



# Queensland Fire Department

Equity and Diversity  
Action Plan 2025 - 2028

Respect

Integrity

Courage

Loyalty

Trust



# Contents

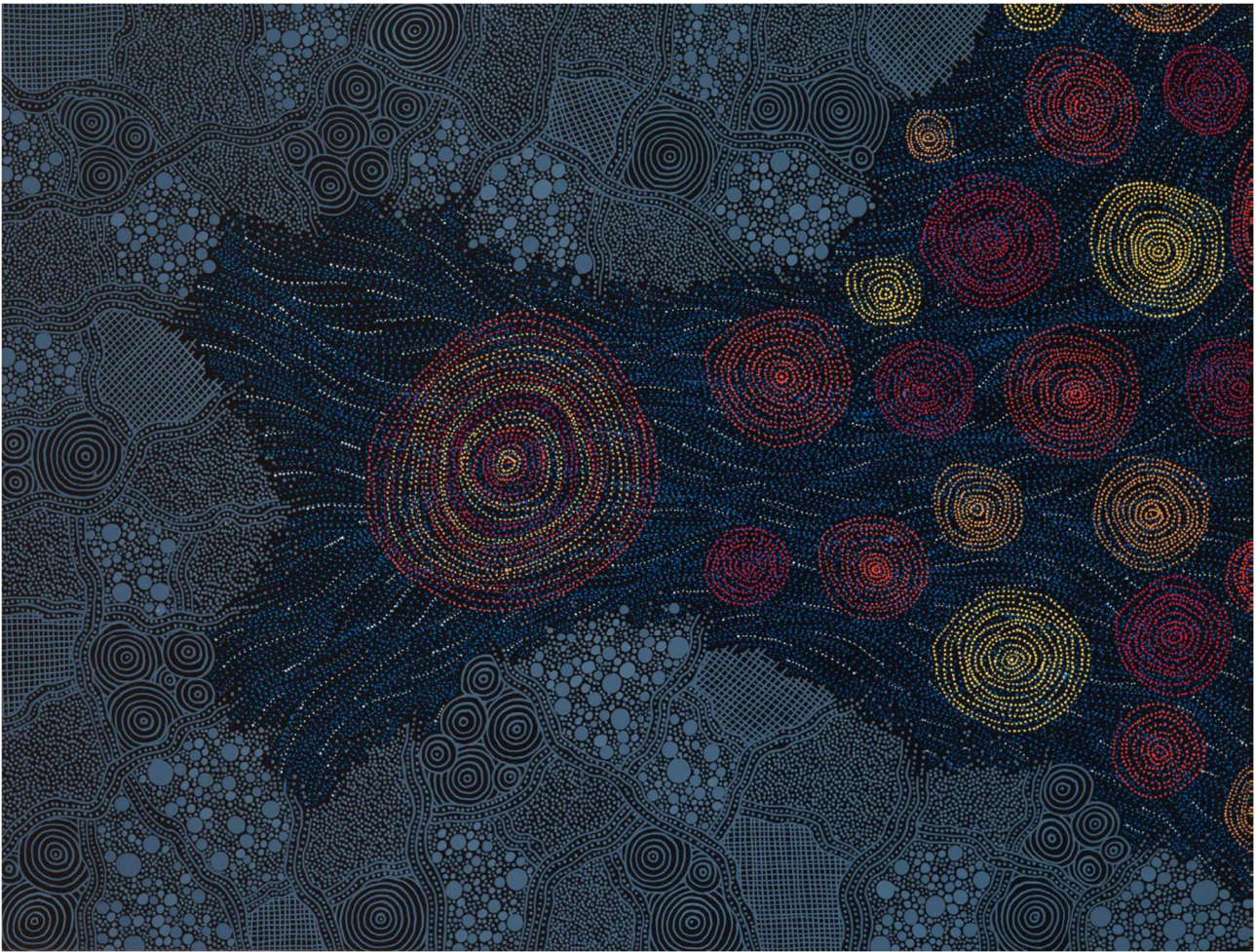
<b>Acknowledgment of Country</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Message from the Commissioner</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Our Diversity Groups</b>	<b>5</b>
Performance data	5
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	7
Employees living with a disability	7
CALD backgrounds	8
Women in leadership	8
LGBTIQA+ employees	9
Intersectionality	10
<b>Our Action</b>	<b>11</b>





# Acknowledgment of Country

The Queensland Fire Department acknowledges Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of country throughout Queensland and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to the Elders – past and present – for they hold the memories, traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state. As an emergency services organisation, we look to our First Nations communities for their knowledge and wisdom – developed over tens of thousands of years – in caring for country, and to learn how we can support in healing country, now and into the future.



