

Queensland Australian South Sea Islander Community Survey 2014

Survey Summary Report

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Acknowledgements

The Queensland Government, through Multicultural Affairs Queensland (formerly known as Cultural Diversity Queensland) would like to thank all Australian South Sea Islander community members who completed the Queensland Australian South Sea Islander Community Survey 2014 (the survey).

Multicultural Affairs Queensland would also like to thank all the Australian South Sea Islander community organisations and community volunteers who helped distribute, promote and return completed surveys through events such as family meetings, morning teas, barbecues etc.

In particular gratitude is extended to members of the Australian South Sea Islander community who participated in the Survey Focus Groups held during February and March 2014.

A special thank you is also extended to Erryn Tomarra, the Queensland Government funded CAMS Australian South Sea Islander worker based in Mackay, for her extensive work in supporting, promoting and facilitating community participation in the survey.

“History shows that despite adversity Australian South Sea Islanders are a resilient people with strong family values, strong work ethic and the ability to contribute to their community in a positive, proactive way. The elders within the community have worked tirelessly to raise awareness and to improve life for Australian South Sea Islanders in a quiet, respectful and positive way. Actions speak louder than words, now it’s time to act. Thank you for allowing me an opportunity to have my say.”

Survey respondent (anonymous)

Summary

Australian South Sea Islanders are the Australian-born direct descendants of people who were brought (in the main) to Australia between 1863 and 1904 to work as indentured labourers in the primary industries.



South Sea Islanders by the Fearless, Cairns c.1890s

Image source: National Library of Australia: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an24493567>

Over 50,000 people (predominantly men) came from some 80 Pacific Islands, primarily Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, and the majority were kidnapped, 'blackbirded' or deceived into coming.¹

While some ancestors of Australian South Sea Islanders may have left their homelands by choice, they were more often than not subjected to the same discrimination and harsh treatment as those that were deceived or taken by force.

Despite the hardship and discrimination faced by the community, Australian South Sea Islanders have contributed significantly to the social, cultural and economic development of Queensland.

In 2013, the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA) in conjunction with members of the Queensland Australian South Sea Islander community, developed an attitudinal survey to gain and share current data on the views, issues and priorities of this unique Queensland community.

¹ The term 'blackbirding' refers to act or practice of collecting, stealing or coercing people into working as labourers.

Survey questions covered issues relevant to Australian South Sea Islanders in Queensland and sought views on:

- current recognition of the Australian South Sea Islander community
- perceptions about Australian South Sea Islander community participation, priorities and goals
- service provision, future employment opportunities and education attainment
- general demographic information.

Survey results indicated a number of common themes regarding the importance of recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders as a unique cultural group and the need for this recognition to translate into the provision of targeted and culturally appropriate services and assistance that meet the needs of the community.

The findings from the survey are a public resource and will be distributed for consideration to government agencies, other service providers and organisations, and the Australian South Sea Islander community for their own advocacy and initiatives.

The results from the survey will also help inform the Queensland Cultural Diversity Policy objective of improving outcomes and access to services for all culturally diverse Queenslanders, including Australian South Sea Islanders.

In the spirit of the Queensland Plan, the results of this survey should be used to ensure ‘nobody gets left behind’ as we continue to celebrate, embrace and respect Queensland’s diversity.

Australian South Sea Islanders today

Introduction

Today’s Australian South Sea Islanders are a distinct cultural group with a unique history and position in Australian society.

Australian South Sea Islanders have a unique history and identity. Australian South Sea Islanders are not indigenous, although some have bi-cultural or tri-cultural heritage through interrelationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Many have shared some aspects of the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Current situation

In the 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census, 3093 people in Queensland identified as having Australian South Sea Islander ancestry.

Table 1: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2011 – Australian South Sea Islander Ancestry

Australian South Sea Islander Ancestry	Number	Source
Rest of Australia	944	ABS Census 2011
Anecdotal Australian South Seas Ancestry	15,000 – 20,000	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission ²
Anecdotal self-identified Australian South Seas Ancestry	10,000 – 12,000	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission ³

Anecdotal evidence suggests the census significantly undercounts the actual Australian South Sea Islander population and may only represent a sample of the whole Australian South Sea Islander community.

There are a number of possible reasons for this undercount, but importantly the lack of accurate data on the size of the community and other information that can be obtained from the census affects the quality and efficiency of the delivery of appropriate programs and services needed by the community.

Population age structure data from the census suggests a young population for Australian South Sea Islanders and a higher population growth rate compared to the non-Australian South Sea Islander population.⁴

Census data also suggests Queensland Australian South Sea Islanders experience greater economic disadvantage overall than non-Australian South Sea Islanders (matched within the same geographical locations). This disadvantage is evidenced by:

1. A lower chance of attaining an education level above a Certificate III or IV and a higher chance of having a below year 12 education.
2. A higher unemployment rate overall⁵.
3. A higher unemployment rate for a given level of qualification (with the exception of a bachelor degree or higher).

Whilst the census provides basic demographic and economic information on Australian South Sea Islanders, enquiries during the Australian South Sea Islander 150th anniversary celebrations in 2013 highlighted a lack of current data relating to the Australian South Sea Islander community. Furthermore, there was no quantitatively collected information available on the current views of Queensland Australian South Sea Islanders on their situation. The survey was developed in response to this issue.

² Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. *The Call for Recognition – a report on the situation of Australian South Sea Islanders*, Canberra: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1992. Note: These estimates are commonly cited in government and some academic sources. The origin of these numbers seem largely traceable back to original ethnographic work done in the 1970s and 1980s.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The term “non-Australian South Sea Islander” in this report is defined as those people who have not identified as having Australian South Sea Islander ancestry in the Census and/or during the current survey.

