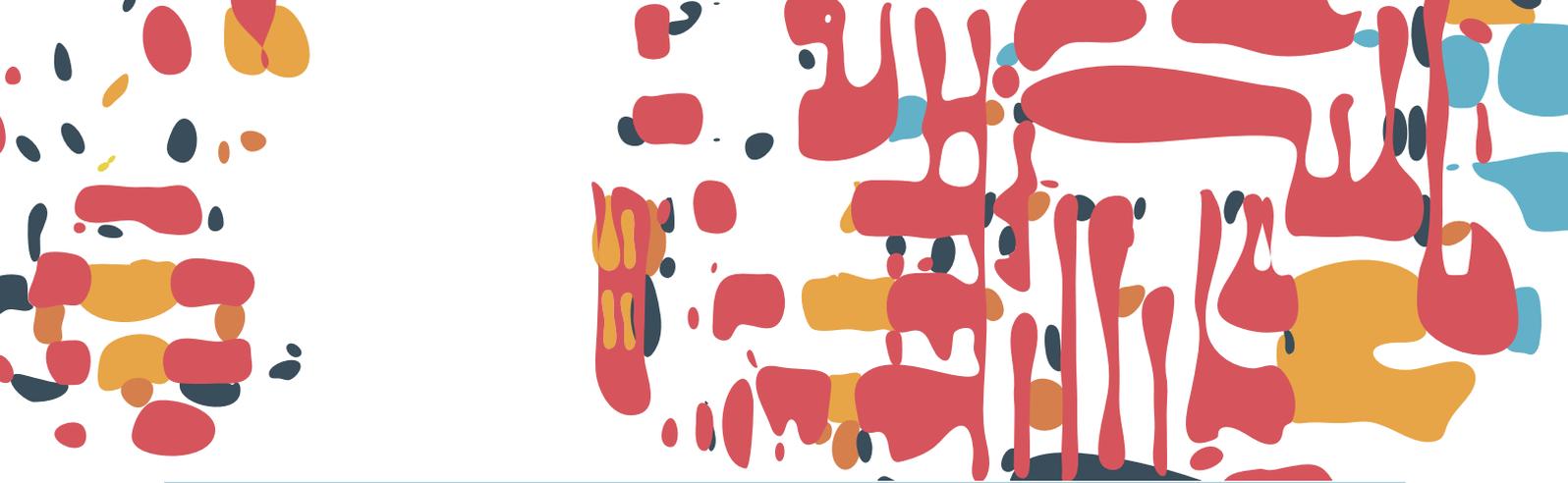




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## Introduction

This report presents the evaluation and emergent research of the Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) which was adopted in 2015 by Grocon for the build of the Parklands Project, Gold Coast, QLD (September 2015 to September 2017). Grocon was the main contractor for the project and this was their first significant experience with working with an IPP, having adopted an IPP as part of the tender process for this privately funded build.

**yourtown**, a non-for-profit organisation with Indigenous participation experience, were invited by Grocon to help support them to implement and evaluate their IPP, and two Aboriginal **yourtown** employees worked on site for much of the duration of the project as the site's Workforce Development Coordinator and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultant. There were approximately 6000 people inducted on site for this project, and over 100 subcontractors worked together to build the residential and commercial village. The project was a major piece of work for south-east QLD and the first lease of the residential buildings was for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

The evaluation of the Parklands Project IPP breaks new ground as the first known publically available evaluation of an IPP within the Australian construction industry. This evaluation of the Parklands' IPP was designed to take place in two major stages.

The first stage of this evaluation explored Indigenous participation within the Australian construction industry and investigated what might constitute good practice for an Indigenous participation plan (**yourtown**, 2016). A range of non-Indigenous and Indigenous subject matter experts from industry, academia, and government bodies were consulted and a literature scan was conducted. Experts directly examined the IPP being used at the Parklands Project and offered their interpretation of its strengths and weaknesses. The insights produced by this consultation have been used to help understand the stories and reflections collected through the second stage of this evaluation project. This report can be accessed [online](#).

The second stage of this evaluation, which is documented in this report, looks at the

application of the Parklands IPP in terms of what was achieved, what worked well, what were the impediments, and what could have been done differently. The IPP adopted by Grocon has approximately 30 Indigenous participation strategies and KPIs (mostly output based), and although this evaluation reports on these, additional evaluation and research questions are addressed so we can better understand the outcomes and learnings from this work. There are many learnings that this evaluation has highlighted which can be considered not only for future Grocon projects, but also for Indigenous participation initiatives elsewhere.



The report follows a five-part structure:

Part I presents an overview of the evaluation and research 'Methodology' for the report

Part II 'Stakeholder Insights' presents reflections of the main stakeholder groups involved with Indigenous participation at the Parklands Project.

Part III 'Emergent Research' introduces the First Australian's Work Engagement Model which offers a 'toolkit' for Grocon to use moving forward in selecting and connecting to their Indigenous participation strategies and increasing Indigenous participation on their projects.

Part IV 'Evaluation Summary' is where we sum up the legacy at Parklands, and also present the 'score-card' on how well the KPIs were met.

Lastly, in Part V 'Moving Forward' we present the key areas (recommendations) for Grocon to focus on in moving forward with Indigenous participation in future work.

**Part I in detail.** The first part of the report presents an overview of the methodology underpinning the evaluation and research presented in this report. Particular attention will be paid to how cultural aspects of the research were considered. Four main phases of the methodology are summarised including (1) developing the project foundations, (2) developing the evaluation lens, (3) data collection, and (4) data validation and model development.

**Part II in detail.** The second part of this report presents the insights and reflections on the IPP activities from the main stakeholder groups involved with Indigenous participation at the Parklands Project. Insights from five core stakeholder groups are presented in the following sections: (1) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees working on site; (2) non-Indigenous subcontractors; (3) Grocon and **yourtown** staff (4) Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee; and (5) Indigenous Businesses working on site or connected to the Parklands Project. Each section proposes a new Theory of Change for each stakeholder group, linking activities (strategies) to short, medium, and potential long-term outcomes. These four Theories of Change can be used to further develop the purpose or vision behind IPPs. A Theory of Change could also influence the KPIs chosen for future project by encouraging more 'outcome' KPIs to supplement existing 'output' measures. Each section also presents a stakeholder perspective of the IPP outcomes, practices that worked well and could be done differently to strengthen future IPPs.

**Part III in detail.** The third part of this report introduces the First Australian's Work Engagement Model which was co-designed with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees working on the Parklands Project site, two Aboriginal psychologists and an Aboriginal designer, supported by **yourtown**. This new evidence-based, culturally-grounded model presents the 'reasons why' IPPs

have the strategies that they have. By describing the factors of work engagement which support the participation and retention of Indigenous employees, this new model can be used to link IPP strategies to the factors that are likely to have a positive participation impact, and also help Grocon's non-Indigenous employees to understand the vision behind the IPP.

**Part IV in detail.** Here we respond to the evaluation question 'Did the project deliver the identified Indigenous participation outcomes?' exploring this question through both a 'score card' (placed in Appendix A) and also through an interpretation of what emerged by talking with the project's main stakeholders.

**Part V in detail.** Lastly, we will present some key focus areas for Grocon to consider in moving forward with future Indigenous participation projects, followed by a reiteration of the recommendations to emerge out of the various stakeholder groups interviewed. Lastly, we present our concluding thoughts.

Before commencing with Part I of the report, a brief overview of the Parklands IPP and the activities used to enact the strategies will be presented. In addition, a description of the pathways through which Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples came to work at Parklands will be provided to provide further contextual information about Indigenous participation on the project.





## Context

### Overview of Indigenous participation and the Parklands Project

In this section, we provide a brief overview of the Parklands Project's Indigenous Participation Plan itself, and the key mechanisms used to enact the plan at Parklands, to offer a picture of what occurred during the project.

The Parklands Project IPP (which can be seen in full in Appendix A), contains 30 strategies under 9 key areas:

1. Community engagement
2. Committee
3. Schools/Universities
4. Training
5. Employment
6. Subcontracting
7. Procuring from Indigenous Businesses
8. Preparing the workforce
9. Evaluation

The IPP presented in Appendix A could be considered illustrative of the sorts of plans that may be currently used by Tier I construction companies on large development projects within Australia, with the exception being in relation to 'Procuring from Indigenous Businesses' where specific financial targets

may be set.

Grocon invited **yourtown** to assist with the implementation of the IPP, and two Aboriginal **yourtown** staff members were based on site (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultant and, once partial funding had been sourced from Construction Skills QLD [CSQ], a Workforce Development Coordinator) for much of the duration of the project. Although these staff members had the only formal roles in relation to the IPP, Indigenous participation was not 'outsourced' to **yourtown**; insights from Grocon staff themselves will show that over the build of the project, many Grocon staff found informal roles to uptake and the Parklands staff were instrumental in driving the wider organisation to embed Indigenous participation more fully within their business by adopting a Reconciliation Action Plan.

One of the first strategies to be implemented at Parklands was the establishment of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee (IPPLC). **yourtown** invited a small number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples with extensive experience and knowledge of Australian Indigenous participation (e.g., staff from the

Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships [DATSIP], Gold Coast City Council) and a local elder to meet regularly with **yourtown** and Grocon representatives to provide advice, accountability, connection to community (including businesses) and an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander voice. Membership of this committee was relatively stable over the build, and although the IPP stipulated only quarterly meetings, the committee actually met almost every fortnightly in the beginning of the project, and then monthly after approximately 6 months into the build.

A key mechanism for implementing the training component of the IPP, which was the result of IPPLC's advocacy, was to invite the Gold Coast School of Construction (GCSC) onsite to deliver Certificate I in Construction accreditations and the school-based Ready for Construction (R4C) program. It was through the support of the GCSC that funding for the Workforce Development Coordinator role was achieved. Unfortunately performing an evaluation of the Indigenous programs undertaken by GCSC at Parklands is out of scope of this

evaluation, although 17 Indigenous students participated in their programs (with 15 completing their training).

Appendix B presents a summary of some of the activities that were undertaken by **yourtown** staff while on site, for the purpose of providing the interested reader with greater clarity of how the IPP was enacted.

An initial point of reflection to consider in describing the Indigenous participation onsite at Parklands is through what pathways did Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees, trainees, and students come to be involved with the Parklands Project. By examining these pathways, we can uncover what were the most and least popular sources of labour supply, which may inform future planning.

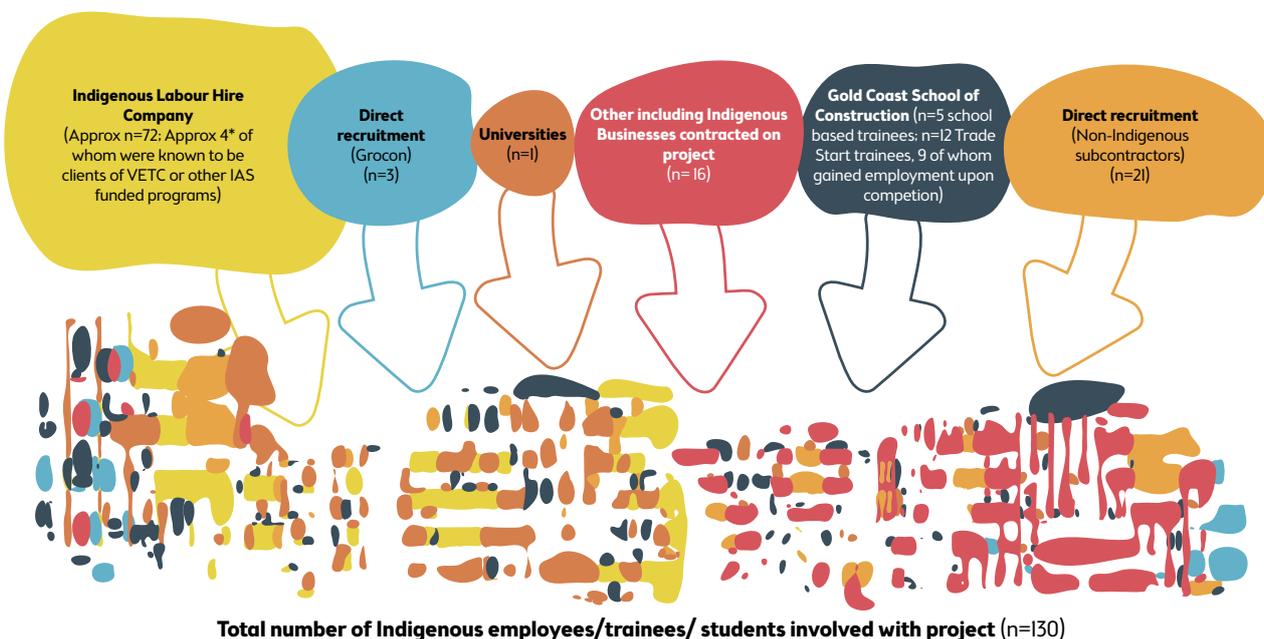
### Description of employment pathways into Parklands

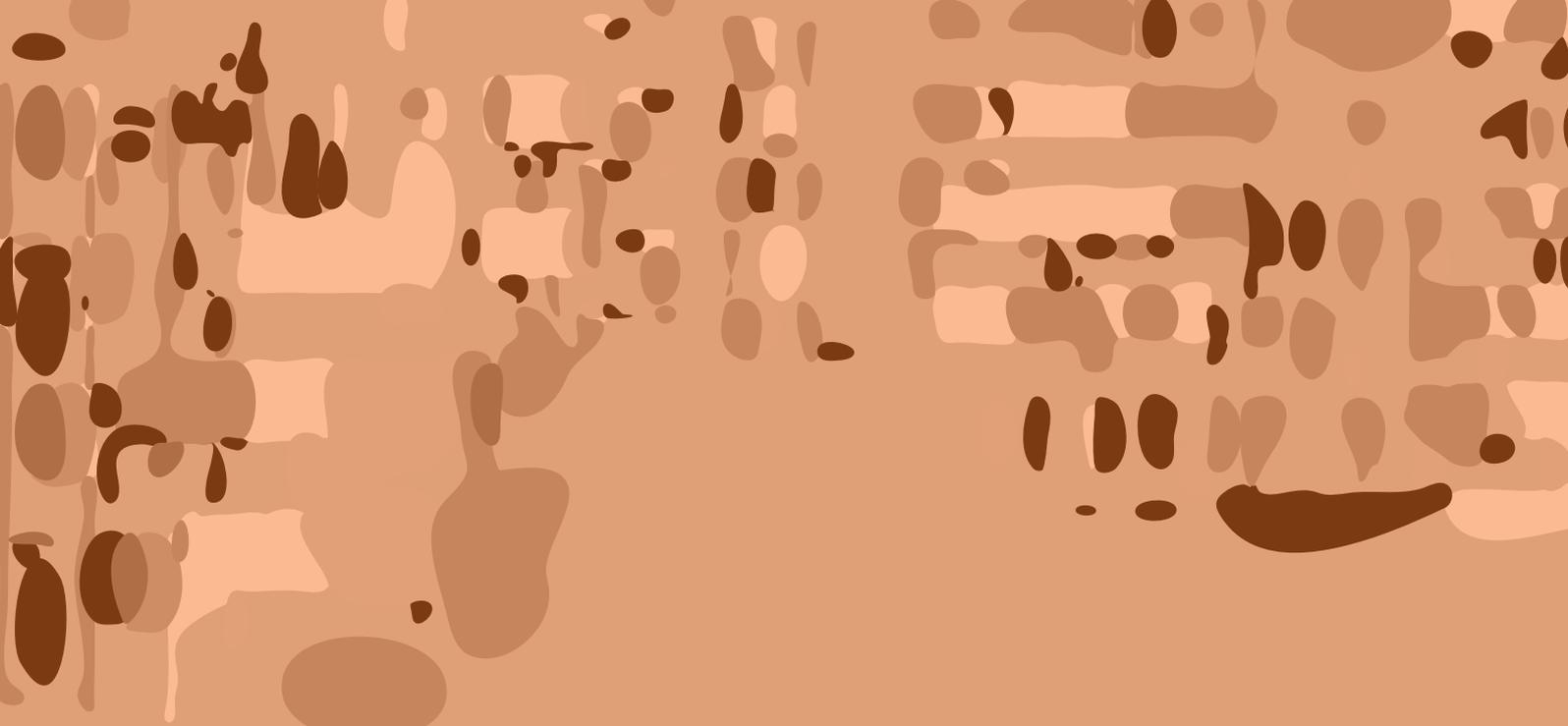
Figure 1 presents an estimation of the breakdown of how Indigenous employees, trainees and students came to be involved with the Parklands Project. The diagram offers only an estimation as these figures were calculated post hoc, but we expect them to be accurate enough to draw some inferences.

What is evident is that there was one primary pathway for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to become part of the Parklands Project, namely through the Indigenous labour hire company. Very little involvement came through universities and IAS funded organisations which may be worth consideration for future projects. While there was some involvement directly through

subcontractors, Indigenous labour hours were mostly achieved on site through the Indigenous labour hire company. For the majority of subcontractors interviewed for this evaluation, the Parklands build was their first experience of working on a project with an IPP; most subcontractors had no experience or knowledge of how to recruit for Indigenous employees. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples involved in labour hire versus direct employment may change over time for South East QLD construction projects, as more and more businesses get connected with Indigenous workers through labour hire or trainee work experience opportunities (e.g., GCSC).

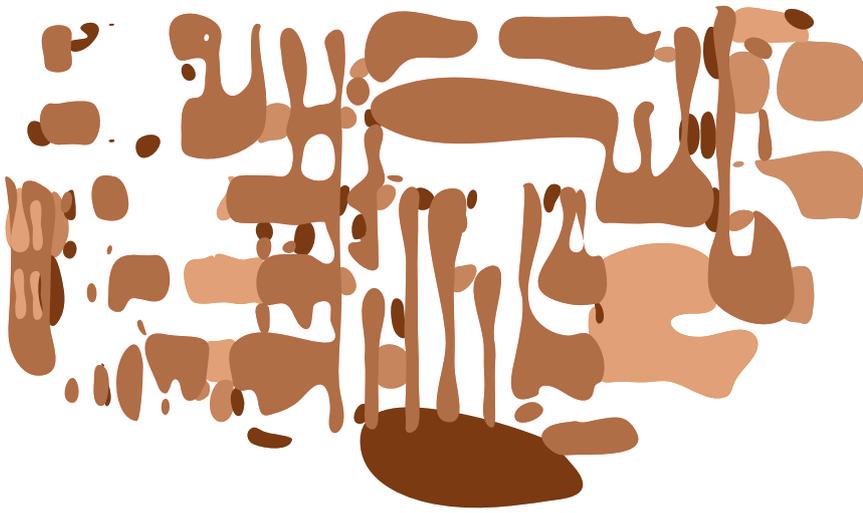
Figure 1. Approximate breakdown of how Indigenous employees/trainees/students were connected with the Parklands Project.





**Part 1**  
**Methodology**





## Methodology

### Report Phases

Figure 2 depicts the phases of the evaluation and research undertaken for this project. Phase 1 involved three key components. Evaluation capacity was firstly developed by looking at existing literature on Australian Indigenous participation and using this as a grounding to understand the project. Second, relationships were established between the researcher and key stakeholders such as with Grocon themselves and members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee (IPPLC). Third, the evaluation focus and methodology was developed through consultation with **yourtown** staff located onsite, Grocon, and the IPPLC. It was agreed that the overall approach would involve two, scaffolded stages – firstly by looking at what the research literature and experts have to say about good practice in Indigenous participation within the Australian construction industry (building evaluation capacity) and then using this foundation to interpret what happens onsite at Parklands.

Phase 2 shows how the evaluation lens was developed. Indigenous participation and social enterprise experts were identified through recommendations from such sources as the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation (DATSIP), **yourtown** executives and Indigenous participation staff, and **yourtown**'s partnering academics or connections. Further recommendations were received throughout the interview process and a total of 18 experts were consulted. During this phase, the cultural capacity of the lead researcher was developed with mentoring by **yourtown** Aboriginal staff and attendance at external forums. Lastly, the interview tools/questions to use when gathering the insights from Parklands stakeholders were created with the support of **yourtown**'s Aboriginal staff (Appendix C-G).

Phase 3 centres around the data collection phase of the Parkland's evaluation. Five stakeholder groups were interviewed:

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working on

site (n=16/130; 12.3%),

- Non-Indigenous subcontractors working on site (n=11/100; 11%),
- Grocon (n=9) and **yourtown** staff (n=3) whose roles involved enacting IPP strategies,
- Members of the Parkland's Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee (n=3) which was established as part of the IPP, and
- Indigenous businesses working on site or connected to the Parklands Project (n=4/16; 25%).

### Process

The process underpinning the interviews with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait workers onsite at Parklands is worth delineating. The researcher spent time on site building relationships and a site presence, to become a familiar face to the Indigenous workers onsite. She was inducted onsite and spent time walking around the site with the Workforce Development Coordinator (Aboriginal **yourtown** staff member) developing rapport, connections, and explaining the evaluation activities with Indigenous employees and

the companies who employed them. After a site presence was developed, Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander staff were invited to take part in a 30 minute interview. Permission was sought by the researcher from the subcontractor companies the workers were employed by to conduct the interview on work time; this was not always possible so the researcher made herself available before shifts (e.g., 5am-7am as well as during normal business hours).

Prior to the interview commencing, Indigenous workers were provided a consent sheet and talked through the information it presented. Permission to tape record the interviews was sought, and interview questions were learned off by heart by the researcher to help the interview have a more casual feel. Interviews were later transcribed verbatim.

At the end of the interview, Indigenous workers were asked for feedback on the experience of taking part in an interview. Responses were very positive, with workers explaining that it was nice to be given the chance to talk about their experiences on site (and be in the air-conditioning!).

Phase 4's purpose was two-fold: To test the validity of the data that had been collected/interpreted and to develop a theoretical model from the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholder data. A non-Indigenous female researcher conducted the interviews (in phase 3), so it was important to check that the workers had felt comfortable to speak openly. The validity of the data interpretation was firstly tested: A summary of the thematic themes which emerged from the qualitative analysis conducted by the non-Indigenous

researcher was re-examined by an Aboriginal psychologist. As to be expected, the cultural expert identified additional cultural themes in the data, and the interpretation was amended to integrate this richer perspective.

As a complimentary process, the validity of the data collected was tested with a follow-up workshop run by a male Aboriginal psychologist and approximately 50% of the interviewed sample attended. Workers were compensated for their participation time in the workshop as this took place outside of work hours. The workshop used alternate and culturally grounded methods to extract the same (and richer) data that had been gathered through the interviews (See Appendix H for example of anonymous participant data).

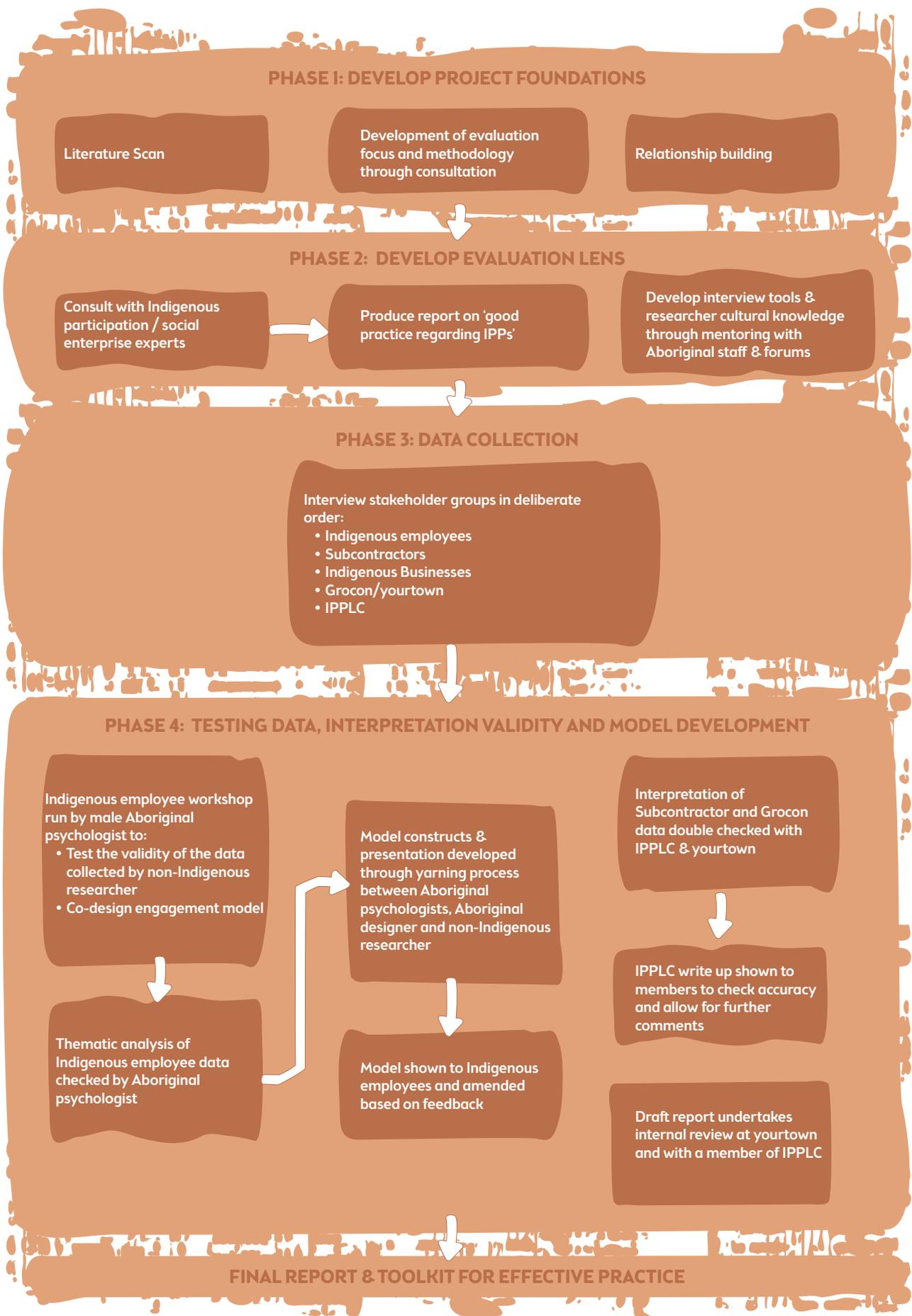
Additional data interpretation/ collection validity checking occurred with other stakeholder groups. For example, the stakeholder groups in Phase 3 were interviewed in a deliberate order so that some of the comments/themes from the subcontractor and Grocon interviews could be checked with Indigenous participation experts from the IPPLC or with **yourtown** staff. This mainly centred upon the perceived legitimacy of the Indigenous participation barriers identified by the stakeholders. The write up of the IPPLC interviews was also shown to the members to check for data collection accuracy, but also to allow members to clarify their thinking or provide additional comments.

Phase 4's second purpose was to create a theoretical model of First Australian's work engagement which can be linked to the IPP strategies. This was achieved by adopting co-design principles

(open questions in the interviews, and drawing and yarning in the workshop). Further co-design then occurred between the non-Indigenous researcher and the two Aboriginal psychologists and Aboriginal designer (all Gamilaroi peoples) to finalise the emergent constructs/themes and the look and feel of the model. Data was triangulated by also looking at existing literature on work engagement and data provided by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Indigenous participation experts interviewed back in phase 2. Several iterations of the model's constructs and appearance occurred; Indigenous workers from Parklands were presented with a reviewed draft of the write up and the model illustration and amendments were made based on their feedback.

The final 'validity test' was performed by an internal review of the draft report conducted by **yourtown** staff and a member of the IPPLC, leading to the production of the final report and toolkit for effective practice.

Figure 2. Research methodology



### Report Limitations

The primary limitation to the stakeholder insights section of the evaluation is the small sample sizes (For example, 16 out of 130 Indigenous employees, representing just over 12% of the total number of Indigenous workers on site) which could mean that the generalisability of the findings have limitations. Care was taken to achieve a mix of employees from the labour hire company, direct employment, VTEC, and GCSC. Similarly, care was taken when talking to subcontracts to talk to those who were and were not meeting their IPP requirements. Achieving interviews with employees proved challenging as many were not able to be interviewed during

work time as was originally contracted during the research proposal phase.

Secondly, this evaluation tried to achieve robust processes (which were culturally safe) within resource feasibility. For example, it was out of scope for this evaluation to investigate the onsite training school's activities to support their Indigenous students, so there may be important learnings from this program that have not been captured. Similarly, there are some additional stakeholders who were not able to be interviewed (e.g., Grocon corporate senior leaders, additional Indigenous businesses, etc) simply because they were not able to come to

realization within the available project timeframes.

Thirdly, despite a dedicated approach towards data validation and using culturally safe projects, the reality is that the bulk of this research was conducted by a non-Indigenous researcher, and therefore cultural nuances may have been missed.

Lastly, there are inherent limitations regarding the sophistication of what was measured at times. Looking back, we found things that could have been useful to measure from the beginning of the project (e.g., extent to which training changes employment prospects such as through promotion).

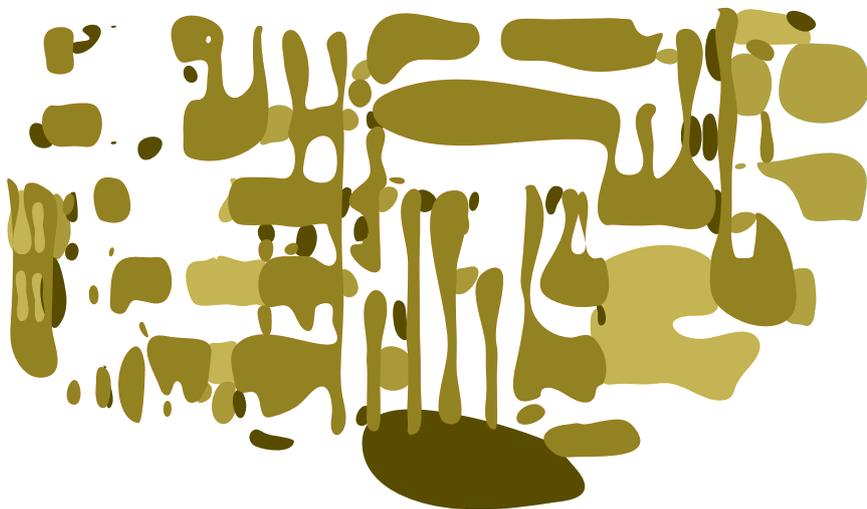




**Part 2**  
**Stakeholder Insights**  
**AKA 'The Experience'**



“What have been the lessons we can share? What has been the legacy?”



## Insights from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Employees

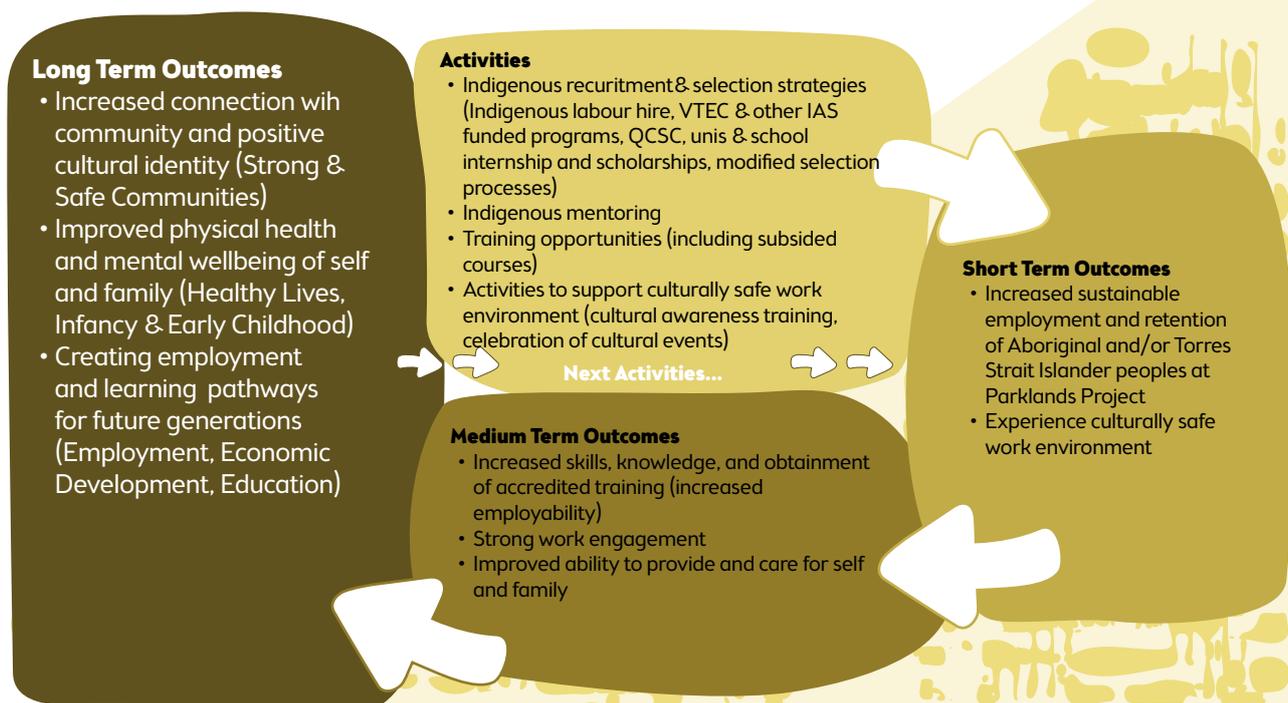
### Proposed Theory of Change regarding Indigenous Employees

A 'theory of change' is a visual representation of the relationship between activities and the changes or results that are hoped to be achieved by an intervention. The theories of change presented in this report have been developed by the report's author based on consultations with Grocon, **yourtown**, and members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee. Stakeholders were asked about the intended and achieved legacy of the IPP and their response were theorised into a causal

model. The models presented in this report would benefit from further interrogation by Grocon before adopting elsewhere to ensure that they indeed fit with Grocon's vision and organisational priorities. They are offered as a 'stating point' to fuel further discussion and reflection.

The theory of change presented below is visionary and ambitious; although it would be difficult to measure, the theoretical links are still plausible and some, albeit preliminary and limited, evidence

supporting these pathways emerged through discussions with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working on the Parklands Project. The theory of change below relates to those activities and outcomes relating to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees stakeholder group and the later sections of the report will highlight alternate focuses for the theories of change.