Photograph of the original artwork - ***'Together'*** - by Sarrita King and Tarrisce King

# Message from the Commissioner

At the Queensland Fire Department (QFD), we are committed to fostering a culture of respect, inclusion, and collaboration. To achieve this, QFD have developed the Everyday Respect Framework—a leader-led, employee-informed initiative designed to drive cultural transformation and embed respect into everything we do as an organisation.

Central to this Framework is the Everyday Respect Council, which provides strategic direction on inclusion policies and programs. Supporting this work are our Communities of Inclusion who will play a pivotal role in driving change, whilst also promoting respect and inclusion across QFD, ensuring that our inclusion efforts are informed by lived experiences and aligned with our shared goals.

By fostering collaboration across operational and governance teams, The Everyday Respect Council and Communities of Inclusion provide the foundation for this transformation, ensuring our cultural change efforts are aligned, accountable, and impactful.

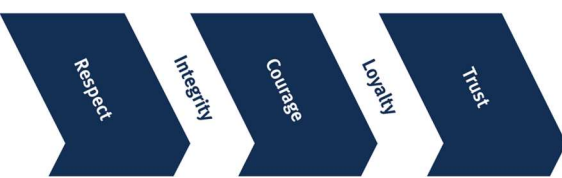
I encourage all employees to actively engage with these initiatives, contribute their perspectives, and support their colleagues in fostering a workplace culture that values diversity and inclusion.

As part of this commitment, I expect every member of our workforce to embrace the principles of respect, integrity, and teamwork. Each of us has a role to play in creating an environment where individuals can reach their full potential and work together as an integrated team to create safer communities through contemporary fire and emergency services.

I expect our workforce to demonstrate leadership at every level by modelling respectful behaviours, collaborating effectively, and addressing challenges with courage and compassion.

Together, we can build a stronger, more inclusive QFD and continue to deliver a safe, capable and inclusive workforce, both for our staff and volunteers, that is representative of the communities we serve.

**Stephen Smith AFSM**  
Commissioner  
Queensland Fire Department





# Introduction

QFD understands that when people from different communities see themselves represented in firefighting roles, they're more likely to consider it as a viable career option. This helps break down barriers, reduces stereotypes, and creates a more inclusive environment for future generations.

Significant work is being undertaken by the Queensland Fire Department to identify better attraction and retention strategies for all target diversity groups. For example, substantial work has gone into supporting women who are currently in (or wish to enter) the firefighting workforce.

QFD believe that recruiting people from diversity target areas isn't just about fairness or filling quotas; it's about creating a stronger, more capable, and more diverse workforce that can respond more effectively to the evolving needs of the communities it serves.

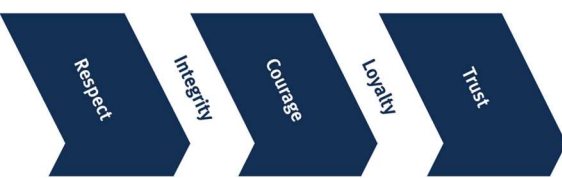
QFD has also developed the Everyday Respect Framework to enable and cultivate a culture of respect across the entire organisation. The Everyday Respect Framework sees the establishment of an Everyday Respect Council (chaired by the Commissioner) and supported by four Communities of Inclusion which comprise Gender, First Nations, Living with a Disability, and Regional and Remote.

Central to the framework is that the Queensland Fire Department recognises that those with lived experience are experts, so the Communities of Inclusion are comprised of staff and volunteers who share a common identity and lived experiences relevant to their chosen Community of Inclusion. They will meet regularly to network, build capacity and promote respect and inclusion across QFD, acting as a resource for members and allies to access, whilst also providing support and direction. The Communities of Inclusion will foster awareness bringing forward the voice of those with lived experience, champion and celebrate the group they represent.

