

South Australia Police

Pride at SAPOL - LGBTIQA+ Strategy 2025-2030



SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE
SAFER COMMUNITIES



**Government of
South Australia**

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Commissioner's message



Grant Stevens APM LEM
Commissioner of Police
South Australia Police

I am proud to introduce South Australia Police's (SAPOL's) inaugural *Pride at SAPOL - LGBTIQA+ Strategy 2025-2030*.

The launch of our Pride at SAPOL LGBTIQA+ Strategy in 2025 coincides with the 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality in South Australia. South Australia was the first state in Australia to introduce this significant legislation which is a testament to the state's championing of human rights and equality.

As an organisation we work to protect and reassure individuals and communities across the state, with a focus on working in partnership with the community. Our commitment to the people of South Australia is embodied in our *Safer Communities* vision.

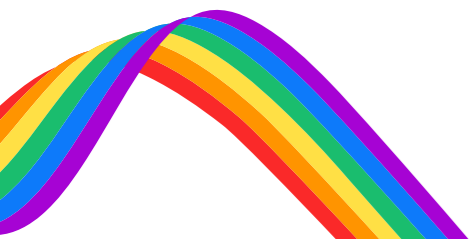
As an employer we are dedicated to developing confident and high-performing people who are representative of our diverse community and are prepared for future policing challenges. We firmly believe that our people are our strength and have embedded this principle into *SAPOL's 2030 Strategy* and our *Diversity and Inclusion Strategy*.

Our goal is to continue to build an inclusive and diverse workforce to ensure that everyone in South Australia feels safe, respected and supported, whether as an employee of SAPOL or a member of the broader community.

This Strategy is our guiding document for enhancing LGBTIQA+ inclusion and celebrating diversity, to ensure that all SAPOL employees can be their authentic selves at work and that LGBTIQA+ community members feel confident to engage with us. It outlines the priorities that will enable us to reduce the barriers that LGBTIQA+ people can face in the workplace and in accessing our policing services.

Our inaugural Pride at SAPOL LGBTIQA+ Strategy reflects our commitment to building relationships and trust in our police service, and the pride we have in our people and in our community.

SAPOL is dedicated to achieving the vision of this Pride Strategy and, through its focus will enhance LGBTIQA+ inclusiveness in the workplace and in our service delivery.





Acknowledgement of Country

South Australia Police acknowledges and respects Aboriginal peoples as the state's first people and recognises Aboriginal peoples as the traditional owners and custodians of land and waters in South Australia.

We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal people to country.

In this document, the term First Nations inclusively refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia, while acknowledging that the first people of South Australia are Aboriginal people.



WALDYA WARNA-BINI NGAMANA
– Eagle coming from the Sea.

Sergeant Danielle James,
Nauo Traditional Owner.

Consultation

In developing this Strategy, SAPOL has listened to and incorporated feedback from the 2019 LGBTIQ+ Community Roundtable and considered the comments and recommendations in the 2021 report of the South Australia Rainbow Advocacy Alliance.

In 2023, further consultation was undertaken with the LGBTIQ+ community as part of the review of the Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer network, which has been relaunched as the LGBTIQ+ Liaison Officer Network.

These voices have played a significant role in the formation of our first Pride at SAPOL Strategy, recognising the need to build trust and connection to develop meaningful, resilient relationships with the LGBTIQ+ community.



Our Vision

The long-term goal for LGBTIQ+ inclusion at SAPOL is:

Together in Pride: Safeguarding diversity, fostering inclusion.

At SAPOL, we recognise our strength lies within the diversity and unity of 'Our people'. We envision a future where every member of the organisation, and the community we serve, irrespective of their gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation, experiences an environment that is inherently safe, deeply respectful, and fully supportive.

We are committed to building on the foundation of trust and positive relationships we have established within the community, ensuring transparency and honesty in all our actions. By actively challenging misconceptions and confronting bias, we strive to shape a more inclusive society - one where progress is shared openly and we learn from our experiences.

By integrating the principles of diversity and inclusion into every aspect of our policing services, we aim to foster a culture where LGBTIQ+ individuals, along with all members of the community, are empowered to thrive and reach their full potential.

Through leadership, collaboration, and education, we pledge to enhance our service delivery, ensuring it reflects our dedication to equality and justice for all. Our actions and policies will be aligned with this vision, driving us towards a future where every interaction is an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding diversity and fostering inclusion.

