

2014 State Report Card

How many Aboriginal people are involved in NRM?

The protection and management of natural resources have been traditional responsibilities of Aboriginal people for tens of thousands of years. Despite widespread changes to Australia over the last 200 years, healthy natural resources remain critical to the spiritual, social, cultural and economic wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

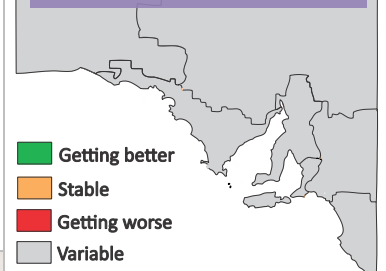
This report tracks Aboriginal involvement in natural resource management through participation in projects, boards, committees, workshops and employment with the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR).


The 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics census indicates that over 30,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (jointly referred to as Aboriginal people in this report card) live in South Australia — about 1.9 per cent of the population. Between 2005-11, the unemployment rate of Aboriginal people in the state was about three times higher than for non-Aboriginal people.

The Government of South Australia aims to increase Aboriginal employment in all public sector agencies to at least 2 per cent across all employment levels (3 per cent in DEWNR).



Regional trends in involvement of Aboriginal people in natural resource management



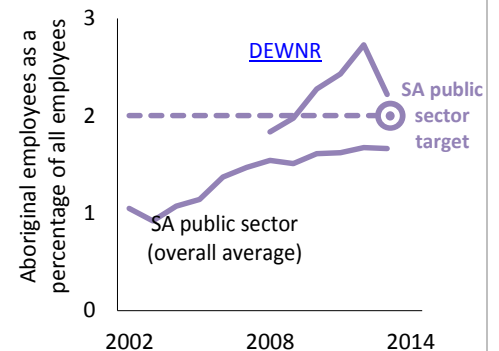
 **State target**
Involve more people in the sustainable management of natural resources

Trend (2010-13)	Variable	Aboriginal employment is increasing across the SA public sector. More information is needed to report trends in Aboriginal participation in NRM.
------------------------	----------	--

From 2002 to 2013, the overall percentage of Aboriginal employees in the South Australian public sector increased by 1.7 per cent to 1,735 people (see graph on right).

Of the government's natural resource management [agencies](#), only SA Water and DEWNR exceeded the 2 per cent employment target between 2011-13 (see graph).

Within DEWNR, the 2 per cent target for Aboriginal employment was exceeded in 2013 in the Alinytjara Wilurara, Eyre Peninsula, SA Arid Lands, SA Murray-Darling Basin and South East NRM regions. In total, 29 Aboriginal people were employed by DEWNR in partnership with NRM boards. NRM boards also funded 119 Aboriginal people as external contractors, with full-time (86 people) and part-time (33) employment.



Where we are at (2013)	On track	Across the SA public sector, Aboriginal employment needs to increase to reach the 2 per cent target. More information is needed to report Aboriginal participation rates in NRM.
-------------------------------	----------	--

The knowledge of Aboriginal people guides natural resource management through their participation in boards, committees and workshops. With the exception of Kangaroo Island, all NRM boards have members who are Aboriginal people. In 4 NRM regions, Aboriginal people also participate in co management boards and committees that manage natural resources.

The collection of information on participation in NRM is not standardised and people's heritage is not always recorded, so the following summaries underestimate actual participation rates. In 2013, 270 Aboriginal people volunteered in field activities supported by the NRM boards, DEWNR, and the Australian Government. 100 Aboriginal people participated in resource management workshops and field days, and projects supported improvements at 30 properties managed by Aboriginal people in the Eyre Peninsula, SA Arid Lands, SA Murray-Darling Basin and the South East NRM regions.

The [Australian Government's 2009 Invest Action Plan](#) highlights that increasing Aboriginal employment and broader participation in the natural resource management sector requires long-term funding and support, particularly for career-path opportunities.

Reliability of information ★★★★★ Excellent for Aboriginal employment but participation data are not standardised

Further information: [Technical information for this report card](#), The [National agreement to close the gap in Aboriginal disadvantage](#), and a report on [the benefits of Aboriginal engagement in the natural resource management sector](#)

