



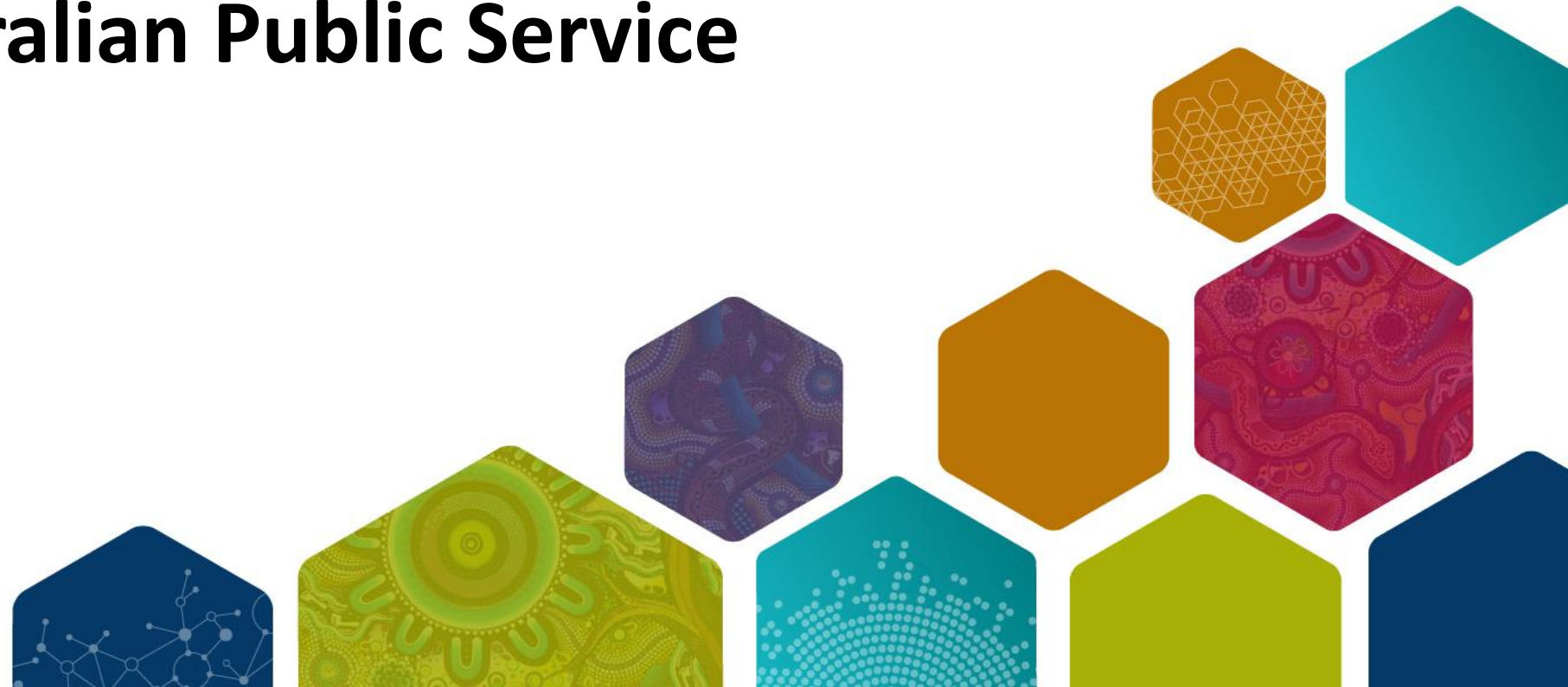
Australian Government

Australian Public Service Commission

# Understanding our workforce: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the Australian Public Service

December 2021

Research Note 29-21



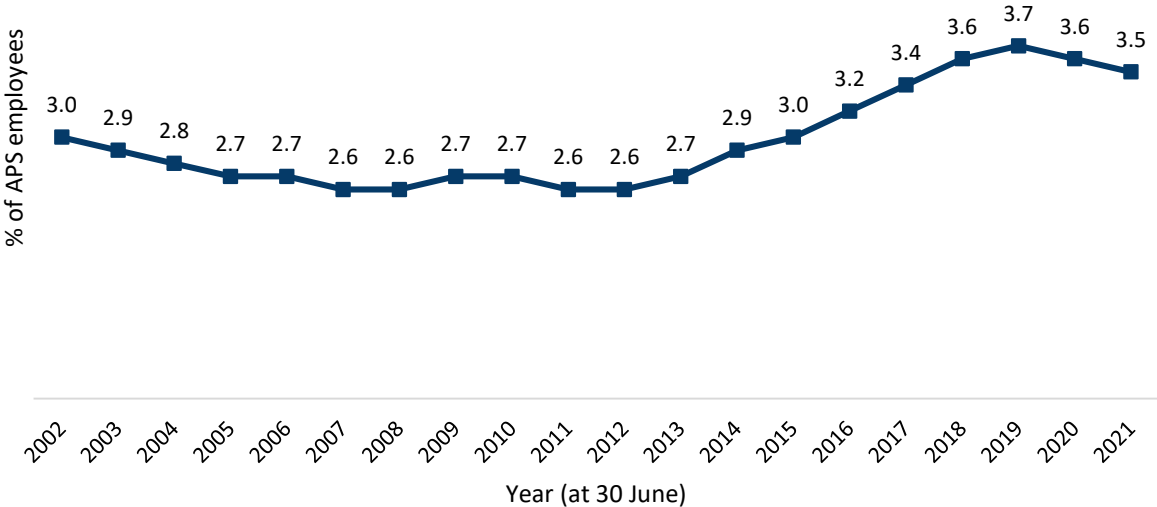
# The proportion of APS employees who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander has increased over the past 20 years

3.5% of APS employees identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in agency human resources systems.

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS has increased over time.

Overall representation, however, dropped over the 24 months prior to 30 June 2021.

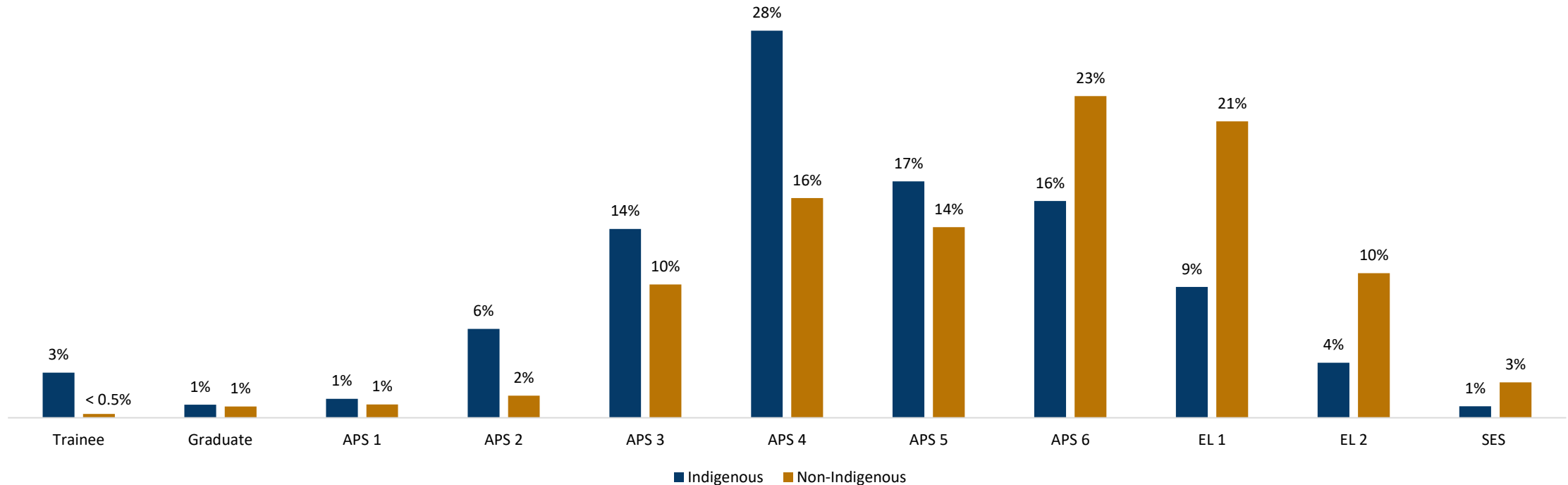
Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees



*Note:*  
The APS Employee Census and APS Employment Database use different terms to record and report Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status. The APS Employee Census asked respondents if they identified as an “Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person”. APS agencies use a range of different terms to record Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status in their human resources information systems. This is reported within the APS Employment Database as “Indigenous” or “Non-Indigenous”. Within this report, the term “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” is used except where brevity is required and the terms “Indigenous” and “Non-Indigenous” are used instead.

