

# GARI YALA 2025-2026 (SPEAK THE TRUTH)

In 2025-2026, we drew on the insights and experiences of 1,158 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait workers, who told us...

## Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

employees do NOT feel culturally safe

Only 40% of Indigenous employees reported their workplace was culturally safe



## Racism remains stubbornly high

41% feel ignored or not taken seriously by their boss sometimes, often or very often

40% hear racial slurs sometimes, often or all the time

53% experience appearance racism – receive comments about the way they look or ‘should’ look as an Indigenous person

## Racism isn't rare – but anti-racism action is

69% said their workplace does not have a racism complaint procedure

Only 38% said they had the support they needed when unfair treatment and/or racial slurs occurred

## A hidden year of unpaid cultural work

1 in 2 worked at least 1 or more hours per week unpaid

1 in 3 worked 3 or more hours per week unpaid

1 in 5 worked 6 or more hours per week unpaid

Over a working lifetime, these **unpaid workplace demands** add up quickly – 1 in 2 full-time Indigenous employees effectively do an extra year of unpaid work over their 50-year career!

## What's changed since 2020?

2 in 9 forms of racism have NOT changed at all

118 No. of years for Indigenous workers to never hear racial slurs at work

A re-emphasis of the strong need to conduct a **Racism@Work Inquiry**

## A call to action

Six years on from the original Gari Yala, it is clear to us that the path forward does not require new mandates, but rather a reaffirmation of our original 10 Truths for organisational action and a deeper commitment to the practice of truth-telling. In Gari Yala 2 we call on Australian employers to move beyond “marking the days” and commit to truthlistening and truthacting.

**1.**

Commit to unearthing and acting on workplace truths – however uncomfortable this may be.

**2.**

Ensure any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-related work is Indigenous led and informed.

**3.**

Develop organisational principles to make it clear how Indigenous community engagement and employment should work in practice.

**10.**

Look to high-impact initiatives – those that research shows are linked to better wellbeing and retention for Indigenous staff.

## Reinforcing the **10 TRUTHS**

### to centre Indigenous Australians' voices to create workplace inclusion

**4.**

Focus on workplace readiness (cultural safety) rather than worker readiness.

**9.**

Take action to address workplace racism.

**5.**

Recognise identity strain and educate non-Indigenous staff about how to interact with their Indigenous colleagues in ways that reduce this.

**8.**

Focus on sustainable careers and career development, rather than just short-term appointments.

**7.**

Consult with Indigenous staff on how to minimise cultural load while maintaining organisational activity.

**6.**

Recognise and remunerate cultural load as part of an employee's workload.

The authors and partners of this report wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the nations across Australia and pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise that all Elders and mobs in locations across Australia have their own experiences with 'work.' We hope this report enables our mob to tell our own stories. *Gari Yala*, speak the truth.