Undoubtedly, 2009 has been a big year of change for us all. Our move to Geelong was perhaps one of the biggest changes our organisation has gone through for many years. We recognise the inherent impacts this move has had on our people. The development of our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is one significant way in which we want to continually address these impacts in a positive and proactive way.

Diversity in our approach to service delivery is important for many reasons. It helps us establish a greater connection to the diverse range of people we serve and situations we all deal with. It also helps us create a working environment that fosters diversity of thought aimed at continual improvement in the things we do.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy reflects our commitment - to the community and to our people - to create an environment that fully supports our vision of ‘a future where every journey is a safe one’.

I entrust this strategy to you all and ask that you not only take the time to read it, but commit to the initiatives it outlines, its outcomes and the shift in mindset that it seeks to create. The benefits will ultimately flow onto each and every one of you and, in turn, to the clients we deal with on a daily basis.

Janet Dore
Chief Executive Officer
“Embracing diversity. A better tomorrow, starts today.”

Diversity represents a strategic direction in the way we pursue the growth and development of our teams within TAC.

It is about our ability to create a more inclusive workplace where we promote, recruit, develop and retain a diverse range of people and skills that will positively impact our ability to deliver an improved client experience. Diverse cultures. Diverse physical capabilities. Diverse experiences.

Essentially, diversity and inclusion create an environment where we all benefit from a multitude of different people who collectively share TAC’s vision and embrace it with as much passion as we all do today.
THE LANDSCAPE TODAY

The charter for the TAC is clear: “to serve the community by reducing the incidence of transport accidents and improve recovery outcomes”. Recently, the TAC concluded its 2009 Employee Opinion Survey and found more than 85 per cent of employees were highly engaged with the organisation. This result exceeds global high-performing benchmarks and reinforces the message that our employees have a strong connection to the purpose of the organisation and the clients they serve. This provides a great foundation on which to build the TAC’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Our move from Melbourne to Geelong had its challenges for many employees. Arguably, this physical change in location created various levels of anxiety for all of us. On the other hand, many opportunities were also created for new employees to join the TAC and add to the strength of the organisation.

This change has fundamentally altered the nature, composition and structure of the people who form the critical foundations of the TAC. As a collective group, we want to understand the impact this change has had on our organisation and what it means in relation to our ability to deliver the best in services to the community.

Team assimilation. Adjusting to a new building. Establishing new networks of colleagues and friends. Settling into a new city. These are some of the current issues facing us today at the TAC. It is envisaged the strategy will address and enable us to work through these matters, and provide pathways to help us move forward.

“In moving forward, we need to understand the past...”
OUR VISION

In the infancy of planning, groups of TAC employees discussed the concept of diversity to create the overall vision for our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which is to:

- ensure a workplace that is as diverse as the community we serve;
- take a leadership position as a champion of diversity; and
- harness the power of diversity to improve our service delivery and client experience.

The positive impacts of this strategic vision will allow the culture of the TAC to:

- further encompass acceptance and respect;
- embrace diversity of thought providing rich dimensions for each employee; and
- provide a workplace that reflects the community we serve, where people are free to be who they are.
AIM AND APPROACH OF STRATEGY

By opening the TAC to a strategy of diversity and inclusion, we are creating opportunities for each employee to gain an insight into new cultures, learn different customs and gain an understanding of the challenges people face. This allows employees to be suitably equipped to deal with any person and any challenge. We are effectively empowering employees, so that they can deal with each client in an authentic manner, building relationships that aid recovery and independence and provide a better client experience with enhanced outcomes.

TAC FOCUS

Whilst there are a number of areas of diversity we can integrate into the organisation, for the next three years, we will be focusing specifically on two main target areas: People & Engagement and Multiculturalism.

PEOPLE & ENGAGEMENT: refers to the empowerment of all TAC employees and clients, particularly in relation to the assimilation and education of people with disabilities and the promotion of good mental health.

As per the Disability Act 2006, all Victorian public sector bodies are required to implement a Disability Action Plan for the purposes of:

• reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
• reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
• promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability; and
• achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

TAC ’s Disability Action Plan has been embedded within the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy with the above points addressed in the Key Priority Areas.