Building a culture of respect, inclusion and belonging is a key priority for QFD, and we understand that the cultural journey must continue to be sustained over the long term. The goal of the Everyday Respect Framework is that QFD will uphold its strong reputation as a responsible employer that is actively seen to foster workforce diversity through its commitment to everyday respect. Cultivating a diverse and inclusive workforce will ensure the future viability of QFD whilst also raising its profile as an employer of choice for people from diverse backgrounds.

QFD fulfills its obligations under the Public Sector Act 2022 through our commitments to:

- promote awareness and education,
- enhance recruitment and hiring practices,
- foster an inclusive workplace culture,
- establish equitable policies and practices, and
- measure and track progress.



# Our Diversity Groups

## Performance data

The Queensland Fire Department (QFD) is dedicated to achieving or surpassing the diversity targets established in collaboration with the Public Sector Commission (PSC). Although QFD actively encourages all staff to share their diversity details to support effective analysis and initiatives, there are significant discrepancies between the data collected via the Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) system and the annual Working for Queensland (WfQ) survey.

Approximately 75% of the QFD workforce has chosen to provide their diversity data via Aurion (by answering one or more diversity questions) while only 5% of the QFD workforce have completed all diversity questions.

Similar to other agencies in the sector, QFD employees seem much more likely to identify with a target group in the anonymised Working for Queensland data than in via the Aurion diversity census. We also note the high level of 'choose not to respond' in the census.

The 2024 WfQ survey did ask respondents for any reasons that they had not identified, and the common responses were (1) I do not see any reason for or benefit in sharing this information with my agency and (2) It is not relevant to my employment. A high proportion of respondents also indicated that they felt that it was private information that [they did] not want to share.



The following table provides the two data collection responses, compared to our agency targets and sector-wide diversity targets, for the Non-Firefighting Workforce.

**Table 1: Non-Firefighting workforce - diversity target groups, MOHRI data and WfQ data**

Diversity Group		September 2024 MOHRI	2024 Working for Queensland	Agency Target	Sector Target
People with a disability		3.4%	11%	12%	8%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff		1.8%	3%	4%	3%
CALD1	Total	4.4%	15%	12%	10%
	Born overseas in a mainly English speaking country	2.6%	8%		
	Born overseas in a mainly non-English speaking country	1.8%	7%*		
CALD 2 - Speak a language at home other than English		4.9%	8%		

The following table provides the two data collection responses, compared to our agency targets and sector-wide diversity targets, for the Firefighting Workforce.

**Table 2: Firefighting workforce - diversity target groups, MOHRI data and WfQ data**

Diversity Group		September 2024 MOHRI	2024 Working for Queensland	Agency Target	Sector Target
People with a disability		0.9%	5%	2%	8%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff		2.8%	5%	4%	3%
CALD1	Total	0.9%	10%*	12%	10%
	Born overseas in a mainly English speaking country	0.7%	6%		
	Born overseas in a mainly non-English speaking country	0.2%	4%		
CALD 2 - Speak a language at home other than English		2.5%	5%		



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The underrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within QFD hinders opportunities to gain deeper and more meaningful insights. To address this, QFD is actively enhancing cultural safety and capability to better support and include all First Nations employees. Targeted actions to improve equity and diversity outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are detailed in the QFD Reframing the Relationship Plan and will also form part of the First Nations Community of Inclusion Workplan.



## Employees living with a disability

For the Non-Firefighting Workforce, WfQ survey data shows 11% of QFD employees have a disability (MOHRI data at 3.4%). Women who identify as living with a disability from the non-firefighting workforce earn \$2,405 (2.2%) more than the average full-time salary for women in the non-firefighting workforce who do not identify as living with a disability.

For the Firefighting Workforce, WfQ survey data shows 5% of QFD employees have a disability (MOHRI data at 0.9%). Women who identify as living with a disability from the firefighting workforce earn \$10,499 (16.3%) less than the average full-time salary for women from the non-firefighting workforce who do not identify as living with a disability.

This information will inform the design and delivery of our objectives under the QFD Disability Service Plan Refresh 2024-2027 and will also form part of the People with a Disability Community of Inclusion Workplan.



## CALD backgrounds

For the Non-Firefighting Workforce, WfQ survey data shows representation of culturally and linguistically diverse employees who speak a language other than English at home is 8%, which is below the target of 12% (MOHRI data at 4.9%). Culturally and linguistically diverse women who speak a language other than English at home (CALD2) from the non-firefighting workforce earn \$7,985 (7.6%) more than the average full-time salary for women in the non-firefighting workforce who do not identify as CALD2.