⁵ According to 2011 Census data, the total unemployment rate for Australian South Sea Islanders aged 15 to 64 years in Queensland was 11.2 per cent which is almost twice the non-Australian South Sea Islander rate (6.1%).

Queensland Australian South Sea Islander Community Survey 2014

Objective

The development of the survey was driven by Australian South Sea Islander community members and the Queensland Government through Multicultural Affairs Queensland.

The overall objective of the project was to provide Queenslanders from Australian South Sea Islander backgrounds with an opportunity to share their views on current issues impacting on, and priorities for, their community. The survey was primarily attitudinal, and sought information on subjective experiences and personal views around key focus areas.

The aim of the survey was to gather data which would allow government, non-government and community organisations to better understand, acknowledge and respond to issues and aspirations of the Australian South Sea Islander community in Queensland.

Survey development

Survey topics and questions were initially identified through inquiry and discussion with government and non-government agencies and community members. A draft survey questionnaire was progressively developed through focus group meetings with members of the Australian South Sea Islander community in Brisbane, Mackay and Rockhampton during February and March 2014. Other Australian South Sea Islander community members gave feedback over the phone and/or by email.

Feedback provided the basis for developing a final survey questionnaire of relevant themes and topics. The complete survey (paper version) is included in Appendix 1.

The final survey was delivered to respondents via two channels, electronic and post. The survey was open from 27 March 2014 to 6 June 2014.

To maximize participation in the survey, the department undertook extensive community consultation, promotion and follow up work. Data was collected from 447 surveys completed or partly completed by Australian South Sea Islander community members.



*Australian South Sea Islander Survey Focus Group, Brisbane, 18 February 2014
From left: Ms Marcia Eves, Ms Sandra Georgiou, Ms Jennifer Darr and Mr Harold Fatnowna.*

Survey data

The survey was aimed at people aged 18 years and over who identified as being an Australian South Sea Islander and were living in Queensland at the time of the survey.

While respondents were provided with a definition of an Australian South Sea Islander for the purposes of the survey, and they self-identified, no verification of a respondent's ancestry was required.

Once the survey was promoted to the Australian South Sea Islander community, obtaining responses was entirely dependent on people self-selecting to complete the survey. As such, the survey results discussed below represent only those of the community who responded:

Of the 1810 Australian South Sea Islanders who identified as aged 18 years of age and living in Queensland in the 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census, approximately 25 per cent completed the current survey

- 62 per cent of survey respondents also identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (see Table 3, Appendix 2)
- 38 per cent of survey respondents were male and 62 per cent were female (see Table 31 in Appendix 2)
- 48 per cent of respondents were aged 45 years and over (see Table 30 in Appendix 2)
- 38 per cent completed year 12 or equivalent (see Table 25 in Appendix 2)
- 59 per cent have tertiary qualifications (see Table 26, Appendix 2).

The percentage breakdown suggests survey results are over represented by older age groups and is strongly biased towards people with tertiary education. Data from the survey is collated into tables in Appendix 2, where a brief discussion of data analysis is also provided.

Summary of responses

The following is a summary of the top or overarching responses to each survey question grouped under the key themes of:

- **Recognition**
- **Main strengths**
- **Positive future**
- **Practical actions**
- **Improved services**
- **Community knowledge, strengths, identity and relations.**

Recognition

"It is not only about our history and culture; it is about the well-deserved recognition of the contribution ASSI made to the economics of Queensland through the sugar, railway and other industries."

Survey respondent (anonymous)

Responses to survey questions around Australian South Sea Islander recognition and acknowledgement of their unique culture and history indicate that respondents feel Queensland Government recognition (85 per cent) is extremely important, followed by recognition from Queenslanders in general (53.9 per cent).

However, less than half of respondents (43.7 per cent) felt the Queensland Government did a good job of acknowledging the unique history and culture of Australian South Sea Islanders. Just less than a quarter (23.0 per cent) felt Queenslanders in general acknowledged Australian South Sea Islanders' cultural uniqueness. (Refer to Tables 4, 5, and 6 in Appendix 1.)

Queensland Government Recognition Statement Australian South Sea Islander Community

The Queensland Government hereby formally recognises Australian South Sea Islanders as a distinct cultural group.

Australian South Sea Islanders are the Australian-born descendants of predominantly Melanesian people who were brought to Queensland between 1863 and 1904 from eighty Pacific Islands, but primarily Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

Australian South Sea Islanders are not indigenous to this country. South Sea Islanders were brought to Australia as a source of cheap labour for Queensland's primary industries. Many people were tricked into coming, others were kidnapped or 'blackbirded'. Men, women and children were forced to work long hours at exhausting manual work for low or no wages while living in very poor conditions. Many were treated like slaves. In the early 1800s, the death rate among South Sea Islanders was five times higher than the comparable European population.

Between 1906 and 1908 South Sea Islanders were deported under the White Australia Policy. South Sea Islanders protested and petitioned the Government against deportation. The descendants of those who remained in Australia are known today as Australian South Sea Islanders. The generation of South Sea Islanders who remained after deportation were subjected to ongoing racial discrimination and harsh treatment, including restrictions as a consequence of government legislation. Some trade unions also adopted exclusionary practices which disadvantaged the community. Many Australian South Sea Islanders are today still living in conditions well below the standard of living enjoyed by most other Australians.

The Australian South Sea Islander community has played a major role in the economic, cultural and regional development of Queensland. Australian South Sea Islanders provided labour to help build local economies and key industries.

They played a significant role in the sugar industry. They also contributed to the development of farming and grazing, as well as the maritime industry, pearling, mining, the railways, domestic services and childcare. Individual Australian South Sea Islanders have excelled in politics, government, religion, sports, art, business, health and education. They have also served the nation as members of the defence force in times of peace and war. While their work benefited the State as a whole, Australian South Sea Islanders remained in a state of poverty.