Together, we will lead by example, embracing 'Our people, our strength' as the cornerstone of our efforts to create a safer, more inclusive South Australia for all.

Background

South Australia has a proud association with human rights, leading the way in anti-discrimination legislation. In 1975, South Australia was the first state in Australia to decriminalise homosexual acts. SAPOL has embraced this association through its commitment to being a diverse and inclusive organisation, guided by its principle of being community-centred and socially-minded.

As South Australia's population continues to grow in diversity, it is critical that SAPOL engages with and listens to the voices of all communities. This will ensure we can adapt, reflect, evolve, and meet the needs of the entire community.

In developing this strategy, we acknowledge that members of the LGBTIQ+ community have, both historically and globally, experienced difficult and traumatic relationships with policing and law enforcement agencies.

To help develop this strategy, we have listened to the voices and lived experiences of the LGBTIQ+ community and their advocates to ensure we learn and work together to build a foundation of trust and mutual respect. Our goal is to deliver a police service that is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to LGBTIQ+ individuals and the broader community.



The Supporting Framework

Our inaugural Pride Strategy aligns with the South Australian Government Public Sector's *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2026*, as well as the initiatives led by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment and the Department of Human Services, who partner to advance LGBTIQ+ inclusion in South Australia.

The Pride at SAPOL Strategy reflects our organisational values and our 2030 principles and aligns with our Diversity and Inclusion and People strategies.

It is underpinned by Commonwealth and State legislation:

- **Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth):** Provides protections against discrimination on certain grounds including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status, family responsibilities, and discrimination involving sexual harassment, harassment on the ground of sex or hostile workplace environments.
- **Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA):** Offers protections against discrimination on certain grounds including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or domestic partnership status, caring responsibilities and the identity of spouse or domestic partner in addition to provisions relating to sexual harassment.
- **The South Australia Police Act 1998:** The primary legal instrument regulating the objectives, structure and powers of South Australia Police.



Our journey so far:



LGBTIQA+ Liaison Officer Network

In 1997, South Australia Police recognised and addressed the need for a dedicated liaison role to better support the then gay and lesbian community.

In 2005, SAPOL formally established the Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer (GLLO) role and created a network to support this initiative. The GLLO network aimed to foster stronger relationships between police and the community, improve service delivery, and promote inclusion.

In 2022, SAPOL undertook an extensive consultation process with both the South Australian LGBTIQA+ community and internal staff to review the GLLO network. The goal was to ensure the model effectively meets the evolving needs of the LGBTIQA+ community and strengthens trust and confidence in SAPOL.

Following this review, the network was relaunched in 2025 as the LGBTIQA+ Liaison Officer (LLO) network. This revitalised program introduces a contemporary framework that better reflects the diversity within the LGBTIQA+ community and enhances community safety, inclusion, and trust between police and LGBTIQA+ communities.

60%

of Australia's LGBTIQA+ employees are influenced by an employer's proven commitment to diversity and inclusion.

(AWEI Employee Survey, 2025 Key Insights).

Building knowledge and awareness

In 2024, SAPOL launched an online LGBT Foundation Awareness training for all our staff. This is a step towards increasing our organisational confidence and awareness in issues affecting the LGBTIQ+ community.

Additionally, a SAPOL training officer completed the Pride in Diversity (PID) Endorsed LGBTQ+ Trainer Program enabling SAPOL to deliver internal, facilitator-led, face-to-face LGBTQ+ Awareness sessions.

Members of SAPOL's Diversity and Inclusion Branch completed the HOW2 Create LGBTQ+ Inclusive Services course. This practical, evidence-based program supports organisations in embedding inclusive practices into everyday service delivery.

SAPOL are also proud members of Pride in Diversity (PID) and Diversity Council Australia (DCA), reflecting SAPOL's ongoing commitment to learning, collaboration, and the promotion of LGBTIQ+ inclusion across the organisation.

Together, these initiatives support SAPOL's goal of delivering inclusive, respectful, and informed policing services that reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.



78%

of Australian employees say managers and supervisors should be required to complete LGBTIQ+ training

(AWEI Employee Survey, 2025 Key Insights).

Visibility in Action

SAPOL's participation in the annual Pride March Adelaide has grown significantly over the past few years. SAPOL members, including Senior Officers and employees, attend on a voluntary basis to demonstrate SAPOL's support and inclusion – both for SAPOL members and the broader LGBTIQ+ community.