Our particular focus on people with a disability, of course also strongly correlates with the large percentage of our clients who are disabled due to road trauma. It is the TAC’s responsibility to break down the barriers and re-integrate people with disabilities within workplaces as well as general society. Our staff need to be equipped with the knowledge, skills and protocol to deal with such scenarios daily. Our initiatives will concentrate on providing employment opportunities and training for affected clients, educating staff in how to relate to and empathise with people with a disability, and continuing the TAC ’s support of external organisations and strategies in this sector.
The mental health and wellbeing of our people is also important to us. Statistically, one in five people within Australia are afflicted with a mental health issue. This growing trend is of course being interweaved into every workplace (including the TAC) and may have affects on productivity and absenteeism. By making mental health a priority of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, we are looking to create an environment where people can be open and comfortable in dealing with such issues. Our strategies include flexible work arrangements, adding a wellbeing index to our annual employee survey, and educating managers on how to support employees with mental health issues within their team environment.

**MULTICULTURALISM** refers to the recruitment, integration and celebration of the different nationalities and cultures within the TAC and the community.

With the TAC serving a community characterised by cultural and social diversity, it is paramount we lead the way by creating initiatives that reflect the needs of our diverse employee group.

If the TAC’s teams reflect the socio demographic of its client base, so that employees - all professionally capable - comprise a mosaic of life experiences and backgrounds, the TAC, as a whole, will ultimately be able to enhance community relations; be equipped to cope with change; and be able to expand upon organisational creativity.

Our multiculturalism strategies will include translation services, mentoring programs and celebration of different cultures.
It is important that we understand the terminology commonly used with regard to diversity in this strategy:

**Disability** is part of human diversity. In fact one in five Australians has one or more disabilities and this proportion is increasing with the ageing population.

Physical disability is the most common form of disability (83.9 per cent), followed by mental illness (11.3 per cent) and intellectual or developmental disability (4.8 per cent).

Disability can result from accident, illness, congenital and genetic disorders or the ageing process. It may be visible or hidden, permanent or temporary, and may have minimal or substantial impact on a person’s mobility, cognitive, sensory and interpersonal functions.

For the purpose of this document, the Strategy has adopted the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) definition of disability, where disability includes:

- loss of bodily or mental functions;
- loss of a part of the body;
- the presence in the body of organisms causing or capable of causing disease or illness;
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body;
- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; and
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person’s thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour.

**Discrimination** means the unequal treatment of people based on some characteristic other than individual merit and achievement. The historic fact that women, racial minorities and others have been excluded from full participation in society has deprived these individuals of their rights and systematically suppressed their talents. The long-term goal of affirmative action is to redress the inequities resulting from past and present discriminatory practices as a means to facilitate the attainment of equal opportunity for everyone.
**Diversity** refers to the fact that our community, both locally and nationally, is comprised of many individuals, each having unique attributes based on a variety of social, physical and cultural characteristics. Included among these attributes are race, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, disability, political affiliation and national origin. The existence of diversity within our organisation provides us with an opportunity to discover ways to integrate all individuals and groups into the TAC in a manner that respects and values their uniqueness while simultaneously advancing the organisation to meet the needs of the community.

**Equal Opportunity** means that each individual is judged on his or her individual merit. Each individual is given an equal chance for employment, career opportunity and advancement. Individual merit and achievement are determined independently and without bias towards the traits that resemble those of the person making the judgement. Equal Opportunity requires that unrelated characteristics and criteria not be used to restrict opportunities.

**Mental Health Condition** A mental health condition can affect a person’s mood, thinking, motivation and behaviour. One in five Australians will experience a mental health condition during their lifetime.

Examples of mental health conditions are:

- depression;
- schizophrenia;
- obsessive-compulsive disorder;
- anxiety;
- bipolar disorder; and
- post-traumatic stress disorder.

Most workplaces have employees affected by mental illness at some stage. It is important that employees experiencing mental health issues feel supported by their employer and colleagues, just the same way as anyone else with another illness or disabling condition.

Employees should feel supported both within the workplace and when absent from work due to their illness. Getting back to work can be an important part of recovery from an episode of mental illness.

**Multiculturalism** is a philosophy that recognises, accepts and integrates the contributions and achievements of all people into the social and economic fabric of the community in which they live. Multiculturalism requires an understanding of and respect for the historical bases of the belief systems and traditions of various groups to develop their members socially, emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and physically.
SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

DEFINE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STRATEGY
• Diversity initiatives integrated into organisation’s long-term strategic plan.
• 2015 and strategic workforce planning objectives supported.
• Current diversity initiatives leveraged.
• Gaps identified and current systemic issues addressed.
• Initiatives benchmarked against global best practice.