The ultimate outcome of Australian Indigenous participation initiatives is to create pathways for 'closing the gap' on 6 key areas where there are notable quality of life differences between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. These areas are:

- Infancy and Early Childhood
- Education
- Employment
- Economic Development
- Healthy Lives
- Safe and Strong Communities

Although 'closing the gap' was not the language used by Grocon staff in describing the desired legacy of the Parklands Project's IPP, the sorts of desired outcomes talked about resonate strongly with this national agenda. Grocon staff talked about creating a more inclusive culture and challenging negative stereotypes, making Indigenous participation practices normal within Grocon and within the construction industry, and increasing skills and knowledge of Indigenous workers "that will carry them forward" and "improve their quality of life" for themselves, their families, and their communities.

### Section Overview

This section of the report presents the perception of a sample of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working on the Parklands Project. This section will cover:

1. Sample demographics
2. What's worked well?
  - a. Cultural safety
    - i. Family support
    - ii. Workplace culture and perceived support
    - iii. Extent to which Parklands is perceived to be a good place for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person to work
  - b. Interest in mentoring
3. What have been the outcomes?
  - a. Training

- b. Impact on self
  - c. Impact on family/ community
4. Could anything have been done differently?

### Sample Demographics

Sixteen Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working on the Parklands Project were interviewed to learn about their experiences on the project and what they felt they had gained through the experience (see Appendix C for interview questions). Participants' average age was 31 years (range 19-48 years) and there were 14 male and 2 female participants. At the time of the interview, the average time participants had been on the Parklands site was 7.6 months (range 2 weeks to 1.5 years). Participants' average length of time spent working within the construction industry was 8.3 years, (range 0.5 to 20 years) with only 2 participants having worked less than 1 year in the industry. Seven participants (44%) had relocated from northern QLD or northern-central NSW to take on the work at Parklands.

Length of time in construction was not indicative of job role/earning capacity however; of the 6 participants (38%) who were in entry level positions (e.g., labourer), the average time spent within the construction industry was 10 years (range 0.5-30 years), perhaps reflecting trends noted within the resources industry wherein Indigenous peoples disproportionately are employed in entry level positions and experience barriers to progress their careers (Brereton & Parmenter, 2008), albeit this may have improved in more recent years (Queensland Resources Council, 2018). Thirty-eight percent (n=6) of the sample were qualified tradespeople or undertaking an apprenticeship. Similarly, forty-four percent of the sample (n=7), at the time of the interview, worked for the Indigenous labour hire company

and a further 2 (12.5%) had started with the Indigenous labour hire company but had since been employed directly by a subcontractor on the site. One participant had participated in the onsite school of construction and had then been employed directly by a subcontractor.

### Participant's referral pathway - 'How did you get the job here at Parklands'?

Pathway	% of this sample
'Murri grapevine' (word of mouth from fellow Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person)	62%
Responded to job advertisement	7.5%
Approached organisation directly	7.5%
VTEC/Job Active Provider	23%

How accurately this small sample reflects the total number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working on the Parklands Project is unclear, however, the above descriptive statistics echo best practice guidelines and the advice of subject matter experts in the industry, that is traditional methods of recruitment (i.e., advertisement with online applications) are not the most effective method for Indigenous recruitment.

The best kind of Indigenous participation plans use culturally appropriate recruitment methods – but many organisations are still using a 'one-size fits all' approach: Michael Limerick from MoU to Increase Indigenous Participation in the Queensland Resources Sector –

"[Lack of] plain English descriptions of what jobs are is a barrier. I've talked to a lot of indigenous people who've said that they don't understand what the job is and often it'll be tied up in jargon. Like there'll be a landscape technician or something where really it's just a groundsman. They go, "Oh yeah, I could do that", but when it's written in all this fancy jargon they don't apply"

### What have been the Outcomes?

This section of the report considers the outcomes that were noted by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working on the Parklands Project, which are likely to be linked to the existence of the IPP. Outcomes are reported under three key themes:

- training impacts,
- individual-level impacts, and
- family or community level impacts.

This section will also make note of the barriers encountered and reasons why some workers were unable to experience training.

### Training outcomes

The Parklands Project achieved 8,351 Indigenous training hours comprised of upskilling existing Indigenous workers and training Indigenous students from the Gold Coast School of Construction.

Twenty-seven accredited training courses were completed by existing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers (e.g., hoist, forklift, manual handling, Certificate 4 in WHS, EWP boom,) and 10 Indigenous students completed an accredited course (Certificate I in Construction) through the GCSC.

Five of the sixteen participants (31%) who were interviewed had completed or were undertaking accredited training during their tenure at Parklands, including a Certificate I in Construction, hoist training, and an apprenticeship. The impact of this training upon the individual was significant, in the majority of instances leading to new employment with significantly higher earnings and increased employment prospects; this in turn positively influenced the Indigenous employees' quality of life and wellbeing:

**“This new job gives me the ability to balance my life better and achieve my goals, I’m a lot more settled, I feel better, and I’m looking forward to getting my own place and doing my own renovations”;**

**“Being paid better, financially you can achieve more so I just feel good. I can keep my house”;**

**“So, they basically got me to start with them labouring and it went from there [They offered me an apprenticeship]. Yeah, it’s sick, I’m stoked”**

One of these participants who commenced an apprenticeship talked about the positive impact this had had upon their community, explaining that it was rare for his mob back home to see their people in non-entry level roles:

**“I say I’m an apprentice...and they go ‘really?’ you know. Yeah. I suppose down [where I’m from] they’ve never met any other Indigenous boys that are [qualified tradesmen] or anything like that. They’re just scaffolders or they’re just labourers, you know. They were all a bit surprised when I tell them that...This shows them that it’s doable”.**

However, barriers to undertaking training were identified by 8 of the 11 participants who, at the time of the interview, had not been involved with accredited training. Five of these Indigenous employees had expressed interest in undertaking training, either by making contact with **yourtown**, adding their name to sign-up sheets, or expressing their interest to their supervisor, but did not receive a follow-up. The remaining employees were not aware that there were training opportunities available to them.

**“A lot of guys in that shed [including myself] tried to contact the [person] who was first here doing it...No one got returned phone calls from the person. Nothing... There were probably about six other guys that were interested in doing other stuff”.**

**“It’s been offered but everyone who put their sheets in, from what I’ve heard no one’s heard anything back”.**

All of these participants were connected directly to the Workforce Development Coordinator by the researcher and were informed of all the training opportunities available. Other barriers to training perceived by **yourtown** staff include:

- Subcontracts discouraging staff to undertake training due to lost time on the job and likelihood of turnover as a result of increased accreditation and skills
- Labour hire companies reluctant to release staff for training due to loss of income
- Indigenous staff, typically in entry level positions, explaining that they could not afford to take the time off from paid work to undergo training, even though it had the potential to greatly benefit their career
- Lack of personal self-confidence to succeed with training

**Key finding:** Training, traineeships and apprenticeships have the potential to significantly impact the quality of life and wellbeing of Indigenous employees and the Parklands Project achieved its Indigenous training target, most likely positively influencing the lives of many employees and their community.

However, many Indigenous employees working on the project may have “slipped through the cracks” and missed out on valuable training. Future projects may have even greater impacts if a different system to sign up and facilitate training is developed and barriers are addressed.

### Individual level outcomes

When asked if they felt they had gotten out of their experience at Parklands, Indigenous employees identified a range of benefits to themselves, to their family and

community, including:

#### Individual impacts

- New skills
- Experience with a large commercial site and Tier 1 company
- Accredited training
- Supervision or team leader experience
- Increased motivation to work
- Career gained, improved employment prospects and offers of ongoing employment
- New friendships and networks
- Self-satisfaction
- New life on the Gold Coast
- Exposure to other trades
- Greater sense of stability than other jobs (due to length of project and variety of opportunities)
- Increased personal self-confidence and wellbeing

“Working down there it just made me feel really, like I felt very good about myself in a way...it did help a lot with self-confidence, and down there everyone sort of wants you to grow and be able to learn as much as you can, which is really good”.

“I’ve definitely met a whole tonne of people since I’ve started work here, and meeting heaps too has kind of like built my confidence and I can talk to people a lot more easily than I could before...More or less just don’t feel as shy, so yeah”

“I feel more confident in myself, just in the way that they have treated me with all the responsibility they’ve given me. That’s made me – yeah, because I suppose at the start I had doubts whether I was good enough to be a [a qualified tradesman], whether, you know – I was just a labourer and whether [a trade] was for me or not I didn’t know. I was sort of a bit scared really, you know. Yeah, just not being good enough I suppose would be – but, yeah, no, as I say all the responsibility

they’ve given me has given me heaps of confidence within myself...you just get the feeling that they’re quite happy with the work I do and keep giving me more responsibility”.

#### Self-efficacy related to future employability

Sixty-three per cent (n=10; 63%) of Indigenous employees interviewed felt confident in their ability to secure future employment after their role at the Parklands Project ended. There were two bases for this confidence: for some, their trade and past experience with successfully gaining employment meant they felt confident moving forward, independent of this current role at Parklands. For others (n=6; 38%), they attributed their experience at Parklands (increased skills, accredited training, new social or employment networks, etc.) with improving their employment prospects.

“There’s plenty of work around... In the past 10 years I’ve only not had work for 3 weeks... Because, we’re qualified it should be easy”

“Yeah, I feel good, I feel I’m in a good position. I’ve got ticketed up, and I plan on getting more tickets, and I’ve got a good boss that likes me for my work ethic and I’m pretty sure that he will be a good referee if I need him down the track. I plan on staying in this industry for a while now”

#### Family and community

##### outcomes:

- Pride
- Improved ability to support family
- Improved wellbeing of family members
- Role modelling and creating employment pathways for current and future generations

“There has sort of been a shift [I’m more motivated to work]. Yeah, I want to set a good

example for my kids”

“I think my son who is only eight – I enjoy this job and I want to show him as well, you know. Hopefully one day when he’s older I can put him on as an apprentice under me or something, you know. I’d really like that”

“I can provide for them a little bit better than what I could before”

“I suppose down home...where I grew up I knew everybody down there, all the Indigenous boys down there...have never met an Indigenous [qualified tradesman] down there so it’s sort of, like, everyone’s just taken back a bit at home. You know, like, shit, he’s made something for himself... They often ring me up asking me if they can get a job up here and stuff like that. Yeah, yeah. Place pictures on Facebook of the job site and that and everybody’s – they’re all spinning out, you know, like, shit, like, yeah”.

**Key finding:** Preliminary outcomes suggest that the Parklands Project may potentially have an impact upon the long term-goals of the Theory of Change by improving employment prospects for those workers who receive traineeships and apprenticeships. Trained workers reported increased quality of life and ability to provide for their families, including potentially future pathways into employment. While the exact extent to which this occurred cannot be measured in this project, the data provided by the Indigenous employees interviewed who received accredited training suggests this is a theoretically possible scenario.

Indigenous employees were able to identify a range of ways in which their experience at Parklands had had a positive impact upon them and their families and communities. The IPP strategies these impacts are most clearly linked (a) labour and training hour targets, and (b) community engagement strategies. The individual, family and community benefits that were perceived by workers illustrates that a positive working experience can have broad impacts including personal and community wellbeing.

## What's Worked Well?

Indigenous workers' experience of working at Parklands is explored in this section of the report through investigating a couple of key variables identified in the research literature which are important to successful Indigenous participation: a sense of cultural safety and mentoring.

## Cultural Safety

Cultural safety can be defined as: "An environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together" (Williams, 1999; p.213). In the current research, cultural safety was operationalised as the psycho-social work environment, particularly the amount of perceived support (from colleagues, supervisors, managers), extent to which participants felt the workplace was a 'good place' for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to work and also the extent to which participants felt their family were supportive of them in their role at Parklands.

## Perceived support from family

Indigenous employees who were interviewed reported high levels of family support for their involvement with the Parklands Project, with 94% (n=15) saying their family were supportive of them for being involved with the project. Some participants noted that their family were particularly proud or pleased with them being involved on a Commonwealth Games project or working with a reputable Tier I company, and some participants also noted that their family were pleased that they had undertaken training opportunities:

"My mum is pretty excited. Yeah. That I'm working in something pretty big like this....Yeah. Because, it's like Commonwealth Games. It's a big thing here"

"My family and that's pretty good, feel confident about me doing the course. They were proud of me"

"When my uncles and my dad and my mum all found out that I was successful in the role...they were quite happy...[that] I've been able to successfully obtain a role like that, and to really get that experience"

## Workplace support and psycho-social work environment

When asked what it is like to work with the people they work with on the Parklands Project, 94% (n=15) of Indigenous employees interviewed used positive adjectives to describe the work environment, suggesting high levels of social cohesion. For nine participants (56%), the collegial working environment was what they liked best about their job. One participant noted that they have observed some racism on site, but stressed that this was uncommon and not evident in leadership roles:

"You do see it here, it's definitely alive here. Ninety-five per cent of the people are just awesome, but there's always a small element that are not. The racist stuff comes from other workers, not anyone in a leadership role, just other workers".

Similarly, when asked if they felt supported by co-workers, supervisors, and managers, the majority of participants agreed:

"It's a good atmosphere, everyone gets along with everyone"

"Everyone is pretty much just mates and we all just chill out and get the work done and just kind of just have a joke and all that kind of stuff"

"Good bunch of blokes. At first it was a bit stand-off-ish. But, once they realised that you were a hard worker and that, yeah"

"Everyone just seems to get along, like no one - even the other guys, everyone is inclusive"

However, three participants reported negative experiences - two of these negative experiences were with supervisors resulting in dismissals and one participant reported that they did not feel supported by some of their co-workers, but did feel supported by their supervisor and manager. Although this represents only 19% of the sample interviewed, it is still worth exploring.

Of course it is hard to really unpick what has occurred in these instances but in two of these cases the researcher was exposed to 'both sides of the story' with subcontractors explaining why they had made termination decisions during their interviews. It feels possible that some cultural misunderstandings may have occurred. For example, these workers were labelled by their employers as 'lazy' and 'not pulling their weight' or 'unable to work unsupervised' although a lack of consideration of health issues affecting performance and a preference to work collectively rather than independently (which is a collective cultural phenomenon) could be an alternate explanation for the two dismissal situations.

It can help if employers are aware of barriers to participation or cultural nuances that could affect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples:

GenerationOne staff member: "I've heard of stories of people going home, putting their new work boots at the front door and then their older brother comes up and sees them and says, "Oh, fantastic! I'll go down to town with these flash boots." And, off they go and then they're not returned by Monday and then the individual goes to put their boots on and they're not there and they're like, "I was only given these three days ago." And, "I'm too ashamed now to be able to front up to work without my boots." So, they just don't turn up to work.

Then the next day they don't turn up again because now it's not about losing the boots it's about the fact that they didn't turn up the day before and they didn't give any notice. So, the issue now is about the embarrassment of not giving notice. Then day three comes and then it's a bit hard [and may lead to withdraw from employment or termination]. That's where the workplace buddy or mentor would notice they're not there and they'd get in touch...It's not a problem mate, we want you at work"

### Visible cultural presence

A key factor that appears to foster feelings of cultural safety for the major of those interviewed was the strong presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on site. Ten employees (63%), unprompted, commented upon the positive impact that this had for them:

"I've never been on a job where there has been this many Indigenous people"

"It's a good feeling. Yeah... Happy, I suppose, I'm not the only one there, you know"

"You feel in the right place".

"So, it makes you feel a lot more comfortable too to be who you are"

"A lot of people find comfort in meeting other Aboriginal people".

"It's just good to see. It's a good thing to see because there are many, many places, even in

the mining, there's not a lot of Aboriginal people working in that industry and when I came here and there were so many other Aboriginal men and women here, it's pretty uplifting to see. Given the chance they can do as well as anyone else"

### Is Parklands a good place for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to work?

This strong visible presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was one of the reasons why 100% of participants interviewed (n=16) responded positively when asked to what extent the Parklands was a good place for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person to work.

Participants also noted that Grocon seemed serious about encouraging Indigenous participation, evident through the training opportunities provided, the cultural celebrations (Reconciliation week and NADOC week), the provision of carpentry tools, and by promoting and tracking Indigenous labour and training targets. Other reasons why participants perceived Parklands to be a good place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to work included:

- good collegial working atmosphere,
- being allowed to take time off for personal or family commitments,
- the approachability of supervisors,
- Preston Campbell's endorsement,
- contributing to a landmark project for the Commonwealth Games,
- the amount of cultural diversity evident in the workplace,
- the positive reception by family and community members when employees yarned about working on this project

"When I first came here they had a Reconciliation Week breakfast with Preston Campbell and all that, they came, and that was really good to meet other people from the same culture, get a chance to meet new people that you work alongside"

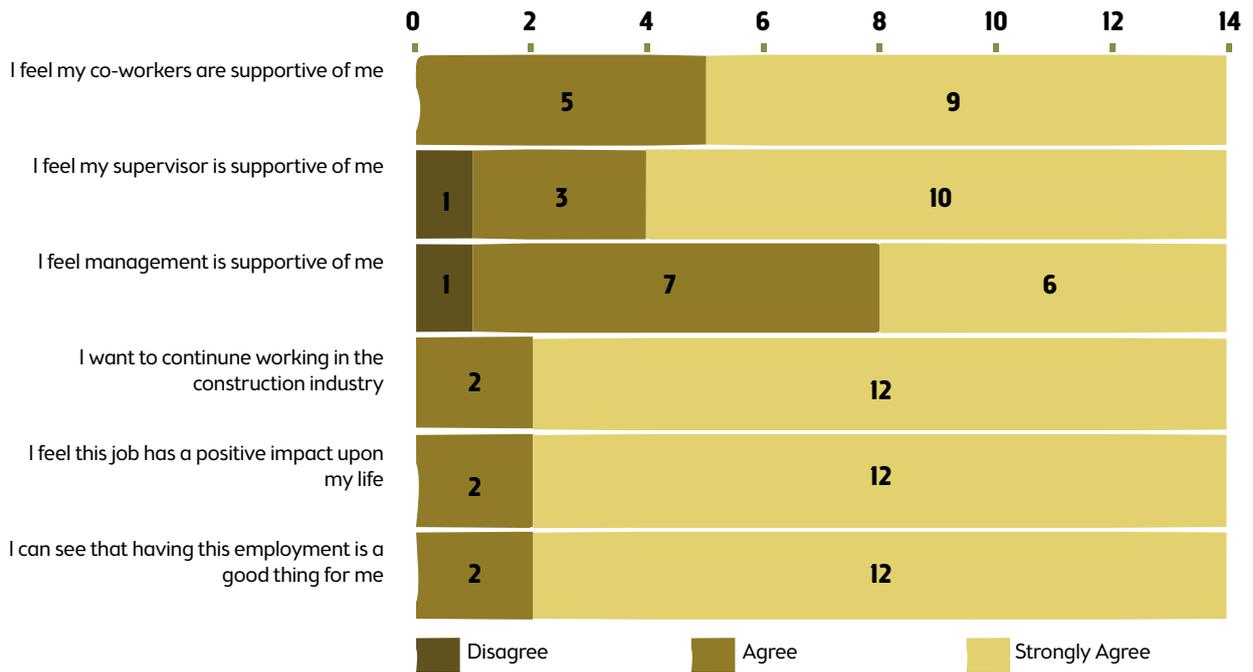
"I think it's good. It's the Commonwealth Games, it's not just any normal, I suppose, project. It's going to be put on show for everybody to see. It's a bonus to be able to say one day to my kids growing up or, you know, other people that you meet that I was involved in, you know, that project and making it happen. [When I tell family I] work at the Comm Games Village, they're all, like, wow, you know. They just building a normal house or something like that. I can be proud of that. I like telling them, it's good".

"Personally I think it's a great place to work to a great extent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work at because Grocon is really supportive of wanting to employ Indigenous people. I mean, you can see it in the way that they personally monitor Indigenous work hours... when I was there they go, if you know anyone who is Indigenous...who wants a job, let us know..."

**Key finding:** 100% of Indigenous participants interviewed (n=16) felt the Parklands was a good place for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person to work.

Participants' qualitative data was supported by the results of a short survey that 14 of the Indigenous employees completed (see Figure 3), which showed the strong majority had a positive experience working at Parklands and held positive perceptions about their employment within the construction industry.

**Figure 3. Indigenous employees' perception of workplace support, employment intentions and perceived value of working at Parklands (n=14)**



**Cultural safety summary**

Parklands Project most likely had a good level of cultural safety for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees. Indigenous participation initiatives that this was most likely linked to are the strategies regarding the celebration of cultural events, community engagement initiatives, and labour and training hours targets. However, there are limits to how much the IPP most likely contributed to the positive work environment as strategies such as subcontractor cultural awareness training were not implemented which most likely affect employees' experiences of cultural safety.

Indigenous employees most likely co-created their sense of cultural safety by enacting norms prevalent within construction, with almost 56% of workers interviewed (9/16) making note of the importance of working hard, demonstrating your worth, and being sociable in order to 'fit in' and have a good experience:

**“Just work as hard as you can to show that you are willing to do what you need to do in order to get the job done”**

**“If your boss tells you to be there, you be there. You know, don't let anyone down. Come to work every day. It doesn't matter if you're sick. Just be committed”**

The majority of those interviewed said they felt supported by colleagues, supervisors and management. However, almost one-in-five (n=3) of those interviewed reported having a negative experience (with either a supervisor or co-workers) and there is some evidence to suggest that cultural misunderstanding could have occurred, although it is impossible to know if this is indeed what happened. Nevertheless, when considering the finding from the next section of the report, the subcontract interview data, it appears likely that interventions such as supervisor cultural awareness training may benefit future projects.

**Mentoring**

Mentoring is one of the corner stone strategies of Indigenous Participation Plans and available evidence suggests that when done well, it is a helpful strategy for increasing engagement and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Mentoring is likely to help create a sense of 'system knowledge' (i.e., how the workplace 'works'), build relationships and foster a sense of cultural safety within the workplace.

On the Parklands Project, mentoring was available to IAS funded programs and GCSC students only, however, a number of the Indigenous business owners explained that they have informal pastoral care mentoring available.

The research literature typically underscores the importance of holistic or pastoral care mentoring for Indigenous employees. In the sample interviewed, there was moderate interest by approximately half of the participants (n=9; 56%) in accessing or learning more about pastoral care mentoring. However, approximately half of those interviewed felt that they were not in need of this

sort of support, many of whom were very settled in their lives (parents, home owners, qualified tradesmen etc). In contrast, almost 71% of participants (10 out of 14 who were asked) expressed moderate to strong interest in career mentoring:

**“I want to keep moving up. I don’t want to be on the tools when I’m 50”; I don’t honestly know what I’m going to do once I get too old for it, you know”.**

Only one participant in the sample interviewed had undergone mentoring at Parklands (as part of the VTEC program) and their satisfaction with the mentoring was high, having been offered both tangible support (fuel cards, advice) and emotional support (encouragement or disclosing concerns):

**“If you need help they’re always there...and they’re always, like, hey, if you need anything let me know”.**

Pastoral care mentoring appears to have been essential for increasing the readiness for employment for some employees, especially those coming from a background of un-employment (e.g., VTEC clients). The following example of yourtown VTEC mentoring highlights the provision of tangible social support and the sorts of challenges VETC clients can face:

**Late one afternoon, yourtown received a call from GenerationOne for a client referral – the client was driving up that night from NSW and had induction training in the morning. yourtown made contact with the client to discover the client’s car had broken down an hour south of the QLD border, but they were out of cash and had no accommodation: “Get yourself on a bus to Southport and**

**we’ll pay for the ticket”. The yourtown mentor drove from the southside of Brisbane to Southport to collect the client from the bus stop and take them to their induction. The mentor arranged and paid for accommodation for the client for the week, bought them groceries, and paid for car hire while their car got fixed. Despite this rocky start, this client has now been successfully employed on the Parklands Project for much of the duration of the project.**

However, not all VTEC clients at Parklands had successful experiences. A different example is of a client who “only lasted one month” employed in a full-time entry level position, with work attendance and contact with their mentor dropping off over the month. Although it is unclear what the exact circumstances of this withdrawal are, it is possible that placing someone from unemployment into 6 days a week of early morning starts and hard physical work that is out in the elements is not sustainable, especially if the client is managing personal challenges. Subcontractors working at Parklands who used the Indigenous labour hire company noted that they need people who can “hit the ground running” and did not have capacity or experience to support a VETC client.

One subject matter expert interviewed in the precursor report to this evaluation suggested that in some instances, part-time work or a staggered entry into the workforce may have more sustainable outcomes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, although employers, and perhaps the construction industry itself, would have to re-think their workforce models to achieve this. Another expert explained that placing

people into roles when they are not ready can increase not only an individual’s but the Aboriginal community’s “shame cycle”, urging IAS funded organisations to aim to “set people up for success”.

**Key finding:** If Grocon choose to adopt a Theory of Change model that aims to break cycles of disadvantage, then future Grocon IPPs may look to include more IAS funded employees or similar programs to target demographics facing disadvantage, which may require a pastoral care-like mentor to be based on site. In addition, it may require innovative construction workplace practices that allow for part-time employment while work readiness is developed.

Career mentoring is likely to be a popular form of mentoring if offered to Indigenous employees; This may help move Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples out of entry level positions, and more employees into leadership positions or into their own businesses.

### **What Could Be Done Differently?**

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers comments relating to things that could have been done differently to further improve the Indigenous participation on site included the following ideas:

- Make sure indigenous staff are aware of the training opportunities available for them and fix the sign up process
- Investigate ways that financial support could be offered to enable workers to attend training (as this means losing a day’s pay)
- Consider having site mentor/s who delivers both pastoral care and career mentoring, based on individual needs
- Consider promoting employment opportunities at Parklands even more to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community, such as by holding local community ‘fun’ days

- Where possible, endeavour to use 'good management practices'. Specifically, some Indigenous trades people noted that colleagues were told by Grocon staff "the night before" that they were no longer required for work that week which led to a sense of anger at not having been given what they perceived to be the 'usual' amount of forewarning for construction jobs (e.g., 1-2 weeks warning that the work is wrapping up). Indigenous workers said these colleagues would be hesitant to work for Grocon again in the future based upon this bad experience. Although some may consider this an inevitable part of labour hire, perhaps giving clear expectations to the staff beforehand (i.e., 'you will be paid at a slightly higher rate of pay but there will most likely be no warning when the role comes to an end') could have helped to alleviate this sense of anger amongst the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander trades people.

Although not suggested directly by Indigenous employees themselves, themes emerging from their comments may suggest that some work around subcontractor capacity may be warranted. For instance, the negative experience of a small number of workers which may have been a culturally based misunderstanding with their supervisors; this may suggest that cultural awareness training, especially around how Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural responsibilities and lore may affect Indigenous employees in the workplace, could be beneficial.

**yourtown** were also aware that some Indigenous employees 'snuck' off site by not signing out of the swipe system to

attend cultural celebrations, as they did not feel they had the endorsement of the subcontracting company they were working for. This suggests that more subcontractors could be encouraged by Grocon to endorse staff's attendance at cultural celebrations, and even attend these events themselves.

### Section conclusion

One-hundred percent of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees who participated in this evaluation felt that the Parklands Project was a good place for First Australians to work, and their data suggests they felt a sense of cultural safety on the project.

While there is evidence to suggest some of the Parklands IPP strategies were linked to creating this sense of cultural safety (i.e., endorsement by key community members, high numbers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples on site, cultural celebrations etc), Indigenous workers may have co-created their sense of cultural safety by complying with construction industry and mainstream cultural norms. Cultural safety could be further safe guarded in future projects by improving subcontractor's knowledge of the potential barriers Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people may face towards employment and increasing supervisors' knowledge of Australian Indigenous cultures.

Although this sample (of primarily established workers) did not appear to be in need of pastoral care mentoring, there was interest in career mentoring, with some workers wondering what they were going to do when they aged and became too old for the physical demands of their jobs. However, if Grocon chooses to adopt a Theory of Change

that focuses on breaking cycles of disadvantage, meaning that future projects will involve more IAS funded programs, then site based mentoring which offers both career and pastoral care support (depending upon the needs of the individual) may need to be considered.

Meaningful training may also break cycles of disadvantage, given that those in this sample who had received accredited training reported improved career prospects and quality of life. Barriers to undertaking training were identified by both workers and yourtown staff to include: gaps in the training sign up and advertisement processes; discouragement by subcontractors or labour hire companies due to workflow implications; inability to cover loss of income during training period; and a lack of personal self-confidence to succeed with training. Given that training appears to change lives, future projects may benefit from addressing these barriers.

The impacts noted by workers included individual level and family and community impacts, one of which included improved wellbeing. Taken in consideration with the commentary regarding the strong, visible presence Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples had on site, this also suggests that a positive working experience can also offer a connection to cultural identity. When mapping the findings from this section to the model that has been co-designed to represent the factors that may help facilitate First Australians sense of work engagement, it is clear there is a lot of alignment. Indigenous employees described feeling a sense of community through good relationships with their non-indigenous colleagues or supervisors, seeing

plenty of workplace diversity, and feeling an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence on site. Furthermore, the wider community supported the work, with key community endorsements by such people as Preston Campbell and positive reaction by family members.

Many workers described having a sense of meaning, at both the individual and the collective purpose levels. Individually, most workers reported satisfaction with 'foundational' factors like pay, feedback, safety conditions, and career growth opportunities. There was also some evidence to suggest working at Parklands spoke to a collective purpose, with some workers perceiving the experience was breaking down stereotypes, and they felt they were acting as role models for the community 'back home'.

Indigenous workers' sense of alignment with cultural values was not systematically examined in this research, but on a general level, comments made by the workers interviewed suggest they felt respected, had a sense of responsibility for the work they performed, valued when their colleagues 'pulled their weight' (reciprocity), and felt a connectedness with the people they worked with.

VTEC and GCSC students (albeit the small number) who took part in this research both noted how well these programs set them up

for understanding and building networks within the construction industry. Although many of the Indigenous workers interviewed appeared to have a solid sense of system navigation, there were still a number of long-term construction workers in the sample who were in entry level positions; one of the reasons for this could be a lack of 'system navigation' capability - i.e., lacking the right networks and or not knowing about opportunities to move their careers forward, especially in a way that balances work with their cultural obligations.

The comments provided by those interviewed suggest that the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working on Parklands most likely felt a sense of cultural safety, but it is important to recognise that cultural safety was most likely 'co-created': Future projects could look to build in more safeguards towards achieving cultural safety by exploring strategies for increasing subcontractor indigenous participation capacity and 'preparing the workforce' strategies.

## Recommendations

### from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees' insights

Indigenous employees' comments suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

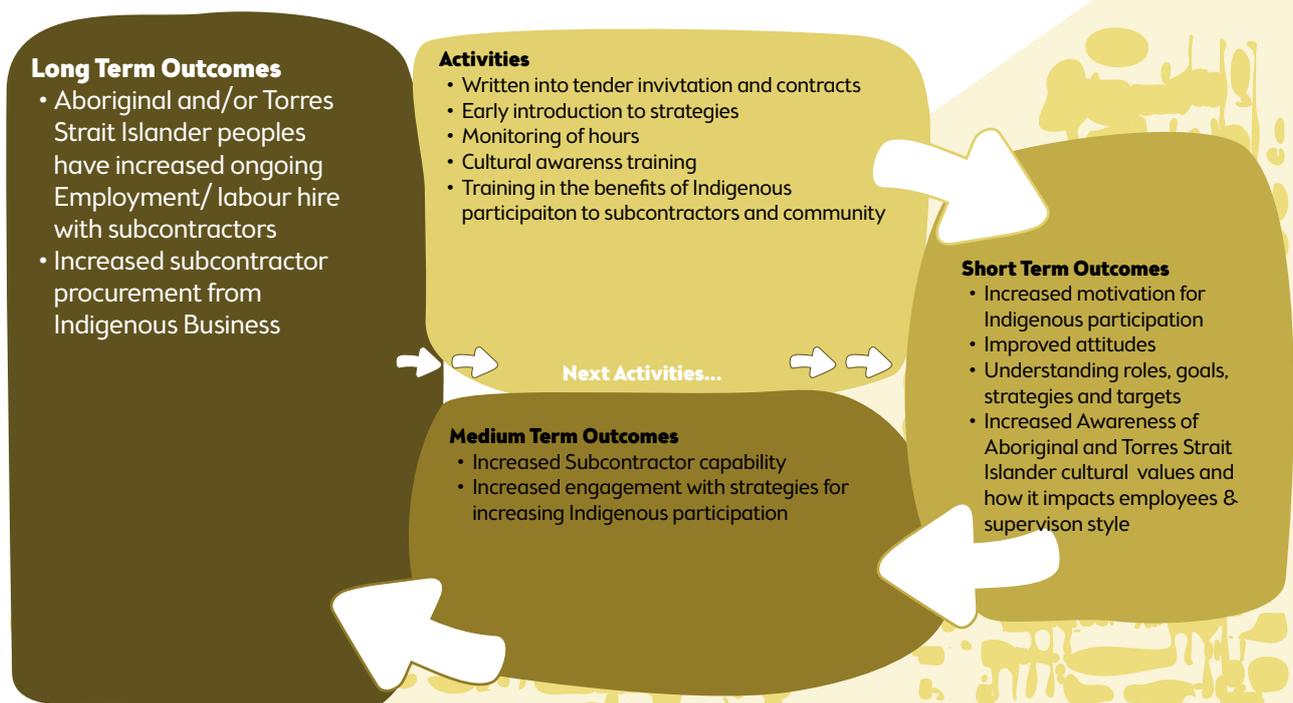
- Investigate ways to improve mechanisms for advertising and signing up Indigenous staff for training opportunities
- Investigate 'scholarships' or 'student loan' options to enable Indigenous workers who do not have the resources to undertake training (not only the course costs, but the loss of income while undergoing training)
- Consider further developing subcontractors' Indigenous participation capacity (see later sections)
- Consider investing in site mentor/s for pastoral care and career mentoring
- Consider developing protocols that better monitor workflows which can provide staff adequate pre-warning when their labour will no longer be required.

The next section of this report considers the implementation and outcomes of the Parklands IPP from the perspective of non-Indigenous subcontractors working on the Project.



## Insights from Non-Indigenous Subcontractors

### Proposed Theory of Change relating to Non-Indigenous Subcontractors:



Grocon and **yourtown** staff members talked about “changing hearts and minds” when thinking about the legacy of the Parklands Project’s IPP in relation to the area of subcontracting. This involved breaking down stereotypes that we know exist within the Australian community and building subcontractors’ capacity to increase the amount of Indigenous participation and retention within their business activities, not just for the Parklands Project but on an ongoing basis.

A theory of change proposing how these outcomes could be achieved is illustrated here. Additional activities not included in the Parklands IPP that may help to achieve the desired outcomes are also included for consideration.