In 2023, Pride lights were projected onto Police Headquarters over the Pride March weekend, symbolising SAPOL's visible support for the LGBTIQ+ community. In 2024, the Pride flag was flown at Police Headquarters for the first time, marking a significant and visible gesture of pride in our people and the LGBTIQ+ community.

As part of SAPOL's ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion, recognising dates of significance is essential to fostering a respectful and inclusive workplace culture. Each year, SAPOL actively supports key LGBTIQ+ events such as IDAHOBIT, Wear It Purple Day, Pride March Adelaide, the Feast Festival, and LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Day. These acknowledgements go beyond celebration – they serve as important opportunities for education and raising awareness, helping to build a more informed and inclusive organisation.

In 2025, SAPOL made a pledge with the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation, joining the national effort to shift the conversation around domestic, family, and intimate partner violence and abuse.

SAPOL acknowledges that there is still work to do and relationships to develop and nurture, to ensure that South Australia's LGBTIQ+ community has increased confidence in the organisation and to enable SAPOL's LGBTIQ+ employees to enjoy a fully inclusive workplace.

LGBTI people aged over 18 were over five times more likely to have experienced suicidal ideation in the past 12 months

(Private Lives 3 Survey, 2019).



1,951

individuals and organisations have taken the pledge to help change the conversation around LGBTQ+ domestic and family violence

(DVA Foundation, 2025).

What is LGBTIQ+?

SAPOL acknowledges and recognises that respect for individuality has a profound impact on affirming a person's identity, self-worth and inherent dignity. We recognise that one label or description cannot fully capture the breadth of lived experiences within the LGBTIQ+ community.

SAPOL supports the right of people to identify their sexual orientation and sex and/or gender using terminology that reflects their identity. SAPOL also recognises that terminology can be strongly contested, particularly terminology to describe sex and/or gender identity.

SAPOL recognises that some of the terms used in this strategy may not be embraced or resonate with everyone. Our intention is to be as inclusive as possible, and we have adopted LGBTIQ+ as an umbrella term to reflect our commitment.

The acronym LGBTIQ+ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/gender diverse, intersex variation queer/questioning and/or asexual. The + symbol acknowledges that there are a broad range of terms that people identify with that may not be encompassed within the acronym.

A glossary of terms is provided at the end of this document. It is not intended to be exhaustive but aims to support understanding and respectful engagement.



The Rainbow Pride Flag

The Rainbow Pride Flag was designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker, an American political activist and artist. It was created as a symbol of LGBTIQ+ pride and identity, “a rainbow of humanity”¹ and has been used around the world as a symbol of safety, allyship and inclusion. The colours represent the diversity of the LGBTIQ+ community, making the flag inclusive of everyone.

“I thought of flags in a new light. I discovered the depth of their power, their transcendent, transformational quality. I thought of the emotional connection they hold,” Gilbert Baker².

1. GLBT Historical Society Museum & Archives. The Rainbow Flag: The Original 1978 Flag. <https://www.glbthistory.org/rainbow-flag>
2. Baker cited in GLBT Historical Society Museum & Archives. The Rainbow Flag: The Original 1978 Flag <https://www.glbthistory.org/rainbow-flag>

LGBTIQA+ identity flags

While the Rainbow Pride Flag serves as a widely recognised symbol of unity and inclusion, it is one of many flags that represent the diverse identities within the LGBTIQA+ community. Each flag carries its own meaning and significance, offering visibility and affirmation to individuals across the spectrum of gender, sexuality, and lived experience. These identity flags complement the Rainbow Flag by celebrating the richness and individuality within the broader community.



Lesbian Flag



Gay Flag



Bisexual Flag



Pansexual Flag



Trans Flag



Non-binary Flag



Intersex Flag



Asexual Flag



Aromantic Flag



Intersectionality



SAPOL acknowledges that people's lives are influenced by their diverse experiences and intersecting identities. Being LGBTIQ+ is only one aspect of a person's identity. Other aspects of a person's being, including age, cultural background, race, First Nations identity, abilities and disabilities, all combine to form a person's unique identity. This can result in various individual advantages or disadvantages.

SAPOL recognises that identities within an individual may evolve or sometimes converge. People within LGBTIQ+ communities may have other marginalising characteristics that compound or amplify the impact of discrimination³. To achieve true inclusion and equity, we recognise that an intersectional perspective or approach is essential.