STRUCTURE DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP TEAM
• Strategy housed within Human Resources division.
• Championed by Executive Sponsor and Program Sponsor, Human Resources.
• Diversity Leaders provided strategic responsibility.
• Diversity Steering Group established, including internal and external representation.

COMMUNICATE DIVERSITY STRATEGY
• Diversity Strategy and objectives communicated to all levels of organisation.
• Public awareness campaign of organisation’s diversity programs.

TRAIN WORKFORCE ABOUT DIVERSITY
• Awareness training delivered to all management levels.
• Consistent and comprehensive diversity training delivered to all levels of organisation.
• Diversity training provided through multiple forums.

RETAIN DIVERSE EMPLOYEES
• Work-life balance incentives reviewed.
• Diversity incorporated into organisation’s shared values and behaviour charter (IMPACT).
• Support programs for diverse employees actively encouraged and endorsed.

RECRUIT DIVERSE EMPLOYEES
• Job design criteria to be inclusive and implicit in encouraging diverse applicants.
• Talent pipeline and sourcing strategies aligned to diversity goals.
• Recruitment methodology to support reasonable adjustment needs.
• Organisation to actively recruit people from diverse backgrounds.

DEVELOP DIVERSE LEADERS
• Accountability for diversity initiatives driven by Leadership Group.
• Managers aware of resources available to support diverse employees.

MEASURE DIVERSITY INITIATIVES
• Diversity metrics established and reported at Management level.
• Diversity dashboard established and reported at Executive level.
• Diversity audits conducted and reported annually.
# KEY PRIORITY AREAS

## 1. Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Key Strategic Actions</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• TAC leadership to demonstrate an open and public endorsement of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.</td>
<td>1.1 Actively demonstrate a commitment to diversity and create a positive change in the workplace.</td>
<td>• Establish a TAC Diversity &amp; Inclusion Steering Group.</td>
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<td>• TAC Leadership to make decisions consistent with, and to openly support the Strategy.</td>
<td>1.2 Report on diversity initiatives and key drivers for change.</td>
<td>• Promote and champion workplace diversity as an integral part of TAC’s culture and workforce planning.</td>
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<td>1.3 Establish and develop community partnerships to enhance opportunities to build a diverse workforce and promote social inclusion.</td>
<td>• Establish Diversity dashboard and report at Executive level.</td>
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<td>1.4 Ensure diversity is a component of all TAC Leadership programs.</td>
<td>• Establish Diversity metrics and report at Management level.</td>
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<td>• Continue to communicate progress of diversity initiatives within TAC Annual Report.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct diversity audits &amp; reports annually.</td>
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<td>• Develop Diversity and Inclusion Strategy implementation plan.</td>
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<td>• Strengthen diversity recruitment opportunities through TAC’s preferred recruitment panel.</td>
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<td>• Continue to develop partnerships with diversity champions such as Leadership Plus, beyondblue and Diversity@Work.</td>
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<td>• Strengthen networks with local employment support groups.</td>
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<td>• Review existing and future leadership programs to incorporate diversity.</td>
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## 2. Policy and Process