For the Firefighting Workforce, WfQ survey data shows representation of culturally and linguistically diverse employees who speak a language other than English at home (CALD2) is 5%, which is further below the target of 12% (MOHRI data at 2.5%). Culturally and linguistically diverse women who speak a language other than English at home (CALD2) from the firefighting workforce earn \$761 (1.2%) less than the average full-time salary for women in the firefighting workforce who do not identify as CALD2.

QFD seek to grow the equity and diversity of culturally and linguistically diverse employees through our commitments under the Queensland Multicultural Action Plan.



## Women in leadership

For the Non-Firefighting Workforce, women represent 60.8% of the workforce. There is a slightly higher representation of women in the permanent (62%) temporary (55%) and casual (69%) non-firefighting employment types.

- Queensland Fire and Rescue is comprised of 250 non-firefighting staff performing a mix of front-line support and corporate roles, of which there is 114 (45.6%) women. Across the AO classifications of AO3 (74.7%), AO4 (95.4%), AO5 (57.1%), AO6 (86.7%), and AO7 (100%) there is a higher representation of women. Across the AO classification of AO2 (3.7%) there is a lower representation of women. At the SO classification there are

four (50%) women and four (50%) men. There are zero people employed at SES and above classifications.

- Strategy and Corporate Services is comprised of 553 staff performing corporate services roles, of which there is 345 (62.4%) women. Across the AO equivalent classifications of A04 (69%), A05 (61%), A06 (67.6%), A07 (73.1%) and A08 (64.1%) there is generally a higher representation of women. Across the AO classifications of A02 (18.1%) and A03 (43.7%) there is a lower representation of women. At the SO classification (43.3%) there is a lower representation of women. At the SES classification there are five (50%) men and five (50%) women.
- Rural Fire Service Queensland is comprised of 100 non-firefighting staff performing a mix of front-line support and corporate roles, of which there is 77 (77%) women. Across the AO classifications of A03 (93.9%), A04 (91.7%), A05 (88.9%), A06 (66.7%) and A07 (58.3%) there is a higher representation of women. Across the AO classifications of A08 (33.3%) there is a lower representation of women. At the SO classification there are two (50%) women and two (50%) men. There are zero people employed at SES and above classifications.
- State Operations is comprised of 220 non-firefighting staff performing a mix of front-line support and corporate roles, of which there is 166 (75.4%) women. Across the AO classifications of A02 (71%), A03 (83.8%), A04 (76.4%), A05 (65.6%), A06 (62.5%), A07 (60%) and A08 (64.3%) there is a higher representation of women. There are zero women within the SO classification and there are zero people employed at SES and above classifications.

For the Firefighting Workforce, women represent 8.7% of the workforce. The distribution of gender is reflective of the overall composition of the firefighting workforce and the predominantly male composition of the firefighting workforce cascades across organisational units. The gender composition of the firefighting workforce continues to be reflective of the whole-of-industry sector, in that women across all jurisdictions in firefighting industries represent typically less than 10% of the workforce. It is worth noting that women became eligible to be professional firefighters in Queensland in 1995. There are a higher number of women as auxiliary firefighters as opposed to professional fulltime firefighters.

There have been a number of changes in the perceptions of the clarity and fairness of promotion backfilling and recruitment processes across segments of the firefighting workforce, since the 2023 WfQ survey. Women in the firefighting workforce who responded to the 2024 WfQ survey reported more positive perceptions of the fairness of recruitment processes (+6%) than they did in the 2023 survey, but a decline in positivity in relation to the transparency of backfilling (-6%). An even larger decline seen in response to their perceptions of the clarity of promotion decisions (down 14% from 2023). By contrast men's opinions of these processes remained stable in comparison to 2023.

QFD is committed to growing equity and diversity of Women through the Gender Community of Inclusion Workplan and through contributions to the Government's Queensland Women's Strategy and a continued focus on the prevention of domestic and family violence through its Domestic and Family Violence Advisory Group.

## LGBTIQA+ employees

QFD believes that creating conversations around LGBTIQA+ inclusion can help our staff, volunteers, their families and the community be more informed, supported and better connected.

While there are no targets set for the employment and inclusion of LGBTIQA+ employees, our 2024 WfQ results show 9% (40) of our workforce identify as LGBTIQA+. This is an



increase from 8% (36) in the 2023 survey. This group remains one of the more engaged groups in QFD.