Eleven non-Indigenous subcontractors working on the Parklands project during the substructure, super structure and fit out phases of the construction process were interviewed regarding their experiences in relation to the implementation of the Parklands IPP. Company representatives who participated in the interviews were those who had oversight of their organisation’s activities on site, however, some were not involved in the initial tendering stages. Organisations ranged in size from small to medium and care was taken to talk to both subcontractors who had achieved a high number of participation hours (meeting or exceeding their targets) and those who had not engaged with Indigenous participation.

### Section Overview

This section of the report will include:

- I. What have been the Outcomes?
  - a. Differences observed between higher and lower performing subcontractors in relation to number of Indigenous participation

- hours achieved
2. What’s worked well?
3. What could be done differently?
  - a. Barriers and challenges observed in relation to subcontractors achieving their IPP requirements
4. Section conclusion
5. Recommendations for future projects

### What have been the Outcomes?

Eleven subcontractors met or succeeded their Indigenous participation targets and were awarded with certificates of achievement by Grocon at cultural celebration events. There were approximately 100 subcontractors engaged on the Parklands Project and all had IPP clauses in their contracts, irrespective of size/value or area.

Subcontracting organisations on the Parklands Project were required to achieve Indigenous labour and/or training hours at a rate of 0.04% of the sum of their contracts. As discussed later in the “Score Card” section (Appendix A), subcontractors’ exact IPP obligations were not stipulated as clearly as they could have been in the tender invitation letter or sub-contract deed: these documents referred to the need to comply with the overall IPP for the Parklands Project, without highlighting subcontractors’ individual role requirements. Grocon have already consulted with **yourtown** to make changes on future IPP projects in regards to this issue.

It is notable that, with only approximately 11% of subcontractors achieving or surpassing their Indigenous participation targets, that the Parklands still met its overall labour and training KPI target for the project. The majority of subcontractors did not achieve their Indigenous participation hours and a variety of reasons have been identified for this and will be unpacked in the following section.

### Differences between High and Low Performers

There were some noticeable differences in the experiences and perceptions of subcontractors who achieved a higher number of Indigenous participation (IP) hours (i.e., more than 50% of their target hours) compared to subcontractors who achieved a low number of hours (i.e., less than 50% of target hours; see Table 1). Note, however, that not all themes were present for all high vs low performing subcontractors. This section will explore these differences observed as there may be opportunity to address some of these differences in future projects.

Table 1. Differences observed between high and low performing subcontractors in regards to Indigenous training and employment hours

High Performers	Low Performers
Early awareness of IP requirements	Late awareness of IP requirements
Clear strategy for how to achieve hours	Delayed action
Aware of their target	Unsure exactly what is their target
Lack of dependency upon Grocon e.g., self-monitoring of hours	Dependency upon Grocon to track progress and motivate them
Pastoral care or supportive element to their supervision style	Indigenous employees viewed as ‘labour’ rather than individuals (i.e., did not know names or have rapport)
Believe target is achievable	Do not believe target is achievable
Proactive engagement with strategies to increase IP	Lack of initiative
Passed on requirements to their own subcontractors	Did not perceive that they could influence their own subcontractors / did not pass on requirements to their subcontractors
Perceive benefits/ feel they gained something out of the experience	Report having gotten nothing out of the experience/ no perceived benefit

### Early awareness

Subcontractors who achieved a higher number of Indigenous participation hours tended to note that they became aware of their IP contractual requirement early in the process, either noticing it themselves in the contract or learning from Grocon/yourtown in an early meeting. In contrast, subcontractors who achieved a lower number of hours typically reported that they had either not noticed the requirement in their contract, did not think it was a priority, or only became aware several months into their time on site:

“Until basically these last couple of conversations I wasn’t even aware of it as a requirement at all”

“It wasn’t actually really clear in the contract the total that we were required to get until quite a ways in. When I spoke to our estimators it seemed to be a surprise to them that we had this obligation”.

“I’m trying to think about that first initial meeting we had here, and I don’t recall there being any

mention that we had to meet the guideline with reference to that”

“We weren’t even given any avenue of how to address this or who to speak to or who to see as far as I’m aware. Like I said if that email was only sent [this year] in January, we’ve been here since early last year”

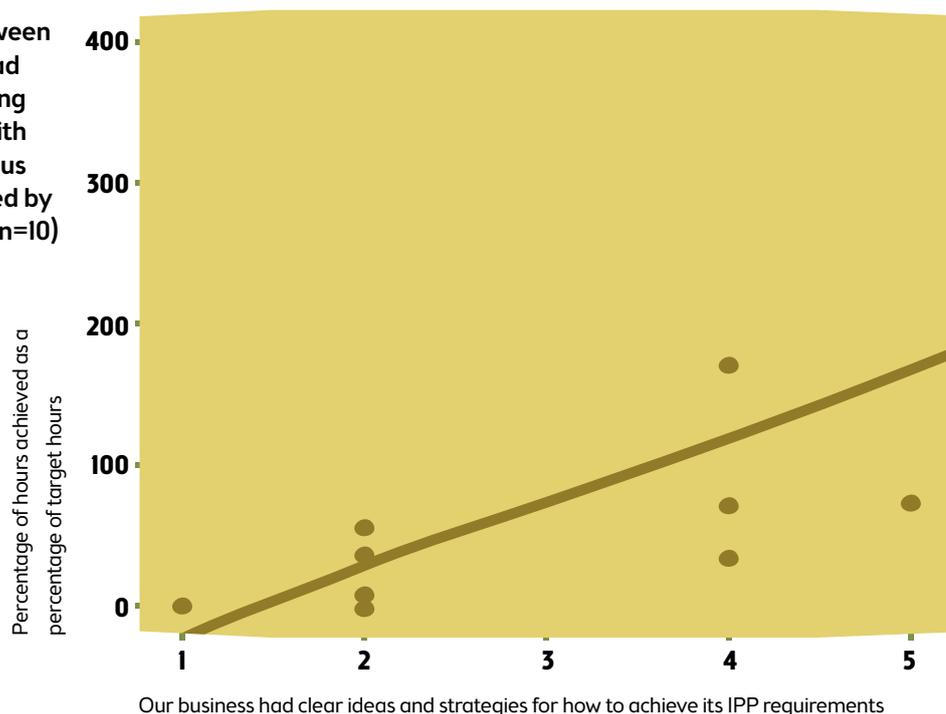
Subject matter experts interviewed in the first phase of this evaluation emphasize the importance of raising subcontractors’ awareness of the IPP as early as possible, such as during the tendering phase. One expert explained that they deliberately ask people tendering for contracts how they plan to meet the IPP requirements.

### Clear strategies and no. of hours achieved

Being aware of the requirements early on was also related to having a clear plan and strategy about how to achieve Indigenous participation hours; this in turn is linked to the number of participation hours actually achieved. Subcontractors were

asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement “Our business had clear ideas and strategies for how to achieve its IPP requirements” on a scale from 1-5 with 1 being “Strongly Disagree” and 5 being “Strongly Agree”. Those businesses who had plans achieved more participation hours. This relationship was significant using a Pearson Correlation ( $r = .69$ ,  $p < .05$ ), depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Relationship between the perception of having had a clear strategy for achieving Indigenous participation with the percentage of Indigenous participation hours achieved by Subcontractor businesses (n=10)



### Management styles

There was some evidence to suggest there may be differences in the management styles of the subcontractors, with those who achieved higher levels of Indigenous participation commenting upon the pastoral care behaviours they used with their Indigenous staff. Some of the subcontractors who achieved their participation hours also seemed a lot more familiar with the Indigenous staff working for them on an individual level.

In contrast, the subcontractors interviewed who achieved a lower number of hours appeared less familiar with those Indigenous staff who had worked for them and did not evidence supportive leadership behaviours. For example, one subcontractor focused strongly upon the hours worked by the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees, and appeared to judge the employees' worth to his business based upon the extent to which they had reliably worked a full week (6 days a week) over the course of their contracts; but little to nothing appeared to have been known about the reasons why employees may have not been able to work a full week or any personal details relating to the employee. This difference in management style may be related to the extent to which subcontractors understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural lore and responsibilities and how it impacts their employees.

### Perceived benefits of participating in an IPP

Subcontractors generally evidenced poor awareness of the benefits to their organisation and to the broader community from participating in an IPP. Subcontractors who achieved higher hours were somewhat more likely to identify more

benefits such as being able to use Indigenous participation strategies again, feeling more open minded about engaging Indigenous employees or reporting having had a good experience and increased awareness of Indigenous participation processes. Although one lower performing subcontractor was able to recognise that having Indigenous participation experience would have reputational benefits for their organisation, it was much more common for these lower performing subcontractors to answer "no" or "nothing" when asked if there are any benefits to their organisation or if they had gotten anything out of the experience.

**"We're not getting anything out of this...I haven't learnt anything extra but, no, they're just another tool to me, so another man"**

**"Nothing. it's just there operating in the background along with 500 other things I've got to think about, do you know what I mean? So it's not like there is any personal growth or anything there, it's just one of a great number of compliance issues"**

However, it is worth highlighting that the experience did significantly change the mind of one subcontractor:

**"I've more of an open mind to engage in these types of services. I mean I've never judged a book by its cover and I've never had a closed mind to employing an individual, but I guess on this scale and being the first time I was a bit hesitant [due to hearing about negative experiences and stereotypes]. And unless I was probably getting forced into it, I wouldn't have done it. But after this I have no hesitation. Like I said, I've really been introduced to**

**some great workers who we'll continue to keep working with".**

### Motivation

Perceived benefits (or positive attitudes), the beliefs around how others want us to behave (subject norms) and motivations (behavioural intentions) are strongly linked concepts in psychological theories of human behaviour (e.g., Theory of Planned Behaviour). When asked what motivation their company has to engage in Indigenous participation, the majority of subcontractors explained that their motivation was compliance based: for only one subcontractor was this compliance motivation also linked, as an afterthought, to an intrinsic motivation to align with their organisation's community-based values.

Eight (73%) of the subcontractors went on to explain that they would not have engaged Indigenous workers had it not been a contractual requirement. In some cases, there even appeared to be resentment:

**"I brought an invoice in [into the interview]; this what it costs us typically per week to keep one of these guys, and that's a chunk of money!"**

It is likely that if subcontractors had a more thorough awareness of the benefits of Indigenous participation to their organisation and the community, and the need for having these initiatives, then they would have greater motivation to participate, resulting in more engagement. Benefits to organisations may include increased capacity to bid and win future work, improved inclusivity culture, and improved reputation. Community benefits may include breaking cycles of disadvantage, increased social equality, and improved inter-cultural relations.

**Putting it in the contract is important:**

73% of the sample of subcontractors interviewed said they would not have deliberately engaged Indigenous workers had it not been a contractual requirement.

Outcomes may be enhanced if subcontractor's attitudes towards Indigenous Participation Plans are changed.

**Dependency vs initiative**

There was evidence of greater dependency upon Grocon/**yourtown** by subcontractor's who achieved lower hours: these subcontractors appeared to rely upon Grocon to track their hours, and to emphasize that it is a priority. This resulted in delayed or less action. For example, one subcontractor noted their awareness of a training school who produced labourers trained in the specialised skills their workers required (which was reportedly a barrier to their organisation taking on board general labourers); however, this subcontractor did not perceive that they could have taken action themselves to link in with this school and take on board apprentices or labourers. It is important to note, however, the time and commercial pressures these companies are under, however, which probably directly affects the extent to which they engaged in researching strategies to increase their Indigenous participation. Only 36% (4 out of 11) subcontractors reported engaging in or researching their own strategies for Indigenous participation outside of what was suggested by Grocon/**yourtown**. In addition, subcontractors appeared unaware of well publicized resources such as Black Business Finder and Supply Nation.

In contrast, subcontractors who achieved higher hours tended to be able to readily bring to mind how they were tracking in relation to achieving their Indigenous

labour and training hours, and even displayed initiative in terms of recruitment strategies such as asking existing Indigenous workers to recruit from their social networks.

**Comments from lower performers suggesting dependency:**

**“Grocon never approached us saying, hey, we'd like proof of a percentage of what your workforce is Indigenous....There was no motivator whatsoever. There was no one saying, hey, where's your proof that – hey, you have to do this. It was, yeah, it was never enforced”**

**“So, we've never been reminded that, hey, you're not going to meet that target with the amount of hours you're putting in every month, Indigenous hours on your claim performer. So, that's never been raised as an issue so we've never thought well it's not a real big issue if you don't meet that percentage hours”**

**Feedback and support**

Nine subcontractors (82%) report that they were contacted by Grocon/**yourtown** and made aware of their contractual requirement for Indigenous participation and offered some support and strategy suggestions for how they could achieve their targets. Subcontractors recall that there were two strategies suggested: using an Indigenous labour hire company or taking on work experience Indigenous students from the construction school located on site. Subcontractors who achieved higher hours tended to recall receiving this support from Grocon/**yourtown** earlier into their time on site.

**Passing on requirements to their subcontractors**

Of the three subcontractors

interviewed who had their own subcontractors, only one passed on the Indigenous participation requirements, however, they did not offer any support or suggest strategies in terms of how their subcontractors could achieve Indigenous participation. Two of these three subcontractors did not perceive that they could play an influencing role in terms of their subcontractors' Indigenous participation activities so they did not make their subcontractors aware/pass on the IPP requirements; this may have been a missed opportunity, even just to create awareness of IPP requirements. It is likely that this perception that subcontractors cannot influence their own subcontractors' Indigenous participation activities is related to a lack of Indigenous participation capacity, i.e., lack of understanding why there is an IPP, lack of knowledge of benefits, low motivation to engage, and low confidence to influence other businesses.

**“With our subcontractors we have no – that's beyond our sphere of influence as to – we can't say to them I need you to – we've got essentially what is a quota system in place, you know, which is back to the dark ages, but I've got no control over who they select... At a subcontractor level, that's where it breaks down.**

**“We haven't enforced this program onto our subcontractors and Grocon hasn't enforced it upon us either. So, really it's been completely up to our subcontractors of who they hire and how and when and who”**

Another way to explain what could be happening here is that there is no 'subjective norm' yet in this part of the construction industry regarding the enactment of Indigenous participation

strategies. Put simply, it is not yet considered 'accepted practice' and 'what is expected', just as a few decades ago many workplace health and safety practices were not 'just what we do around here'.

### Ramifications

The strong majority of subcontractors interviewed (9/11; 82%) were unsure if there were implications if Indigenous participation requirements were not met. Setting ramifications for poor effort or achievement is one method to motivation behaviour and many of the subject matter experts interviewed in the first part of this evaluation believe that ramifications and accountability is necessary to improve subcontractor's engagement with Indigenous participation activities. However, given subcontractor's Indigenous participation capacity was quite low in this sample (i.e., very few had prior experience of working on a project with an IPP and there was little knowledge of the reason why IPPs exist and the benefits), it might be worth exploring alternate methods of building motivation at this early stage in the commercial industry's capability rather than creating ramifications such as financial penalties.

### What's worked well?

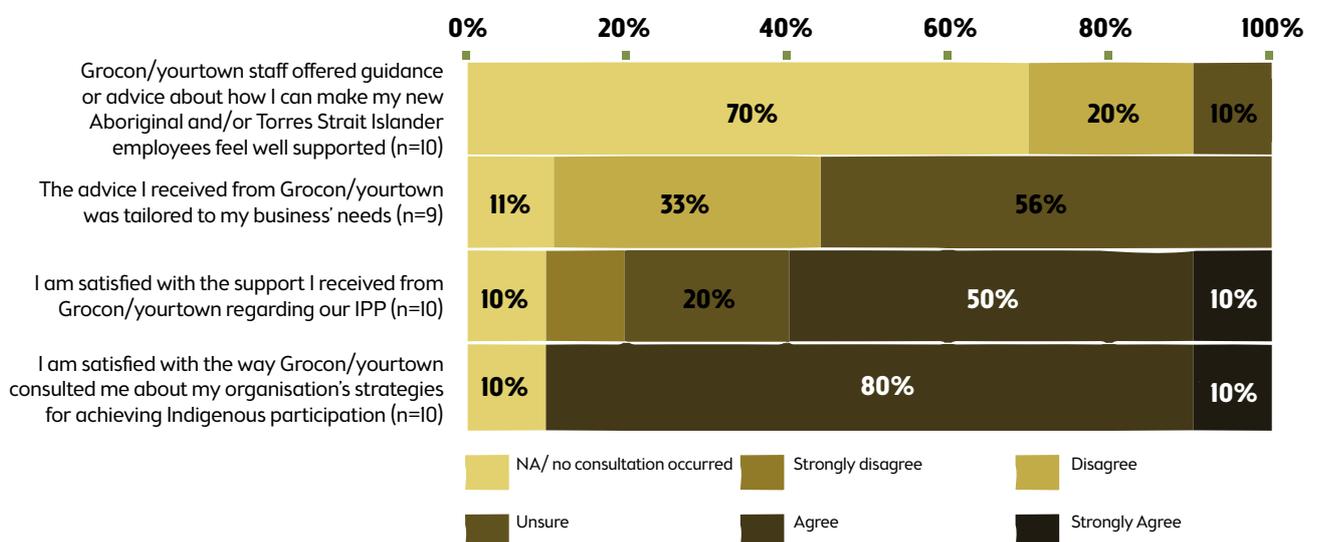
Subcontractors noted two things when asked about what factors have helped facilitate Indigenous participation: **yourtown**/Grocon clarity of the priority of the IPP requirements and support from **yourtown**/Grocon mainly by the suggestion to engage an Indigenous labour hire company.

As noted before, many subcontractors only became aware of the Indigenous participation requirements in their contract once on site when **yourtown**/Grocon emphasized the priority of the requirement and suggested strategies for achieving their targets. Secondly, many of those subcontractors who used the Indigenous labour hire company reported that this was an easy option for organisations without prior Indigenous participation experience. Subcontractor's appreciated that it took the challenge and time requirements of recruiting for Indigenous workers out of the equation, risks were minimised, and performance management issues were handled by the labour hire company.

### Subcontractor rating of support from yourtown/Grocon

Subcontractors were asked to rate four statements relating to the support they had received from Grocon/**yourtown**. Figure 5 shows that 90% (n=9/10) of subcontractors surveyed were satisfied with the way Grocon/**yourtown** had consulted with them regarding their strategies for achieving Indigenous participation. Of note, subcontracts surveyed largely reported that cultural awareness advice regarding how to make new Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employees feel well supported was not provided by Grocon/**yourtown**; this should be addressed in future projects if formal cultural awareness training for subcontractors is not implemented. There was diversity in the extent to which subcontractors felt the advice offered to Grocon/**yourtown** was tailored to their business needs, with businesses most commonly reporting that the strategies suggested did not overcome the barriers/challenges their organisation faced (most typically, that the labour hire offered did not have staff with some particular skill sets).

Figure 5. Subcontractor perceptions of the support they received from Grocon/yourtown.



## What Could Be Done Differently?

### What barriers and challenges to Indigenous participation are present for subcontractors?

In analysing subcontractors' interview data, a number of barriers to Indigenous participation are apparent (Table 2). The majority of these barriers were noted directly by subcontractors themselves, however, some are the

observation of the researcher. Some of these barriers may be 'within our control' meaning that strategies could be put in place to attend to their impacts.

The most frequently mentioned barriers were commercial pressures combined with the nature of the work, i.e., requiring staff with specialised skill sets or experience (no entry level labouring positions available and

no budget for taking on a non-skilled workers and providing them with supervision/training). Another commonly mentioned barrier was having an existing workforce with no room to hire new staff; this barrier was particularly prevalent for smaller businesses.

Barrier/ Challenge	Quote or evidence
Commercial pressures/ interaction of money with safety/ Specific skill set required / No available entry level positions	<p>"If somebody comes along and says to me 'I have a labourer for you,' and we turn around and say 'Okay. What experience has he got in [specific skill]?' Because you're taking on a labourer, you're paying full time labourer rates or whatever it is, and we want to make sure that he has some level of experience right? ...it's high risk work, and you want lads who know what they're doing"</p> <p>"If I get two labourers and this guy has [specific] experience, he's done it before, and this guy has nothing, you're going to say - it's a safer guy here. He knows what he's doing. It's going to be less watching, minding, training and still would be on the same money. It's as simple as that".</p> <p>"Financial support would have helped"</p> <p>"Whether they're black, white, female or male, it's more this is the job we've got, I need this skillset to be able to do it safely"</p>
Existing or fixed labour force	<p>"I understand that we've got to have an Indigenous component but when you have got a long-term workforce, what do you do with them? Do you have to get rid of those guys? I mean, as I said, it's a commercial arrangement we have here and we can't put people on just for the sake of putting them on, especially at that kind of money; we just don't have margins to carry people"</p>
Negative experiences with labour hire; no additional resources to offer upskilling/ supervision	<p>"Attendance was not as good as hoped for"</p> <p>"It's just not commercially viable [to offer training or mentoring to improve work performance]...when we're paying that kind of money, you know, that adds up to a lot of money and we expected some output"</p>
No perceived benefits	<p>Only 2 out of 11 subcontractors interviewed mentioned perceived benefits from taking part in a project with an IPP.</p>
Lack of flexible work hours/ lack of willingness to change work hour model/ Blanket approach to employee management	<p>"They [Aboriginal worker from labour hire company] wanted less hours and didn't want to work Saturdays and didn't want to - this is what the project demands, We were doing 56 hours in a basic week. We did five tens and a six...that would be a flat week. And then sometimes when we're pushing...which means you're working for 60 hours a week....It's expected and required"</p>

No perceived implications from non-compliance	<p>"I don't know if there's any consequences, I wouldn't expect so"</p> <p>9/11 (82%) subcontractors interviewed were unsure if there were ramifications if IP requirements were not met</p>
Pessimism potentially leading to lack of strategy/effort	Subcontractors who used less/no strategies to increase Indigenous participation were typically those who perceived their target as unrealistic or "outrageous".
Late or lack of awareness of the requirements	"My understanding is it was a project wide thing not on an individual company basis"
Lack of planning (including at tender phase) / Lack of awareness of strategies for increasing Indigenous participation (e.g., finding Indigenous Businesses to procure from)	<p>"If it has to be that way it has to be part of the tender documentation because, you know, we have several factors when we're pricing work"</p> <p>None of the subcontractors spoken to had devised strategies to achieve Indigenous participation prior to commencing work on site. Only 4/11 Subcontractors used their own initiative to use alternate strategies to increase Indigenous participation. Majority of subcontractors had no prior experience of working on a project with an IPP.</p>
Lack of knowledge of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander lore and responsibilities and culture and how to incorporate this knowledge into effective supervision	<p>"That's really not our responsibility because at the end of the day they're just labour hire for us, they're not employees... [Labour hire company] are the ones that need to put the rocket up their bum, like if you want to keep your job"</p> <p>"They're no different to any of the others. So, as long as they're doing their job that's all I'm concerned about...I don't talk to them about their culture or anything like that, you know. If they wanted to discuss that with me freely they'd come and talk to me, but I certainly wouldn't bring it up"</p>
Lack of recognition to the importance of supportive leadership, pastoral care, or relationship/rapport building	<p>"We don't want to know what happens at home. I don't personally, it's not my business, I just want the guy to turn up onsite every day and, you know, not have to be re-told what he was doing the day before"</p> <p>"I just see these guys, unfortunately, as what are you going to give me at the end of the week, and if I don't get what I want and need, then why have I got you here, and that's the bare bones of it all"</p>

**Are First Australian's 'just another employee?'**  
 Stacey Vervoort, Marumali Consultations: -  
 "Ten years ago the thinking was 'leave your culture at the door - first and foremost you are and employee here to perform a role'. Now there's recognition that diversity amongst employees is an organisational asset - it enriches our workplaces".

Subcontractors' commonly perceived barriers were presented to some members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee,

DATSIP, Marumali Consultations, Indigenous businesses connected to the Parklands, Grocon, and **yourtown** staff (aka the 'sounding board') to test the validity of the perceived barriers. It was acknowledged that it can be hard for small companies with intact teams to take on new staff, but it was also noted that it is most likely that the majority of companies working on Parklands expand and contract their labour pool regularly depending upon the size of the job and therefore have capacity to take on a new employee. However, it is important to note that many

subcontractors did not become aware of their IPP requirements until sometime after their work had commenced on site, wherein teams had most likely already become established. It was also noted that the Indigenous labour hire company suggested by Grocon/**yourtown** did have staff with a range of experiences and trade accreditations, and also the capacity to source specific skill sets: Therefore it may be possible that subcontractors had a misperception that they only had access to general entry level Indigenous workers. In some

cases, however, there could have been a genuine absence of rare or advanced skill sets required for working for particular subcontractors.

Members of 'the sounding board' had different opinions regarding the extent to which it was important for supervisors to understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural lore and responsibilities. Some said "No knowledge is needed, just treat them like a regular employee" but the literature does suggest that organisational members typically perceive benefits from receiving cultural awareness training. Our previous experience with the **yourtown's** VETC evaluations (2013; 2014) reveal that cultural responsibilities does affect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee behaviour and this can lead to misunderstandings in the workplace. In addition, the research of Schultz and Vervoort (under preparation), and also

that conducted as part of the current evaluation, suggests that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees who feel there is stronger alignment between the organisation's values with their cultural values have not only better job satisfaction and retention but better wellbeing. We feel that many of these values are just good workplace practices in any case for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees (e.g., establishing a relationship and rapport with workers, allowing workers to feel a sense of responsibility/ownership over tasks, making sure there is reciprocity within the team in that everyone is 'pulling their weight' etc) so what could perhaps be lacking for some subcontracts is good quality supervision and management styles.

Grocon/**yourtown** staff acknowledge that more could have been done to generate awareness of the IPP contractual requirements earlier on, and the

desktop audit of the tendering and contractual documents do confirm some subcontractors' comments that it was "not as clear as it could have been". This is an 'easy win' for Grocon to address for future IPP projects.

By identifying the perceived or observed barriers for subcontractors we have a valuable opportunity for intervention for future projects. Stakeholder collaboration between main and subcontractors, training providers and other expert partners may be required to address the identified barriers, which deserve further analysis and consideration. This evaluation has identified issues that appear to have affected the extent to which subcontractors took action to achieve their Indigenous participation targets. Figure 6 presents a 'road map' of the psychological constructs that may need to be addressed in order to increase the likelihood of this changing for future projects.

Figure 6. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991)



By mapping the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) to potential subcontractor cognitions, we can see how Indigenous participation could potentially be strengthened.

This theory proposes that when people consider a behaviour as positive or involving benefits (attitude), and if they believe other people consider the behaviour as positive or want them to perform the behaviour (subjective norm), this is more likely to lead to stronger intentions to engage in the behaviour (motivations) resulting in greater engagement in the target behaviour. This relationship is also influenced by the presence of 'control beliefs', for example, how confident people feel in their ability to perform a behaviour (self-efficacy) or how easy or difficult they perceive it will be to enact the behaviour (i.e., can challenges be overcome?).

Applied to construction industry subcontractors, this theory would suggest that Indigenous participation would be higher if the following cognitions existed:

#### **Attitude:**

- Indigenous participation benefits my organisation – it aligns with our organisation's cultural values around community and inclusivity, broadens our employee workforce, and improves our ability to win tenders.
- Indigenous participation also benefits our community by helping to break cycles of disadvantage and create a more culturally diverse and accepting community.
- By adopting Indigenous participation strategies, I get to do something meaningful that has the potential to positively change lives and communities

#### **Subjective norm:**

- It is important to others in my industry and those who hire my business that I engage in Indigenous participation strategies and plans.
- I am expected to do this as part of my contractual requirement and there will be implications (such as lack of future work) if I do not make reasonable efforts to engage with Indigenous participation strategies.
- My employees expect me to take part in Indigenous participation strategies so that I am demonstrating our company values.

#### **Control beliefs:**

- I have strategies for achieving Indigenous participation and I feel confident that it will work.
- The majority of challenges my organisation faces in achieving Indigenous labour and training hours can be managed.

These proposed cognitions present a stark contrast to a lot of what was heard during the subcontractor interviews. Subcontractors in the current sample saw few perceived benefits of Indigenous participation, typically saw no perceived consequences from not meeting targets and no perceived 'subjective norm' within the industry, and barriers and challenges were perceived by many as insurmountable and out of their control (i.e., would take main contractor, government or industry intervention to address).

Although this theory is not without its criticism and the current application may overly simplify the situation, it may be useful to consider each of the constructs it illustrates (which have been used in empirical research to explain how humans behave) and what could potentially be done to shift the current state of beliefs

to ones that are more likely to lead to successful Indigenous participation outcomes.

## **Section Conclusion**

- The strong majority of subcontractors interviewed would not have taken specific steps to employ an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander worker had they not been encouraged to do so by their contractual requirement, suggesting that Parklands' IPP directly increased the number of Indigenous workers on site.
- While subcontractors' capacity in the area of Indigenous participation did improve, the gains appear generally limited (i.e., knowledge of one particular labour hire company).
- Although the sample was small, it was most common for subcontractors to not pass on the IPP requirements to their subcontractors and there was only one example of a Subcontractor investigating procuring materials from an Indigenous business.
- Subcontractors' main motivation to participate in the IPP was to fulfil a contractual obligation
- There was little to no awareness of the benefits (to organisation or community) of participating in an IPP
- The goal to change 'hearts and minds' of subcontractors does not appear to have occurred in the majority of those interviewed. The greatest opportunity in working with subcontractors is to increase their capacity in regards to Indigenous participation, such as building motivation to participate, increase knowledge of the benefits, and create a sense of contribution which may lead to greater initiative and engagement.
- Simply having Indigenous participation requirements

in the contract is not enough, it needs to be reinforced by the Principle contractor as an important priority

- Supporting subcontractors to develop strategies to achieve Indigenous participation requirements is a necessary activity, given the lack of prior experience in this area.
- Early awareness of requirements and having a clear strategy are linked to greater hours achieved.
- Subcontractors appeared to vary in the extent to which they were familiar with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultural lore and responsibilities and how this affects their workers; there was also variance in the management styles.

## Recommendations

### from non-Indigenous subcontractors' insights

Non-Indigenous subcontractor comments suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Create awareness early: Place a spot light on the IPP during the tender phase
- Subcontractor previous experience and capacity to engage with IPPs may be low - Consider providing information sessions during the tender phase regarding why IPPs exist, available strategies and benefits of Indigenous participation to build subcontractor capacity and motivation
- Ask businesses to submit plans for how they will achieve Indigenous participation at tender phase and use in decision making to award contracts
- Facilitate cultural awareness training that incorporates knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural lore and responsibilities and how this affects employees and

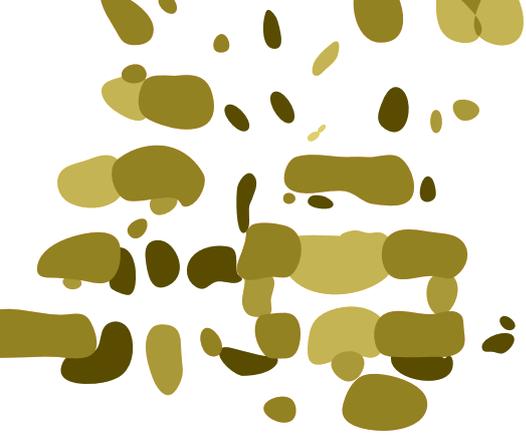
implications for supervision styles

- Continue to recognise and reward subcontractors who achieve IPP requirements
- Consider developing clarity regarding what the repercussions are for subcontractors not meeting IPP requirements, and communicate these repercussions to subcontractors.
- Consider investigating alternate funding avenues for additional training/increased financial margins for more supervision of workers for organisations that require staff with specialised skill sets.
- Consider alternate ways subcontractors may be able to contribute towards IPP goals outside of labour hours (e.g., alternate community investment activities)
- Conduct further analysis and work associated with the barriers/challenges that were either perceived by the subcontractors or the researcher in this evaluation and consider ways that these could be tested or managed. Some of these challenges may require collaboration with expert partners, larger budgets, or advocacy for industry changes.

The next section of this report will present the reflections from Grocon and **yourtown** staff working at Parklands.

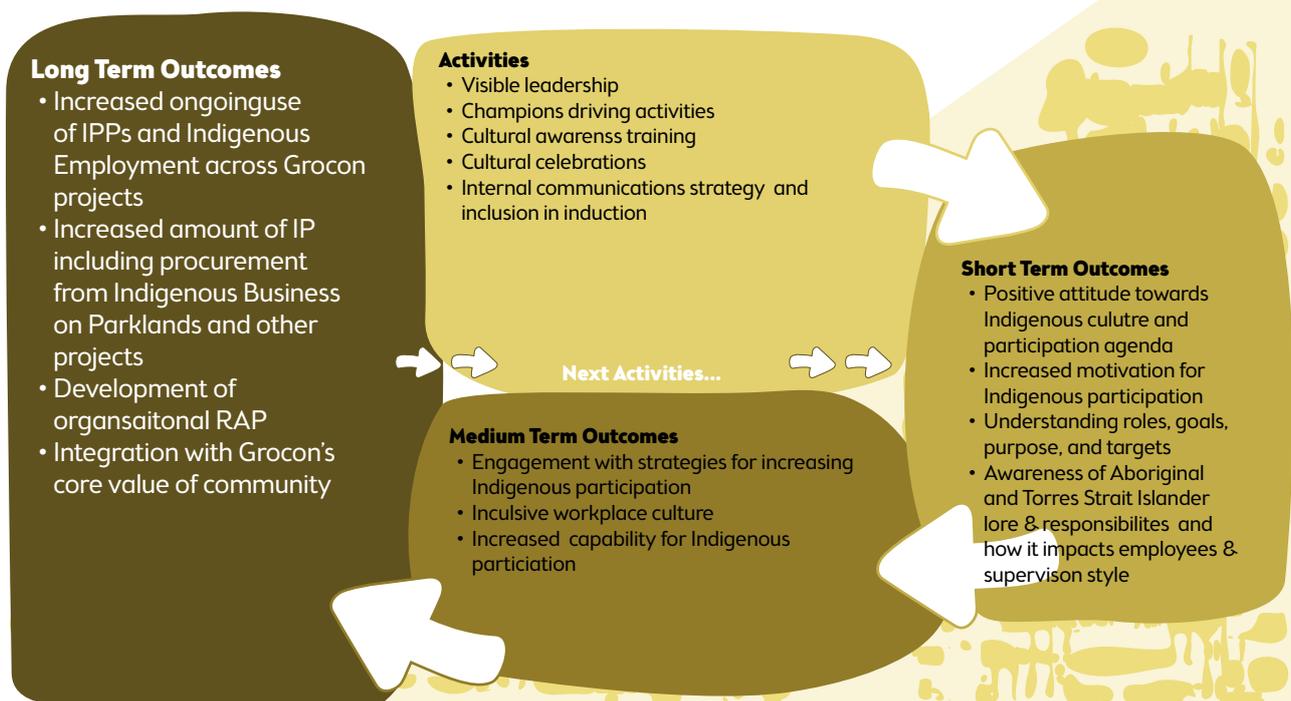






## Insights from Grocon and yourtown staff

### Proposed theory of change relating to Grocon:



Leaders who demonstrate their support and emphasise the importance of Indigenous participation is seen by Grocon and **yourtown** stakeholders as a key activity to foster a culture that embeds and prioritises Indigenous participation. Stakeholders saw the IPP legacy specifically for Grocon as including: Increased organisational capacity for enacting Indigenous participation in the future; wider use of IPPs in Grocon projects even when they are not required such as for civil projects; development and implementation of an organisational Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP); and the integration of Indigenous participation activities with Grocon's core value of community. To achieve such changes, medium and short terms outcomes are likely to include: Developing staff members understandings of their role in relation to the IPP (be that informal or formal role); increasing understanding around the purpose and perceived value of IP practices; and fostering an inclusive workplace culture.