Australian South Sea Islanders' unique spirituality, identity and cultural heritage enrich Queensland's culturally diverse society. For more than a century their culture, history and contribution to Queensland have been ignored and denied. Even today there is little knowledge or understanding among the Australian community about Australian South Sea Islanders.

The Government acknowledges and regrets that Australian South Sea Islanders experienced unjust treatment and endured social and economic disadvantage, prejudice and racial discrimination. The Government also recognises that Australian South Sea Islanders continue to face significant disadvantages.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that present and future generations of Australian South Sea Islanders have equality of opportunity to participate in and contribute to the economic, social, political and cultural life of the State.

The Queensland Government requires its departments and other agencies to act on this commitment through their policies, programs and services.

P. Beattie
The Hon. Peter Beattie MLA
Premier

John Kay
The Hon. John Kay MP
Speaker - Queensland Parliament

Mark McGowan
The Hon. Mark McGowan MLA
Leader of the Opposition

1 September 2000

The issue of Australian Government recognition and/or all Australians knowing Australian South Sea Islander history and culture regularly arose in written responses.

Written responses to survey questions about recognition and acknowledgement also highlighted several themes of importance to Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community. These 'recognition themes' entailed practical actions, outlined below, and recurred in other survey question responses highlighting their importance in helping to achieve positive community outcomes:

- Australian South Sea Islander history and culture should be taught in Queensland's curriculum.
- That the economic contribution of Australian South Sea Islanders and their ancestors be properly recognised.
- That there be better acknowledgement of the harsh and often discriminatory history of Australian South Sea Islanders.
- That there be greater acknowledgement of Australian South Sea Islanders' distinct ethnicity (in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other culturally diverse peoples).
- That there be a greater understanding of Australian South Sea Islander associations with their ancestors' original home islands, extended family connections and the problems caused by past removals.
- That specific identification, assistance, consultation and action be granted to Australian South Sea Islanders.

A common theme in survey responses was that recognition and acknowledgement requires practical measures to identify and meet specific Australian South Sea Islander needs, although the degree to which respondents thought this had already been achieved varied.

Main strengths

“Australian South Sea Islander people are hardworking people. They are very respectful people to all cultures and are always trying to work in harmony to make better outcomes for all.”

Survey respondent (anonymous)

Respondents were asked what they thought were the three main strengths of the Australian South Sea Islander community in Queensland today.

Strong family links were overwhelmingly indicated as the main community strength by 74 per cent of respondents. In addition, 33.3 per cent of respondents indicated the role of Australian South Sea Islanders in Queensland's economic, cultural and regional development was an important community strength, closely followed by 30.1 per cent of respondents who indicated the recognition of Elders was a major community strength. (See Table 7 in Appendix 2 for further responses.)

Positive future

“As an Australian South Sea Islander, for me it’s not about getting more support, it is about being recognised for our contribution to this land and an understanding of what was endured by ancestors....”

Survey respondent (anonymous)

When asked, “What are the three most important things that will lead to a positive future for Queensland’s Australian South Sea Islander community?” the leading response, given by 67.8 per cent of respondents, was ‘more recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders’ unique culture and history’. ‘Australian South Sea Islander community unity’ was indicated as the next most important factor for a positive future by 41 per cent of respondents, followed by ‘strong well-resourced community organisations’ with a 38.3 per cent response rate. (See Table 8 in Appendix 2 for overall collated responses.)



Group of South Sea Islanders workers on a sugar plantation, Cairns 1890
Image source: John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, Neg. 60623.

Practical actions

“Allocated Government resources for Australian South Sea Islanders targeted at health, education, housing, job opportunities and scholarships.”

Survey respondent (anonymous)

Respondents were asked to indicate “What practical actions would improve outcomes for Queensland’s Australian South Sea Islander community?”.

Responses are presented at Table 9 in Appendix 2. This question elicited multi-responses, 32 per cent

of which have been grouped under the broad theme of ‘honouring the Action Plan’s intent’.⁶

The next two highest proportions of responses had educational themes. Better acknowledgement of Australian South Sea Islander culture and history through curriculum initiatives was seen by 24.7 per cent of respondents as important, closely followed by 23 per cent of people indicating education services, scholarships and opportunities for Australian South Sea Islanders would improve community outcomes.

With regards to education attainment, respondents were asked a separate multi-response question, “If you were to do more study, what would help you achieve your goal?” As can be seen in Table 2, the highest response rates to this question reflect the last practical action outlined above:

Table 2: If you were to do more study, what would help you achieve your goal?

Achieving study goals	Frequency	Percentage
Scholarship to go to university	133	39.7
Scholarship to go to TAFE or get other training qualifications	124	37.0
Better learning support (e.g. tutoring or mentoring)	105	31.3
More time for study or training	99	29.6
Less discrimination	57	17.0
Access to childcare and family support	46	13.7
Scholarship to finish school	29	8.7
Closer educational facilities	29	8.7
Improved health	26	7.8
Better transport	18	5.4
Other	28	8.4
Base	335	-

⁶ The Queensland Government Action Plan for the Australian South Sea Islander Community (the Action Plan) was formulated to address five major issues identified from public consultations with the Australian South Sea Islander community (i.e. improved access to services, better government and community awareness, community development and addressing discrimination). The Action Plan was to be a blueprint which guided agencies in working to address service delivery issues impacting on the Australian South Sea Islander community. The broad survey theme of ‘honouring the Action Plan’s intent’ takes into account survey responses that called for: more Australian South Sea Islander specific government funding, consultation and culturally appropriate services (e.g. identified positions, recognition of distinct ethnicity on forms, etc.); making the Action Plan happen or more actions not promises; recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders as a distinct ethnicity and not under the multicultural banner; and/or cultural awareness training in government, industry and the like. While other responses also fall within the major issues identified in 2001 as requiring addressing via the Action Plan these were grouped for statistical purposes because of their alignment with cultural improvements in actions and services.