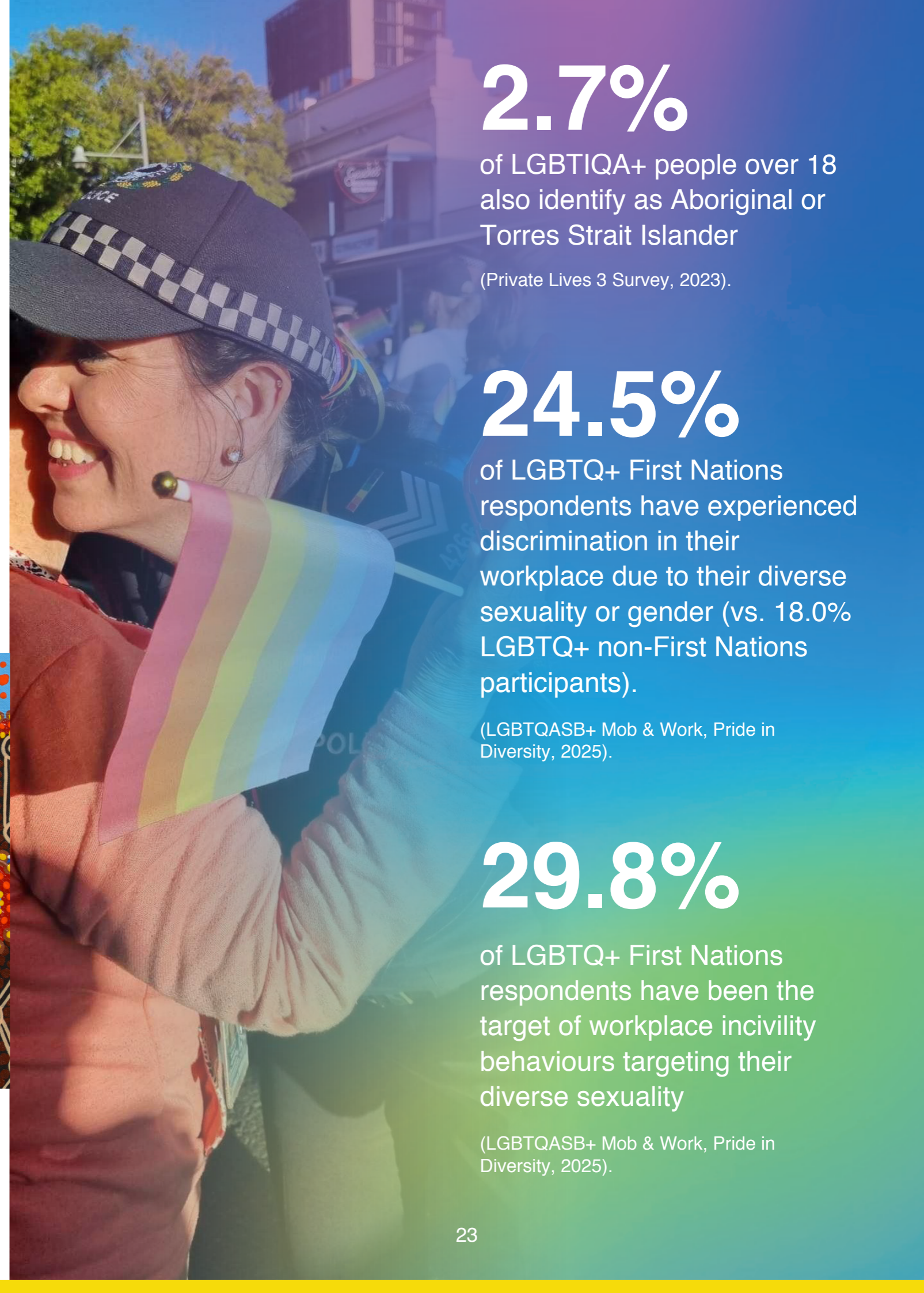
Brotherboy and Sistergirl

Some First Nations people and communities use the terms Brotherboy and Sistergirl to describe gender diverse individuals within their cultures. These terms reflect unique cultural understandings of gender identity and roles.

However, it's important to note that not all First Nations gender diverse people identify with these terms, and language and identities may vary across communities.