### Section Overview

This section will report Grocon and **yourtown** insights regarding:

1. What have been the outcomes of the project?
2. What's worked well?
  - a. Success factors
  - b. Visible leadership
  - c. Cultural inclusivity
  - d. Capacity in relation to Indigenous participation
3. What could be done differently?
4. Section conclusion
5. Recommendations

Nine Grocon employees and three **yourtown** staff working at Parklands were interviewed in July 2017 (project completed in September 2017; See Appendix E for interview questions). Staff held a range of roles which were

involved in the implementation of the IPP and represented approximately one-third of all staff on site.

### What have been the outcomes?

Grocon and **yourtown** staff readily identified positive outcomes they perceived have been produced by the successful implementation of the Parklands' IPP. Outcomes were perceived by Grocon/**yourtown** staff to have affected a range of stakeholders and systems including individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, Grocon staff as individuals and as an organisation, subcontractors, and more broadly, the construction industry and the community (See Figure 7 for summary). To be discussed in this section are the impacts Grocon and **yourtown** staff could see themselves to have occurred as a result of the Parklands' IPP, i.e., the impact upon Grocon as an organisation and the personal impacts noted by staff.

### Organisational impacts

Staff noted that this experience with the Parklands' IPP has led to several outcomes specifically for Grocon. The development of an organisation RAP which was driven by Grocon staff at Parklands is a strong project legacy and means that Grocon will continue to embed Indigenous participation within its future projects. The capacity of the organisation to enact Indigenous participation strategies was reported to have significantly increased, with staff reporting that they felt they had learned a lot from the current experience, suggesting staff may have more confidence to enact their roles in relation to the IPP next time around:

**"I'd do some things differently next time around"**

**"This was the first time we'd**

**come across it...it was trail blazing for everyone"**

**"We have learned a great deal"**

**"We can take this to the next project and make it business as usual – let's not just drop the ball".**

As aforementioned, staff also noted they feel that through undertaking the IPP journey on the Parklands Project, their workplace has increased in its cultural competence and cultural inclusivity. Lastly, Grocon staff reported they have built quality relationships with the local Indigenous community, which was verified and described by one Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee member as a relationship that will be "on going into future".

### Personal impacts

When asked directly if there have been any effect on them personally through playing a role in the Parklands' IPP, the majority of staff reported that they had changed as a result of their participation. The most commonly cited change was increased cultural awareness and cultural competency:

**"It's increased my understanding of Australian's history and the treatment of Indigenous peoples"**

**"[I've got a greater understanding of] the importance of diversity"**

**"I have a better understanding of what the challenges are that Indigenous people face".**

Four Grocon staff members (44%) also talked about a range of positive workplace outcomes such as increased job satisfaction, work motivation, and positive mood or emotion (e.g., pride) which they had experienced as a result of how meaningful they had found their role in relation to the IPP:

“I’ve enjoyed it – Knowing that you’ve got some of those guys a job and it’s interesting to see them get on and develop”

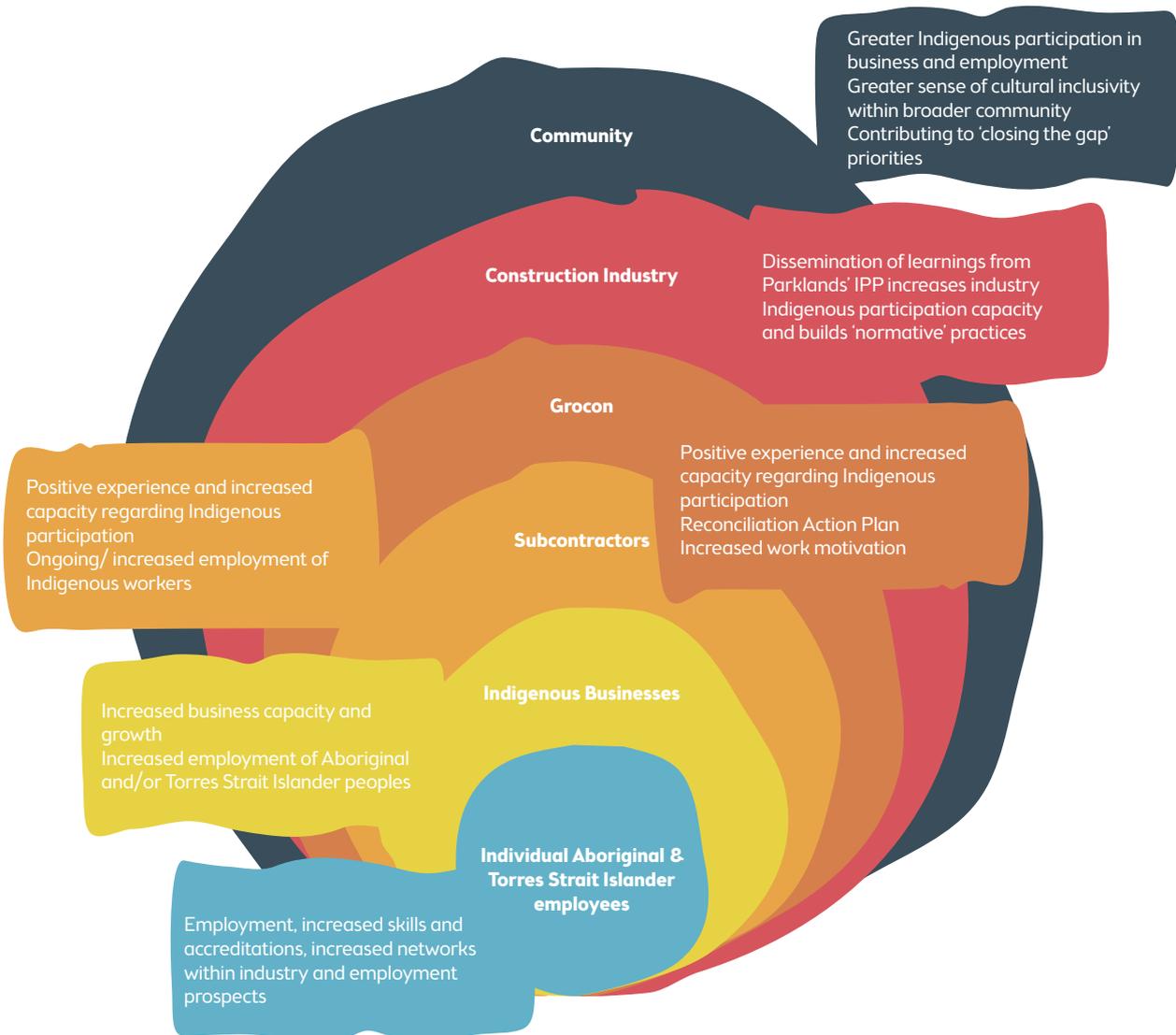
“I have the desire to do it again and achieve even better”

“It’s so much more than just giving someone a job”

“It’s something that we can be proud of – feels good to be doing this”.

Grocon and **yourtown** staff were clearly able to identify positive impacts of the Parklands IPP: They personally observed and could speak to the changes they saw within their own organisation in terms of culture, capacity, and strategic direction and the effects it had had on them personally in terms of psychological capital. Australians can also benefit as a result of Indigenous participation initiatives which may be a corollary not previously considered in Indigenous participation evaluations or policy setting.

Figure 7. Graphical depiction of Grocon and yourtown staff perception of the legacy left by the Parklands Indigenous Participation Plan



## What's Worked Well?

Grocon and **yourtown** staff's direct perception of 'what worked well' is presented in this section of the report. In addition, factors that facilitated the outcomes of the Parklands IPP will also be explored through examining a few key variables that are likely to impact the success of Indigenous participation from an organisational perspective, namely, leadership support, sense of cultural inclusivity, and capacity in relation to Indigenous participation.

## Success Factors

Both Grocon and **yourtown** staff could see a number of factors that they felt had helped drive the positive outcomes achieved from the IPP, including:

- Having dedicated and specialised resources with the right personalities and skills driving the project:  
"The support from getting **yourtown** on board really made a difference" (Grocon). This was helped by securing partial funding from Construction Skills QLD for the Workforce Development Coordinator role, meaning there was an onsite, fulltime resource
- Funding for onsite training through Major Projects - Construction Skills QLD, which enabled the Indigenous employees to access onsite training
- Quality Indigenous labour hire which provided subcontractors, with no prior IPP experience, an easy strategy to achieve Indigenous labour hours
- High functioning and well connected Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee (no internal politics between members, driven to achieve the best possible outcomes and to hold Grocon/**yourtown** to account to follow

- through on their aspirations)
- Quality onsite training solutions (i.e., Gold Coast School of Construction)
- Grocon leadership support (explored in more detail below)

## Visible Leadership

Visible leadership, as it relates to Indigenous participation, is the extent to which leaders are seen to support and create pathways for Indigenous participation. The key is that the behaviours of the leaders indicate their support, are visible to the people they lead, and are believed to be genuine; leaders 'walk the talk'.

Leaders who engage in a range of behaviours that indicate their genuine support are more likely to create an organisational culture where people know that Indigenous participation is prioritised, in turn influencing workers' attitudes and the extent to which they engage in Indigenous participation strategies.

The importance of leadership support for Indigenous participation cannot be underestimated and is compounded by the fact that the workforce within a construction company is often changing, thus the culture may be less entrenched, requiring strong leadership and systems for the desired culture to remain.

Grocon and **yourtown** stakeholders reported strong visible leadership enacted by senior Parklands Project site leaders regarding the IPP. Grocon staff saw their leaders engage in such behaviours as:

- publicly endorsing their support for the IPP at meetings or in correspondence,
- devoting resources to the implementation of the plan,
- regularly attending liaison meetings,
- keeping up to date with Indigenous participation progress and issues,
- attending cultural events during work and non-work time,
- supporting staff members driving Indigenous participation activities including their attendance at industry forums,

- meeting with local elders,
- emphasizing the importance of IP to subcontractors both verbally and via correspondence,
- supporting events to recognise subcontractors who achieved targets, and
- advocating support for the development of an organisation-wide RAP

"You can tell they both believe in what they are doing"

"Their behaviour backs up what they say"

"None of this could have been done without him"

This visible leadership was also noticed by an Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee Member who reported site senior management as devoted to their role in supporting the IPP and showing commitment on a reliable and regular basis:

"He doesn't just pop into a meeting - he's there every time".

However, approximately a third of Grocon/**yourtown** staff interviewed reported that the visible leadership developed over time and that the internal communications regarding the IPP could have been stronger in the initial stages of the project, which may have helped people find their role in relation to the IPP:

"Why it's important and what your role is in relation to it could have been stronger";

"It took a while for the leaders to understand the IPP";

"Communications to subcontractors were delayed";

"I don't think we've communicated it particularly - as well as we perhaps might on the workforce here"

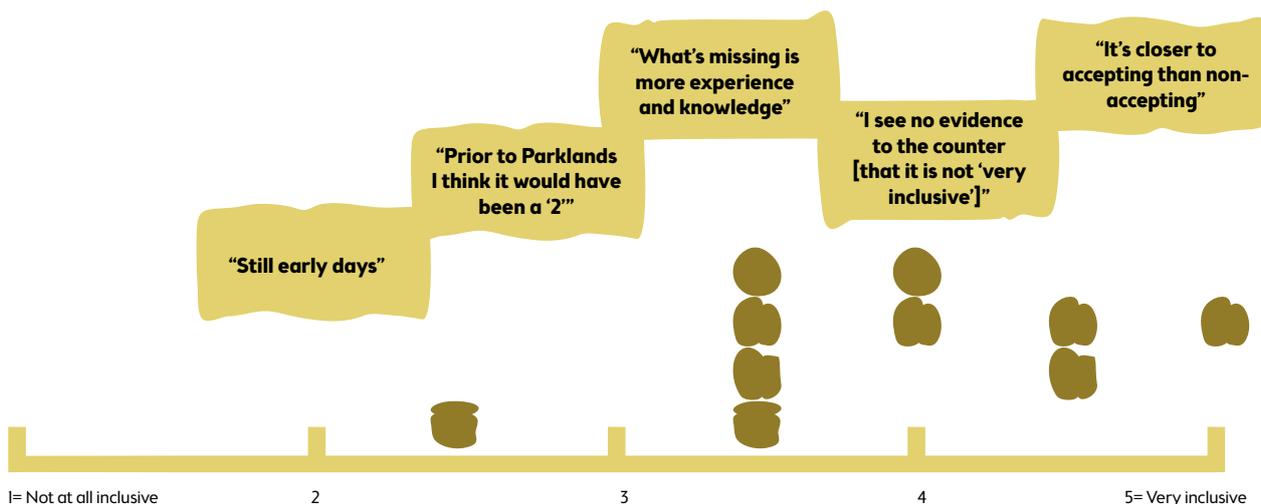
Staff reported that the site leadership support for Indigenous

participation at Parklands was one of the factors leading to successful IPP outcomes. Site leadership appeared linked to people's perception of the importance and value of IPP practices. These findings underscore the importance of encouraging and preparing leaders to support IPPs in future projects.

### Cultural inclusivity

A workplace culture that is 'inclusive' is one in which people's personal identities are respected and supported. Organisations that have more supportive and culturally inclusive work environments are more likely to be employers of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – they are 'culturally safe' places to work.

Grocon and **yourtown** staff typically said that they feel the inclusivity of the site workplace culture has increased over the course of the Parklands Project. When asked to rate the extent to which the culture was inclusive (using a broad definition), a range of responses were provided (n=10):



When reflecting upon the changes they had observed in the extent to which the culture is inclusive at the Parklands site, Grocon and **yourtown** stakeholders noted the growing cultural awareness of staff regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Staff discussed the cultural awareness training they had participated in, with the majority of staff noting they found it worthwhile. Staff reported it increased their awareness of Aboriginal people's culture and the effects of colonisation. Cultural awareness training appeared particularly useful for international staff members who reported having less prior knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Constructive feedback included the desire for the training to have more information about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural lore and responsibilities may affect

employees in the modern workplace.

**"It opened my mind up"**

**"I really didn't know a lot about how Aboriginal people had been treated historically"**

**"It opened my eyes to new understanding of misconceptions".**

Some Grocon staff also noted that, through yarning with **yourtown's** Aboriginal staff, they had increased their awareness and sense of connection to the importance of the IPP, through learning about the challenges First Australians may face in relation to gaining and maintaining employment. This demonstrates an alternate pathway for learning and cultural change through the impact of influential individuals.

Cultural awareness training for staff is one mechanism for influencing the inclusivity of the

workplace culture, and this is evident in the current findings. Grocon staff suggest that cultural awareness training is valuable and should be included on future projects, especially when international staff may have been recruited. Training that explains Aboriginal and Torres Strait cultural lore and responsibilities and how it impacts workplace behaviour may also be beneficial. Findings also underscore the value of 'hall-way conversations' with individuals who are genuine, passionate, and knowledgeable about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, which may further increase awareness and build commitment to having an inclusive workplace culture.

## Capacity in relation to Indigenous Participation

An employee's 'capacity' in relation to Indigenous participation may be influenced by such factors as the perception and uptake of their role in relation to the IPP, attitude towards Indigenous participation, perception of benefits or motivations to engage with IPP activities, cultural awareness, and knowledge of ways to enact IPP strategies.

An individual who perceives that they have a role to enact in relation to building successful Indigenous participation outcomes, whether that be formally or informally, who has a positive attitude towards the practice of using IPPs, and perceives benefits to themselves, their organisation or community for participating in an IPP have more capacity in the area of Indigenous participation.

## Role in relation to IPP

High risk organisations know that everyone in their business has a role to play in relation to workplace safety – the same principle applies to creating a culture that embeds and achieves Indigenous participation. Formal roles may include enacting strategies and driving Indigenous participation activities. Informal roles may involve learning about the Indigenous participation objectives, developing cultural competence, promoting achievements and commitments in the wider industry, and supporting a culturally inclusive work environment.

Grocon staff, with prompting, generally perceived that they had a role to enact in relation to supporting the Parklands IPP. Some staff proactively created roles for themselves, formally or informally, to support or promote the participation activities, demonstrating significant commitment to the purpose of the IPP. These staff members saw and utilised opportunities to:

- provide advice,
- influence subcontractors,
- look for opportunities to procure from Indigenous businesses,

- prepare external communications promoting the IP activities,
- attend forums,
- attempt to set up student internships,
- share IP learnings internally, or
- directly influence the legacy of the IPP by helping to develop an organisational RAP.

There appeared to be variance, however, in the extent to which Grocon staff at Parklands recognised the role they could enact in relation to the IPP. Some staff noted that they feel contract managers could have been a stronger driving force in creating early awareness, communicating the importance of, encouraging engagement in Indigenous participation activities by subcontractors, and seeking opportunities to procure from Indigenous businesses. Contract managers may benefit from additional training that seeks to build their confidence to influence subcontractors, and clarifies the incentives and ramifications of engaging in Indigenous participation strategies.

**“Some people didn't see it as a their role [initially] - 'I've got enough to do without having to deal with anything else' type mentality... I think that was lacking by some people to start off with and that's probably why the message didn't get out. Because the project was so busy trying to actually get it started and to start building” [Grocon staff member].**

**Learnings from elsewhere:** Origin Energy see their procurement staff as key drivers of Indigenous Participation and provide them with training that aims to increase their cultural competency, awareness of best practice, and relationships with Indigenous businesses and networks: “It's important to build their [procurement staff] confidence of how to procure from Indigenous businesses, how to talk to these businesses, and confidence that it will go well” (Matt Ralph, Origin Energy).

## Perception of the practice of IPPs

The majority of Grocon staff saw value in and believed the practice of having an IPP is “a good thing”. Some staff noted that it aligned with their personal as well as the organisational values connected to supporting community development. Others noted the importance of supporting initiatives aimed to reduce the disadvantage faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Some Grocon staff discussed the risk of having a 'quota' system, suggesting this could mean that workers who do not demonstrate the competence required for a Tier I project are preferentially hired or kept employed over more meritorious non-Indigenous workers (discussed as a hypothetical situation). It was emphasised that employment and promotion at Grocon should always be based on merit. Overall, comments suggested Grocon staff held a positive attitude towards IPP practices.

## Perceived benefits

Grocon staff identified a range of benefits from participating in an IPP. For their organisation, it was noted that being committed to and achieving the IPP objectives benefited Grocon's credibility and reputation. For the community, it was noted that the Parklands IPP has the potential to change the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by providing employment, meaningful training opportunities, and business development. Staff discussed the personal impacts of IPPs as including increased knowledge and cultural awareness.

**Recommendation:** Grocon's knowledge and perception of the benefits of having an IPP contrasted greatly with subcontractors' lack of awareness of the benefits. There is an opportunity to promote the benefits when interacting with subcontractors. This may lead to increased subcontract engagement with Indigenous participation strategies..

### What were the challenges or barriers?

Grocon and **yourtown** staff identified a range of impediments that they believed affected the implementation and success of the IPP. A lot of the impediments appear to be within the control of Grocon or could be influenced through intervention. However, some of the impediments noted reflect wider industry or societal conditions or require more complex solutions that may be beyond Grocon's immediate control or influence.

#### Impediments noted included: **Within control or potential to influence**

- Perceived role and understanding of IPP
- Delayed start
- Internal capacity
- Subcontractor capacity
- Size of contracts vs capacity of Indigenous businesses
- Availability of resources
- Networks with Indigenous businesses
- Retention of Indigenous employees
- Clarity of IPP with procurement staff

#### **Harder to influence**

- Worker readiness and lack of funding to address this
- Financial barriers to engage in training
- Lack of support from an educational institution
- Labour pool
- Pressure for production preventing staff from engaging in IPP activities.

Verbatim quotes are used to illustrate these identified impediments to emphasise that these insights came from Grocon staff themselves and are not the assessments of the researcher.

#### **Lack of perceived role by some Grocon staff or understanding of priority in early stages of project:**

“We probably should have actually sat down with a whole team at the start and gone, you know, we’re going to do this and this is why we’re going to do it. So, I think that’s probably part of it as well. And, maybe people took it for granted that people understood what we were trying to do”;

“Understanding what is an IPP, why is it important and why are we doing it, could certainly be improved more widely. So, not just people that were set to be directly involved through the procurement of it or their services or otherwise [but all staff]”.

#### **Delayed start caused missed opportunities to influence subcontractors:**

“Some of the subcontractors we probably got there too late...they’d already hired their workforce”

“Once things have got to site it’s a bit difficult, but certainly it’s working out at the front end what and where there are opportunities and leveraging them”

#### **Lack of experience for majority of Grocon team (hence the partnership with yourtown):**

“Grocon staff just don’t have the experience in IPP...So, without that strategy of engaging with yourtown, I suppose specialist Indigenous resource, I don’t think the outcome would have been as good as it has been here”;

“This was the first time I’d come across it”;

“Bit of trail blazing for everyone. It’s something that’s been new and with change there’s always a bit of struggle there”.

#### **“Still early days” in terms of subcontractors capacity (experience, knowledge and buy-in):**

“You’re working with companies who have never done this before”;

“A lot don’t know how they can contribute to Indigenous participation”;

“It’s really new in the industry, you know. If you go back ten years in terms of safety records and quality records and recording injuries, ten years ago a lot of that wasn’t there”;

“So, you’re telling me I’ve got to lay one of my guys off to employ one of these guys’. These are the things that get said during the tender reviews”;

“I know it’s been hard getting reports back from subcontractors on a monthly basis – there was a lot of chasing up”.

#### **Inherent challenges with current Indigenous labour pool:**

“Very difficult to get somebody on board with them [subcontractor] simply because of the amount of time it takes to get somebody through their OH&S practices, [the amount of specialised training required] that’s another impediment. They’re generally reluctant to put on or take somebody through that training process that is only going to be temporary”.

#### **Inherent challenges with procurement requirements for large projects:**

“One of the things suggested by the subject matter experts I interviewed was to de-bundle contracts into smaller packages because a lot of Indigenous business are small in size and can’t meet larger contracts, is that something you could do

here?” [Researcher]

“No, not really. Certainly for a project of this scale...and for the scale of projects that Grocon does I don't think that would ever be practical”. [Grocon staff member]

**Pressure for production affected the extent to which Grocon staff could engage with Indigenous participation:**

“The whole team doesn't go to these breakfasts. It's sort of, like, senior management... Because we're trying to do a job. If we suddenly had everyone attending, the job stops”

**Perceived hesitancy to engage with unfamiliar Indigenous businesses:**

“It was out of their [Grocon's procurement team's] comfort zone”.

**Limited resources affected the extent to which opportunities to procure from Indigenous businesses were explored or new networks established:**

“So, the business [now] widely supports it [procurement from IBs] but the actual people picking up the phone to call [was limited] and we're under staffed, under resourced”.

**Lack of relationships with Indigenous Businesses that meet Grocon's requirements:**

“Procuring the services from qualified businesses has been a challenge. [One of the businesses we've procured from] was absolutely atrocious... [another] I wouldn't highly recommend, it hasn't always been positive [despite receiving recommendations]”.

**Lack of support from local university to find students to undertake personalised internships at Parklands:**

“[University] came back and confirmed that they were unable to support, which was a bit surprising to be honest. But, after a year I'm glad they finally let us know. It's disappointing [we proposed creating] opportunities for relevant students on the project based on where their interests lie...It was just that it was not something that they could currently support, but that was a year after the original discussion”.

**Indigenous employees in entry level positions often cannot afford to undertake upskilling:**

“[The guys were telling me that] I can't do the training as I'll lose a day's pay”

**Retention issues due to communication or relationship short fallings between subcontractors and their employees or lack of worker readiness:**

“We've lost a few people – some of the subbies don't have the strategies to communicate with their Indigenous employees... non-accredited training [for subcontractors and Indigenous employees] may help subcontractors to improve their supervision of Indigenous staff and improve worker 'readiness' for the job”

**Lack of money or motivation to increase 'work readiness' of employees:**

“It took an accident for that [manual handling course] to happen – [that company] weren't willing to pay for that – there needs to be additional funding for Indigenous labour hire to train some of their staff to increase their readiness for work [e.g., manual handling course].

**Lack of clarity regarding priority of IPP, incentives and**

**ramifications for non-compliance with IPP requirements:**

“They [contracts staff member] told me 'it's not a priority, there's no penalty' – they were lacking passion or a perceived role to influence”.

**What could be done differently?**

Reflections regarding the perceived impediments against the Parklands IPP led Grocon and **yourtown** staff to identify a few key learnings regarding what they could do differently on future Indigenous participation projects: These form the basis of the recommendations that emerge from this stakeholder section of the report. Staff most frequently cited examples of activities aligned to the themes of 'start earlier' and 'do more with subcontractors'.

Stepping back from the data, staff frequently appeared to be talking about doing more to change the workplace culture – that is, what we value, what we believe, and 'just how we do things around here'. Staff talked about embedding Indigenous participation as a priority across more aspects of the project and making changes to some processes and practices.

**Start earlier**

The majority of staff said that, next time around, planning and implementing Indigenous participation needs to start earlier. For instance, if visible leadership is more evident right from the beginning of the project, this may help people understand the importance of the IPP and identify the formal and informal roles they need to play to contribute to its success. Staff also noted that it is important to start building your relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community early, and also to bring on board your expert partners from the start. The

strongest commentary related to the theme around 'starting earlier' was in regards to emphasising the importance of the IPP to subcontractors: too many got the message too late.

**"We need to take more ownership upfront"**

**"I think you'd want to have your relationship with yourtown before you even got on site...Hit the ground running"**

**"That was the biggest challenge for [yourtown staff member], was when [they] started going and talking to these subbies, really [their] conversation was probably the first time they were aware that we were serious, you had to achieve these requirements"**

**"It's got to be done up front as part of the tendering process before they know they've won it. So, it can't be done after they've won, it's got to be part of that process right up front".**

### **Do more with subcontractors**

Grocon staff noted how vital it is to highlight the IPP to subcontractors, suggesting that next time the Indigenous participation should be emphasised back in the tendering phase. Four (44%) staff members also made the suggestion to incorporate subcontractor's proposals to meeting IPP requirements into contract award decisions.

**"...in our tender selection we'd be wanting to probably use their IPP, their response to how they're going to deliver it, as one of our decision factors in awarding"**

**"Biggest case is just making people believe it's important. You know, people used to think safety wasn't important. The same with this, you know, it's going to take a little bit longer"**

Staff readily identified that it was "still early days" for subcontractors in terms of their capacity to adopt and enact Indigenous participation strategies, but Grocon staff perhaps did not see that they could play a role in fast-tracking this capacity growth. A Grocon leader said that they hoped one of the legacies of the Parklands IPP was to change subcontractors' "hearts and minds" and future projects could consider ways in which this could be more fully realised. For instance, Grocon could consider strategies to build subcontractors' understanding around the reasons for having IPPs and their benefits using formal or informal learning mechanisms. Using adult learning principles is recommended, for instance, subcontractors who reported that a Grocon senior leader had impressed upon them the importance of the IPP in their initial on-boarding meeting appeared more fully committed to integrating Indigenous participation strategies than those who had been emailed this same information.

**"A bit more needs to go with it rather than just being a bunch of clauses in a tender document"**

In addition, Grocon could consider opening a dialogue about the barriers subcontractors perceive regarding Indigenous participation (before they come on site and ongoing) and play a role in helping to mitigate what barriers are within Grocon's control.

### **Embed Indigenous participation as a priority across all aspects of the project**

Starting earlier and helping people see the priority of the IPP and understand what they need to do to contribute may facilitate greater embedment of Indigenous participation across

the project. For instance, Grocon staff suggested more could be done to promote Indigenous participation within the site:

**"I think that would be something that could be promoted well and make people, again, a bit more aware of the significance of it. We did it at the reconciliation breakfast... subcontractors were awarded, certificates for exceeding their hours [but there could be more communications] even before that, of these people are achieving, these people are getting close to it [achieving their hours]"**

Structures to help staff find their role were also suggested:

**"I think I would have probably tried to put a bit more focus on for our commercial managers as well. So, you know, in their KPIs or whatever that might be, that this is something that they have to be focussed on as well"**

One the IPP strategies included an explanation of Grocon's Indigenous participation commitment during the site induction as the primary mechanism of internal communications, but when the researcher attended the training, no mention of Indigenous participation was made during that session. Taken in consideration with Grocon staff's own comments regarding the struggle they observed some people appeared to have in finding their role in relation to the IPP, this suggests that Indigenous participation did not become embedded in the workplace culture. Put simply, as may typically be the case when things are done for the first time, there was not the shared belief by all that Indigenous participation is 'important and the way we do things around here'. However, it is important to highlight that the IPP activities were not 'outsourced to

**yourtown**. In contrast, site leadership and a core group of Grocon employees appeared to show marked interest and initiative in taking on board ways to help make the Indigenous participation activities a success and support **yourtown** staff. Most significantly, it is through the advocacy of the Grocon Parklands staff that the wider organisation has now adopted a Reconciliation Action Plan.

### Section conclusion

Grocon and **yourtown** staff reported that the Parklands IPP had numerous positive impacts, and could speak personally about Grocon's increased capacity in the Indigenous participation space and their own personal increased awareness, as a result of learning about the effects of colonisation and the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Staff reported significant increases in their capacity to enact an IPP and also noted a belief that the culture of inclusivity had improved at their workplace as a result of undergoing the IPP journey (most strongly linked to culture awareness training).

Grocon and **yourtown** staff saw much evidence of visible leadership behaviours during the project by Grocon site leaders which appeared to help some staff understand the priority of Indigenous participation. However, it was also noted that initial communications and implementation of the IPP was delayed and there was some evidence to suggest that IPP was not fully embedded within the site culture.

This delayed start and some staff's perceived lack of connection to the role they could play in enabling the IPP were identified as key impediments to address in future projects. Other impediments within Grocon's control that could be considered include further actions to fast-track subcontractor's capacity (including motivation) to enact Indigenous participation strategies, and consideration of subcontractor's proposals for contributing to Indigenous participation when awarding tender decisions.

### Recommendations from Grocon and yourtown employee insights

Grocon and **yourtown**'s comments suggest the following high-level recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Start earlier – Make sure the IPP is evident to subcontractors back in the tendering phase and that there are visible leadership behaviours from the beginning so staff connect and find their role in relation to enacting the IPP
- Do more to build subcontractor's capacity to support Indigenous participation (e.g., motivation, perception of benefits, knowledge of strategies, etc).
- Do more to embed Indigenous participation within the site's culture

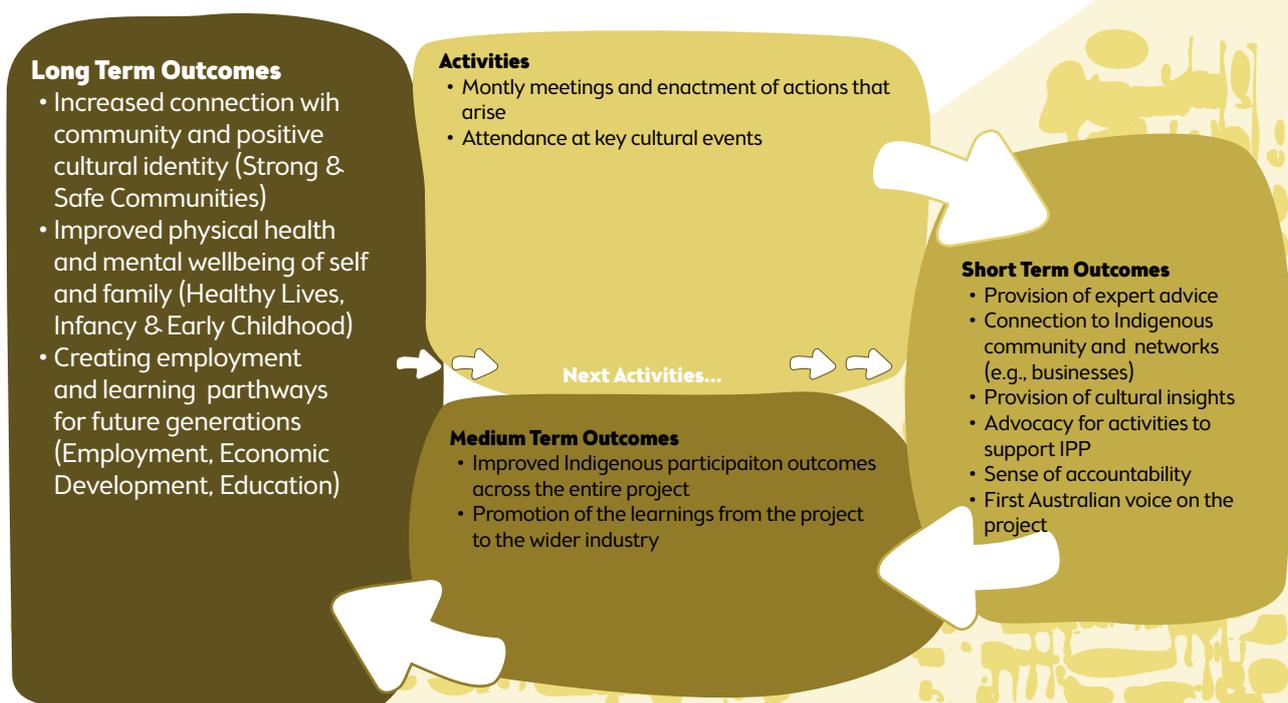
The next section of the report presents the insights from the Parklands Project's Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee.





## Insights from the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee

### Proposed theory of change relating to the IPP Liaison Committee



The proposed theory of change relating to the IPPLC focuses upon building Grocon and **yourtown**'s capacity to enact the IPP, leading to improved outcomes across the entire scope of the project.