Responses to the question “If you were looking for a job or a better job, what would help you?” indicated more access to job interview training and/or mentoring and other affordable training (28.4%) would be the most beneficial outcome, followed by a higher education level (25.6%). Less discrimination accounted for 21 per cent of responses, closely followed by employment assistance services (19.5%). Other responses are collated in Table 24 in Appendix 2.

Improved services

“It would be fantastic to have ASSI specific employment programs (such as the Indigenous Cadetship Scheme) incentivised jobs for employers like the Indigenous have.”

Survey respondent (anonymous)

Respondents were also asked to provide short written responses to the question, “In brief, what is the one thing that would improve the services below for you as an Australian South Sea Islander?” The services listed were: health, education, social services (e.g. child care, aged care, disability care), employment, housing, police, transport, emergency services (e.g. ambulance, fire services), legal and other services.

While responses were given for each different service listed, common themes emerged across the total service responses and, in brief, included:

- Availability of Australian South Sea Islander specific services, programs and/or assistance such as: financial assistance, apprenticeships, training and mentoring

- Provision of cultural awareness training and education for employers, businesses, teachers, service delivery staff, etc., to better meet the needs of Australian South Sea Islanders
- The same choices, services, benefits and rights as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples but with recognition of cultural difference
- Australian South Sea Islander targeted or identified employment opportunities including cadetships, training, incentive schemes and the like.

Underlying all of these responses is the assertion of a distinct Australian South Sea Islander ethnic and cultural identity, which requires special recognition and tailored services, programs and benefits.

‘Identity’ is central to many of the issues and themes highlighted in current survey responses. Mentioned a number of times in overall written survey responses was the need for a clear Australian South Sea Islander identifier to be added to all government and other agency forms.

Tables 11 to 19 in Appendix 2 provide individual collation of the practical actions given by respondents to each service area surveyed.

Community knowledge, strengths, identity and relations

“Establish a governance structure that will enable South Sea Islanders to influence political parties. Strong regional collaborative organisations across Queensland with the main priority of raising the profile of SSI people.”

Survey respondent (anonymous)

The survey clearly brought forward an array of views and priorities. The richness and diversity in people’s survey responses is to be expected from an engaged and active community and adds to the web of knowledge about Queensland’s Australian South Sea Islander community’s needs and priorities. Importantly, however, some responses to survey questions indicated a lack of knowledge about already available services and programs, or how particular initiatives worked.

As noted earlier, 62 per cent of survey respondents indicated they had dual or multi-cultural heritage (i.e. claimed Australian South Sea Islander and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages).⁷

Issues with Australian South Sea Islanders being incorrectly labelled as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander for access to services and programs were highlighted in some written responses. On the other hand, some responses indicated tension around people ‘wrongly’ identifying in order to access assistance or entitlements designated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Survey responses also indicated that connections back to ancestral homelands, and understanding the impact of the removal and subsequent returning of ancestors to the Pacific region and/or those that stayed in Australia, are important identity factors for consideration.

Active Australian South Sea Islander community organisations, strong community identity and a strong commitment to work together to promote community interests drew comparable responses as community strengths, but did not rank as the overall three main strengths (see earlier main strengths discussion). A caveat is required in that many respondents indicated they would like to have selected more than three main strengths.

Written comments across survey questions about community organisational unity were both positive and critical. However, community unity and strong well-resourced community organisations were also seen as two of the three most important requirements for a positive future for Queensland’s Australian South Sea Islander community.

Some responses relating to Australian South Sea Islander recognition and acknowledgement indicated community based initiatives and resources were also important and better community engagement was needed.

While fewer in number, some respondents indicated recognition had been forthcoming, providing opportunities and fostering a sense of pride. Appropriate recognition can also be a powerful emotional and symbolic gesture. While the call for a National Day of Recognition or similar cultural events and commemorations did not surpass other initiatives in terms of actions for a positive future, there were numerous comments throughout survey responses that spoke to such initiatives being important for promoting recognition and awareness while instilling pride in the community.

⁷ The survey, not being a census, did not specifically question whether people gained Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage through both or one parent and/or through intermarriage.

Next steps

The focus of the survey was to gather information about the attitudes, needs and priorities of Australian South Sea Islanders in Queensland today.

Responses indicated better recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders' unique identity was still needed. Acknowledgement of a separate Australian South Sea Islander identity in the national Census and multi-heritage identification choices on government and non-government forms may enhance a feeling of community unity and common purpose.

The teaching of Australian South Sea Islander history and culture in school was seen as essential for broader community knowledge and understanding, as was cultural awareness training in organisations.

While feedback from respondents may have differed, many responses stated or alluded to the need for better service provision, programs and/or actions specifically tailored for Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community.

The survey findings are a public resource to increase community, government and other stakeholders' awareness of current issues and aspirations of the Australian South Sea Islander community. The findings will be distributed widely to government agencies and other service providers for consideration when planning future programs, targeted improvements to service delivery and other initiatives involving the community. The Australian South Sea Islander community may also utilise the survey results for advocacy and to inform their own initiatives.

The full report relating to this survey is available online at **www.communities.qld.gov.au**.

More information

For more information regarding the survey please contact Multicultural Affairs Queensland:

Phone: (07) 3224 5006
Email: maq@communities.qld.gov.au



*Belinda Arrow, first recipient of an Australian South Sea Islander Community Foundation Scholarship to graduate.
Photographer: Les Dixon*

Appendices

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Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire

Survey questions

Australian South Sea Islanders are the direct descendants of South Sea Islanders brought to Australia between 1863 and 1904 to work as indentured labourers

Q1a Are you an Australian South Sea Islander in Queensland? (Please tick)

- ☐ Yes Please complete this survey.
- ☐ No End survey.