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are employed across all classification levels within the APS

Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous employees by actual classification

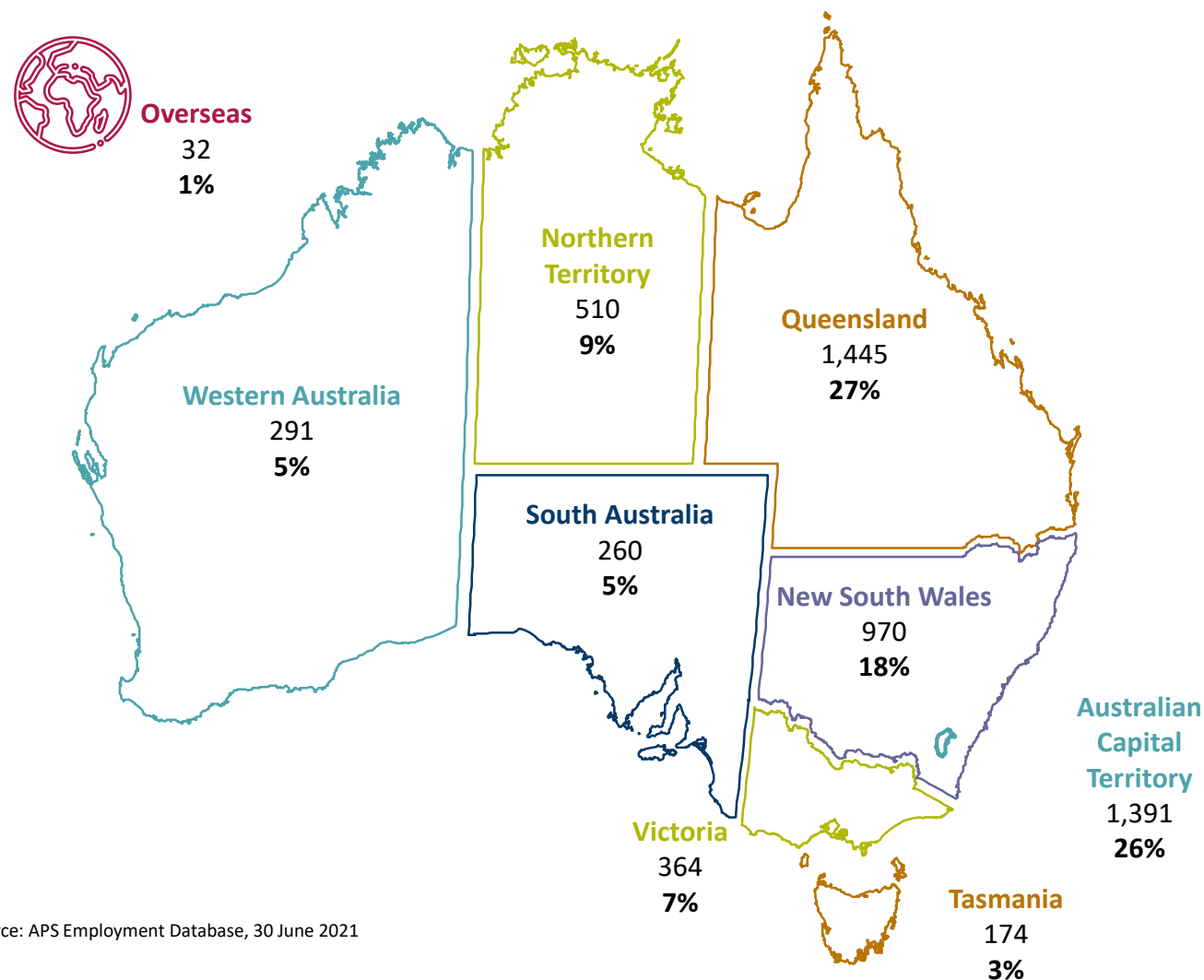


Greater proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are employed between the APS 2 and APS 5 levels than non-Indigenous employees.