As noted previously in regard to the proposed theory of change figures presented in this evaluation, the long-term outcomes are visionary and ambitious and more likely to represent the collective outcomes of an entire industry's IPPs rather than a single project's IPP. However, these outcomes have been included to make salient the higher goals for Indigenous participation initiatives which is a clear grounding for establishing intrinsic connection and purpose for this work.

### Section Overview

Three members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee (IPPLC) with extensive experience and knowledge of Australian Indigenous participation offered their perception of:

- The committee's role
- The outcomes of the Indigenous participation activities
- The factors that helped to facilitate good outcomes
- The lessons learned and opportunities to improve.

This section summaries the insights committee members provided and offers some suggestions for recommendations.

#### What were the key things the committee was able to offer?

Indigenous Liaison Committee members saw their role on the Parklands Project as offering a diversity of key activities. Members noted that the committee was able to offer Grocon and **yourtown**:

- Networking and connection to Indigenous Businesses and employees
- Support and advocacy for key initiatives that would benefit the IPP such as the establishment of GCSC on site
- Cultural insight and awareness, e.g., the use of language and guidance around cultural specific events
- Links to local traditional owner groups and protocols.

Importantly, IPPLC members, Grocon staff and **yourtown** staff all noted that the committee provided a mechanism for Indigenous stakeholders to have a voice, and offered accountability, challenge and guidance to Grocon and **yourtown** as they enacted the IPP strategies. The committee was perceived by **yourtown** staff to be 'high functioning' and dedicated towards challenging Parklands staff to work towards the best possible Indigenous participation outcomes.

#### What have been the outcomes?

Committee members were asked to what extent they perceived the Parkland's IPP to have been successful in achieving positive outcomes. Members noted successes to include:

- Growth and increased capacity for a number of the 16 local Indigenous Businesses working on the Parklands and 15 micro/small Indigenous businesses taking part in the Grocon-Gold Coast TAFE business development program
- Achievement of significant number of Indigenous labour (112,164 hrs) and training hours (8,351 hrs) over a 2 year period (Sept '15 to Sep '17).
- Establishment of quality relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, built and maintained from the beginning to end of the project with plans for continued engagement

post-handover

- Influenced handover organisation, JLL, to adopt Indigenous participation goals meaning there are ongoing procurement opportunities associated with the property management stage of the Parklands lifecycle
- Fostered a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community connection to the site
- Useful learnings which can be passed on to other businesses as best practice - opportunity to influence not only their industry but the wider community regarding how they do business.
- Attainment of Grocon RAP, meaning Indigenous participation will become part of how Grocon do business.

Crucially, members saw the success of the Parklands to be ongoing, and highlighted that there is further opportunity to influence Indigenous participation practices and thinking, internally within their own organisation, externally within the construction industry, and potentially more broadly within the communities they interact with:

**"What they are doing is best practice".**

**"It's demonstrated the outcomes in terms of what can be achieved through authentic connection and it's shown its success. So, promote that to the next mob"**

**"... leading by example. It's about demonstrating and influencing ongoing commitment"**

#### So... are these figures alright?

To date, there are no published benchmarks regarding what is a 'typical' number of Indigenous participation hours (employment and training) for similar metropolitan large construction projects in South

East QLD. Organisations working in accordance with the 10% training policy report their figures to DATSIP and CSQ but this information is not publicly released. There are some published evaluations for the resources sector, but we are not aware of any publicly available evaluations for the construction industry. Without a benchmark, it is difficult to interpret if what has been achieved on the Parklands Project is 'normal' or 'significant'.

Two of the three committee members interviewed, stated that based on their experience, that these figures (i.e., number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed on project and were recipients of training) were significant:

“**[That figure] is huge. That's a big number...Those numbers are not typical [for other similar projects]... They should be really proud of them**”.

The third committee member interviewed made note of the fact that other businesses have failed to meet their targets, but in terms of offering an interpretation of the Parkland's achieved Indigenous participation, explained that it is “hard to know”.

Interpreting Grocon's success regarding procurement with Indigenous businesses proved just as complicated. Grocon did not set a Indigenous procurement target for the Parklands Project, but construction contracts adhering to the QLD Indigenous Procurement Policy or federal government IPPs adopt a 3% target meaning that 3% of the total price of the contract should be spent with Indigenous businesses. There was some discussion with an IPPLC member who suggested that targets should perhaps look at the total amount of a contract that is “accessible” to Indigenous

businesses with a view to more sensitively capturing how well businesses allocate procurement to Indigenous businesses (i.e., by highlighting what is actually achievable):

“**If a certain amount has to be spent on concreting and there are no Aboriginal concreting business, then this money is not 'accessible' for Indigenous businesses, [meaning that the calculations should be altered]**”

### What's worked well?

When asked about what have been the driving forces towards success for the Parkland's IPP, committee members noted the following:

- Having **yourtown** Aboriginal staff helping to drive the IPP on site at Parklands
- Genuine Grocon leadership support: “**He doesn't just pop into a meeting**”
- Cultural celebrations – events that brought key stakeholders together to celebrate success and build a sense of connection. One committee member recommended Grocon could do even more of these events as a way to deepen connections within the community.
- Regular meetings between Grocon and the Indigenous Liaison committee and the action focus of this committee: “**It's not just a talk fest. There's very clear actions, very clear reporting on those actions**”, “**The collaboration between all parties involved has been excellent**”.
- Grocon's willingness to make the IPP a success: “**Grocon have shown commitment and have grown in their capacity to make participation happen**”; “**Remember Grocon did not have to do this, they were under no obligation, they chose to do it**”.
- Successful community

engagement: “**I think they've done a lot of good work in community around trying to engage with community, educate community about what they're doing and what they're trying to do**”

- Building Indigenous participation capacity of partnering organisation, **yourtown** through providing opportunity: “**[yourtown has] been brilliant... [but] It's all been a learning experience. It's important that we talk about that as a real positive**”, that is, the staff from this organisation have had the opportunity to develop a track record and increase their capacity in the Indigenous participation space, and transfer this knowledge into **yourtown's** own RAP.
- Investment in Indigenous small business development program of benefit to the industry, not specifically for Parklands, and likely to leave a legacy “**We know that for every dollar spent in an Indigenous business, over four dollars is created in economic and social value [Supply Nation, 2015] so investing in these Indigenous businesses has created a legacy**”.

### What could be done differently?

Committee members had several ideas for how Grocon/**yourtown** could improve practice and do things ever better the next time around. The following is a list of suggestions from the committee members interviewed to consider:

- Grocon staff, aside from leaders, could be supported to find their role in relation to the IPP earlier in the project. For example, internal and external communications could be stronger from the beginning of the project
- More work could be done to create a connection with the IPP across all levels at the Parklands. For example, wider

stakeholders or community, not just those directly involved in the IPP, could be invited to attend cultural events.

- Make sure this IPP is not in isolation to the rest of Grocon's activities – make it part of the culture and integrate it within their strategic plans such as they have done with adopting a RAP: “This document [Parklands IPP] or something similar to this needs to be implemented as a standard practice on all their projects. So, that then encourages them to build long-term sustainable partnerships and relationships with Indigenous businesses”
- Diversify the membership of the IPPLC to include some sub-contractors or Indigenous businesses working on the project – this may provide a mechanism to educate non-Indigenous subcontractors around the benefits that can occur through having an IPP: “Let them see it as part of their business”.
- Put people's names (or roles) next to the actions in the IPPs to increase accountability but make sure everyone sees a role to play in enacting the IPP, especially leaders: “Because if it's not everyone's outcome then how do you endorse it. At the end of the day if [the Aboriginal consultant] is the only one accountable for this what chance does he have of making it happen, you know, and what support mechanisms does he have”

Importantly, there was a lot of discussion regarding how things could be done differently to maximise procurement from Indigenous businesses:

- Develop more commitment around procurement from Indigenous Businesses, for example:
  - o Adopt procurement targets: “[reading from the IPP:] ‘Select tenders

for Indigenous business throughout the procurement process’ - It's quite clear that that's what they were going to do and they haven't done it... I just think there's so many opportunities that just get passed by”.

- o Make more effort to engage Indigenous construction businesses, not just ‘peripheral’ businesses (e.g. cleaning, catering, printing, etc): “You look at those businesses that are engaged, how many of them are actually construction businesses”. You take the [Indigenous labour hire] stuff out, you know, there's nothing there [in terms of spend]”.
- o Conduct Indigenous business development program earlier on, so that some of these businesses may potentially develop capacity in time to tender for the project
- o Consider re-investing in another Indigenous business development program to facilitate Indigenous businesses getting involved in the re-development phase of Parklands once the lease to the Commonwealth games ends.
- o Work to re-conceptualise thinking regarding the capability of Indigenous businesses: “[They've told me] We need businesses that can manage contracts over a million dollars or two million dollars or whatever, how many Indigenous businesses can do that? But, they're there. There are Indigenous [construction] businesses that can do that”.
- o Re-consider de-bundling contracts to make it easier for smaller Indigenous businesses to tender, after all, other Tier I organisations are already doing it: “That de-bundling conversation

is something that needs to happen”

- o Consider re-developing the Indigenous specific forward procurement sessions: “All the Indigenous businesses that I spoke to that went to the Grocon forward procurement stuff and the sessions and that, just saw no value in it. And, they didn't feel engaged...They didn't feel the contracts would be in a space that they would be up to tender for”.
- o Consider changing procurement processes to make tendering more accessible for Indigenous businesses. Consider working with the Indigenous businesses to tender.

Lastly, there was some reflection upon the value of placing a higher priority upon IPP activities when making decisions to award contracts (which was congruent with the reflections of some Grocon staff members). A committee member recalled an example of a procurement decision that was made where there was no clear reason given to the committee as to why the decision went the way it did, leading a member to suspect that Grocon made a choice to stick with a pre-existing relationship:

“To me that was a massive missed opportunity [They were going to employ over 10 Indigenous electrical apprentices and help them achieve accredited training]”.

#### Could this be operating here?

Professor Martin Loosemore, University of NSW: “[One of] the barriers to entry [for a new business including an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business] are the fact that you've got these very cosy supply chain relationships which don't really change and it's really hard to break into that industry”

## Section Conclusion

Committee members highlighted what they reported to be significant Indigenous participation achievements made through the Parklands Project's IPP. Not only did this include the achievement of labour and training hours (with two members describing these numbers as "huge" and "not typical" for SEQ construction projects), but this also included ongoing legacies such as: Increased capacity of many of the Indigenous businesses involved with the project or development program; increased capability and commitment for ongoing Indigenous participation by Grocon and **yourtown**; and learnings that can be shared with wider industries. Importantly, the IPPLC members valued the willingness of Grocon and **yourtown** to learn and take on board their advice, and noted the excellence of their approach:

**"What they are doing is best practice".**

Members readily identified a number of factors they felt had led to these successful outcomes. This included expert partnerships (**yourtown**, liaison committee), taking the time to do community engagement activities and cultural celebrations, and genuine leadership commitment.

Committee members saw their role as multifaceted, offering advice, connections to Indigenous businesses and traditional owners, accountability, and an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander voice. Members encouraged the promotion of this work to share insights and improve Indigenous participation elsewhere:

**"It's demonstrated the outcomes in terms of what can be achieved through authentic connection and it's shown its success. So, promote that to the next mob".**

Suggestions for things to do differently next time echoed some of Grocon's own reflections, including helping Grocon staff find their roles earlier in the project, increasing accountability, and strengthening internal and external communication about the IPP. Suggestions also included broadening the stakeholder groups invited to cultural celebrations and diversifying the membership of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee. Further consideration and reflection may be required regarding Grocon's commitment to procure from Indigenous businesses, and the adoption of targets and the de-bundling of contracts conversation may need to be had (again) internally. Innovating procurement processes to help Indigenous businesses tender for contracts was also noted, and the review of the Grocon - Gold Coast TAFE Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander small business development project (summarised in the next section) offers some tangible ideas in this area.

## Recommendations from IPPLC insights

Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee members' comments suggest the following high-level recommendations for future IPP projects:

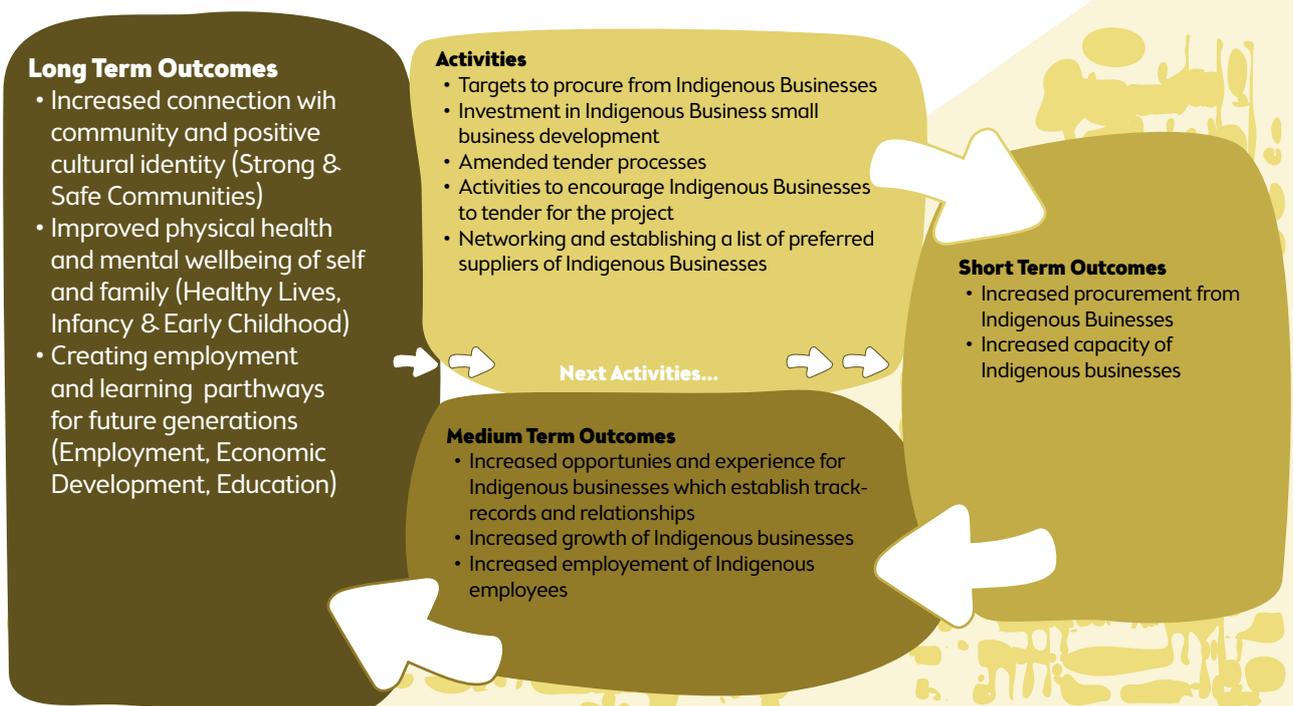
- Do more to embed Indigenous participation within the site's culture
- Broaden the stakeholders involved with Indigenous participation (e.g., attending cultural events, members of the IPPLC etc)
- Develop more commitment regarding procuring from Indigenous businesses (i.e., consider setting targets, try to engage more Indigenous construction businesses, adapt tender processes further or offer additional supports, consider de-bundling contracts etc)
- Factor into the decision making to award contracts on a subcontractor's capacity to meet IPP commitments
- In conjunction with sharing best practice for implementation, Grocon can encourage Australian Tier I construction companies to report publicly on Indigenous participation hours achieved to develop an understanding of what is achievable and track improved progress over time as IPP practices become more embedded and capacity increases within the industry. This may have an additional benefit: **"Us Tier I's are very competitive; making this public may bring on some healthy competition - we achieved this, what did you achieve?"** [Grocon leader].





## Insights from Indigenous Business

### Proposed theory of change relating to Indigenous Businesses



The proposed theory of change relating to Indigenous Businesses (IBs) focuses upon building capacity of local IBs, leading to sustainable business growth through the immediate opportunity of contracting on the Parklands, but also leading to increased future procurement through offering opportunities for businesses to establish track-records and relationships, and entry into the supply chain for a Tier I organisation. The Parklands Project's IPP did not contain targets regarding procurement from Indigenous Businesses, but future IPPs could consider including targets to cement the priority of this activity. As an alternate to procurement targets, Parkland's IPP funded, with Gold Coast TAFE, an Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander Business Development Program, OCG and DATSIP.

As noted in regard to the proposed theory of change figures presented in this report, the long-term outcomes are visionary and ambitious and more likely to represent the collective outcomes of an entire industry's IPPs rather than a single project's IPP. However, these outcomes have been included to make salient the higher goals for Indigenous participation initiatives which is a clear grounding for establishing intrinsic connection and purpose for this work.

One of the core components of the Parklands Projects IPP regarding Indigenous Businesses was investment in an Indigenous small business development program in conjunction with QLD TAFE. This service was delivered by the Aboriginal business, Yolla Consulting, and involved a combination of one-on-one individualised coaching, business development plans, and group-based workshops. This

section of the report presents a summary of some of the data from Yolla Consulting regarding the outcomes of this program, a separate, independent evaluation out of scope for this project. Interested readers are directed to Yolla Consulting for more details on what was achieved by their program.

### Section Overview

This section of the report will report insights from four Indigenous Businesses who were involved with the Parklands Project, covering the topics:

- What have been the outcomes from being involved with the Parklands Project?
- What's worked well?
  - o Entry point into the project
  - o What was Grocon like to work with?
- What could be done differently?

In addition, this section will provide a brief overview of the outcomes of the Grocon - Gold Coast TAFE Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander Business Development Program taken from Yolla Consulting's evaluation of the program.

### What have been the outcomes?

Indigenous Businesses identified positive outcomes from their involvement in the Parklands Project that include business growth and business support, with a flow on effect of increased quality of life, opportunities and wellbeing for Indigenous employees and businesses affected by the project.

### Business growth and opportunities created

The four Indigenous businesses interviewed reported that they had experienced phenomenal business growth as a result of being involved with the Parklands project. The growth resulted

firstly by the activities at the Parklands, but also through establishing track-records or demonstrating the success of their product, and importantly through the relationships which were fostered which has led to further work.

*"We went from being boutique to having over 70 guys on our books... [This experience has] built our business for us. We can now operate and we can make sure that we've not only got a future for us but also for our workers. So, it's been fantastic for us, it's been really good... So, I suppose what they've done for us is that they've not only built a process but they've given us access to their subcontractors... we've got ongoing relationships from this engagement of Parklands. So, absolutely, opportunities have opened up... Most of them (subcontractors) have used us outside of the Parklands Project which is great"*

*"Because of that one Grocon... [contract], it kind of, opened up the door to all these other opportunities. So, there were all [contracts] for the likes of GOLDOC, Hutchinson's Builders, a mining company in Brisbane, and heaps of small Government ones.... That was because of that first one. We had such a success...There was actually a lot of word of mouth from the [that contract]. [Because of the increase in work and opportunities] we can finally create a culture where we get some really good outcome"*

*"I was able to replicate this [elsewhere]. I was able to say 'This really works' and show people the evidence that it works and this is the results that we've got" [This contract] Helped me to provide evidence that what I was doing was working which has led to [a significant expansion]"*

The growth that these businesses experienced due to the Parklands has meant that more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were able to be offered work or training, as these businesses mostly employ or procure from other Indigenous peoples.

Emma Kerslake from Yolla Consulting: "An Aboriginal Business is 100 times more likely to employ Indigenous people so investing in Indigenous Businesses can make a massive difference... These businesses give back to their local communities, they do pro-bono work, and sponsor local charities..."

### Improved quality of life for community

With this growth in their businesses and by delivering their services, these Indigenous employers were able to recognise how their involvement on the Parklands Project had benefited their community, especially in terms of improved quality of life. Participants talked about employees taking their children on their very first holidays, employees being able to better manage their finances and plan their lives, and improved staff retention, capability and loyalty towards their business as a result of receiving training through the Parklands Project:

"We had a couple of guys [Aboriginal employees] that called me up and said 'We're taking our family away on holidays!', You know, for the first time ever taking their kids on holidays"

"It was obviously great for us but it was also great for our local community because myself and my business partner we're from here, so we were actually able to engage people that we actually know in the community...it was a really good flow on effect for us in that we were I suppose, in a way, giving back to our

community and providing opportunities for them and their families..."

"Most of our guys have had work in the construction industry but it's very periodic. So, you might have a week on and then you might have two weeks off. It [Parklands] was more that sustainable and long-term work that they can actually - knew that they were getting work for six months so they could start saving, they could forecast ahead for whatever that may be [reducing stress and providing opportunity]"

Specifically, in relation to the Indigenous Small Business Development Program, Emma Kerslake reported that some of those who participated have yarned with her about the increased sense of community they feel by being supported and connected to other small Aboriginal businesses who are undertaking the same journey. In addition, these businesses have commented upon decreases in stress they experience due to the improved capability they have to manage their business and win contracts.

### What worked well?

The three Indigenous Businesses that worked directly with Grocon reported that what worked well for them on this project was the support provided (e.g., assistance with required documents to work with a Tier 1), leadership demonstrated by Grocon/**yourtown** and Grocon's attitude towards promoting their business. One business reported that Grocon/**yourtown** facilitated introductions between their business and subcontractors, and showed leadership in communicating their expectations to subcontractors regarding IPP targets. Another business leader remarked upon the efforts Grocon management had gone

to in promoting wider use of their business within the Tier 1 and the significant rapport they had with these Grocon managers. Businesses also mentioned that the accessibility of Parklands management to discuss or clarify concerns was another factor that has worked well in the implementation of the Parklands IPP. Importantly, Indigenous businesses' sense that Grocon were committed to achieving IPP outcomes was a theme present in the yarns with the Indigenous businesses.

"If you've got the support of the executive team and they pass it down through their directors and managers, it gives us confidence that we can go in there and talk to these subcontractors that they've got on site knowing that we've got the backing of everybody in Grocon"

"There's a bit of an open door policy which is very rare on big projects like this, you know. We've got direct contact [with senior leaders]. They've always been approachable"

"It's probably been one of the best projects that I've ever worked on in terms of support-wise and structure-wise"

"I've, sort of, become real good friends with some of the top management staff and that, and they've given us, you know, numbers for people that they know of and, sort of, open up doors in that sense, you know - 'Look here. Give this guy a ring. He's the site manager or the project manager on that site, give him a call. He needs two or three of your guys. He might be able to give you something,' you know. And, stuff like that, they've been terrific"

### Entry point into the project

Three of the four Indigenous Businesses interviewed became

involved with the Parklands Project through a pre-existing relationship with an Aboriginal employee at **yourtown** or with members of the Parkland's Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee. This is reflective of the majority of other Indigenous Businesses who worked on the Parklands Project, who were either sought out directly through recommendations requested by Grocon employees or through **yourtown**/IPPLC relationships. Only one Indigenous Business became involved as a result of attending information sessions run by Grocon or through advertisements made about the project (and took part in a standard tender process). This is congruent with how subject matter experts describe the entry points for Indigenous Businesses into Tier I construction projects, emphasising "It's all about relationships and partnerships".

One business was assisted by Grocon and **yourtown** to develop the documentation needed to be compliant with a Tier I organisation's contract, including capability statement, WHS materials, and insurance requirements. Without this assistance, this business would most likely not have been able to seize the opportunity to get

involved with the project and benefit from the subsequent phenomenal growth their business experienced.

**What was Grocon like to work with?**

The three IB that had direct contact with Grocon reported highly positive experiences of working with the Tier I organisation. All three businesses commented upon how much they valued Grocon's motivation and commitment to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, which demonstrated to them a genuineness behind the IPP activities:

**"It was deadly. It was good. It was great to see - well, we were, kind of, blown away. We met Grocon about a year and a bit ago. And, they'd seen the vision. They shared the vision. And, they just took us through what they wanted to do and, what they wanted to provide opportunities for Indigenous workers and, obviously, small businesses that come into the project to be a part of it...It's been a good experience"**

This perception of genuineness appears to be a cornerstone to the good quality of the relationships that has been

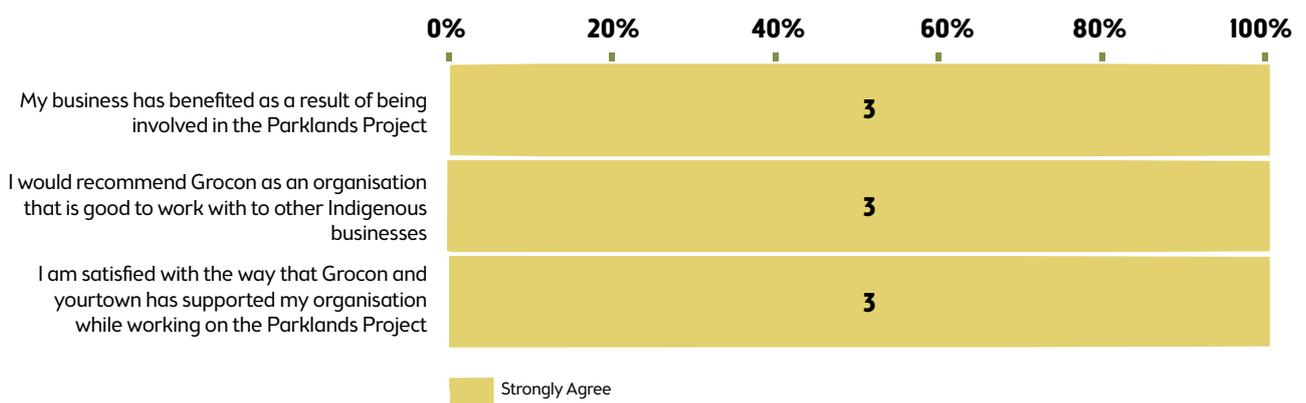
established between Grocon and these Indigenous Businesses.

**Do not underestimate the importance of relationships:**

Stacey Vervoort, Marumali Consultants: "Relationships are a central part of many Aboriginal cultures. In Western cultures, the focus can often be on a person's role first and values second, but for many community members, the relationship is more likely to be based upon rapport, trust and respect - 'I'm here today because I think you're genuine and if I didn't, I wouldn't be here'. It can be the same for an Aboriginal worker, if we don't feel respect for our boss it can be harder for some to work for that person. Whereas in Western culture that can be less of an issue and people may still work for them even if they don't share their values with them, because they are their boss and they are the worker. It's more about roles, whereas often with a collectivist culture is more likely to do things based on who that person is first, then their role."

When asked to rate their opinion of the experience and support they received from Grocon/**yourtown**, these three businesses provided maximum positive endorsement of the survey statements (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Indigenous Businesses' perception of their experience working on the Parklands Project and the extent to which they would recommend Grocon to other Indigenous businesses**



### What could be done differently?

Indigenous Businesses were complementary of what Grocon/yourtown has done to promote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations within Parklands and there were not many comments regarding what could have been done differently.

There was some discussion regarding 'poaching' of workers by subcontractors and comments regarding what mechanisms could have been established to discourage this. Other industries have observed this issue (Barkley et al., 2014), wherein a limited pool of Aboriginal labour can mean retention issues arise. However, it is also useful to bear in mind that research shows that Aboriginal employees leave employment for reasons including lack of career development (Tiplady & Barclay, 2007) which may have been occurring at Parklands; some Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait staff interviewed for this evaluation reported that employees with the Indigenous labour hire company had reported feeling discouraged by business owners to undertake training as it meant time away from work resulting in reduced number of billable hours for the company.

In contrast to the comments made by the Indigenous Liaison Committee, there was the opinion that the decision to invest heavily in one Indigenous business rather than diversify Indigenous procurement spend, was a sensible step for a Tier 1 new to the area of Indigenous participation:

**"I know it sounds bad but I'm kind of glad in a way that a number of the Indigenous businesses didn't get opportunities on the Grocon site. A lot of them would have gone in at tier five or six and probably would have lost money on the**

**contract. You know, that - I think that they [Grocon] did a lot directly with the Indigenous businesses, with one or two that they worked with, and I think that that's a really good model..."**

**"Grocon dealing directly with a major Indigenous subcontractor on site is leading by example. And, it's a very, very good way to do business when you're just new in this space and starting out and things like that. Because I feel like that if it had been at other levels in the supply chain, you know - once you're dealing with a tier four or five there's no cash to be had"**

Despite the views that sit either side of the fence regarding the scale and scope of the Parklands' investment in Indigenous businesses, there is an opportunity now that Grocon has built its capacity for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander companies to continue to broaden its investment in construction-based Indigenous businesses. This may also avoid perpetuating a trend noted in the industry, with a high level of "cosy-supply chains" meaning new Indigenous businesses struggle to break through into the market.

### **Grocon - Gold Coast TAFE Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Business Development Program**

#### **Program description and goals**

The Parklands IPP made a key commitment to Indigenous business growth by funding a small business development program (BDP) with TAFE QLD (Gold Coast region), OCG and DATSIP. Yolla Consulting, in connection with its advisory mentors, delivered this program to 15 micro and small-sized Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses between 1 August 2016 and 31 August 2017. This section of the report draws

upon the work of Emma Kerslake, Yolla Consulting.

The program goal was to build the capacity of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses to successfully compete in Grocon, and other Tier 1 and Tier 2, supply chains by developing the necessary capabilities to tender and fulfil contractual requirements, ultimately building sustainable and profitable Indigenous businesses. Appendix I contains the full list of the program's objectives.

The program utilised a combination of face-to-face mentoring (tailored to specific business needs) and small group workshops (focusing on different fortnightly topics).

This program differs from other small business development programs and some design elements are worth noting. Firstly, the number of mentoring hours delivered by expert Aboriginal advisors was intense - up to 40 hours was available. Secondly, mentors travelled to and met at times convenient to the micro-small business which saw 100% attendance at sessions:

**"Micro and small businesses are often juggling all of the roles and responsibilities involved in running the business many having not yet reached significant enough cash flow to outsource or employ others to manage specific aspects for them yet." (Kerslake, p.4 2017).**

Thirdly, mentors 'sat-with' the mentee and actively helped to co-produce documentation with them which was required to move their business forward: This differs from other development/mentoring programs that provide advice but require the mentee to adapt the advice and produce the documentations on their own. Lastly, the fortnightly workshops

included opportunities to foster relationships and peer-support with other Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses, thus promoting a sense of community.

### **Program outcomes**

The program review concerning general outcomes was conducted with a 20% participant sample (three businesses) who spoke with an independent interviewer regarding the general outcomes they perceived from participating in the program.

#### **General outcomes included:**

- Increased knowledge and skill to tender successfully
- Increased sense of community as a result of peer-support and relationships with other Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses at similar points in their development
- Decreased stress and increased wellbeing reportedly due to improved ability to win contracts and manage their business
- Businesses rated the mentoring experience on average 5/5 and workshops on average 4/5 (on a 5-point Likert scale)

#### **Other general outcomes (when considering the entire sample) included:**

- Eight businesses expressing interest in undertaking a Certificate IV in Small Business Management as a follow-on from participating in the program
- Businesses reported making more 'strategically achievable' choices regarding the size of the contracts they tended for.

### **Financial outcomes**

Over \$1.7 million of new contracts (award confirmed as of December 2016) have been awarded to participating businesses since the commencement of the program. Although some businesses were

receiving support from sources outside of the program during this time, Yolla Consulting note that they can trace a direct link between the program's activities and the outcomes that have been achieved. A total of \$750,000 of these contracts are for work with the Commonwealth Games alone. Furthermore, the overall financial outcome of the program will continue to be fully realised over time.

### **Barriers faced by Micro-Small Indigenous Businesses**

Yolla Consulting observed that many of the businesses faced the same barriers in trying to run and grow their businesses which may present opportunities for Grocon to consider in future IPPs. Digital literacy emerged as an issue for a number of the businesses, with many of the owners/operators finding it challenging to use digital tools, templates and computer systems, presenting a significant challenge when considering current mainstream tendering processes. This may be a wider trend for Indigenous businesses as ABS data (cited by Yolla Consulting) indicates that many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families have been late adopters to technology.

In addition, the repertoire of Work, Health and Safety (WHS) requirements that these micro and small businesses need to navigate appear significant. Yolla Consulting explain:

**“there appeared to be a range of overlapping regulations and requirements for industries, supply chains and then sites. This adds a significant burden on micro and small businesses regarding WHS documentation and licences, and ultimately impacts on profitability”.**

Just as Grocon worked with the Indigenous labour hire company on Parklands, there may be opportunities to develop

pathways for supporting micro to small Indigenous businesses in a practical manner (given potential digital literacy issues) to navigate WHS prerequisites.

The last barrier highlights the paradoxical challenges small Indigenous businesses face when trying to win work – one business received feedback that they were required to have an ISO audit qualification to win a Building and Asset Services contract valued at less than \$50,000 per annum. Gaining and maintaining such accreditation would cost more than \$50K. The irony is that this tenderer encouraged micro-small Indigenous businesses to apply, perhaps revealing a lack of capacity on behalf of the industry for supporting and engaging micro-small Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.

The interested reader is directed to Loosemore and Denny-Smith (2016) for further research identifying barriers for Indigenous businesses within the construction industry.

In summary, barriers emerging from the BDP review suggest Grocon may like to consider:

- Amending tender processes to cater for businesses that may have lower digital literacy
- Advocating for or funding the development of practical WHS specific development programs to assist Indigenous businesses that are ready to gain WHS/HSEQ accreditation or qualifications to enable them to tender for Tier 1 or 2 contracts.
- Make invitations to tender realistic if encouraging micro-small businesses.

## Reflections on the Grocon – Gold Coast TAFE Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Business Development Program

This program clearly achieved some very significant outcomes in terms of business capacity growth, with members of the IPPCL explaining that these businesses were unlikely to have moved onto such successful growth trajectories without participating in the program.

It appears likely, however, that the businesses that participated still need to undergo more development before they will be likely to tender for and win contracts with Tier 1 and Tier 2 construction companies (the objective of the program). One member of the IPPLC suggested that a second BDP could be run to set micro-small Indigenous businesses up for securing work with Parklands as it transitions from the GOLDOC contract to a residential and commercial facility.

### Section conclusion

Indigenous businesses who took part in this evaluation mostly became connected to the Parklands Project through existing relationships with **yourtown** or the IPPLC, reflecting the importance of relationships and rapport in order to procure with Indigenous businesses. The businesses who interacted directly with Grocon reported a very positive experience of working with Grocon and **yourtown**, in particular, noting that Grocon staff appeared genuine in their desire to support Indigenous businesses.

Significant growth and new opportunities were reported by the four Indigenous businesses interviewed as a result of being involved with Parklands Project. The ripple effect of this growth for Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander peoples can only be imagined, with these businesses hiring a very high proportion of Indigenous staff. Over \$1.7 million of new contracts was traced back by Yolla Consulting to the mentoring they conducted as part of the Grocon – Gold Coast TAFE Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Small Business Development Program (BDP). The reality is that these investments and outcomes for these Indigenous businesses would most likely have not occurred through the Parklands Project had Grocon not enacted an IPP, therefore making a deliberate effort to procure from and invest in the development of Indigenous Businesses. The efforts made by Grocon may well have changed the trajectory of these Indigenous businesses connected with the Parklands Project.