Q1b Can you also identify as: (Please tick)

- ☐ An Aboriginal person
- ☐ A Torres Strait Islander person
- ☐ An Aboriginal and a Torres Strait Islander person
- ☐ None of these

About Australian South Sea Islander Community Recognition...

Q2 What does Australian South Sea Islander recognition mean to you today?

(Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Government acknowledgement of Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history
- ☐ Queenslanders' in general know about Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history
- ☐ Other, please say anything else here:

What do you think about the following statements?

Q3a The Queensland Government acknowledges the unique culture and history of the Australian South Sea Islander community. (Please tick)

I strongly disagree

☐

I disagree

☐

I neither agree nor disagree

☐

I agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

Please say anything else here:

Q3b Queenslanders in general know about the unique culture and history of the Australian South Sea Islander community. (Please tick)

I strongly disagree

☐

I disagree

☐

I neither agree nor disagree

☐

I agree

☐

I strongly agree

☐

Please say anything else here:

About Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander Community...

Q4 What do you think are the three (3) main strengths of Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community? (Please tick only three)

- ☐ Strong family links
- ☐ Strong links to ancestors' islands overseas
- ☐ Strong community identity
- ☐ Rich cultural heritage
- ☐ Strong spiritual leadership
- ☐ Recognition of elders
- ☐ Strong commitment to work together to promote community interests

- ☐ Significant role in Queensland's economic, cultural and regional development
- ☐ Active Australian South Sea Islander community organisations
- ☐ Active volunteers in the community
- ☐ Achievement in education, business, sport and the arts
- ☐ Please say anything else here:

Q5a What are the three (3) most important things that will lead to a positive future for Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community? (Please tick only three)

- ☐ More recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history
- ☐ Queenslanders in general know about Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history
- ☐ Australian South Sea Islander community unity
- ☐ Strong well-resourced community organisations
- ☐ Acceptance of cultural diversity by Queenslanders in general
- ☐ Job opportunities
- ☐ Support for education
- ☐ Health outcomes
- ☐ Emotional well-being
- ☐ Culturally sensitive aged care
- ☐ Business opportunities
- ☐ Freedom from discrimination
- ☐ Please say anything else here:

Q5b What practical actions would improve outcomes for Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community?

1

2

3

About Services...

Q6 In brief, what is the one thing that would improve the services below for you as an Australian South Sea Islander?

What is the one thing that would improve this service for you?

HEALTH	
EDUCATION	
SOCIAL SERVICES (e.g. child care, aged care, disability)	
EMPLOYMENT	
HOUSING	
POLICE	
TRANSPORT	
EMERGENCY SERVICES (e.g. ambulance, fire services)	
LEGAL	
OTHER SERVICES Please identify:	

About Your Employment...

The information you share is confidential.

Q8 How would you describe yourself? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ I am employed full time
- ☐ I am employed part-time or as a casual employee
- ☐ I am self-employed or a small business owner
- ☐ I am unemployed (Go straight to Q12)
- ☐ I am employed, but I am looking for more or better work
- ☐ I am a student or apprentice
- ☐ I look after my family or other dependents (e.g. children, elders)
- ☐ I am a volunteer in my community
- ☐ I am retired (Go straight to Q13a)
- ☐ Other, please identify:

Q9 What is your main job?

Q10 What sector does your main job fit in to? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Australian (Commonwealth) Government
- ☐ Queensland State Government
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ Private business
- ☐ Non-government organisation
- ☐ Other, please identify:

Q11 What area does your main job fit in to? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Administrative and support services
- ☐ Education and training
- ☐ Health care, social assistance and community development
- ☐ Arts, recreation and tourism services
- ☐ Mining and exploration
- ☐ Construction (e.g. building, engineering, etc.)
- ☐ Information, media and telecommunications
- ☐ Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- ☐ Retail trade and services
- ☐ Wholesale trade (e.g. materials, machinery and equipment)
- ☐ Manufacturing (e.g. products, machinery, equipment)
- ☐ Electricity, gas, water and waste services
- ☐ Financial and insurance services
- ☐ Professional, scientific and technical services (e.g. legal, accounting, advertising, etc.)
- ☐ Public administration and safety (e.g. government administration, justice, defence, etc.)
- ☐ Accommodation and food services
- ☐ Transport, postal and warehousing
- ☐ Rental, hiring and real estate services
- ☐ Other, please specify:

Q12 If you are looking for a job or a better job, what would help you?

(Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ I'm not looking for a job
- ☐ Assistance with small business development
- ☐ Access to job interview training and/or mentoring and other affordable training
- ☐ Improved health
- ☐ Employment assistance services
- ☐ Less discrimination
- ☐ Better transport
- ☐ Higher education level
- ☐ Childcare and family support
- ☐ Other, please specify:

About Your Education...

The information you share is confidential.

Q13a What is the highest level of school education you have completed? (Please tick one)

- ☐ Didn't go to school
- ☐ Year 8 or below
- ☐ Year 9 or equivalent
- ☐ Year 10 or equivalent
- ☐ Year 11 or equivalent
- ☐ Year 12 or equivalent

Q13b What other education and training have you completed? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ No more education and training after school
- ☐ Certificate 1 & 2 Level
- ☐ Certificate 3 & 4 Level
- ☐ Advanced diploma, diploma and associate degree level
- ☐ Bachelor degree or higher Level
- ☐ Other level, please specify:

Q14 If you were to do more study, what would help you achieve your goal?

(Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Scholarship to finish school
 - ☐ Scholarship to go to TAFE or get other training qualifications
 - ☐ Scholarship to go to university
 - ☐ Better learning support (e.g. tutoring or mentoring)
 - ☐ More time for study or training
 - ☐ Closer educational facilities
 - ☐ Better transport
 - ☐ Access to childcare and family support
 - ☐ Improved health
 - ☐ Less discrimination
 - ☐ Other, please specify:
-

A Bit More About You...

The information you share is confidential.

Q15 What is your housing situation? (Please tick only one)

- ☐ I rent my home
- ☐ I live in a home owned or rented by someone else
- ☐ I own my home (with or without a loan)
- ☐ Other, please specify:

Q16 What is your age group? (Please tick)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 65 years and over | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 to 64 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 59 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 54 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 49 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 to 44 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 39 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 to 34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 29 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 24 years | | |

Q17 Are you male or female? (Please tick)

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Q18 What suburb or town do you live in?

Q19 Please share more comments about anything else below.

Appendix 2: Abridged one-way survey tables

Data analysis

Data from the survey is reported for each question as raw frequencies and percentages from one way tables (see below). Percentages provided are based on only those who provided a response to the question. Most questions asked of the respondent had categories provided to choose from for a response. If a category did not exist for the respondent to choose, then the respondent had the opportunity to provide an open ended response. This open text was then recoded into either a new category where applicable, recoded back into an existing category if it was similar or, if it was an infrequent comment, it was coded as “Other”.

Respondents were given the opportunity for a number of questions to provide an additional open ended written response. Thematic analysis was applied to these responses in order to identify recurring themes. The occurrence of common recurring themes were counted and grouped together and new choice categories were created where the occurrence of that theme accounted for five per cent or more of the base of those who responded.

Survey tables

Table 1: Survey completion

Completion (survey total)	Frequency	Percentage
Completed	217	48.6
Partially complete	230	51.5
Total	447	100.0

Table 2: Can you also identify as:

Indigenous status	Frequency	Percentage
Aboriginal	187	42.9
Torres Strait Islander	32	7.3
Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	52	11.9
Non-Indigenous	165	37.8
Total	436	100.0

Table 3: Indigenous status

Indigenous status (collapsed)	Frequency	Percentage
Indigenous	271	62.2
Non-Indigenous	165	37.8
Total	436	100.0

Table 4: What does Australian South Sea Islander recognition mean to you today (multiple- response)? ¹

Australian South Sea Islander recognition	Frequency	Percentage
Government acknowledgement of Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history	374	85.0
Queenslanders' in general know about Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history	237	53.9
ASSI history taught in school curriculum	15	3.4
ASSI economic contribution	13	3.0
Better acknowledgement of history - slavery/blackbirding/hardship	30	6.8
Federal/All Australian Recognition	32	7.3
Recognition of ASSI as a distinct ethnicity	18	4.1
ASSI Specific assistance/consultation/action/commemoration	12	2.7
Pacific Is & Family Connections	9	2.1
Other	22	5.0
Base	374	-

Table 5: What do you think about the next statement?: The Queensland Government acknowledges the unique culture and history of the Australian South Sea Islander community

Queensland Government acknowledges (total responses collapsed)	Frequency	Percentage
I strongly disagree/I disagree	142	32.8
I neither agree nor disagree	102	23.6
I agree/I strongly agree	189	43.7
Total	433	100.0

¹ Tables where a respondent can make more than one response do not have a total as percentages do not add to 100. In these cases a base of respondents is given upon which the percentage for each response was based.

Table 6: What do you think about the next statement?: Queenslanders in general know about the unique culture and history of the Australian South Sea Islander community

Queenslanders in general know (total responses collapsed)	Frequency	Percentage
I strongly disagree/I disagree	247	57.4
I neither agree nor disagree	84	19.5
I agree/I strongly agree	99	23.0
Total	430	100.0

Table 7: What do you think are the three (3) main strengths of Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community (multiple-response)?

Three main Australian South Sea Islander community strengths	Frequency	Percentage
Strong family links	305	74.0
Significant role in Queensland's economic, cultural and regional development	137	33.3
Recognition of elders	124	30.1
Achievement in education, business, sport and the arts	107	26.0
Strong links to ancestors' islands overseas	104	25.2
Active Australian South Sea Islander community organisations	93	22.6
Strong community identity	91	22.1
Rich cultural heritage	81	19.7
Strong commitment to work together to promote community interests	76	18.5
Active volunteers in the community	50	12.1
Strong spiritual leadership	46	11.2
Other	13	3.2
Base	412	-

Table 8: What are the three (3) most important things that will lead to a positive future for Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community (multiple-response)?

Three things for a positive future	Frequency	Percentage
More recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history	278	67.8
Australian South Sea Islander community unity	168	41.0
Strong well-resourced community organisations	157	38.3
Queenslanders in general know more about Australian South Sea Islanders' unique culture and history	124	30.2
Job opportunities	123	30.0
Support for education	96	23.4
Acceptance of cultural diversity by Queenslanders in general	77	18.8
Health outcomes	61	14.9
Freedom from discrimination	50	12.2
Business opportunities	36	8.8
Culturally sensitive aged care	27	6.6
Emotional well-being	14	3.4
Other	17	4.2
Base	410	-

Table 9: What practical actions would improve outcomes for Queensland's Australian South Sea Islander community (multiple-response)?

Practical actions to improve Australian South Sea Islander outcomes (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Honouring the Action Plan's intent	114	32.0
Better acknowledgement of Australian South Sea Islander culture and history through curriculum initiatives	88	24.7
Education services, scholarships and opportunities	82	23.0
Improvements and unity in Australian South Sea Islander community organisations (including National Body)	75	21.1
Federal/all Australian/better recognition, respect, acceptance and awareness	65	18.3
More job and training opportunities/apprenticeships	58	16.3
More meetings with and across Australian South Sea Islander communities, more Australian South Sea Islander consultants/advisors and community based workers/organisations	57	16.0

Table 9: continued...

