



APiC on the MBC2B project

Challenges and successes



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1. Project APiC plan

Fulton Hogan is required to spend 1.5% of the contract value on Aboriginal Participation in Construction. Following the award of stage 2 works and the execution of the associated contract amendment deed, Fulton Hogan has a target project spend of \$2,503,651 for the Mungle Back to Boggabilla reconstruction project.

2. Initiatives implemented

2.1 Direct engagement from local community

In order to meet the Aboriginal Participation in Construction (APiC) targets, Fulton Hogan planned to engage indigenous local people and businesses throughout this project. It was found that there were limited local businesses in the area early on and so direct employment became the main focus.

It was found that for those persons who resided in Boggabilla and surrounds (postcode 2409), 56% of residents identified as being of aboriginal heritage. Fulton Hogan approached the Toomelah Local Land Council and community elders who initially recommended five locals they thought would be suitable for employment on the project. Two of the five recommended people are now directly employed by Fulton Hogan and are undertaking a Certificate III in Civil Construction.

Once word spread through the community of the possibility of employment a number of indigenous persons approached the project for employment. A total of 45 people who identify as aboriginal that have been engaged through Fulton Hogan on this project fulfilling 21 full-time equivalent roles.

2.2 Requiring subcontractors/suppliers to prioritise aboriginal participation

Fulton Hogan continues to work with subcontractors and suppliers to engage members of the local community on this project. Not only are there a number of local aboriginal people willing to work, for subcontractors and suppliers who are not based in this area it presents an economic benefit to them to employ local individuals. The employment of individuals based in the area do not have to spend time travelling long distances to and from the project each week (workers can work a full five days and still have the whole weekend to rest) and since travel is not required, therefore the payment of travel expenses/allowances is not required.

2.3 Engaging a local elder as a mentor

It was identified early in the project that the whole project team would benefit from the engagement of a local elder as a mentor on site not just for aboriginal workers but also for the project teams. The local elder has helped the project teams to better understand the community needs, barriers to employment and to assist the new staff where required to address barriers to work.

2.4 Leaving a legacy through traineeships

The Transport for NSW and Fulton Hogan project teams are working to leave a legacy in the local community through traineeships.

Transport for NSW employed a local Aboriginal identified Administration Trainee for assistance on the project. Kelirra completed year 12 at Boggabilla Central School in 2018 and to date she has completed a Certificate III in Business Administration and is commencing a Diploma of Project Management.

Fulton Hogan employed two school based trainees from Boggabilla Central School, supporting them to complete a Certificate II in Business Administration while completing years 11 and 12. The implementation of school based traineeships also aligns with the RMS Diversity and Inclusion Forum Committee's Action Plan for Western Region – Pre-employment opportunities for Aboriginal youth in remote locations (Appendix 1 of the RMS Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020).

Fulton Hogan also has a number of local indigenous people undertaking civil construction traineeships on site.

2.5 Cultural heritage training

Cultural heritage training is being held progressively for the whole project team to increase staff awareness of local traditions and areas of significance. This is run by a local elder and positive feedback had been received from all who have attended so far.

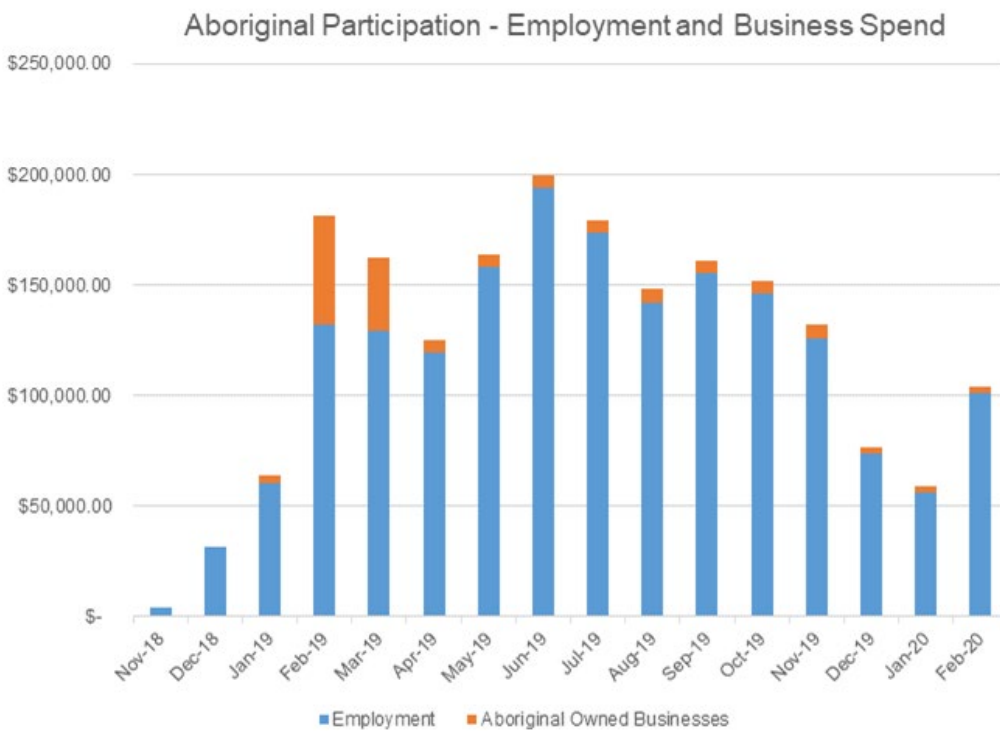
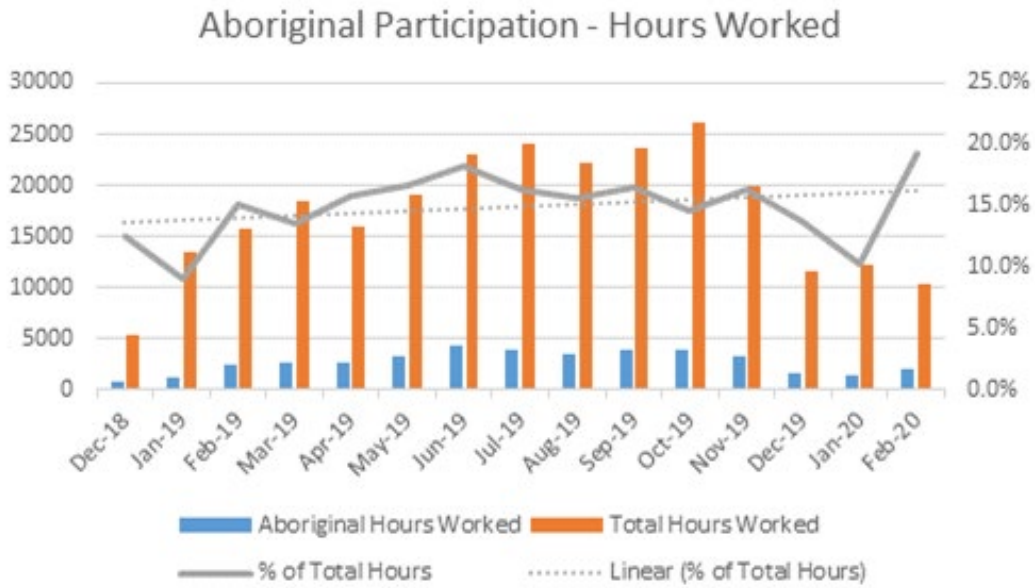
2.6 Providing breakfasts/lunches for students and staff of Boggabilla central and Toomelah public schools