Indigenous businesses highlighted a number of things that they think had ‘worked well’ in implementing the Parklands IPP, including the support provided (e.g., assistance with required documents to work with a Tier 1), leadership shown by Grocon/**yourtown** in emphasising the importance of the IPP to subcontractors, and Grocon’s proactivity in promoting their businesses. Alternates to traditional tendering projects was also highlighted as a recommendation to peruse in future projects, as there may be unique needs for Indigenous businesses. The BDP was also another clear example of something that ‘worked well’: Members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee all emphasised the success of this program and, as further testament, the unique model piloted in this program has since been adopted elsewhere (The Creating Tracks Program) and investment significantly expanded (e.g., 160 Aboriginal

and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses from hospitality, tourism and arts businesses).

Despite discussions with some members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee suggesting that Grocon should have considered broadening the investment spend with the Indigenous businesses they procured from, an Indigenous business themselves felt that it was a sensible strategy for Grocon to work intensely with just one business, given they were new to the area of Indigenous participation. It was also noted, that had the small Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses involved in the BDP been awarded contracts at Parklands, they might actually have lost money on the project. Having increased their capacity with Indigenous participation, however, Grocon can now consider, as part of the recommendations from this evaluation, reviewing its Indigenous procurement commitments and strategies.

### Recommendations from Indigenous business’ insights

Indigenous businesses comments, and suggestions made by Yolla Consulting’s evaluation of the business development program, suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Consider ways to discourage the poaching of staff, which may mean encouraging businesses to be more supportive of staff development opportunities
- Review tendering processes and procurement strategies for engaging Indigenous businesses:
  - o Continue to offer support to businesses during tendering, e.g., provide support

- to develop required documentation to be eligible to work for a Tier 1 construction company
- o Consider amending tender processes to cater for businesses that may have lower digital literacy
- o Advocate for or fund the development of practical WHS specific development programs to assist Indigenous businesses that are ready to gain WHS/HSEQ accreditation or qualifications to enable them to tender for Tier 1 or 2 contracts
- o Make invitations to tender realistic if encouraging micro-small businesses to apply.





**Part 3**  
Emergent Research  
AKA 'The Tool-Kit'



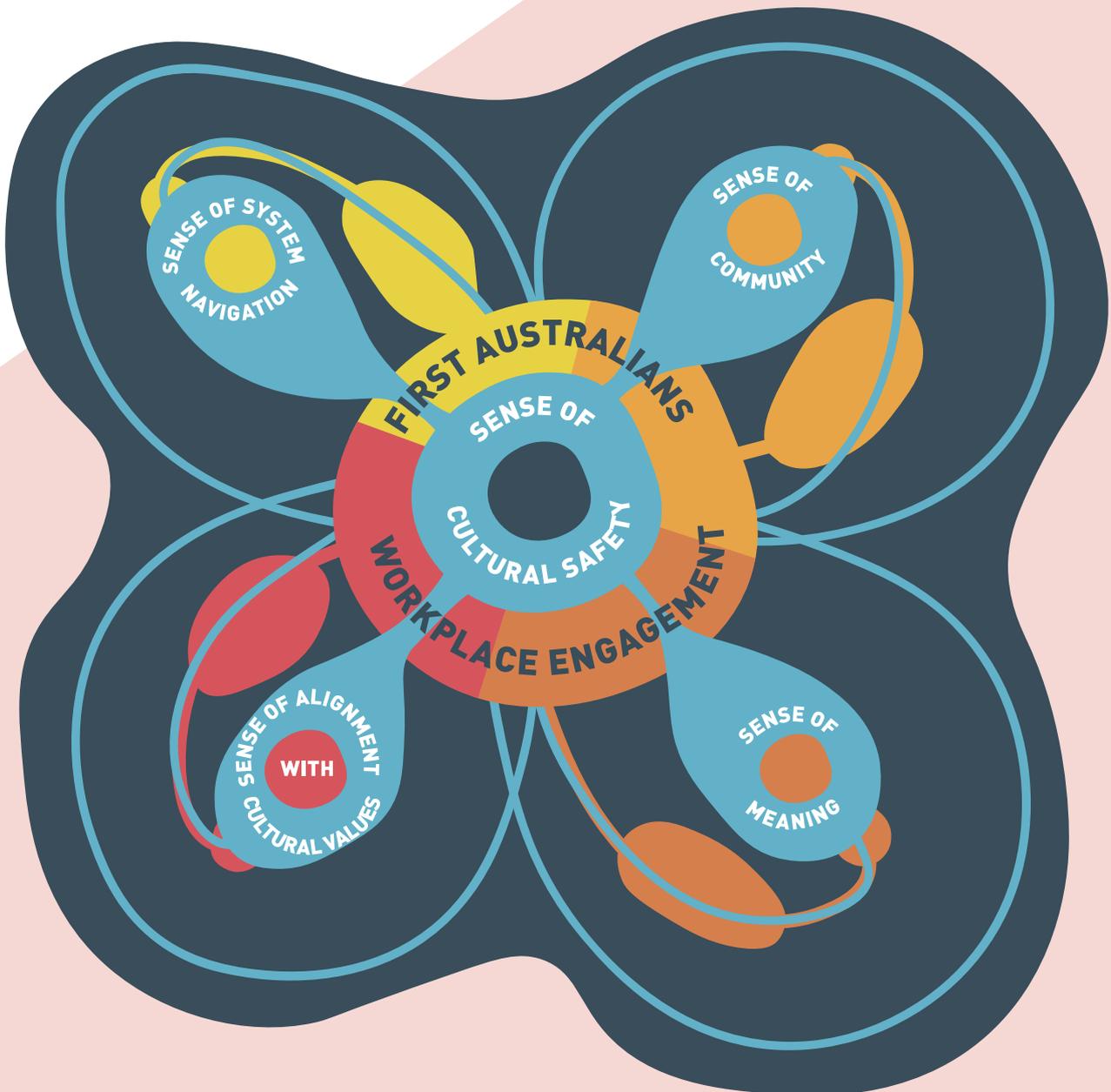
**“People need to understand the reason why they are doing something,  
they won’t do it otherwise”**



## The First Australians' Work Engagement Model

**Developed in collaboration with Marumali Consultations and Tristan Schultz of Relative Creative through yarning with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples working at the construction of the Parklands Project, Gold Coast QLD.**

This model depicts the factors identified as likely to facilitate First Australian's sense of work engagement. The factors are all interconnected, shown through the blue lines which represent ripples in water, or thread weaving the sense of cultural safety through the other senses. The First Australians' Workplace Engagement, seen in the yellow, reds and oranges, represents that if the blue continues weaving, work engagement will weave back. This 'ripple effect' reflects that which can occur through investing in Indigenous participation initiatives. The colours of this model are inspired by the colours of the Parklands Project itself which seemed fitting as this project has led to so many Indigenous participation legacies, including the development of Grocon's RAP. The colours and design are also compatible with Grocon's RAP artwork. A sense of 'Cultural Safety' is viewed as the 'higher order' factor in this model, but the weaves do not flow in any particular direction as they are all interconnected.



## What is this model?

Indigenous Participation Plans (IPP) are designed to increase the amount and quality of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees and businesses participation within a construction project. These plans may contain over 30 strategies for a large construction project, spanning a number of priority areas.

Sometimes there are plans in place, but when it comes to implementation, things get skipped over, pared back, or forgotten. Sometimes key stakeholders for a project may not understand the role they need to play in supporting the IPP, which can influence the extent to which an organisation is able to have a truly inclusive workplace culture and foster the engagement and retention of First Australian employees and businesses. Sometimes the plan itself may not be fully understood, especially if a template is adopted from elsewhere.

What is missing from the IPP space is a framework or theoretical understanding of what drives First Australians to want to work for an organisation and what makes for a good working experience for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. With this understanding, businesses can connect their strategies to a clear purpose – research shows that purpose drives people to act and influences their discretionary effort. It may also suggest that new or alternate strategies may be useful to build the required foundations for First Australians' workplace engagement. Therefore, this model offers the beginnings of a culturally theoretical underpinning of IPPs.

## How was this model developed?

First Australians working on the Parklands Project (Gold Coast, QLD) yarned with us about the factors that lead to a good working experience (job satisfaction and engagement) for them personally and their mob, and about the reasons why they have, or may want to, leave a job (retention, withdrawal, and turnover).

Sixteen (16) First Australian employees at the Parklands Project and five (5) First Australian subject matter experts who work in the field of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation took part in this research through interview and/or workshops. A model of First Australians' workplace engagement and retention was co-designed with two Aboriginal psychologists and an Aboriginal designer, based on the aforementioned participants' stories and feedback of earlier drafts of the model.

There is no one antecedent amongst these factors, and they are all deeply interrelated and can affect each other to a greater or less amount. The constructs that emerged from the yarning have been presented into themes that may be useful for Grocon and other businesses to think about as points for intervention through IPP strategies.

It should be acknowledged that our First Peoples are not a homogenous group and therefore variance regarding the components of employee engagement and retention amongst Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees should be expected. The extent to which the different constructs presented in the model matter to any individual First Australian is expected to vary, person to person, but are likely to be present to some extent.

## Sense of Community

**'There's heaps of us guys on site and I like the people I work with here'**

First Australians talked about the importance of a sense of belonging that is created by working in a space alongside other Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees. When First Australians can see others of their mob in their workplace, they feel more at ease and comfortable in their work environments, because they have people there who share similar worldviews and they are not "the odd one out".

Seeing other cultural diversity in their workplace can also help create feelings of an inclusive work place. Being able to see diversity and see First Australians have a solid presence in an organisation helps to foster a sense of positive relationships and community within the workplace, and appears to increase employees' overall sense of belonging and commitment to an organisation.

This connection to a community also includes positive relationships with non-Indigenous fellow employees, supervisors, and managers. Liking the people you work with was the most frequently mentioned thing that the First Australians working at the Parklands liked about their jobs.

Perceptions of wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community support were important to participants, particularly when that support came from family and members of community who were well respected. Participants discussed how they felt positive about their workplace when they also perceived that family and respected members of

community not only valued their individual roles within the workplace, but also respected the organisation itself. These discussions appear to highlight the importance of organisations developing and maintaining a positive relationship with the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in which they are situated, and in doing so, facilitate wider support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members themselves to engage and work with that organisation. This process also appears to facilitate a sense of congruence for employees across their personal culture, family and community values and choice of employment.

### **Sense of Meaning (personal and collective)**

**'I'm happy with the working conditions and this job is good for me and my mob'; 'This job allows me to provide and be a good example'**

First Australians are more likely to feel work engagement if their job is meaningful at two levels - if it is meaningful for them individually and if it speaks to collective purpose. At the individual level, First Australians talked about all those factors that exist in non-Indigenous job satisfaction literature such as receiving positive feedback, receiving appropriate pay, satisfaction with work hours and safety conditions, experiencing task completion or sense of mastery, having opportunities to develop skills and career progression pathways etc.

Collective purpose, on the other hand, extends beyond notions of self (the individual) within the workplace, and includes thoughts around how this job could benefit community. For example, one employee talked about how he hoped that through gaining a trade, he would be able to offer

his own son and others in his community an apprenticeship one day. Other stories touched on acting as role models for their community and breaking negative stereotypes.

### **Sense of alignment with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Values**

**'The words and actions of people in this workplace don't clash with my culture's values'**

First Australians appeared more positive about their workplace when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures were not only visible (such as via placement of flags and further symbolism), but when they felt they were also genuinely respected. Participants noted that organisational engagement with and celebration of cultural events such as NAIDOC Week is one of the ways such respect can be demonstrated.

Having positive experiences with fellow co-workers, managers and supervisors who are seen as accepting, supportive and as not harbouring negative stereotypes is also instrumental in facilitating positive connections to and safe places for culture. Such factors were noted to strongly relay a sense of employee value, connection between work and culture as well as strong respect throughout the workplace.

Following on from this, First Australians reported greater engagement and wellbeing when the values of their workplace aligned with their own cultural values. Research (Schultz & Vervoort, under preparation) shows that there are six common cultural values present in many Aboriginal cultures (respect, responsibility, reciprocity, acceptance, connectedness, and interconnectedness). Workplaces that have these values present in their organisational climates may

be more likely to be employers of choice for Aboriginal peoples.

Organisations can build First Australia's sense of a connection to culture in their workplace by giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture a visible presence (symbols), through celebrating cultural events, adopting Reconciliation Actions Plans, and having cultural committees. They can also increase the sense of respect for First Australian culture by engaging with cultural awareness and competency training and through visible leadership activities that encourage an inclusive culture.

### **Sense of System Navigation**

**'I know how things work around here and who to go to if I need something'**

Engaged First Australians are likely to know how to navigate 'majority' or 'mainstream' culture and norms. They understand the expectations of their employer and enjoy the satisfaction of being "a hard worker". They have the ability to navigate and understand procedures, policies and norms of a mainstream organisation, or have access to people they trust who can help them to do this. This factor is particularly important in construction projects which are time pressured, have tight budgets and generally have inflexible workplace practices.

Organisations can support First Australian's work readiness by running well designed entry level programs, career development programs, mentoring programs, tailored Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and on-boarding strategies, and offering additional training to supervisors who manage First Australian employees.

## Sense of Cultural Safety

**'This is a good place for me to work - I can be myself'**

Feeling like it is 'ok' to identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person and that in doing so, you will not be labelled or negatively stereotyped, appears to be a cornerstone for First Australians' sense of engagement in their workplace. When First Australian's do not have a sense of cultural safety, they are more likely to experience compromised wellbeing, display work withdrawal behaviours (absenteeism, low productivity) or simply leave that organisation.

When yarning, many First Australians talked about the negative stereotypes that exist in society and some recalled previous experiences where they have encountered discrimination. Finding employers, co-workers and organisational systems that do not harbor these perceptions provide employees with the experience of personal cultural safety, free from prejudice.

Employees' experience of such positive work environments appears to have an ongoing positive impact for the employee's families and community. First Australians discussed their ability to share positive stories about their workplace with those they are connected to outside of the work, such as children and families, allowing them to dispel negative stereotypes and operate in alignment with cultural roles. For example, one Aboriginal man told stories about how maintaining employment was viewed as a way to honour a man's role of providing for his family and taking pride in that practice on a daily basis. This process was noted to have positive effects upon future First Australian generations, in particular via positive role

modelling demonstrated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

Cultural safety was not seen as an independent construct in this model but perhaps a higher order factor - the other themes in the model are expected to feed into and generate a stronger feeling of cultural safety. A workplace that respects your culture and has a climate that does not clash with your cultural responsibilities, that offers something meaningful to you and your collective purpose, which has a positive reputation amongst your community, and where you are supported to navigate a 'mainstream' system, is likely to have strong cultural safety, leading to greater work engagement and higher retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### Reflections on this Model

It is not a simple case that a workplace that 'scores more highly' on a greater number of the engagement senses will be able to predict the retention for any given First Australian - the interaction and person valance of the variables is more complex than this. For instance, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee may stay with an institution they personally consider culturally unsafe if they feel their presence in the role has a lot of collective meaning - especially if they are 'breaking new ground' for their community or performing advocacy by being a First Australian in this position/institution. However, they are unlikely to recommend the organisation to community and may speak honestly about their experience of being culturally unsafe at this place of employment.

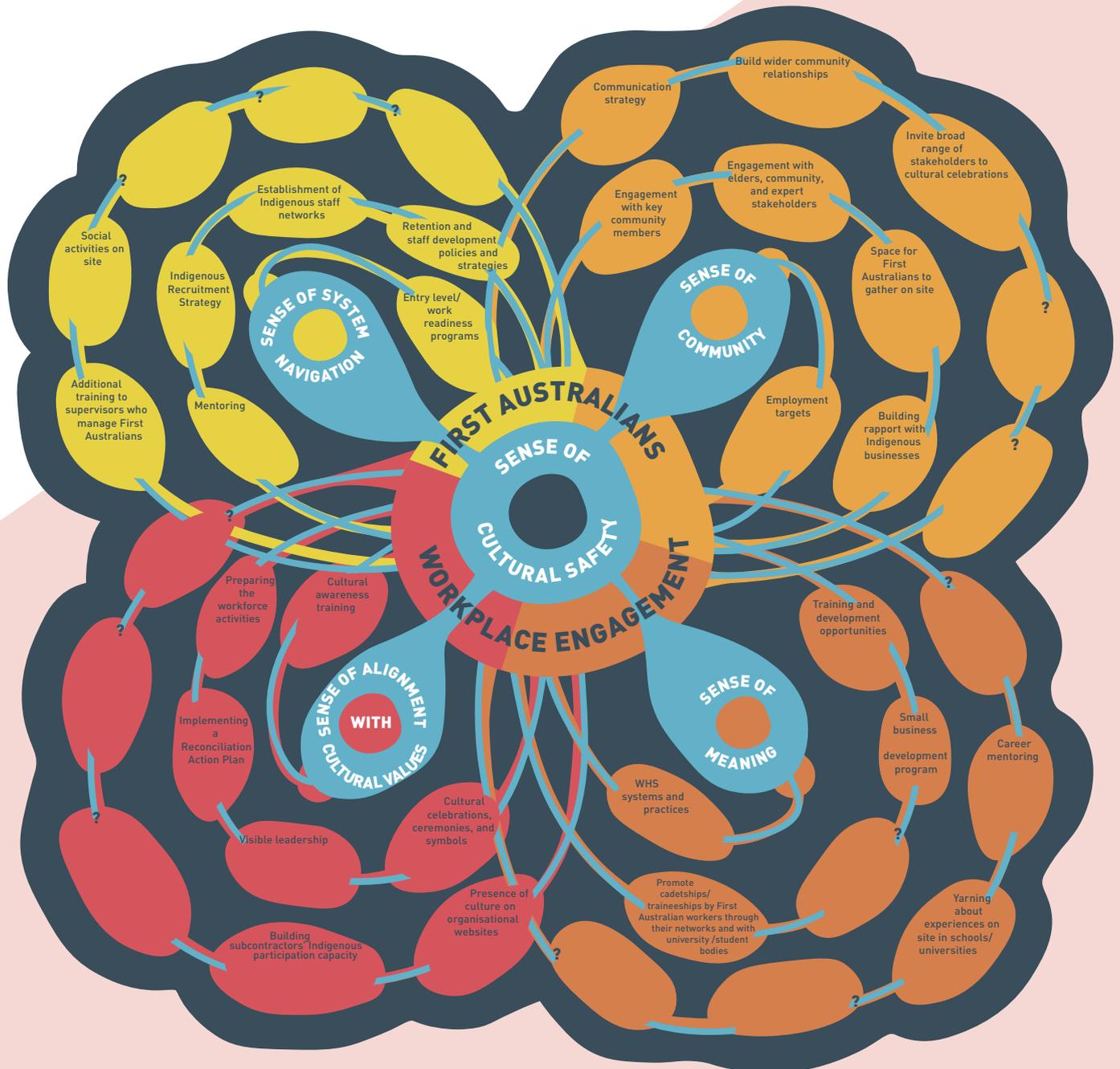
**yourtown** have co-designed with Marumali Consultations and Relative Creative a set of

templates which facilitate the development of strategies in alignment with the model's constructs. The strategies used on the Parklands have been mapped to the constructs as an example (See Figure 9 and Table 3).

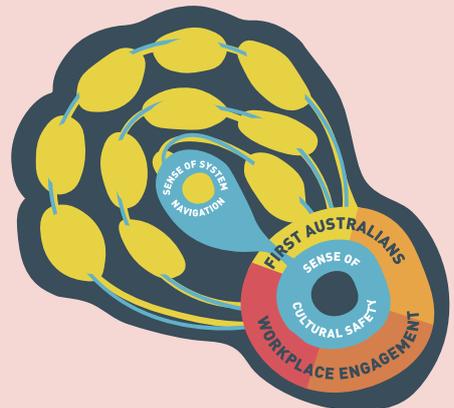
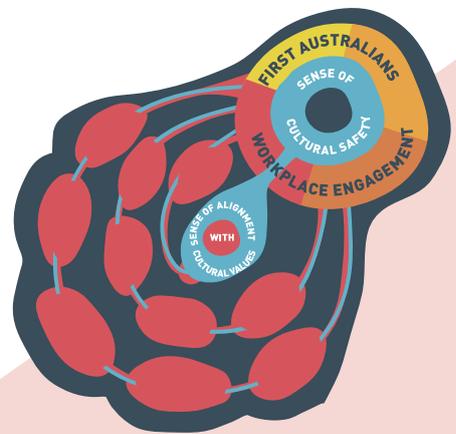
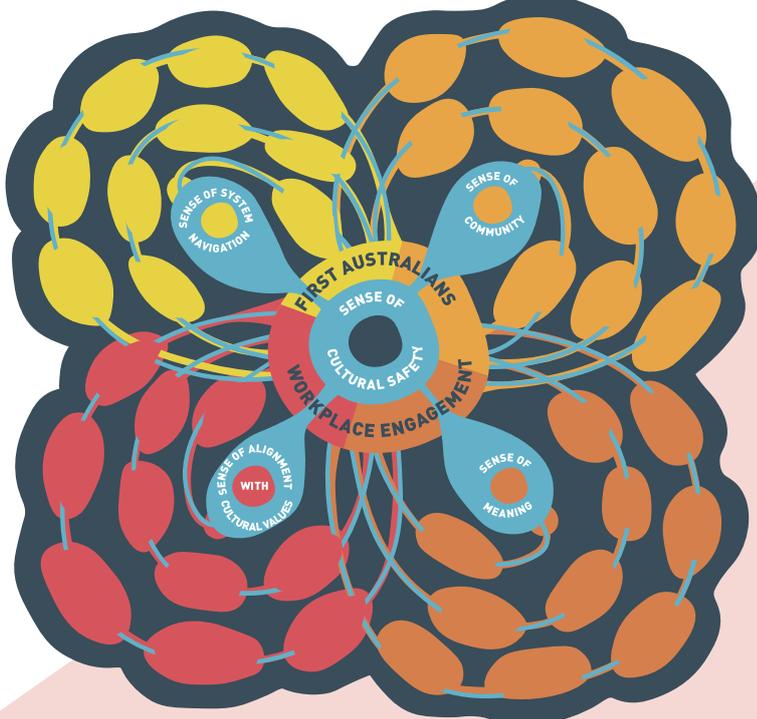
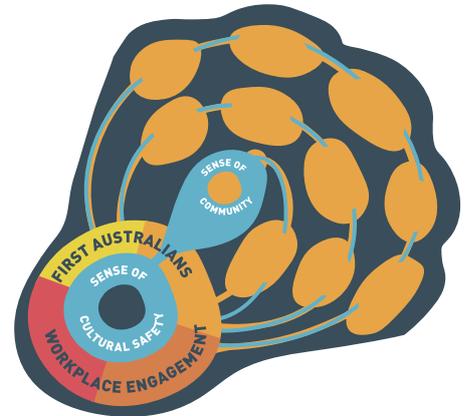
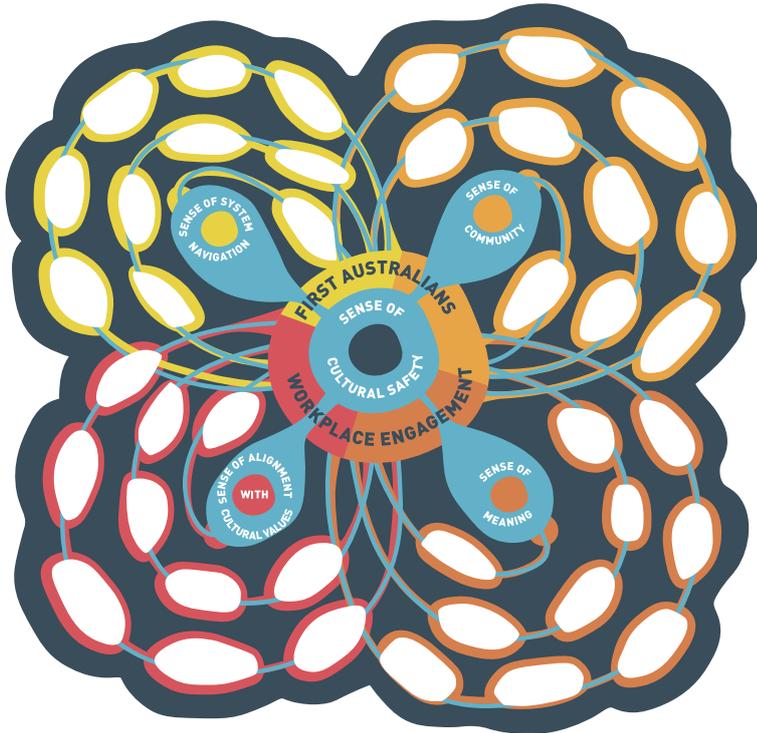
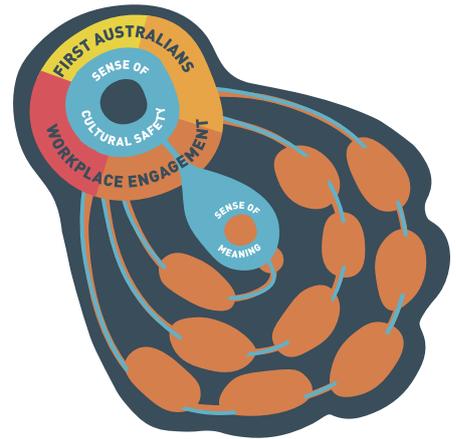
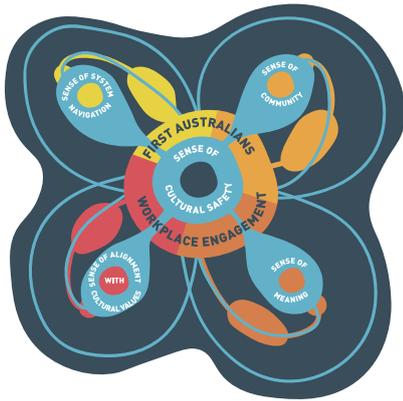
### yourtown Moving Forward

We envision facilitating workshops with key stakeholders to help them develop or fine-tune their IPP strategies for future projects through the use of these templates. We expect that organisations that use this planning process in relation to their Indigenous participation will develop workplaces where people are more connected to the Indigenous participation activities, can see their role in relation to making the workplace culturally safe, and have a greater appreciation for First Australians' culture. If people are clear on the importance of the work they are doing, we feel they are more likely to do it and do it well. We also expect that there will be greater collaboration between stakeholders, and the IPP strategies chosen will lead to even more powerful outcomes.

Figure 9. Indigenous Participation Strategies that help foster each of the First Australians' Workplace Engagement factors



The First Australians' Work Engagement Model Toolkit Elements for Participation and Discussion





Cultural concepts in collaboration with Marumali Consultations  
Visual Communication and design layout: Tristan Schultz, Relative Creative  
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**Table 3. Strategies that are likely to foster the factors that lead to First Australians' Work Engagement and Retention**

Factor	Strategies that foster this factor that were used on Parklands Project	Additional strategies to consider
Sense of Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging Preston Campbell (support from key figure in community)</li> <li>• Engagement with elders, community, and expert stakeholders (e.g., Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee)</li> <li>• Separate demountable space for First Australians to come together during breaks</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Employment targets leading to greater numbers of First Australians on site, providing strong visible presence</li> <li>• Building rapport with First Australians stakeholders (e.g., Aboriginal businesses working on Parklands)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite a broader range of people to the cultural celebration events – non-indigenous workers, family and friends etc</li> <li>• Development of internal communication strategy for both Indigenous and non – Indigenous staff re: Grocon's commitments</li> <li>• Build wider community relationships in order to celebrate Indigenous cultural events</li> </ul>
Sense of Meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development opportunities</li> <li>• WHS systems and practices</li> <li>• Small business development program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees invited to yarn to First Australians in schools or universities about their experiences working on Parklands</li> <li>• Promote Cadetship/ traineeship opportunities via above process via relationships with Universities, student bodies etc.</li> <li>• Career mentoring</li> </ul>
Sense of alignment with cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural awareness training<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Cultural celebrations, ceremonies, and symbols</li> <li>• Visible leadership</li> <li>• Adopting an organisational RAP</li> <li>• Preparing the workforce activities<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies to build subcontractor's understanding of the benefits of IPP to themselves and the Australian community and improve their cultural competency so they can better convey respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, improving the experience of First Australians working for them<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Greater presence of culture on Grocon website*</li> </ul>
Sense of System Navigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry level /work readiness programs i.e., VTEC, Gold Coast School of Construction</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Indigenous Recruitment Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional training to supervisors who manage First Australians</li> <li>• Additional social activities on site to foster peer-to-peer learning and support</li> <li>• Establishment of Indigenous staff networks</li> <li>• Long term appropriate retention and staff development policy and strategies</li> </ul>



#### Footnotes

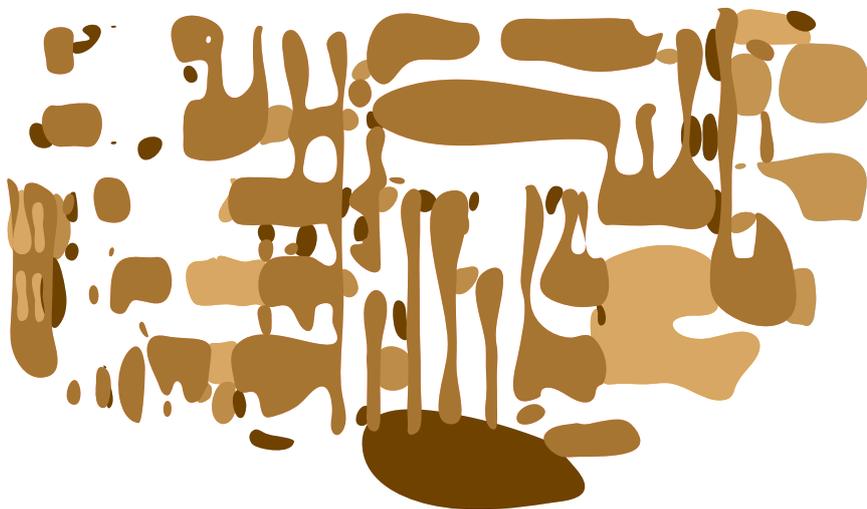
1. This occurred for Grocon staff but findings suggest that subcontracts may also be in need of this training, as per the original strategy in the IPP
2. Findings suggest there is more that could have been done in this space, i.e., IPP was not mentioned in the induction training the researcher attended
3. See subcontractor insights section for more details. One example is that some First Australian employees 'snuck' into the NAIDOC week celebrations as they did not feel that their employer would be supportive of their attendance. Another example is of a subcontractor who 'didn't bother' to learn the names of his Aboriginal employees as they were 'just another man' to them.



**Part 4**  
**Evaluation Summary**  
**AKA 'The Score Card'**



“How well did we go?”



## Did the project deliver the identified Indigenous participation objectives?

The Parklands Project has done more than just meet the majority of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) it set out to achieve in its Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) that was adopted in 2015. Appendix A sets out the IPP, strategy by strategy, with its KPIs and a score card in relation to these objectives, but the more interesting story is how the outcomes are seen through the eyes of those involved in the process.

The Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees themselves talk about the increased career opportunities many of them gained by receiving meaningful training opportunities (8,351 Indigenous training hours achieved), which for several has led to a greater quality of life. Some of them yarned about how their experiences on site were breaking down stereotypes they have faced in other workplaces, and they perceived themselves as acting as role models for their mobs back home. One-hundred percent (100%) of workers interviewed for this evaluation (n=16) felt that the Parklands was

a good place for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person to work, and the reasons for this included endorsement of the project by key Aboriginal community members, enjoyable and supportive working environment leading to a sense of cultural safety for the majority of those interviewed, and strong visible presence that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people had on site (through sheer numbers, cultural symbols and celebrations).

Seven and a half percent (7.5%; n=101) of the workforce were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples working during the peak month of employment at Parklands (1352 total number of people working on site, 26/10/16) and the employees themselves noted this strong visible Indigenous presence and the sense of community it generated:

**“I’ve never been on a job where there has been this many Indigenous people”; “You feel in the right place”.**

A total of 120,515 Indigenous employment and training hours

were achieved for the Parklands Project, surpassing the target of 106,000 hours (0.04% of the contract sum).

The Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee, comprised of government and industry experts in Indigenous participation, called the achievements on this project “significant” and feel that this project has left a real legacy for the industry and the community. Among the outcomes they noted are the increased capacity and growth of many of the 16 local Indigenous Businesses working on the Parklands (procurement spend of over \$3 million) and 15 micro/small Indigenous businesses that took part in a culturally safe business development program (jointly funded by Grocon and Gold Coast TAFE) which is believed to have led to over \$1.7 million new contracts during the course of the program (with more in the pipeline). Committee members also highlight the ongoing quality relationships with the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community that have been developed, and the way this

experience at Parklands has built Grocon and **yourtown**'s capacity to work in this space. The committee have noted several times they are keen to "share the learnings" from this project so the wider industry can benefit.

The Indigenous businesses themselves also shared the observations of the Committee, some noting that Parklands gave them their 'big break':

**"We went from being boutique to having over 70 guys on our books... [This experience has] built our business for us. We can now operate and we can make sure that we've not only got a future for us but also for our workers".**

Given that Indigenous businesses have been shown to employ more than 30 times the proportion of Indigenous peoples than non-Indigenous businesses, we know that these 'big breaks' will have a ripple effect on the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community.

**yourtown** staff bring to mind the work of the Gold Coast School of Construction (GCSC), with a total of 5 Indigenous students who completed the School based R4C program, and a further 11 Indigenous young

people who completed the Trade Start program (Certificate I in Construction) with 9 of them gaining employment at the Parklands. This means that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples are getting skilled and into employment.

Some of the subcontractors involved with the project see the primary outcome of the Parklands IPP as a significant increase in their capacity to employ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, most of whom did not have prior experience of working on an IPP project. Those Subcontractors who early on developed a strategy for how to create Indigenous participation in their business had greater success than those who did not have a plan. Although, there is more work to be done with building subcontract capacity, as the majority of subcontractors interviewed could not identify benefits (to themselves or the Australian community) for having worked on an IPP project.