Practical actions to improve Australian South Sea Islander outcomes (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Australian South Sea Islander specific commemorations, cultural events, tangible expressions of recognition (e.g. streets named, flag flown, etc.)	46	12.9
Better Australian South Sea Islander health research and access to health benefits	44	12.4
Same choices, services and rights for Australian South Sea Islanders as for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	26	7.3
Better engagement with and visibility of Australian South Sea Islanders to stop segregation and discrimination	26	7.3
Recognise stolen generation and some form of compensation (e.g. reparation, funding for family research, reunion support, facilitating cultural links to ancestral homelands)	20	5.6
Housing help	19	5.3
Australian South Sea Islander community educating their young	14	3.9
Other	68	19.1
Base	356	-

Table 10: “In brief, what is the one thing that would improve the services below for you as an Australian South Sea Islander?” The total base of respondents who answered across all services (multiple-response, multiple-part)

One thing that would improve services for Australian South Sea Islanders (survey total)	Frequency	Percentage
Not answered	159	35.6
Answered	288	64.4
Total	447	100.0

Table 11: One thing that would improve: Health Services (multiple-response)

Improving health services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Better access to Australian South Sea Islander specific services, funding and benefits (e.g. PBS)	80	37.4
Cultural identification and awareness / education and research about Australian South Sea Islander specific health issues	53	24.8
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander comparable health assistance (the same access for all)	33	15.4
Education and support about healthy eating programs, exercise, mental health and the like	16	7.5
Australian South Sea Islander identified positions / employment and training opportunities	14	6.5
Other	30	14.0
Base	214	-

Table 12: One thing that would improve: Education Services (multiple-response)

Improving education services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Acknowledgement and teaching of Australian South Sea Islander history and culture especially through school curriculum	70	29.3
Funds, assistance and opportunities all levels of education (including scholarships)	68	28.5
Tutoring, mentoring, intervention programs, training to transition and/or help to higher education	30	12.6
Same choices, services, benefits and rights for Australian South Sea Islanders as for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (recognition of different cultural identity and Australian South Sea Islander specific funds)	26	10.9
Cultural awareness, Australian South Sea Islander suitable education, more Australian South Sea Islander identified positions and/or role models	24	10.0
Other	35	14.6
Base	239	-

Table 13: One thing that would improve: Social Services (e.g. child care, aged care, disability) (multiple-response)

Improving social services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Cultural Awareness / Knowledge (including history and cultural content)	27	18.1
Better Accessibility / Information / Benefits / Financial subsidies	25	16.8
Aged and Disability services and financial assistance	25	16.8
Same choices, services, benefits and rights for Australian South Sea Islanders as for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (recognition of different cultural identity and Australian South Sea Islander specific funds and services)	19	12.8
Child Care / Welfare services and financial assistance	16	10.7
Australian South Sea Islander identified positions / workers / traineeships	11	7.4
Other	38	25.5
Base	149	-

Table 14: One thing that would improve: Employment Services (multiple-response)

Improving employment services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Scholarships or funding, apprenticeships, traineeships and/or better opportunities	63	31.8
Australian South Sea Islander targeted or identified positions, training and service providers	55	27.8
Same opportunities, services, apprenticeships etc. for Australian South Sea Islander as for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (recognition of different cultural identity)	19	9.6
Equal opportunity / less discrimination	17	8.6
Mentoring, youth training, help and/or assistance from employment services	16	8.1
Employer cultural awareness, training and/or incentives to employ Australian South Sea Islanders	11	5.6
Other	22	11.1
Base	198	-

Table 15: One thing that would improve: Housing Services (multiple-response)

Improving housing services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Subsidised loans and interest rates, help getting a loan or into home ownership and/or rent to buy schemes	42	25.9
More access, opportunities and/or availability	35	21.6
Australian South Sea Islander specific housing / community owned housing	33	20.4
Affordability, benefits and/or funding	25	15.4
Same opportunities, access and/or benefits as for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples but recognition of cultural difference	20	12.4
Other	18	11.1
Base	162	-

Table 16: One thing that would improve: Police Services (multiple-response)

Improving police services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Australian South Sea Islander Police Liaison Officers, cultural awareness (e.g. difference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples), less discrimination and/or access to the same funds and opportunities as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	63	47.4
Australian South Sea Islander identified positions and/or more jobs / cadets	57	42.9
Other	17	12.8
Base	133	-

Table 17: One thing that would improve: Transport Services (multiple-response)

Improving transport services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Better access, reduced costs and/or funding for all	18	22.0
Australian South Sea Islander jobs and services	13	15.9
Help for aged and disabled (e.g. discounted fares, better access)	11	13.4
Access to the same funds and opportunities as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and others with awareness of cultural differences	10	12.2
More education and training and/or help with learners to get employment	9	11.0
Other	21	25.6
Base	82	-

Table 18: One thing that would improve: Emergency Services (multiple-response)

Improving emergency services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Australian South Sea Islander identified jobs and traineeships and/or employment opportunities	43	44.3
Cultural awareness training and/or same opportunities and funds as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	21	21.7
Other	35	36.1
Base	97	-

Table 19: One thing that would improve: Legal Services (multiple-response)

Improving legal services (collated under general response themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Same services and funding as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (i.e. ATSILS, Legal Aid, etc.), specific Australian South Sea Islander services and/or recognition and cultural awareness	49	49.0
Assistance, Funding and Education about services - more generally	29	29.0
Job training and/or opportunities in legal professions for Australian South Sea Islanders	13	13.0
Other	9	9.0
Base	100	-

Table 20: Labour Force Status

Labour force status (collapsed responses)	Frequency	Percentage
Employed	276	61.7
Unemployed	46	10.3
Not in the labour force	68	15.2
Not stated	57	12.8
Total	447	100.0

Table 21: What is your main job?