- Brotherboy refers to a gender diverse person who has a male spirit and takes on male roles within their community. Brotherboys often have a strong sense of cultural identity and connection to their heritage.
- Sistergirl describes a gender diverse person with a female spirit who takes on female roles within their community. Many sistergirls maintain strong and deep connections to their cultural identities and communities.

3. Diversity Council Australia. What is intersectionality? Accessed 5 May 2025, <https://www.dca.org.au/resources/di-planning/what-is-intersectionality>



2.7%

of LGBTIQ+ people over 18 also identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

(Private Lives 3 Survey, 2023).

24.5%

of LGBTQ+ First Nations respondents have experienced discrimination in their workplace due to their diverse sexuality or gender (vs. 18.0% LGBTQ+ non-First Nations participants).

(LGBTQASB+ Mob & Work, Pride in Diversity, 2025).

29.8%

of LGBTQ+ First Nations respondents have been the target of workplace incivility behaviours targeting their diverse sexuality

(LGBTQASB+ Mob & Work, Pride in Diversity, 2025).



Domestic abuse within the LGBTIQ+ community

This strategy acknowledges SAPOL's awareness and understanding of the distinct and unique forms of control that members of the LGBTIQ+ community may encounter, which go beyond domestic violence 'typically' experienced in heterosexual relationships. This may come in the form of power and control, with threats of 'outing' someone, withholding gender-affirming clothing or medication, or leveraging a person's identity to isolate or manipulate them.

The victim may also experience barriers to seeking help, with fears of discrimination and social stigma stemming from homophobia or transphobia. This strategy seeks to ensure the LGBTIQ+ community have confidence in SAPOL as a safe space to seek support.

Reporting rates of family or intimate partner violence remain low with just 28% reporting to a support service, and only 45% of those who reported to police felt supported.

(Private Lives 3 Survey, 2019)

More than 60% of LGBTQ+ people have experienced domestic, family or intimate partner violence and abuse in their lifetime.

(Private Lives 3 Survey, 2019)

81%
of LGBTIQ+ people with a severe disability reported experiencing family violence.

(Private Lives 3 Survey, 2019)





Partnerships and collaboration

Since 2023, SAPOL has been a proud Principal Partner with Pride in Diversity. Pride in Diversity is a national not-for-profit employer support program for all aspects of LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion, specialising in HR, organisational change and workplace diversity. Pride in Diversity has supported SAPOL's commitment to achieving inclusion in the workplace.

As part of the LGBTIQ+ Liaison Officer (LLO) training program, SAPOL engaged with SARAA (South Australian Rainbow Advocacy Alliance), Shine SA, the Equality Project, and Thorne Harbour Health to assist with the delivery of training and to support the development of the role. These partnerships improve our understanding of issues affecting the LGBTIQ+ community, identify barriers to reporting, develop best practice, and enhance relationships between police and the community to increase trust and confidence in SAPOL.

SAPOL also maintains ongoing collaboration with these organisations through regular meetings, joint initiatives, and consultation to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery and community engagement.

SAPOL has attended the Better Together Conference in Adelaide across multiple years (2021, 2023, 2025), as well as the Proud to Be Your Friend 3rd World Conference for Justice Professionals in 2023. Both conferences have provided significant opportunities for SAPOL to develop a deeper understanding about the challenges faced by LGBTIQ+ communities and to build collaborative networks across Australia and globally.

We welcome the opportunity for continued engagement and collaboration.

Allyship

Anyone and everyone can be an ally. We can all have a positive impact.

An ally helps change culture. By listening and learning, being visible and vocal, and through actively supporting LGBTIQ+ people, allies can use their position to raise awareness of issues and counter discrimination of marginalised groups. Allies have a unique power to influence others and to show that respect and inclusion are important to everyone.

Within SAPOL, through allyship and the building of strong supportive relationships, we are all enablers of an inclusive workplace where everyone feels safe, respected and supported to reach their potential. It is an inclusive culture that enables LGBTIQ+ people to feel safe to be themselves at work⁴.



4. Diversity Council Australia (Brown, C., O'Leary, J., Trau, R., Legg, A.) Out At Work: From Prejudice to Pride, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2018.

One in four Australians in the workplace don't ever see themselves becoming an ally to LGBTIQ+ communities

(Seek PRIDE Report, 2021).

47%

of people who are gay or lesbian have experienced workplace sexual harassment in the past five years.