Grocon employees themselves told some of the most powerful personal stories of change, having gone on a journey during their time at Parklands

towards developing a 'genuine' understanding of why IPPs are important and how they can change lives. Grocon employees have experience at constructing buildings, but through playing a role in the IPP, they had a chance to help contribute to a community. From the leadership and passion that emerged through the Parklands IPP, Grocon have adopted an organisational-wide Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), meaning that they will continue to try to maximise the amount of Indigenous participation in their future work and influence the construction industry. They have chosen to make this evaluation report, bones and all, publically available in the hope that it might led to improved practices elsewhere.

Grocon and **yourtown** set about to maximise the amount of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participation on the Parklands construction project by adopting 30 Indigenous Participation Strategies (Appendix A): The majority of these strategies were enacted and the majority of KPIs were met. However, a score card cannot tell the full story of the legacy that has been left

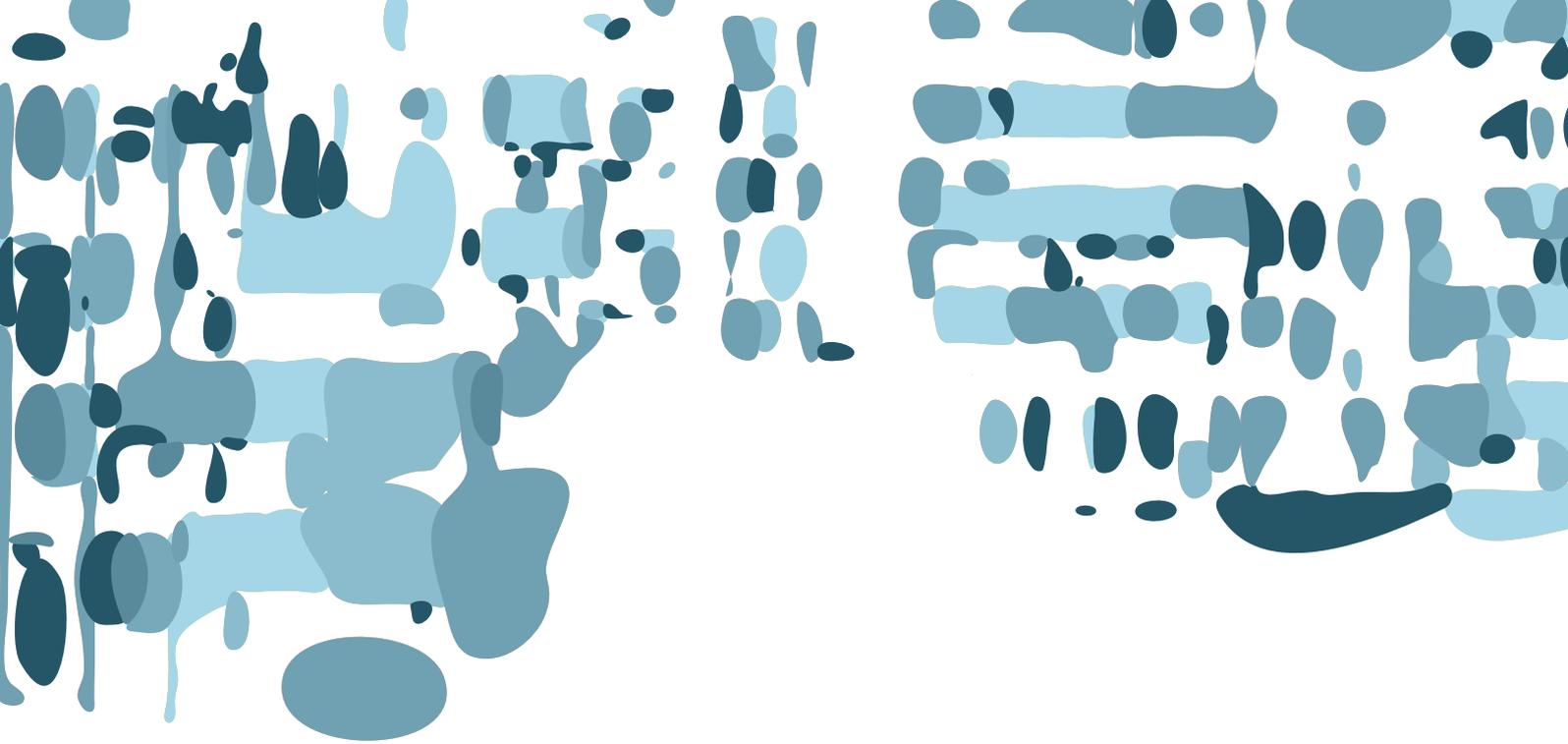


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**Part 5**  
Moving Forward  
AKA 'The Recommendations'



“I want us to do even better next time” (Grocon leader)



## Key Focus Areas for Moving Forward

Multiple recommendations are peppered throughout this report, but if we were to distil this evaluation down to the most essential issues for Grocon to consider in moving forward with their IPP work, the following 5 key focuses are recommended:

- 1. Engage in more forward planning to fine tune and deepen the effect of the key strategies that have the most impact on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation**  
Rather than trying to 'do more' and make the IPP even bigger on future projects, focus energy on refining the implementation of key strategies, and especially, doing more forward planning. For instance, we know from this evaluation that meaningful training can change lives, so how do we ensure that more Indigenous workers know about and are able to uptake training opportunities? The exception to this recommendation is the area of Indigenous procurement, wherein the
- 2. Develop a 'Theory of Change' that represents what Grocon wants to contribute through their Indigenous participation activities**  
Do you want to break cycles of disadvantage? Do you want to help close the gap on those areas identified by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet? Or would you like to aim more locally and affect changes that you can readily see and link to your work? Ask yourself, how do your activities, short and medium term outcomes align with these long-term goals? The goals you choose for your Theory of Change may mean that you change the strategies you focus on (e.g., breaking cycles of disadvantage would mean more VTEC alliances and focuses on job readiness training for workers facing disadvantage and upskilling employers to support entry-level staff).
- 3. Use the theoretical template offered in this report to align workplace strategies to fostering what we now know is linked to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander job engagement and retention**  
Employees who are connected to a purpose for why they need to do what they do and how their actions contribute to the goal of the organisation have a stronger sense of work engagement and the organisations are more profitable. By linking the IPP strategies to theory that explains why doing what you are doing is important, people are more likely to enact their role in relation to the IPP and things won't 'get forgotten or ignored'. The values that underpin the IPP will become embedded in their organisational culture. Further to this, when selecting the KPIs attached to your strategies, it may be helpful to focus on both 'outputs' (e.g., 'how many did we train?') and 'outcomes' (e.g., 'how did they training impact the person?').

#### 4. Keep doing those things you know are working well

A number of strengths were identified in this evaluation, and we recommend continuing these activities in future projects.

For instance:

- a. Allocating adequate resources to support IPP activities
- b. Connecting with expert partners and expert committee members who can provide accountability, advice and create relationships with Indigenous businesses and community
- c. Leaders visibly displaying their support for the IPP which helps people to connect to the priority and purpose of the work and develop clarity around their role in relation to the IPP.

Some of these actions that are credited as leading to successful outcomes may have been done 'ad-hoc' or 'implicitly' – it may be helpful for Grocon to clearly notice and encourage the replication of these facilitating factors in future projects.

#### 5. Pick up your role as an influencing power

Subcontractors need help to understand why IPPs exist, how they benefit themselves and what positive impact they can have on the Australian community. Subcontractors identified many barriers for their businesses in achieving Indigenous labour hours, but maybe if they were more strongly connected to the benefits of Indigenous participation, they may be more likely to see and ask for solutions. The construction industry has often used a 'compliance-based' method of creating change, but research shows that intrinsic motivation has its place to play too.

We suggest Grocon implement more activities to build subcontractor's Indigenous participation capacity, such as: running awareness sessions about the purpose, benefits and available strategies for enacting IPPs; talking about the value of IPPs when interacting with subcontractors; highlighting Indigenous participation in the tender phase; dissecting the barriers identified by subcontractors in this evaluation and investigating if any of these can be mitigated etc.

In addition, we encourage Grocon to follow through on your ambitions to share learnings within the construction industry, for the betterment of Indigenous participation legacies.

### Recommendations

#### from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees' insights

Indigenous employees' comments suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Investigate ways to improve mechanisms for advertising and signing up Indigenous staff for training opportunities
- Investigate 'scholarships' or 'student loan' options to enable Indigenous workers who do not have the resources to undertake training (not only the course costs, but the loss of income while undergoing training)
- Consider further developing subcontractors' Indigenous participation capacity
- Consider investing in a site mentor for pastoral care and career mentoring
- Consider developing protocols that better monitor workflows which can provide staff adequate pre-warning when their labour will no longer be required.

### Recommendations

#### from non-Indigenous subcontractors' insights

Non-Indigenous subcontractor comments suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Create awareness early: Place a spot light on the IPP during the tender phase
- Subcontractor previous experience and capacity to engage with IPPs may be low - Consider providing information sessions during tender phase regarding why IPPs exist, available strategies and benefits of Indigenous participation to build subcontractor capacity and motivation
- Ask businesses to submit plans for how they will achieve Indigenous participation at tender phase and use in decision making to award contracts
- Facilitate cultural awareness training that incorporates knowledge of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural lore and responsibilities and how this affects employees and implications for supervision styles
- Continue to recognise and reward subcontractors who achieve IPP requirements
- Consider investigating alternate funding avenues for additional training/increased financial margins for more supervision of workers for organisations that require staff with specialised skill sets.
- Consider alternate ways subcontractors may be able to contribute towards IPP goals outside of labour hours (e.g., alternate community investment activities)
- Consider developing clarity regarding what the repercussions are for subcontractors not meeting IPP requirements,

and communicate these repercussions to subcontractors.

- Conduct further analysis and work associated with the barriers/challenges that were either perceived by the subcontractors or the researcher in this evaluation and consider ways that these could be tested or managed. Some of these challenges may require collaboration with expert partners, larger budgets, or advocacy for industry changes.

### Recommendations from Grocon and yourtown employee insights

Grocon and **yourtown's** comments suggest the following high-level recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Start earlier - Make sure the IPP is evident to subcontractors back in the tendering phase and that there are visible leadership behaviours from the beginning so staff connect and find their role in relation to enacting the IPP
- Do more to build subcontractor's capacity to support Indigenous participation
- Do more to embed Indigenous participation within the site's culture

### Recommendations from IPPLC insights

Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee members' comments suggest the following high-level recommendations for future IPP projects:

- Do more to embed Indigenous participation within the site's culture
- Broaden the stakeholders involved with Indigenous participation (e.g., attending cultural events, members of the IPPLC etc)
- Develop more commitment

regarding procuring from Indigenous businesses (i.e., consider setting targets, try to engage more Indigenous construction businesses, adapt tender processes further or offer additional supports, consider de-bundling contracts etc)

- Factor into the decision making to award contracts on a subcontractor's capacity to meet IPP commitments

### Recommendations from Indigenous business' insights

Indigenous businesses comments, and suggestions made by Yolla Consulting's evaluation of the business development program, suggest the following recommendations for future IPP projects

- Consider ways to discourage the poaching of staff, which may mean making businesses more supportive of staff development opportunities
- Review tendering processes and procurement strategies for engaging Indigenous businesses:
  - o Continue to offer support to businesses during tendering, e.g., provide support to develop required documentation to be eligible to work for a Tier I construction company,
  - o Consider amending tender processes to cater for businesses that may have lower digital literacy
  - o Advocate for or fund the development of practical WHS specific development programs to assist Indigenous businesses that are ready to gain WHS/ HSEQ accreditation or qualifications to enable them to tender for Tier I or 2 contracts.
  - o Make invitations to tender realistic if encouraging micro-small businesses to apply.



## Concluding Thoughts

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, through their yarning, share a lot of stories about transitions or journeys. The Parklands Project IPP has been a journey for all those involved – This was Grocon’s first major experience in using an IPP, and the Grocon staff interviewed talked about how much this work has personally impacted them - they talked about learning about intergenerational trauma and how shocked they were that they had known so little about the effects of colonisation. Now they have chosen, as a whole business, to continue to use IPPs throughout their work by adopting a Reconciliation Action Plan.

**yourtown** staff who came on board to help enact the IPP strategies (including the author of this evaluation) had the right

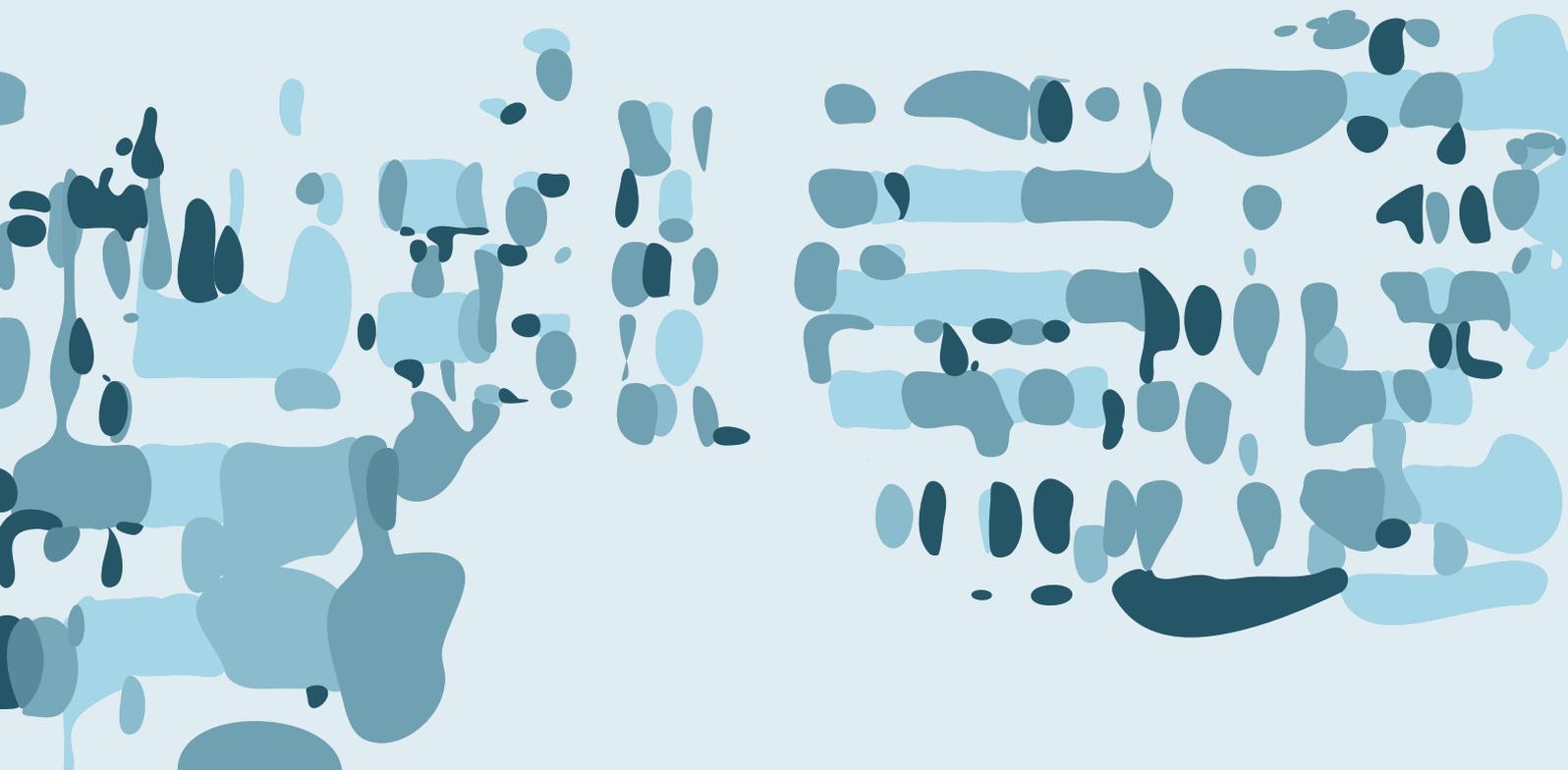
vision, personality, and the skills, but not direct prior experience of bringing IPPs to life for a Tier 1 construction company – our capacity has been significantly increased and we can now bring this forward and make further contributions in the community, highlighting the ‘ripples’ of the legacy that has been left.

This report is the first known publically available evaluation of an IPP within the Australian construction industry, so in some ways it is breaking new ground. It presents the learnings as transparently as possible and is itself a work in progress, but it is hoped to stimulate further analysis and discussion within the industry to one day lead to even better outcomes.

There are many learnings that this evaluation has produced

which can be considered not only for future Grocon projects, but also for other Indigenous participation initiatives elsewhere. The theoretical model presented in this report offers the beginnings of an evidence-based, culturally grounded theory for aligning the abundant number of IPP strategies with what will most likely increase Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples’ job engagement and retention. This theoretical toolkit is most likely applicable for industries other than construction and we encourage its use, interrogation, and development.

For what was ultimately a brief moment in time, a two year build, a lot of significant work has been done and there is more to come. A legacy has been created.



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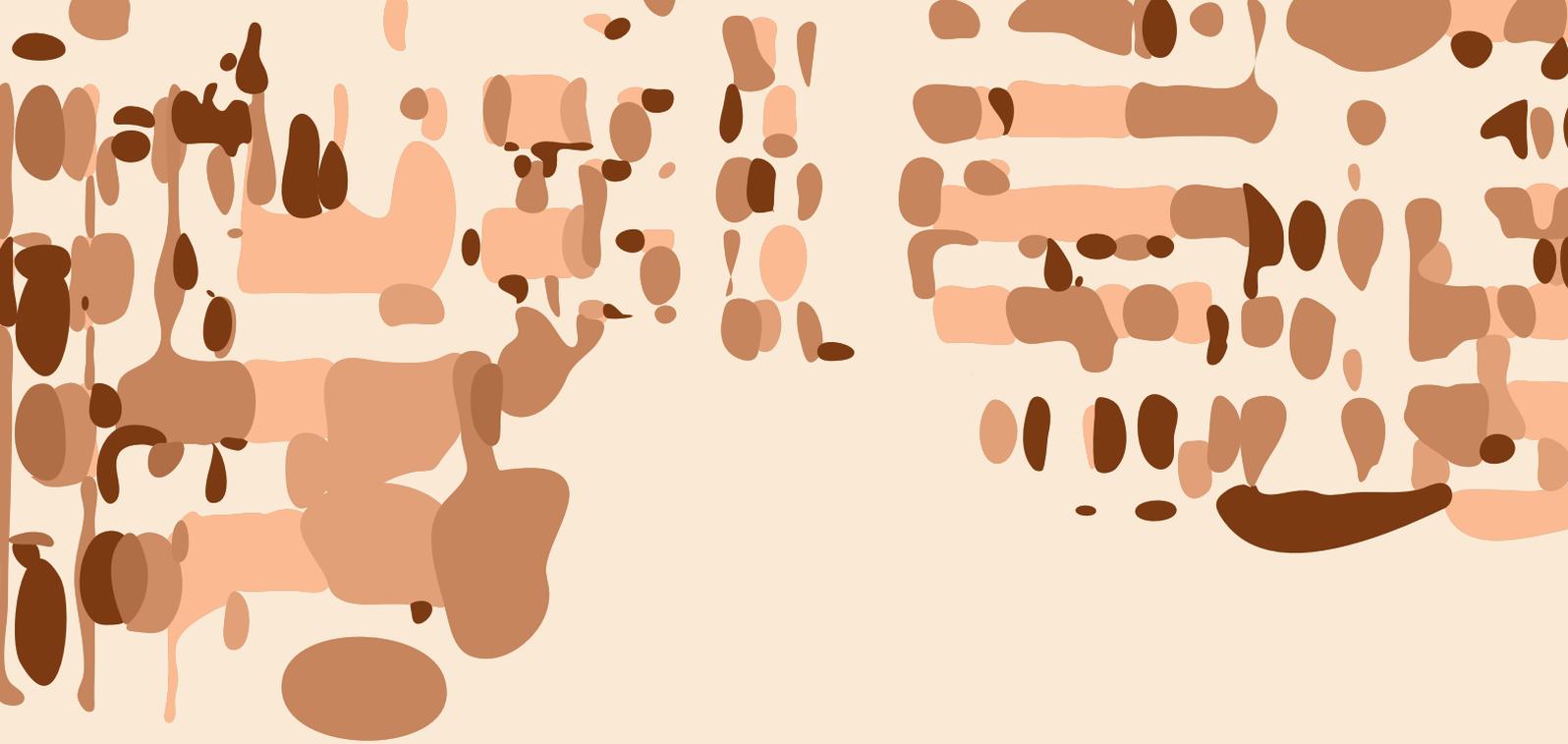
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## Appendix



# Appendix A

## Parklands Project's Indigenous Participation Plan Score Card

Category	Strategy	KPI	Outputs and Actions	Comments	Score card
I. Community engagement	I.1 Identify and consult with local Indigenous community stakeholders	Hold number of public meetings about the project with local Aboriginal community stakeholders	Grocon and yourtown staff attended and promoted the Parklands Project within Gold Coast community e.g. employment expos, resource and construction committee meetings, local Indigenous community organisations (e.g. local youth groups and Indigenous organisations such as Kalwun), consulted with funded programs (e.g. VTEC providers, IAS <sup>1</sup> funded programs) state, federal and council (SQWs) and held a joint Indigenous business information session with DATSIP.	The project was promoted to key stakeholder/s groups and members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee (IPPLC) noted that Grocon had built quality relationships with community. However, a IPPLC member noted the Indigenous business tendering information session left businesses that attended feeling "with no sense that there were contracts available that suited their businesses", which many be related to the size of the businesses and contracts offered.	KPI achieved but improvements could be made 
	I.2 Develop an internal communication strategy to ensure all Grocon employees are aware of our commitment to increasing Indigenous participation on the project	Communication strategy is developed and is appropriately circulated	Communication strategy involved an email from Executive Project Manager which went to all Grocon staff on site explaining the IPP, yourtown's role and Grocon's expectations to their staff. Secondly, induction slides were developed for delivery in corporate induction (to be attended by anyone who goes on the Parklands site). Site leaders also talked about the IPP and Grocon's commitments in staff internal meetings, and staff noted that they observed visible leadership behaviours (which became obvious over time). Staff were updated at meetings and via emails regarding IPP achievements and invited to attend cultural celebrations.	Improvements could be made in future projects. Grocon staff noted email was delayed, and that internal understanding of the IPP - "what it is and why are we doing it" and "what formal or informal role do you play" could have been better. For example, some key roles such as contract managers may have been unclear on the role they could play in relation to the IPP. Some staff also noted that they were unable to attend cultural celebrations due to their work commitments. There was some evidence to suggest that the IPP was 'spread but not embedded. E.g., When researcher participated in site induction training there was no inclusion of the IPP materials.	KPI achieved but improvements could be made 
	I.3 Build relationships with local Indigenous community in order to celebrate Indigenous cultural events	Indigenous culture is promoted and celebrated during significant events	Relationships created with Dept. of State Development, traditional owners, GC Council etc. yourtown and Grocon staff visited different community groups such as Yugambah Museum and Jellurgal Cultural Centre.	The key to achieving this strategy was choosing members for the IPPLC who could create links with the local community: "They had their fingers in the pies and feet on the ground". Members of the IPLC noted that Grocon has built good quality relationships with community which they see as ongoing. IPPLC suggest invited broader range of stakeholders to events in future. Some Indigenous employees had to 'sneak into' cultural celebrations, suggesting subcontractor capacity needs to be built so they promote the attendance of celebrations to their staff and they themselves attend.	KPI achieved - this is an area of strength 

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> IAS = Indigenous Advancement Strategy

Category	Strategy	KPI	Outputs and Actions	Comments	Score Card
2. Committee	2.1 Establish the Grocon Constructors Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee (IPPLC)	IPPLC established	Committee members included Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander members from DATSIP, GC Council, GOLDOC, traditional owner, Aboriginal Party (Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2013) <b>yourtown</b> and Grocon.	IPPLC acted as a conduit for spreading the word of the initiatives available onsite into local Indigenous community and provided guidance on IPP activities at Parklands. IPPLC members, <b>yourtown</b> and Grocon all commented upon how productive, action orientated and beneficial the committee were.	KPI achieved – this is an area of strength 
	2.2 IPPLC to meet quarterly	IPPLC quarterly meetings	The committee met monthly rather than quarterly due to the amount of content to provide guidance upon.	As above	KPI achieved – this is an area of strength 
3. Schools/ Universities	3.1 Build relationships with student bodies and universities to scope, develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander internship, scholarship, and/or secondment program with Grocon	Established relationships	Approached Griffith University GUMURRII centre – they were unable to provide students for Grocon internships but were able to put forward 2 students with psychology skill sets who were taken on in internships by <b>yourtown</b> which offered internships closer to their skill sets (psychology); one of these students completed 1-week of work experience at Parklands as a Workforce Development Assistant.  1 x \$5000 scholarship awarded by Grocon to Aboriginal Griffith University engineering student.  GCSC 'schools' program wherein students gain a Cert I in Construction; 7 schools from GC participated.  Approx. 15 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liaison staff from Dept. of Education came to Parklands for site visit.	Alternate universities such as QUT are being investigated for internships for the Grocon RAP.  Relationships were established, and although Grocon themselves were not able to take on a student intern, as a result of the Parklands IPP, 2 Aboriginal students were taken on by <b>yourtown</b> (in non-construction based areas). Depending upon the Theory of Change that gets developed for Grocon's future IPPs, then the desired KPI may be to offer Indigenous students construction industry internships to build capacity in the sector.	KPI achieved but changes could be made 
	3.2 Liaise with University Indigenous student support bodies to scope Indigenous pathway opportunities e.g. cadetships and/or work experience.	Established relationships	As above	As above	As above

Category	Strategy	KPI	Outputs and Actions	Comments	Score card
4. Training	4.1 Set targets for Indigenous training and implement strategies for meeting those targets	Set targets for Indigenous training. Development and implementation of strategies	<p>Grocon initially developed a combined Indigenous training and employment hours target of 132,500 hrs. Training hour specific target was not set.</p> <p>Funding was gained from CSQ (assisted by GCSC) for Workforce Development Manager. Strategies included the development of training priorities, liaison with subcontractors and training suppliers, and the promotion of training to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples on site. Training strategies have been documented.</p> <p>8351 Indigenous training hours achieved as of 30/9/17, comprised of hours of upskilling existing workers and Indigenous clients' hours of participation in GCSC programs.</p>	<p>The achievement of funding for Workforce Development role greatly assisted success of training and IPP activities. A workforce development assistant was also employed which further facilitated this work.</p> <p>No specific, separate training hours targets were set for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers as the target adopted was aligned to the QLD govt Building and Construction Training Policy, however, it may be useful in future projects to consider a specific target and additional tracking.</p> <p>In addition, there could be targets around the number of Indigenous employees receiving training, and tracking around the type of training (e.g. accredited vs non-accredited) given that training has the potential to get Indigenous people out of entry level positions.</p>	<p>KPI achieved but changes could be made</p> 
	4.2 Identify Indigenous training opportunities in consultation with DATSIMA, Construction Skills QLD, RTO's, subcontractors and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and agencies.	Identify indigenous training opportunities	<p>Approached Indigenous RTOs to discover who has funding. CSQ were invited to come on site which resulted in funding for Trade Start program.</p> <p>Training opportunities established early and continued through life of the project E.g., BMD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff (civil/earthworks) received upskilling. SQW and VETC groups approached (e.g., yourtown, GC council). GCSQ established on site with 11 Indigenous trainees completing a Cert I, (9 of whom gained employment on site and 5 Indigenous students completing the School based R4C program.</p>	<p>Opportunities were identified, but interviews with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers on site suggest there were barriers for employees taking up these opportunities. Future projects could examine and attempt to mitigate barriers.</p>	<p>KPI achieved but changes could be made</p> 

	<p>4.3 Select staff members of Grocon Constructors (QLD) and select staff member of the majority subcontracting companies will attend a two day Cultural Awareness Training Workshop delivered by an Indigenous business</p>	<p>Cultural awareness training delivered to select staff members of Grocon Constructors (QLD) and select staff members of the successful major subcontracting companies.</p> <p>The cultural awareness training workshop to be delivered by an Indigenous business.</p>	<p>Cultural artefacts training provided pre-construction of civil and building works.</p> <p>Approximately 40 Grocon staff from Parklands Project attended 1 day cultural awareness training in July 2016, 11 months into the commencement of the project. Training was provided by Indigenous business Jellurgal. Five Grocon staff attended Jerurgal cultural centre to learn about the local area.</p> <p>No subcontractors attended training.</p>	<p>Grocon staff (who were interviewed from this evaluation) reported that they perceived the training to be valuable, providing them with increased knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, and the historical treatment of Indigenous people in Australia. This was seen as particularly important given the number of international staff members working on the project. Suggestions for improvement included training of how Indigenous cultural responsibilities may influence an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee in the workplace and what supervision styles are most effective. In addition, subcontractors may benefit from cultural awareness training.</p>	<p>KPI mostly achieved but improvements could be made</p> 
	<p>4.4 Deliver the following training: 6 Indigenous job seekers to obtain 'white card' 2 Indigenous employees to be unskilled to supervision by completing RTO training</p>	<p>Identified accredited training programs are delivered.</p> <p>50% of Indigenous jobseekers who complete the training gain employment.</p>	<p>17 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander job seekers gained 'white cards' through GCSC, 9 of whom obtained work on Parklands Project. Additional white cards may have been attained by Indigenous job seekers, however, this information is untracked.</p> <p>1 x Aboriginal Grocon employee gained supervisory experience on Parklands Project and will be retained by Grocon for future projects; another Grocon candidate could not be found. 1 x Aboriginal DMAC employee received supervisory experience, although no formal training was provided.</p>	<p>Aboriginal employee was not actively recruited into organisation but has been internally promoted. RTO supervisory training was not considered necessary for these individuals, could consider revising strategy in future IPPs.</p>	<p>KPI achieved – this is an area of strength</p> 
	<p>4.5 Implement employment and training programs in partnership with local education and training organisations</p>	<p>80% of Indigenous participants complete the training.</p>	<p>GCSC invited and established on site; VETs invited onsite and established on site (although small number of clients) SQW invited onsite CSQ invited onsite Trade Start achieved a 92% completions rate School based R4C Program achieved a 100% completion rate</p>	<p>GCSC delivered both the Trade Start and the School based R4C, requiring little ongoing support once established on site.</p>	<p>KPI achieved – this is an area of strength</p>

<p>5. Employment</p>	<p>5.1 Minimum of 5% Indigenous employment for this project. Grocon Contractors (QLD) will either directly or indirectly through subcontractors, it its execution of the work under the Contract on Site, employe Indigenous workers for the number of labour hours no less than the number derived by multiplying the accepted Contract Sum by 0.04%.</p>	<p>Percentage of Aboriginal people employed as a proportion of the total</p> <p>Employment by the enterprise and on the project</p> <p>Number of Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander peoples employed by enterprises working on the project.</p>	<p>112,164 Indigenous labour hours was achieved, surpassing the target of 106,000 hrs (Contract Sum by 0.04%). If considering this using the 10% Training Policy, (wherein employment hrs are combined with training hours) then 120,515 hrs were attained, achieving 114% of the target.</p> <p>During the peak month of employment at Parklands when there were 1352 people working on site (26/10/16), there were 101 Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander peoples working, representing 7.5% of the workforce.</p> <p>During the period Aug 2015 to 30th Sept 2017, 6,176 workers were inducted onsite (as a proxy measure of no. of workers on the Parklands Project); During this same period, there were 130 Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander peoples inducted onsite, representing approximately 2.10% of the inducted workforce. However, there are limitations to using the number of inducted people as the measurement of total 'employment', as it does not reflect nature or length of employment at Parklands.</p> <p>Similarly, of the 2,802,756 labour hours recorded for Parklands (Aug 2015 to 30th Sept 2017), 112,164 hours (4%) were Indigenous labour hours.</p>	<p>Although there are no published benchmarks regarding what are 'typical' or 'good' Indigenous participation figures for large urban SEQ projects, some members of the Indigenous Participation Liaison Committee (with significant Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander participation oversight) report that what has been achieved on the Parklands Project is significant.</p> <p>Greater clarity is recommended for how this target is written – two different figures are produced using the two different methods of calculations e.g., 5% of employment or 0.04% of contract sum. A third target was also set by Grocon initially, (e.g., 132,500 total employment plus training hours). This is confusing, not only internally for Grocon/you town staff but also for subcontracting companies. In addition, it may be more insightful to use number of labour hours compared to number of people inducted on site as the KPI.</p> <p>Important to bear in mind that in some locations a 5% target may be unrealistic (given that the DATSIP places only 2% of the total population of construction workers in QLD as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples, and only 1.3% of construction workers in SEQ). Targets may need to be regionally specific. This may also suggest that more initiatives are needed by projects to bring on board entry level Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.</p>	<p>KPI achieved if using 'contract sum' target – this is an area of strength</p> 
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	5.2 IPPLC to determine deemed labour hour requirements against the 10% training Policy and allocates a suitable percentage target for Indigenous workforce	IPP and 10% Policy requirements are interrelated and contribute to each other.	10% training policy was used to develop overall workforce training target of 265,000 training hours; 132,500 of which was set by Grocon as the goal for Indigenous employment and training hours. Once again, the various targets in the IPP present some confusion (i.e., 5% of labour hours/ 0.04% of contract value/ 132,500 figure set by Grocon). At the end of the project, 120,515 hrs were attained, surpassing the 0.04% of contract value target (i.e., 106,000 hrs).	As afore mentioned, there are no published recommended benchmarks for what is a 'typical' or 'good' percentage of Indigenous training hours achieved on a comparable project, however, some members of the Indigenous Liaison Committee (with extensive experience of Indigenous participation in QLD) report that what has been achieved on the Parklands Project is significant.  As noted earlier, clarity around the target is recommended.  See <a href="#">Indigenous Employee section</a> for more details on barriers to achieving training hours.	KPI achieved if using 'contract sum' target - this is an area of strength  
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Category	Strategy	KPI	Outputs and Actions	Comments	Score Card
5. Employment (contd.)	5.3 Confirmed employment of Indigenous people as identified in early consultation:  Grocon to offer 1 Indigenous Business Administration Traineeship/s  Grocon to offer 2 Indigenous Apprenticeships in Grocon  Grocon sub contractor will employ 15 Indigenous people to work on this project	Hiring an Indigenous person to complete an Indigenous Business Administration Traineeship.  Hiring on two Indigenous people to complete their apprenticeships  Hiring of four Indigenous people by the subcontractors	Grocon employed 2 Indigenous employees (Workforce Development Assistant completing a Business Administration Traineeship; Receptionist), however, tenure for both positions was short as employees had competing personal life demands which could not be accommodated within the job role.  Following encouragement by Grocon/yourtown, one Aboriginal man working as a labourer was instated an apprentice with a subcontractor.  Grocon utilised Indigenous labour hire company to employ 12 Indigenous carpenters.	Recommend re-wording this strategy as Grocon do not do direct hiring.  In addition, the Strategy and KPI appear to contradict themselves, with the former suggesting the employment is done by Grocon and the latter suggesting it is a subcontractor.  KPI for Indigenous Business Administration Traineeship does not measure for length of tenure or completion.	KPI partly achieved  
	5.4 Develop and implement an Indigenous recruitment strategy	Development and implementation of the policy	Indigenous recruitment strategies were utilised on the Parklands Project such as targeting IAS' funded projects and using GCSC and Indigenous labour hire company to recruit candidates.	Although Indigenous recruitment strategy was not documented and formalised, Grocon are now developing an Indigenous recruitment strategy as part of RAP.	KPI mostly achieved and documentation will be achieved through RAP  