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Community and Personal Service Workers	92	33.3
Clerical and Administrative Workers	43	15.6
Labourers	25	9.1
Professionals	25	9.1
Managers	21	7.6
Technicians and Trades Workers	18	6.5
Sales Workers	17	6.2
Machinery Operators and Drivers	9	3.3
Inadequately described	12	4.4
Not stated	14	5.1
Total	276	100.0

Table 22: What sector does your main job fit in to?

Sector	Frequency	Percent
Queensland State Government	92	33.3
Private business	73	26.5
Non-government organization	65	23.6
Australian (Commonwealth) Government	16	5.8
Local Government	12	4.4
Education	7	2.5
Not Stated	7	2.5
Other	4	1.5
Total	276	100.0
Base	82	-

Table 23: What area does your main job fit in to?

Industry	Frequency	Percent
Health care, social assistance and community development	77	27.9
Education and training	37	13.4
Administrative and support services	33	12.0
Retail trade and services	18	6.5
Public administration and safety (e.g. government administration, justice, defence, etc.)	18	6.5
Mining and exploration	16	5.8
Construction (e.g. building, engineering, etc.)	16	5.8
Transport, postal and warehousing	16	5.8
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	7	2.5
Arts, recreation and tourism services	7	2.5
Accommodation and food services	7	2.5
Professional, scientific and technical services (e.g. legal, accounting, advertising, etc.)	3	1.1
Rental, hiring and real estate services	3	1.1
Manufacturing (e.g. products, machinery, equipment)	2	0.7
Wholesale trade (e.g. materials, machinery and equipment)	1	0.4
Information, media and telecommunication	1	0.4
Not stated	9	3.3
Other	5	1.8
Total	276	100.0

Table 24: If you were looking for a job or a better job, what would help you (multiple-response)?

Looking for a better job	Frequency	Percentage
I'm not looking for a job	118	36.0
Access to job interview training and/or mentoring and other affordable training	93	28.4
Higher education level	84	25.6
Less discrimination	69	21.0
Employment assistance services	64	19.5
Assistance with small business development	56	17.0
Childcare and family support	39	11.9
Improved health	18	5.5
Better transport	11	3.4
Other	5	1.5
Base	328	-

Table 25: What is the highest level of school education you have completed?

Highest year of school attained	Frequency	Percentage
Didn't go to school	2	0.5
Year 8 or below	42	10.9
Year 9 or equivalent	37	9.6
Year 10 or equivalent	122	31.8
Year 11 or equivalent	36	9.4
Year 12 or equivalent	145	37.8
Total	384	100.0

Table 26: What other education and training have you completed?

Highest Tertiary Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
No more education and training after school	86	23.8
Certificate 1 & 2 Level	62	17.2
Certificate 3 & 4 Level	106	29.4
Advanced diploma, diploma and associate degree level	55	15.2
Bachelor degree or higher Level	52	14.4
Total	361	100.0

Table 27: Highest education level ever attained

Highest education level (collapsed)	Frequency	Percentage
Below Certificate III ²	148	41.0
Certificate III or above ³	213	59.0
Total	361	100.0

² Includes those who did not go to school.

³ Encompasses Certificate 3 and 4 levels, advanced diploma, diploma and associate degree levels and bachelor degree or higher levels.

Table 28: If you were to do more study, what would help you achieve your goal (multiple-response)?

Achieving study goals	Frequency	Percentage
Scholarship to go to university	133	39.7
Scholarship to go to TAFE or get other training qualifications	124	37.0
Better learning support (e.g. tutoring or mentoring)	105	31.3
More time for study or training	99	29.6
Less discrimination	57	17.0
Access to childcare and family support	46	13.7
Scholarship to finish school	29	8.7
Closer educational facilities	29	8.7
Improved health	26	7.8
Better transport	18	5.4
Other	28	8.4
Base	335	-

Table 29: What is your housing situation?

Housing status (rent/own)	Frequency	Percentage
I rent my home	200	52.8
I own my home (with or without a loan)	118	31.1
I live in a home owned or rented by someone else	59	15.6
Other	2	0.5
Total	379	100.0

Table 30: What is your age group?

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
18 to 24 years	33	8.6
25 to 29 years	35	9.1
30 to 34 years	31	8.1
35 to 39 years	54	14.0
40 to 44 years	47	12.2
45 to 49 years	55	14.3
50 to 54 years	39	10.1
55 to 59 years	27	7.0
60 to 64 years	21	5.5
65 years and over	43	11.2
Total	385	100.0

Table 31: Are you male or female?

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	145	38.1
Female	236	61.9
Total	381	100.0

Table 32: Region⁴

Region	Frequency	Percentage
North/Far North Queensland	243	63.6
South East Queensland	99	25.9
Central Queensland Coast	40	10.5
Total	382	100.0

⁴ A respondent was asked to provide a suburb and these were organised in Local Government Areas and then classified into regions. Regions are organised into: Central Queensland Coast: Bundaberg (R), Fraser Coast (R), Gladstone (R), Livingstone (S) and Rockhampton (R); North/Far North Queensland: Burdekin (S), Cairns (R), Cassowary Coast (R), Charters Towers (R), Isaac (R), Mackay (R), Palm Island (S), Townsville (C), Whitsunday (R) and Yarrabah (S); South East Queensland: Brisbane (C), Gold Coast (C), Gympie (R), Ipswich (C), Logan (C), Moreton Bay (R), Noosa (S), Redland (C), Sunshine Coast (R) and Western Downs (R).