The project team often makes use of excess food from site barbeques to feed students and staff of the local Boggabilla and Toomelah schools. Site staff have cooked barbeque breakfasts and lunches for the schools and local community members a number of times and can see the benefit of community outreach and ensuring that students eat at least one meal per day.

3. Results to date

As of the end of February 2020, the results achieved are as follows:

Activity	Target	Actual
Employment	\$2,700,000	\$1,726,585
Employment (fulltime roles)	Equivalent of 10	Equivalent of 21
Aboriginal owned business	\$100,000	\$140,381
Education and training	\$245,000	\$188,805
TOTAL	\$2,503,651	\$2,055,771



4. Key challenges

4.1 Project location

Not having access to reliable transportation is a barrier for people being able to get to work each day. Due to the location of the Mungle Back Creek to Boggabilla reconstruction project,

there is no public transport, the project is not within walking distance from town, site work starts early (pre-start commences at 6:30am and attendance is mandatory) and some work involves being on-call. Therefore, if you don't have access to a reliable method of transport to get to work it is difficult to keep a job.

4.2 Modifying existing processes/roles to suit

In order to cater to community needs, such as sorry business and to allow for family time, Fulton Hogan has been able to split some full-time roles into multiple part time roles. A great example of this are the cleaners on site – a number of local aboriginal people are employed as cleaners and they work with Fulton Hogan to ensure that someone is always on site to meet the project needs.

Site management has had to reconsider the traditional military style role performance management in the industry. Some indigenous persons have never had a male role model growing up, have never had to deal with confrontation, lack the confidence to speak up and are unlikely to show up to work if they've been embarrassed or shamed without reporting it. The local elder has been instrumental in identifying these issues and working with Fulton Hogan to address these issues and achieve staff retention.

4.3 Need for basic education on role specific requirements

In addition to working with the community and training providers to help job starters be job ready, it has been recognised that it is important that extended inductions are conducted to ensure that workers are aware of all role specific requirements.

4.4 Industry specific training

Access to training to gain industry competencies needed to work on site (such as the requirement to have a white card) has proved difficult in Boggabilla. Fulton Hogan has needed to arrange training locally to ensure that potential workers have the ability to gain the competencies and qualifications needed.

5. Next steps

5.1 Boggabilla bush food garden

The MBC2B project team is working hard to establish a garden containing local plants of aboriginal significance for cultural learning, education and as a community resource. This will help to replace plants that were cleared for the work, start a seed bank for further propagation and become a location for training locals in aboriginal conservation and land management. A suitable location has been identified adjacent to the Boggabilla Cemetery on the Town Common property. The Local Land Council is working with Local Land Services and the Town Common to secure the site.

5.2 Toomelah firewood packaging facility assistance

The National Indigenous Australians Agency and Toomelah Land Council have proposed a project to develop a community owned firewood packaging business adjacent to the Toomelah mission and have approached the project to supply a hard stand and driveway for the facility, pending council approval.

5.3 Employment transition (to Inland Rail and other companies)

The Transport for NSW and Fulton Hogan teams are keen to work together with Inland Rail and other companies in the area to promote continued employment of skilled workers as the Mungle Back Creek to Boggabilla reconstruction project comes to a close.