	<p>5.5 Develop and implement an Indigenous retention policy including on-site mentoring program</p>	<p>Development and implementation of the policy.</p>	<p>Made use of mentoring programs that are part of the programs e.g., VTEC, Trade Start and School Based R4C Program. This meant that only those Indigenous employees who were part of these programs had access to mentoring. Although Indigenous Businesses report that they aim to have a mentor-like relationship with their employees, not all employees interviewed for this evaluation reported having this sort of relationship with their employer.</p> <p>An application was made to the Prime Minister Council (PMC) for funding for an on-site for mentor but this was not approved.</p>	<p><b>yourtown</b> feel the lack of a dedicated onsite mentor is a missing link for this project. Future projects may like to consider having an onsite mentor, who could support the Workforce Development Coordinator, especially if the long-term outcomes from the proposed Theory of Change for Grocon's involvement in Indigenous Participation is adopted (i.e., breaking cycles of disadvantage). See comments re mentoring in the Indigenous Employee section.</p> <p>Retention policy was not documented or formalised but may be developed from research that has occurred through this evaluation (<a href="#">First Australians' Work Engagement Model</a>).</p>	<p>KPI not achieved but the research produced through this evaluation can inform a quality retention policy which can be developed and implemented in future projects</p> 
	<p>5.6 Collect from Group Training Organisations (GTOs) and sub-contracting companies a list of Indigenous apprentices, trainees, and job seekers.</p>	<p>A list of potential Indigenous apprentices and trainees is compiled and updated 6 monthly</p>	<p>GTOs were contacted regarding apprentices, trainees, and job seekers. Emails sent to relevant subcontractors notifying them of any third year carpentry apprentices from Indigenous labour hire company who may be available for employment.</p> <p>GTOs, MEGT<sup>2</sup> and Housing Industry Association were invited to talk to GCSC Cert I students about apprenticeship opportunities.</p> <p>Records of Indigenous students from GCSC maintained and Trade Start students completed 10 weeks work experience with subcontractors, with 75% (n=9/12) gaining employment or an apprenticeship at Parklands upon completion of this work experience.</p>	<p>Completed on an ad hoc basis, only systematic records kept are from GCSC. Completed more regularly than 6 monthly; shorter timeframes to be more responsive are recommended.</p> <p>More systematic processes could be developed for record keeping purposes on future projects. However, the 'ad hoc' approach used at Parklands meant more immediate placement activities could occur.</p>	<p>KPI partly achieved and changes could be made</p> 

	5.7 Investigate the employment of any out of trade Indigenous apprentices by either Grocon Constructors (QLD) or one of our subcontractors	Number of out of trade Indigenous apprentices employed for the project	No specific 'out of trade' register was established or tracking of employment of 'out of trade' Indigenous apprentices employed.	As above – completed on ad hoc basis. More systematic records could be kept on future projects.	KPI not achieved as systematic records were not kept. 
6. Sub-contracting	6.1 Include Grocon expectations concerning Indigenous employment opportunities and targets into all contractual agreements with contractors	Indigenous participation plan clause included in the majority of contractual agreements.	Desktop audit confirms that IPP requirements are recorded in subcontractor Tender Invitation Letters and Contracts (within the 'Special Conditions' section: See Appendix J). However, subcontractors' exact obligations are unclear and were not clarified by senior site leadership until late in the project through email correspondence (See Appendix K). It should be noted, however, that the labour hour calculation provided in the email were incorrect, perhaps contributing to subcontractor confusion.	Interviews with subcontracts reveal that many subcontractors did not notice the IPP requirements or did not think they were a priority until made aware in face-to-face meetings by yourtown and Grocon. One subcontractor described the IPP requirements as "buried in the training section" and others did not fully understand what their targets were until they had been onsite for a significant amount of time. See <a href="#">subcontractor insights section</a> for more detail and recommendations.	KPI technically achieved but improvements need to be made to highlight the presence of this clause 

**Footnotes**

<sup>2</sup> Not-for-profit employment service

	6.2 IPPLC to provide subcontractors and other providers with advice and support that maximises Indigenous participation and retention.	Advice and support provided to subcontractors and other partners that maximises Indigenous participation	Of the sample of subcontractors who were interviewed, the majority reported they had received advice and support from <b>yourtown</b> /Grocon which maximised their Indigenous participation.	See subcontractor insights section for details regarding subcontractors' perception of the support they received.  It is recommended this strategy is re-written as may not be possible for IPPLC members to take up this role in relation to all subcontractors and is most appropriate that it is other roles such as Indigenous Consultant or the Workforce Development Manager driving this. In addition: "It's fundamental to have Contract Managers on board and impressing the importance of the IPP" (yourtown). See Grocon/yourtown section for more details and recommendations e.g., Procurement staff should be offered opportunities to attend additional training regarding Indigenous participation to build confidence and understanding of their role in relation to the IPP.  IPPLC members may be able to speak at a forum or information session for subcontractors to build their capacity.	KPI achieved 'in essence' as support was provided, however, changes can be made to increase subcontractor Indigenous participation capacity.  
Category	Strategy	KPI	Outputs and Actions	Comments	Score Card
7. Procuring from Indigenous Businesses	7.1 Develop joint ventures and consortia that involve Grocon and Indigenous small to medium enterprises	Number of joint ventures or consortia	No official joint venture between Grocon and Indigenous Business was developed during this project. However, an Indigenous labour hire company was a preferred supplier and did not have to go through regular tendering process.	Grocon mentored this Indigenous labour hire company with their workplace health and safety documents to enable this business to subcontract on the project.	This strategy appeared not to have suited Grocon's needs at the stage they were at in their Indigenous participation journey.  KPI not achieved. 
	7.2 Offer business mentoring, training support and skills development for Indigenous small to medium enterprises	Number of Indigenous business assisted	Grocon co-funded a small business development program with Gold Coast TAFE, delivered by Yolla Consulting. As of Dec 2017, 15 micro/small Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses have completed the program. See section X, for high level summary of achievements from this program.	Businesses received personalised mentoring suited to their development needs and goals.  Program outcomes were perceived by members of the IPLC as "significant" in terms of business' increased capacity and growth. The program has been more widely rolled out, having received significant further funding by the Office of Commonwealth Games and QLD TAFE.  Although the businesses are most likely still at a stage where they would most likely not tender for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 construction company (aims of the BDP), this may yet be a future long-term outcome.	KPI achieved – this is an area of strength  

Category	Strategy	KPI	Outputs and	Comments	Score Card
	7.3 Establish partnership with SE QLD Indigenous Chamber of Commerce to provide forum that identifies and provides access to local indigenous businesses.	Partnership with SEQICC established and Parklands Development	A partnership with SE QLD ICC was not established for the Parklands Project. Alternate methods were identified as more relevant at this stage.	This strategy appeared not to have suited Grocon's needs at the stage they were at in their Indigenous participation journey.	KPI not achieved 
8. Preparing the workforce	8.1 Development of a communication strategy so all employees are aware of our commitment to increasing Indigenous participation	Communication strategy completed	See above (Category 1). This strategy is a repeat of strategy 1.2		
	8.2 Design or customising an induction package	Completion of induction package	As afore mentioned, material for induction package was developed, however, when the researcher for this project attended the induction training, this material was not covered.	This may suggest that not all Grocon staff understood the importance of the IPP and the formal or informal role that they played in relation to it - "spread but not embedded" in the workplace culture. When staff have a clear understanding of purpose behind the work they are doing, there is greater engagement.  The KPI set for this strategy may need to be revised to better encourage uptake and impact.	KPI technically achieved (resourced developed), however, the essence of this strategy was not. 

	<p>8.3 Celebration activity during NAIDOC week (July) – including catering from an Indigenous catering company</p>	<p>Yearly celebration</p>	<p>NAIDOC week and reconciliation weeks celebrated onsite and at Musgrave Park (Brisbane). Celebration ceremonies for businesses achieved their Indigenous participation targets. Senior leaders attended local community events such as commemorative day for Gold Coast Aboriginal service men. Social media posts celebrating days and profile of Indigenous workers and businesses in Quarterly Newsletter.</p>	<p>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees noted the importance of celebrating these events and took it as a sign that Grocon was serious about Indigenous participation by witnessing Grocon marking these events.</p> <p>Subcontractor understanding of the importance of these events may be low; for example, some subcontractors did not attend events even when they were due to receive a reward. Similarly, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees report ‘sneaking into’ attend these events (did not use swipe pass entry point to leave site so that employer would not know they were attending a cultural celebration). These workers were not encouraged to attend by the subcontractors they were working for and did not believe they would be allowed to attend (<a href="#">See Indigenous Employee Insights section</a>).</p>	<p>KPI achieved but improvements could be made</p> 
<p>9. Evaluation of the IPP</p>	<p>9.1 The IPP to be evaluated in order to share the learning’s and avoid pitfalls on future projects including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the project deliver the identified Indigenous participation objectives?</li> <li>• What Aboriginal participation opportunities for employment, training and business procurement were achieved?</li> <li>• What were the main success factors or impediments?</li> </ul>		<p>Evaluation finalised following completion of the project. Evaluation questions answered with additional research questions including ‘What is a good IPP?’ and ‘What are the factors that influence the work engagement and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees in the construction industry?’.</p> <p>Project has been awarded an Innovation Challenge credit point under their Community Green Star Rating for developing a RAP.</p>	<p>Findings from evaluation and research to be made publicly available and promoted in national industry forum. This is the first publicly available evaluation of the IPP within the construction industry. Dissemination of findings expected to lead to increased discussion, improved industry practice, and further Indigenous participation initiatives.</p>	<p>KPI achieved</p> 

# Appendix B

## Part I:

### Example of activities undertaken by Grocon and yourtown staff to implement the Indigenous Participation Plan

#### 1. Community engagement

- a. Reconciliation breakfast hosted May 2016
- b. Reconciliation breakfast and launch of Grocon's RAP hosted May 2017
- c. Preston Campbell endorsed the project and spoke at RAP launch (May 2017)
- d. Indigenous businesses engaged for cultural celebrations (e.g., catering, photography)
- e. Grocon held stalls at both 2016 and 2017 Musgrave Park NAIDOC week celebrations, with senior site leader attending in 2016.
- f. Grocon Parklands staff attended Jellurgal Cultural Centre
- g. NAIDOC week advertised onsite (large banner at entrance to site)
- h. Senior site leaders attended local memorial service to commemorate 25 years of the laying Yugambah Memorial recognising Indigenous service personnel from Yugambah Clans.
- i. **yourtown** presented outcomes from the research sitting behind this evaluation ('What is good practice for Indigenous participation plans?') to QLD Resources Council Indigenous Participation forum.
- j. Aboriginal artwork displayed at End of Construction event and IPP achievements noted

#### 2. Committee

Committee with Indigenous participation experts and local elder supported

#### 3. Schools/Universities

- a. Local university's Indigenous student centre contacted regarding placement and scholarship opportunities - placement facilitated with 1 Griffith University student.
- b. \$5000 scholarship awarded to Aboriginal Griffith University engineering student

#### 4. Training

- a. Monitoring of Indigenous training hours via subcontractor reporting implemented
- b. Gold Coast School of Construction established on site
- c. Workforce Development Coordinator role established (funding secured from Construction Skills QLD)
- d. Training needs assessment completed
- e. Onsite training (other than GCSC) established (accredited and non-accredited training completed)
- f. Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) application submitted (with

Southport Special School)

- g. Dept of Education Indigenous Liaison Officers and Heads of Department attended Parklands for site visit
- h. Resource and Infrastructure training group attended Parklands for site visit
- i. 'Try a Trade' event held July 2017, facilitated by CSQ
- j. Process and activities undertaken by Workforce Development Coordinator documented to assist with replication on future projects.

#### 5. Employment

- a. Monitoring of Indigenous labour hours via subcontractor reporting implemented
- b. Indigenous labour hire company invited on site and assisted with documentation in order to meet project requirements.

#### 6. Subcontracting

- a. Proportion of subcontractors met with over the course of their contract at Parklands and made aware of the priority of their IPP requirements and support/strategies suggested (i.e., introduction to Indigenous labour hire company).

#### 7. Procuring from Indigenous

##### Businesses

- a. In partnership with Gold Coast TAFE, funded small Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander business development program
- b. Promoted Indigenous businesses working on Parklands internally within Grocon, and also to site handover organisation
- c. Referrals for engagement of Indigenous businesses suggested by IPPLC investigated and/or uptaken

#### 8. Preparing the workforce

Cultural awareness training completed by Grocon Parklands staff

- a. Organisation wide RAP developed and launched (May 2017) with help of external Aboriginal consultant, driven by Parklands staff
- b. Celebration morning tea and certificate awarded to subcontractors who achieved IPP requirements
- c. Applied and were awarded 6 Star Rating from Green Building Council of Australia (which included assessment of Grocon's RAP and the Parklands Indigenous participation achievements)
- d. Parklands IPP achievements celebrated at end of project morning tea, attended by range of community stakeholders

#### 9. Evaluation

- a. **yourtown** organisational psychologist and senior researcher engaged to conduct evaluation
- b. Indigenous participation and construction industry experts consulted to build evaluation lens
- c. Evaluation completed

# Appendix B

## Part II

### Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) – First Steps Checklist

Instructions: This check-list includes a list of key activities to complete prior to tender contracts being awarded. Some activities can be driven by the expert partner but all will require the support of Project General Manager and the Executive General Manager.

Task	Completed
<p><b>Step 1. Allocate a budget.</b></p> <p>As a rough rule of thumb, allocate 0.1% - 0.5% of the total cost of the build; this will need to be revisited once goals and strategies have been developed. Consider if 'set asides' are possible for particular parts of the build.</p>	
<p><b>Step 2. Appoint internal program champion.</b></p> <p>The champion will need to communicate the priority of the IPP and hold authority (e.g., Project General Manager and the Executive General Manager from either development or construction). Leadership support is one of the key factors that will lead to successful Indigenous participation outcomes.</p>	
<p><b>Step 3. Appoint your expert partner.</b></p> <p>Expert partners will help drive the IPP, will know all the ins and outs for how to implement the strategies, and will be able to bring people and businesses together to achieve the IPP requirements. However, it is important not to think of the IPP as 'out-sourced' to the expert partner (i.e., for the Parklands Project, <b>yourtown</b> was engaged as the expert partner).</p>	
<p><b>Step 4. Establish legacy goals.</b></p> <p>With the expert partner's guidance, and input from the project team, establish your organisational goals and IPP strategies; consider using First Australian's Work Engagement Model or develop a Theory of Change.<sup>1</sup></p>	
<p><b>Step 5. Establish an IPP Committee for the project and undertake community engagement.</b></p> <p>Depending upon the size of the project and needs, a committee can provide expert advice, feedback on goals and strategies, as well as connection and trust building with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and businesses.<sup>2</sup></p>	
<p><b>Step 6. Establish internal ownership and role clarity.</b></p> <p>Ensure Grocon project team are briefed on the IPP, goals, and what their individual and collective roles are in relation to Indigenous participation: This is best done in person so that leaders can convey their passion and commitment. Project staff can contribute at Step 4 to increase their sense of ownership with the IPP's implementation.</p>	

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> See pages 23 and 72 of the Parklands evaluation

<sup>2</sup> See page 55 of the Parklands evaluation

Task	Completed
<p><b>Step 7. Attend cultural awareness training.</b> Staff will benefit from cultural awareness training which was perceived as valuable on the Parklands Project.</p>	
<p><b>Step 8. Establish and implement an Indigenous business procurement policy.</b> The committee can help with identifying eligible businesses and building relationships.</p>	
<p><b>Step 9. Communicate IPP expectations to Subcontractors.</b> Make sure subcontractors notice and respond to the IPP requirements in tender invitations and be clear on how it will influence your decision to award contracts. Also consider strategies to increase Subcontractors' Indigenous participation capacity such as connecting them with expert partners or running strategy/awareness sessions. An early labour needs analysis conducted by the expert partner is crucial for getting Indigenous staff trained and ready to take up positions with subcontractors.</p>	
<p><b>Step 10. Establish monitoring processes for Indigenous labour and training hours.</b> For Parklands, subcontractors were required to report their IPP hours achieved as part of each months progress claim.</p>	
<p><b>Step 11. Establish how training will occur on the project.</b> Consider if an onsite Registered Training Organisation (RTO) can be utilised and approach organisations with funding.</p>	
<p><b>Step 12. Seek funding.</b> Where available, seek funding for key roles and resources (e.g., Workforce Development Coordinator).</p>	

# Appendix C

## Example interview questions asked with Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander employees and trainees on site at Parklands.

Intro:

- General chat
- Info about project (provide copy of consent sheet and explain)
- Explain the sorts of questions
- Check preferences regarding confidentiality & anonymity
- Confirm consent to tape record interview

\*Note, questions were re-phrased to be more colloquial and naturalistic and a semi-structured approach was used to allow the interview to flow naturally based on the content of participants comments. Questions were learned off by heart by researcher to appear less formal and only a small amount of notes taken to assist with cues to probe.

Feedback on interview:

- How did that go? What did you think of the chat?
- Is there anything you'd suggest I do differently?
- Were any of the questions confusing or hard to answer/ should be re-phrased?
- Ask if would like to receive feedback on outcomes of project.

Constructs	Questions*
Role	What is your job title?
Referral pathway and current employer	How did you get this job on the Parklands project? How long have you worked in the construction industry?
Employment status before involvement with the project	Were you employed before you got this job?
Family support	What did your family or people close to you think about you getting this job?
Engagement & retention factors (model)	What do you like best about your job? What do you like least about the job? Are there times when you thought about/think about quitting your job? What are the things that made you not do this or would make you regretful to leave?
Receiving environment / What's worked well / What could be done differently	What is it like to work with the people you work with? Do you feel that the people you work with (co-worker and supervisors, managers) are supportive of you? To what extent do you think [Grocon] is a good place for Aboriginal [Torres Strait Islander] people to work? Are there things that have been 'done well' in terms of encouraging Aboriginal [Torres Strait Islander] peoples to work at Parklands? Is there anything that hasn't been done well, or that could be done, to get more Aboriginal [Torres Strait Islander] peoples on site.
Perception of mentoring program	[if general employee] Have you been offered any mentoring while working here on site? Is that something you'd be interested in? [Probe re needs]. [If eligible for mentoring] Have you met [mentor]? Is he a mentor to you? How often do you see him? What sort of things would he do to support you? What do you like best about the support you receive from X? Are there other ways that X could help you?
Training received and perceived value of training	Have you had any training at Parklands? [Probe - value and impact of the training]
Self-efficacy for future employability	How confident do you feel in terms of having work in the future? Is that as a result of having had this job?
Needs for a successful transition (model)	What advice would you give to a new Aboriginal [Torres Strait Islander] employee to help them get settled? Thinking about this job and all the jobs you have had, what helped you the most in terms of getting settled in your job? From your perspective, what are the important things that a job needs, to be a good job for an Aboriginal [Torres Strait Islander] person?
Impact of the job	Is there anything that you feel you have gotten out of this job at Parklands? [Probe: skills, opportunities]
Demographics	May I ask how old you are? How long have you worked in construction?
Open question What's worked well / What could be done differently	Is there anything I haven't asked about that would be good for me to know in terms of how Grocon and yourtown have gone about supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to work on the Parklands Project?

# Appendix D

## Example interview questions asked with Non-Indigenous Subcontractors operating at Parklands Project.

Intro:

- General chat
- Info about project (provide copy of consent sheet and explain)
- Explain the sorts of questions
- Check preferences regarding confidentiality & anonymity
- Confirm consent to tape record interview

\*Note, questions were re-phrased to be more colloquial and naturalistic

Construct	Question
Role in relation to IPP	What's your involvement with the IP component of your contract for this project?
Awareness of IPP	How did you become aware that your contact with Grocon has an IPP component?/ Did you notice that part of the contract?
IPP prior experience/ capacity	What's your organisation's experience with Indigenous participation? Do you have a RAP?
Presence of an IPP	Does your organisation have its own IPP for this project? [Probe: What sorts of things are contained in the IPP?]
Supports provided by Grocon/ <b>yourtown</b>	Were you provided any support or guidance by Grocon/ <b>yourtown</b> ? What sort of support was provided?
Satisfaction with support	Were you satisfied with the support you received?
Type of support perceived as most useful	What assistance from Grocon or elsewhere have you found most useful? [Probe: what other assistance would you like?]
Self-directed learning about IP	How did you go about learning about how to do Indigenous participation?
Challenges	What challenges in relation to Indigenous participation have you faced? How did you try to manage those challenges?
Perception of ability to achieve requirements	How realistic was it for your organisation to achieve Indigenous participation?
Attitude toward the practice of IPPs	What's your take on Indigenous participation? What do you think about having IPPs?
	What advice would you give to other organisations who are required to do an IPP?
Perceived ramifications of non-compliance	Does it matter if you don't manage to achieve your IPP?
Effectiveness of Grocon's comms strategy	Do you remember receiving this letter? What effect did it have on you? /what did you think of it?
Perception of IPP progress	How is your organisation going in terms of Indigenous participation? [Probe: On track for meeting its goals?/ awareness of what the required target is/ understanding of target]
Perception of role in relation to IPP	How do you see your role in relation to Indigenous participation?
Motivation	What motivation does your company have to engage in Indigenous participation strategies? /What's your organisation's motivation for having an IPP? (Probe: Would you have done it without the contractual requirement? Why not?)
What's worked well?	So, if we're thinking about Indigenous participation at Parklands from your company's perspective on this project, what's worked well?
Impediments	What hasn't worked?
Improvement opportunities	What could your company and what could Grocon do differently in the future to make Indigenous participation even more successful? [Probe: communication/ awareness of requirements/ supports offered]
Personal outcomes/ benefits of IPPs	What have you gotten out of this experience in terms of your experience and skill in the Indigenous participation space?
Outcomes/ benefits of IPPs	Have there been any benefits for your organisation from being involved with an IPP project? Can you see any impacts from the practice of having IPPs?
Open question What's worked well / What could be done differently	Is there anything I haven't asked about that would be good for me to know in terms of Indigenous participation at Parklands?

## Appendix E

### Example interview questions asked with Grocon and yourtown staff

Intro:

- General chat
- Info about project (provide copy of consent sheet and explain)
- Explain the sorts of questions
- Check preferences regarding confidentiality & anonymity
- Confirm consent to tape record interview

\*Note, questions were re-phrased to be more colloquial and naturalistic. Additional questions based upon role were also included, or questions were tailored to suit position within the site.

Construct	Question
Role at Parklands	What is your role at the Parklands Project?
Role in relation to IPP	What is or has been your role in relation to the Parklands IPP?
Motivation/commitment	How is it that the Parklands Project has an IPP? [Probe: How would you describe the motivation to have an IPP?]
Attitude towards IPP	What's your take on the practice of having IPPs?
Perceived benefits	Are there any benefits for Grocon for having IPPs attached to their projects?
Strategies utilised	What sort of strategies did you use to implement your role in relation to the IPP?
Barriers/ challenges	Did you encounter any challenges?
Visible leadership	Are leaders at Parklands Project and Grocon supportive of Indigenous participation at the Parklands project? What behaviours do they display to give you this impression?
Receiving culture	Do people at Parklands or Grocon ever make comments that make you think - 'they don't really agree with the IPP' or could be considered insensitive for someone from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture?
Receiving culture	To what extent do you consider the culture at Grocon to be an inclusive culture which respects people's personal identities? [explain term] 1 = not at all; 5 = very inclusive
Legacy - outcomes	There is talk about the Parklands Project IPP having a legacy - what sort of outcomes do you think is meant by this? What outcomes do you think there have been from the IPP? [Probe: what have you actually seen?]
What worked?	Have you had any learnings about what makes for a successful implementation of an IPP? [What worked well in relation to Parklands' IPP?]
Impact on you personally	Has there been any effect on you as a result of playing a role in the Parklands Project IPP?
Do differently	Looking back, is there anything you or other people could do differently in terms of maximising the outcomes of Indigenous participation on the Parklands Project?
Cultural training	Did you take part in cultural awareness training? What did you think of it?
What worked?	Have you had any learnings about what makes for a successful implementation of an IPP? [What worked well in relation to Parklands' IPP?]
Impact on you personally	Has there been any effect on you as a result of playing a role in the Parklands Project IPP?

# Appendix F

## Example interview questions asked with members of the Indigenous Participation Plan Liaison Committee

Intro:

- General chat
- Info about project (provide copy of consent sheet and explain)
- Explain the sorts of questions
- Check preferences regarding confidentiality & anonymity
- Confirm consent to tape record interview

\*Note, questions were re-phrased to be more colloquial and naturalistic and a semi-structured approach was used to allow the interview to flow naturally based on the content of participants' comments.

Construct	Question
Liaison Committee	What do you see as the key things that the liaison committee was able to offer?
Overall perception of the program	From your perspective, how successful has the Parkland's Project IPP been?
Interpretation of data	So just looking over the figures achieved [show data]- bearing in mind there are no published benchmarks for equivalent projects - based on your knowledge, are these figures typical or good?
Outcomes	I hear the phrase 'legacy' used a lot in relation to the Parklands IPP - what sort of outcomes do you think is meant by this? (Are these things that have been achieved?)
Facilitating factors	What, from your perspective, has worked well in relation to Parklands' IPP?
Do differently	Looking back, is there anything people could have done differently in terms of maximising the outcomes of Indigenous participation on the Parklands Project?

## Appendix G

### Example interview questions asked with Indigenous Businesses

Intro:

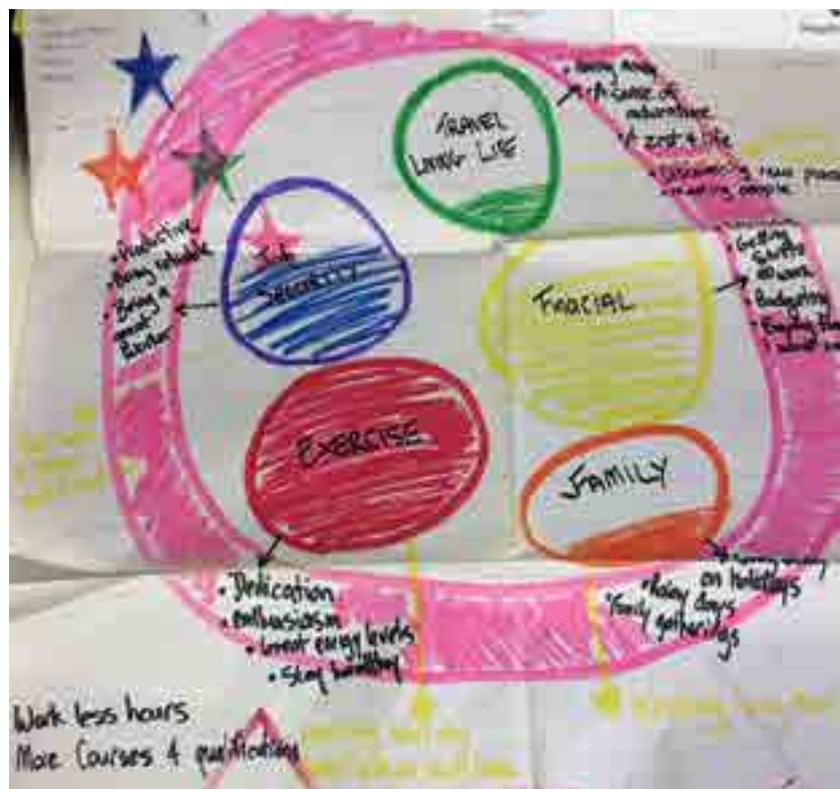
- General chat
- Info about project (provide copy of consent sheet and explain)
- Explain the sorts of questions
- Check preferences regarding confidentiality & anonymity
- Confirm consent to tape record interview

\*Note, questions were re-phrased to be more colloquial and naturalistic and a semi-structured approach was used to allow the interview to flow naturally based on the content of participants comments.

Construct	Question
Entry into the project	How is it that you became involved on the Parklands Project?
Receiving environment	What are Grocon and the other businesses like to work with?
Processes	Did your business take part of a tender process re working on Parklands? What was the tender process like? Were you supported through that process?
BDP outcomes	How did you find the small business development program with Yolla? What sorts of things did they help you with? What outcomes do you think their support has led to?
Supports for Indigenous businesses	What sort of payment cycle are you on with them?
Outcomes	What has your business gotten out of this experience of working at Parklands?
Barriers	What sorts of challenges has your business faced in its time? How do you recruit for your employees?
Support for employees	Do you give any advice to your employees when they first come on your books? Do your employees need any supports from your organisation? [are there any supports in place for them if they require it?]
Support for employees	Do your employees have access to a mentor?
Training	Has it been possible for any of the guys on your books at Parklands to receive training? Is there anything that gets in the way of them having training?
Worked well	What do you think has worked well in terms of helping there to be good Indigenous participation [procurement/employment/training] at Parklands?
Do differently?	Is there anything you haven't liked or thought could have been done better? Is there anything Grocon/yourtown could do differently in the future to make Indigenous participation even more successful?
Open question	Is there anything I haven't asked about that would be good for me to know in terms of how Grocon/yourtown have gone about supporting Indigenous businesses to work on the Parklands Project?

## Appendix H

### Example of activity conducted with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees, facilitated by Clinton Schultz from Marumali Consultations.



# Appendix I

## Grocon – Gold Coast TAFE Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Business Development Project Objectives

The following objectives were designed to increase the capabilities of businesses by building participants’:

- Knowledge and skills in the areas of business planning, business financials, marketing,

legal issues, tendering and contract negotiations, employment and human resources, management and leadership;

- Understanding of Grocon’s and other Tier one and two suppliers’ standards and procurement processes and a clear pathway of the next steps needed to take to become a

Grocon supplier; and

- Transferable practical and usable tools and frameworks to help assess, manage and grow their business.

# Appendix J

## Extracts collected from desktop audit

### ABSTRACT FROM TENDER INVITATION LETTER – GENERIC LETTER FOR ALL TRADE PACKAGES

#### 6. PLANS & POLICIES

This Project is subject to various Queensland Government Policies and Guidelines to which the Tenderers must endeavour to provide adherence:

##### Local Industry Participation Plan (LIPP)

- Under this plan the Subcontractor is required to provide a full, fair and reasonable opportunity to local suppliers and specialist subcontractors when tendering the provision of equipment or services under the trade scope and in particular demonstrate how they will provide benefit to the region via this project.

##### Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP)

- The aim of the IPP is to maximise the employment, training and business development opportunities for Indigenous businesses and people

##### Training Policy Management Plan (TPMP)

- Under this policy the Subcontractor is required to comply with the QLD Government Building and Construction Training Policy in relation to providing Apprentices, training and up-skilling opportunities for their workers on the project.

As part of their tender submission the Tenderer is to provide details of how they will commit to the requirements and implement each of the above mentioned Plans. The successful Tenderer will be required at given times throughout the project to release details and substantiation of the above.

### ABSTRACT FROM TENDER INVITATION LETTER – GENERIC LETTER FOR ALL TRADE PACKAGES

#### 17. Indigenous Participation Plan

17.1 The Subcontractor must, and must ensure that its subcontractors:

- (a) implement the Indigenous Participation Plan; and
- (b) comply the requirements of the Subcontract Documents in relation to indigenous participation.

# Appendix K

Copy of correspondence from senior leadership to subcontractors to clarify IPP requirements



## Grocon Parklands Project

### Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) Compliance

As a Contractual requirement Grocon Constructors and each of its Subcontractors engaged on the Parklands Project has to fulfil certain requirements regarding compliance with Indigenous Participation. The Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) requirements for Grocon and our Subcontractors are 'back to back' and as such any requirements we as Grocon Constructors are to meet, as a Subcontractor you are also in part therefore, required to meet. These requirements are commercial contract conditions.

Both Grocon Constructors and as a Subcontractor to Grocon Constructors, you and any sub – subcontractor you may engage, have a need to meet compliance requirements as described in the Special Conditions attached to your Subcontract. Part 16 of the Special Conditions refers to the IPP implementation requirements and the IPP document itself is listed in your Subcontract as Annexure E. Please refer to both documents to familiarise yourself further on your requirements to be met.

Grocon and numerous Subcontractors have to date made very concerted efforts to meet their IPP obligations – some Subcontractors have to date however made little to no effort. Our collective compliance with our IPP requirements is important in many ways – apart from contractual obligations to do so, other examples of compliance importance may be corporate citizenship reputation, subcontractor peer reputation and community status / partnership perception.

Target Indigenous Participation Hours (IPH) are calculated in the following manner:

- Current Subcontract Value (SCV) \* 0.04% (factor) = 'xxx' Indigenous Participation Hours (IPH),

An example would be as follows;

- \$6,900,000 (SCV) \* 0.04% = 2,760 Indigenous Participation Hours (IPH)

On the basic premise of each operative attending work on a 56 hour working week, the requirement equates to one (1) Indigenous operative approximately 49 weeks. (Clearly the higher number of Indigenous operatives the lower the number of weeks' attendance.)

In accordance with the above calculation, please calculate your own specific IPH attendance and if you have not already done so, commence as an urgent requirement necessary measures to meet set compliance requirements.

In order for us to meet our commitments and to assist you in meeting yours, Grocon Constructors can and will provide you with any necessary assistance you may need in understanding, engaging and monitoring / tracking your IPP compliance through IPH.

Please contact Mr Robert Ahwing, Grocon Constructors Parklands Project Workforce Development Coordinator, details as hereunder for assistance:

Robert Ahwing | Workforce Development Coordinator | Grocon | T +61 402 966 050

Due to the limited duration until the completion of the Project and therefore the reduction in available operative hours available, those Subcontractors who have not made efforts to meet compliance must do so without delay.

Yours Sincerely,



Grant Beckett | Executive Project Manager | Grocon  
M +61 428 802 735

03 January 2017

[www.parklandsproject.com.au](http://www.parklandsproject.com.au) | [www.grocon.com](http://www.grocon.com)







