

OUR STORIES

ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Increased employment opportunities to enhance wellbeing of Aboriginal people is a key commitment for Main Roads. To help us achieve this objective, in collaboration with Nudge, a for purpose charity, we developed a Strategic Business Case for Aboriginal Employment Initiatives.

Championed and led by our Aboriginal Employment Initiatives Taskforce, the business strategy includes: contract clauses with mandatory requirements and stretch targets for Aboriginal participation and employment; procurement through Aboriginal businesses; and incentive payments against these stretch targets for major works.

In the Kimberley, our maintenance activities are managed within the region. This model means direct engagement with local contractors and creates greater employment opportunities for Aboriginal communities.

The Broome – Cape Leveque Road Upgrade project is a direct managed works project, with construction staged over three to four years. This brings local Aboriginal communities and business, opportunities for employment and training over an extended period. A program of works like this is known to be more effective in delivering long-term economic and social benefits.

Achieving genuine increased capacity within Aboriginal communities and businesses, this longer construction program also provides time for local communities to adapt and prepare for the increase in traffic growth and visitors to the area.

Our approach also engages skilled work crews in the Kimberley who have inherent knowledge of the landscape and surroundings. This local knowledge is critical, especially in the far north where conditions have a major impact on road construction and maintenance activities.

For each project, we consult with local Aboriginal businesses from the early stages of the works. This helps our understanding and creates familiarity with Aboriginal businesses and local capabilities. It also helps us understand family and language groups and various cultures in the region, ensuring we have the best engagement model creating strong links and long-term mutually beneficial relationships.

We remain committed to learning from our experiences, as well as working closely with contractors, Aboriginal businesses, organisations and the communities we serve in order to increase participation rates in our projects and provide sustainable employment and training.

We have been actively updating how we do things to ensure we make a difference within our industry. Feedback from Aboriginal communities and businesses we work with has been positive with praise for our ongoing commitment and level of engagement.

This positive feedback makes us even more determined to continue to work towards making a difference for Aboriginal people and their communities. Visit our YouTube site to view a video on our Aboriginal Engagement and Participation.