QFD is committed to ensuring LGBTIQ+ employees feel safe, valued and supported to bring their whole selves to work. As such, QFD is proud to deliver the Allies of Inclusion program, which contributes to a safe, healthy and inclusive workplaces where our people feel safe to share their perspective. A QFD Ally of Inclusion is informed and committed to understanding the broader context of inclusion and diversity. Supporting the Allies of Inclusion program are the Workforce Resource Groups (WRGs), WRGs are groups of staff and volunteers with a shared set of interests, experiences and perspectives that help promote QFD's shared values, who play a part in helping QFD be more inclusive within the organisation and the communities we serve. WRGs provide staff and volunteers with opportunities to network, exchange views, put forward innovative ideas, mobilise and participate in relevant events. QFD also actively participates in Brisbane PRIDE Month, International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) and Wear it Purple Day.

## Intersectionality

QFD recognises that employees may belong to multiple diversity groups, which can result in intersecting challenges to achieving equity and inclusion.



## Our Action

The Everyday Respect Framework will create a safe, capable and inclusive workforce EVERYDAY. The Everyday Respect Framework will deliver cultural transformation through a leader-led, employee-informed approach to respect and inclusion. which will reinforce and embed a culture of respect and inclusion throughout the department. These communities will act as a supportive resource, foster awareness, build capacity and promote respect and inclusion across the Queensland Fire Department EVERYDAY.

The Everyday Respect Framework provides strengthened scaffolding of inclusion governance, giving the Communities of Inclusion a formal mechanism to raise issues, influence change, and track progress, whilst also empowering diverse employee voices to contribute directly to cultural reform initiatives, drawing on their lived experience through a bottom-up approach. Each Community of Inclusion is proactively supported by a dedicated SLT Sponsor and external coach.

Each Community of Inclusion has developed their own, self-determined workplan and have provided their top three priorities for inclusion in this QFD Equity and Diversity Plan 2025 - 2028.

No	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
1.	Develop Gender Community of Inclusion workplan based on reporting data	Workplan Developed and submitted to Everyday Respect Council	December 2025
2.	Undertake research and data collection to formalise a report/presentation to ERC, including recommendations	Report and Recommendations prepared and submitted to Everyday Respect Council	March 2026
3.	Design and create a space for Gender COI to be part of collaboration and consultation for QFD workforce	Process for consulting with COI determined and communicated to QFD	June 2026
4.	Inclusion and representation on statewide working groups and panels	Members of the Regional and Remote COI are represented on three statewide working groups and panels	June 2026
5.	Equal opportunities to participate in training and development for Regional and Remote staff	Live Fire Prop is deployed to at least five (5) regional locations in 2026	December 2026
6.	Undertake research on the 'Auxiliary to Permanent' employment pathway to determine feasibility for Regional and Remote staff	Develop a detailed report with recommendations to improve the 'Auxiliary to Permanent' employment pathway	July 2026
7.	Identify Queensland Government First Nations initiatives and activities that QFD should support and participate in.	Meet with Public Sector Commission to understand Queensland Government's priority for First Nations initiatives and activities.	July 2026
8.	To build cultural awareness and capability, members of the First Nations COI receive funding to attend ANZSOG 2025 First Nations Public Administration Conference	Members of the First Nations COI attend ANZSOG 2025 First Nations Public Administration Conference.	December 2025



No	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
9.	Identify and understand the Closing the Gap Awards process with a view to increasing visibility and representation across QFD	COI evaluates the Closing the Gap awards process and identifies areas for improvement and make recommendations on suggested improvements	July 2026
10.	Build awareness & culture change of people with a disability through delivery of quarterly Lunch & Learn sessions	COI measures event participation and reviews and monitors WfQ survey positives.  Observable changes in workplace behaviour (demonstrated through increased WfQ results), such as increased awareness and collaboration, reduced incidents of bias, and improved communication across diverse teams.	July 2026
11.	Provide input to Psychological Safety Review	COI provides input to psychological safety report to include a disability perspective	December 2026
12.	Promote, champion and review new QFD Inclusion Curriculum.	25% of QFD personnel (operational and corporate staff) attain completion of the QFD Inclusion Curriculum within 6 months of rollout  50% of QFD personnel (operational and corporate staff) attain completion within 18 months of rollout	July 2027