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<tr>
<td>• Policies and procedures to reflect the TAC’s aspiration to be inclusive of diversity, and to be statements about how TAC leadership and employees are to operate.</td>
<td>2.1 Continually review policies and procedures to ensure we attract and retain a diverse workforce.</td>
<td>• Review job design and flexible work arrangements process.</td>
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<td>• Policies to provide for a culture of inclusiveness to be developed and supported.</td>
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<td>• Review current recruitment practices, highlighting opportunities to incorporate diversity principles.</td>
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<td>• Develop a general enquiry/information telephone number for interested people with special needs to advise the organisers of their needs.</td>
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<td>• Provide support such as sign-language interpreters and handouts in large print or Braille at recruitment sessions and interviews.</td>
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<td>2.2 Ensure policies and procedures are reflective of the Discrimination Act, Fair Work Australia legislation and the Victorian Human Rights Charter.</td>
<td>• Review all policies and processes, ensuring TAC meets all legislative requirements.</td>
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<td>2.3 Ensure mental health supports are reflected in relevant policies and procedures, and can be reported on.</td>
<td>• Ensure Employee Assistance Program (EAP) continues to provide timely and practical support to employees and their families.</td>
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<td>• Further develop and strengthen mental health initiatives within the broader employee support framework.</td>
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<td>• Continue to promote and make available flexible working arrangements for all employees.</td>
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<td>• Add wellbeing index component to Employee Opinion Survey.</td>
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<td>2.4 Establish and develop employment programs that foster the growth of a diverse workforce.</td>
<td>• Continue to support and develop TAC’s Traineeship Program in partnership with Jolt Training Group and the Corio Norlane Neighbourhood Renewal Program.</td>
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<td>• Develop Career Start program for people with disabilities to gain work experience at TAC, and actively promote this program to TAC claimants.</td>
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<td>• Continue to support current and future collaborative programs with WorkSafe.</td>
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<td>2.5 Ensure future Enterprise Agreements are reflective of TAC’s commitment to diversity.</td>
<td>• Review Enterprise Agreement and make recommendations on additional diversity and inclusion clause(s) in future Agreements.</td>
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## 3. Culture and Engagement

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<tr>
<td>• The culture of the TAC to be open and inclusive of diversity.</td>
<td>3.1 Further develop a culture that values diversity and inclusion as part of all planning and decision-making.</td>
<td>• Embed diversity and inclusion within the Employee Opinion Survey, Exit Interview Proforma, Position Descriptions and Performance Development Review templates.</td>
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<td>• Diversity to be valued as a key opportunity for the TAC to take a leadership position in its role as a provider of human services in the Victorian community.</td>
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<td>• Conduct an organisational diversity audit and make appropriate recommendations.</td>
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<td>• Introduce diversity and inclusion to the Reward and Recognition Program.</td>
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<td>3.2 Ensure Diversity and Inclusion Strategy actively promotes the connection to TAC’s shared values and behaviour charter.</td>
<td>• Embed TAC’s shared values and behaviour charter statements in future communication plans relating to diversity initiatives.</td>
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<td>3.3 Continue commitment to external diversity initiatives and review opportunities for further involvement.</td>
<td>• Continue to support TAC’s Small Grants Program.</td>
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<td>• Establish networks within industry and public sector to promote return-to-work opportunities for TAC clients.</td>
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### 4. Communication

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| • Communication in all forms at the TAC to be accessible and inclusive, and to demonstrate a consistent message embracing all forms of diversity. | 4.1 Continue provision of TAC publications and communications to diverse groups in accessible formats. | • Review existing publications and communications, and recommend improvements.  
• Improve coordination and access to translation and interpreting services within TAC. |
| | 4.2 Promote key diversity messages across the TAC and the community. | • Profile diversity success stories on corporate website.  
• Wording in recruitment advertising to reflect TAC’s commitment to diversity.  
• Communicate diversity-related initiatives (such as Career Start program) through TAC’s Empower magazine. |
| | 4.3 Support and organise activities and events to promote and celebrate diversity. | • Provide regular opportunities for TAC employees to meet diversity champions from industry through co-ordinated information sessions.  
• Promote and celebrate diversity through TAC’s health and wellbeing awareness campaigns. |

### 5. Education

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| • TAC to provide its workforce with contemporary education and support in understanding diversity. With a strategic approach to education, we will enable understanding and embrace of diversity and inclusion of all our current and future employees. | 5.1 Develop and build on existing training initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion. | • Develop a diversity information session for managers, employees and new starters at the TAC.  
• Continue to provide mandatory Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) training for managers and employees.  
• Continue to provide mental health awareness training for managers. |

### 6. Support

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| • TAC infrastructure to be accessible and inclusive, physically and culturally. | 6.1 Consider issues regarding access and inclusion in the development and management of TAC facilities. | • Improve process for employees to request special requirements such as IT software, workstations and flexible working options to meet their needs.  
• Provide accessible information on TAC website and Intranet on disability access at TAC headquarters.  
• Develop a database of TAC employees who speak languages other than English.  
• Develop policy regarding building access and special needs requests for current and future employees. |
| | 6.2 Provide support networks for diversity groups. | • Consider mentors as part of return-to-work plans.  
• Develop mental health support group.  
• Provide opportunities for employees to establish support networks for diversity groups. |
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