(Everyone's business: Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces, Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018)

LGBTIQ+ employees are twice as likely to be victims of workplace discrimination as their non-LGBTIQ+ colleagues.

(Seek PRIDE Report, 2021)



Marching forward with Pride at SAPOL – Our key priorities and goals

As we continue to learn and develop to enhance LGBTIQ+ inclusion we have identified key priorities and goals to guide us.

Key priorities and goals

The Pride at SAPOL - LGBTIQ+ Strategy 2025-2030 has four key priorities and 11 associated goals.

Priority 1:

Equitable, inclusive and accessible services

Goals:

- 1.1. Increase trust in SAPOL by the LGBTIQ+ community and their families.
- 1.2. Positive engagement with LGBTIQ+ peoples, their community and advocates.

Priority 2:

Enhance organisational culture and attitudes

Goals:

- 2.1 Inclusive workplaces where LGBTIQ+ people are empowered, thrive and are supported to reach their potential.
- 2.2 Culturally safe workplaces which recognise and value the diverse backgrounds and the perspectives of others.
- 2.3 Provide information and training on allyship and its importance.

Priority 3:

Build LGBTIQ+ knowledge

Goals:

- 3.1 A workforce with increased awareness and understanding of LGBTIQ+ topics.
- 3.2 Enhanced LGBTIQ+ community trust and engagement with SAPOL.
- 3.3 Leaders who are capable, confident and committed to LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

Priority 4:

Increase representation and participation

Goals:

- 4.1 Policies and procedures that support recruitment, retention and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people.
- 4.2 Recognition as an employer of choice for LGBTIQ+ people.
- 4.3 LGBTIQ+ employees have access to networks and resource groups to provide support and a safe space.

Glossary

Affirmation Gender affirmation involves recognising and accepting an individual's gender identity, including their self-identification and experiences. This process can be social, medical, or legal, and it encompasses the validation and support of the individual's gender by others.

Asexual A person who may experience little to no sexual attraction but may experience romantic attraction.



Aromantic Someone who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others. Aromantic individuals may or may not identify as asexual.



Belonging Belonging is the result of daily experiences that make a person feel safe and able to bring their whole, unique self to work. Organisations that value belonging focus on creating an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels accepted, respected, and connected.

Binary Binary is defined as relating to, composed of, or involving only two things.

Bisexual An individual who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the same gender and people of another gender.



Brotherboy Is a term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people who have a male spirit and take on male roles within the community. Brotherboys have a strong sense of their cultural identity.

Cisgender Describes people whose gender is the same as the sex assigned to them at birth (male or female). 'Cis' is a Latin term meaning 'on the same side as'.

Diversity Diversity involves recognising, respecting, and valuing differences based on various factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, age, disability, sexuality, and more. A diverse workplace welcomes everyone and benefits from a range of perspectives.

Equality Equality is about treating everyone the same to achieve fair outcomes.

Equity Equity involves acknowledging that people have different needs based on their intersecting identities and experiences. It aims to meet these needs to ensure everyone experiences fair and just outcomes, removing barriers and disadvantages.

Gay Where a person is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the same sex and/or gender as themselves.



Gender Gender refers to a spectrum of human identities and self-expression. While often used interchangeably with sex, gender is a distinct concept encompassing various identities beyond the binary.

Gender diverse Is an umbrella term for gender identities such as transgender, non-binary or gender fluid/queer.

Gender expression Describes how a person presents their gender through behaviour, mannerisms, interests, and appearance, regarding the categories of femininity, masculinity, non-binary or gender neutral.

Inclusion Inclusion is about bringing together diverse individuals in an organisation. It is achieved when diverse people feel respected, connected, contributing, and progressing at work.

Intersectionality Intersectionality recognises that people's lives are shaped by their overlapping identities and experiences, such as age, race, gender identity, class, disability, and sexuality, which together form a unique identity.

Intersex



Refers to people who have genetic, hormonal or physical sex characteristics that are not typically 'male' or 'female'.

Lesbian



A person that identifies as a woman who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as women.

LGBTIQA+

This term encompasses individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning, asexual/ aromantic, and other diverse identities within this community.

Non-binary



Individuals whose gender is not exclusively female, or male are often referred to as non-binary.

Pansexual



Someone who is romantically and/or sexually attracted to people regardless of their gender identity. Often framed as attraction to all genders, or attraction to people based on specific traits

Queer/questioning

An umbrella term used to describe a broad range of diverse sexualities and/or genders.

Sex

A person's sex is based upon their sex characteristics, such as their chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs. While typically based on the sex characteristics observed and recorded at birth or infancy, a person's reported sex can change over the course of their lifetime and may differ from their sex recorded at birth.

Sistergirl

Is a term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people who have a female spirit and take on female roles within the community, including caring for children and family. Many sistergirls live a traditional lifestyle and have strong cultural backgrounds.

Transgender



This umbrella term describes individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

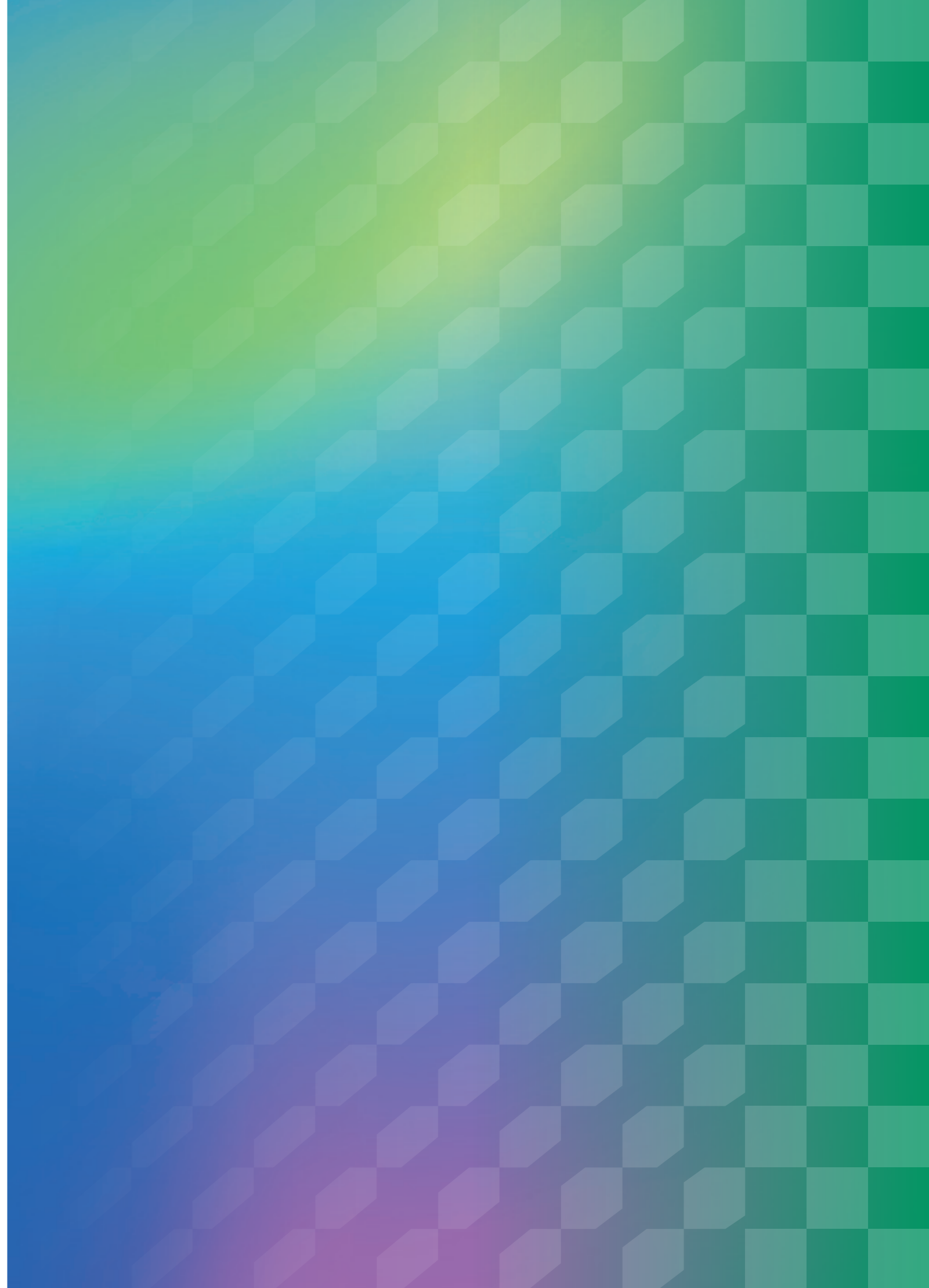


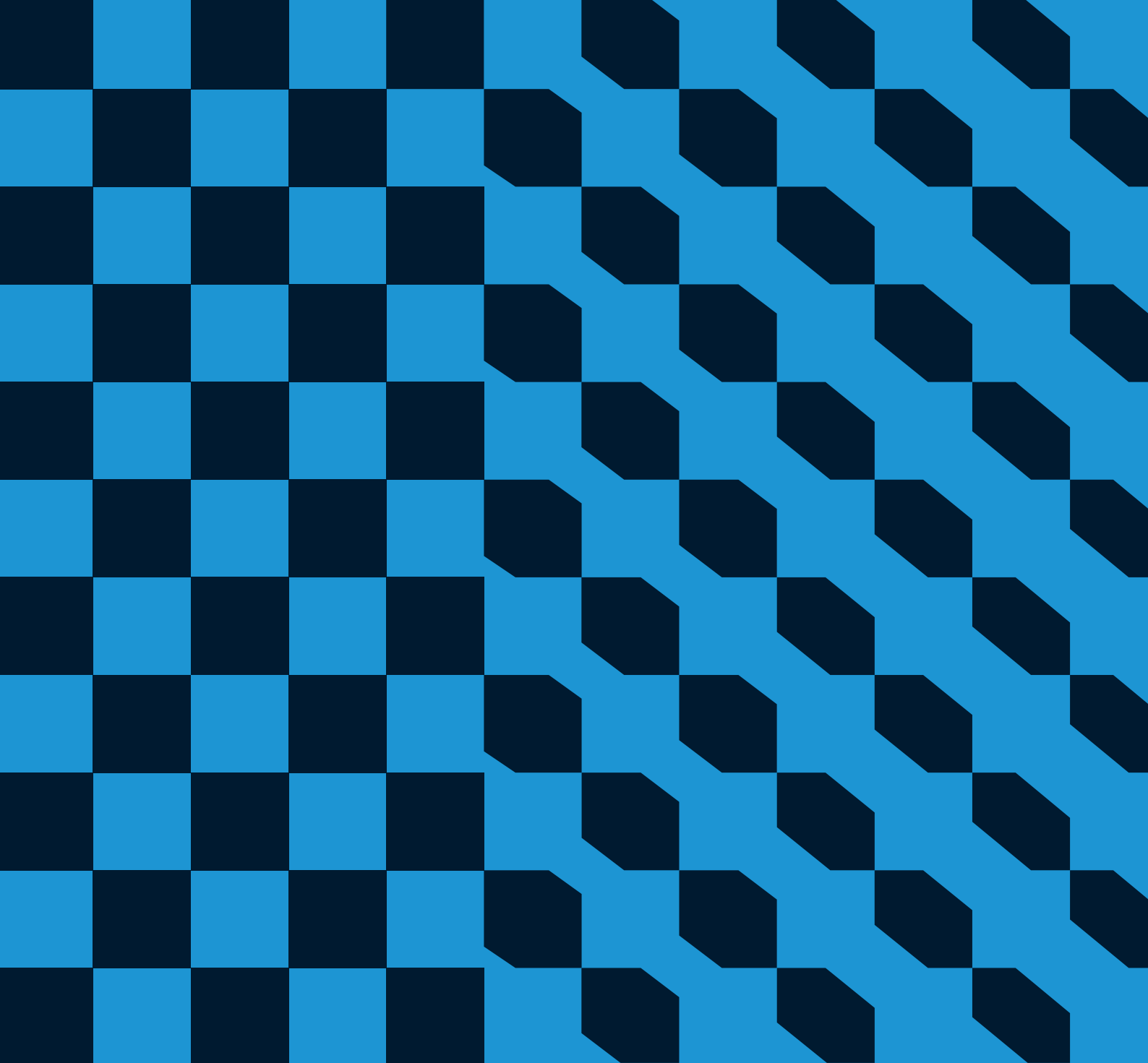


Contact details

Responsibility for management of outcomes of SAPOL's Pride Strategy rests with the Diversity and Inclusion Branch.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this Strategy, please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Branch via email: sapol.diversityandinclusion@police.sa.gov.au





Service Integrity Leadership Collaboration Courage Respect