Source: APS Employment Database, 30 June 2021



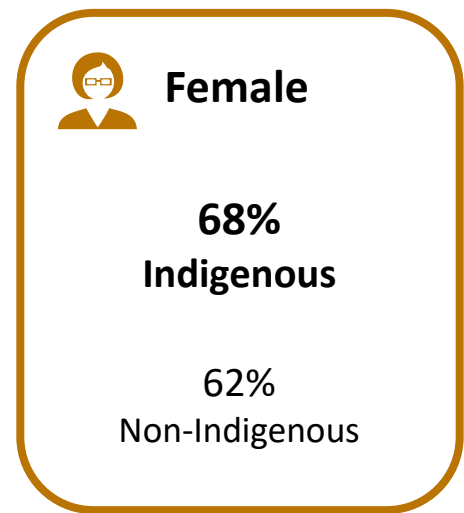
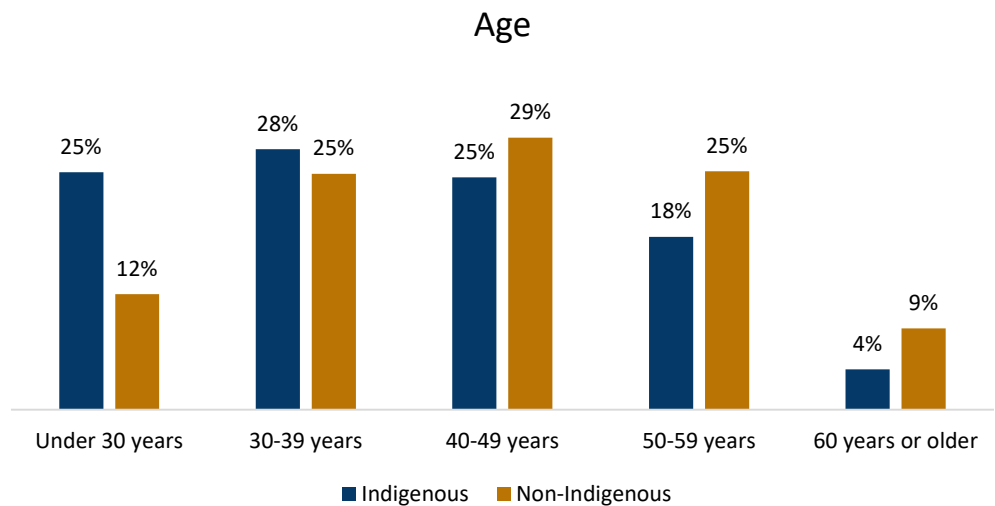
# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS work in all areas of Australia



Source: APS Employment Database, 30 June 2021

A greater of proportion of APS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees work in regional areas (35%), than non-Indigenous employees (13%).

# Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees had similar employment profiles except for a notable difference in median length of service



Median length of service in the APS

6.8 years Indigenous      12.0 years Non-Indigenous

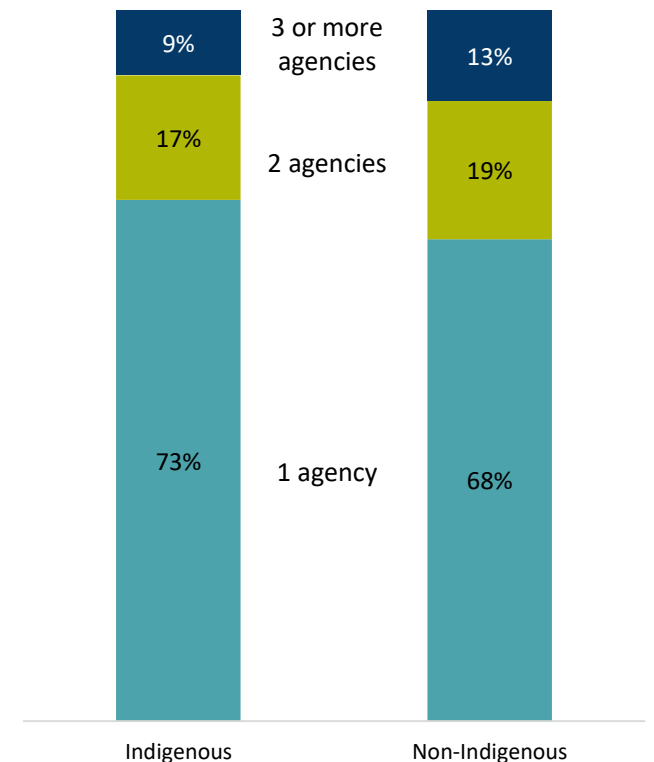
Employed on ongoing basis

89% Indigenous      88% Non-Indigenous

Employed full time

82% Indigenous      81% Non-Indigenous

Number of agencies worked in



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees reported high levels of employee engagement and that their wellbeing was supported

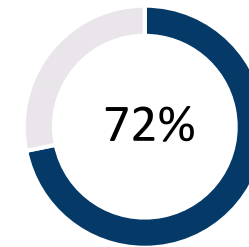
Employee Engagement Index scores reflect whether respondents feel emotionally connected and committed to their organisation.

The Employee Engagement Index score for the APS overall is 73%.

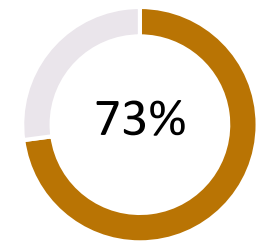
Wellbeing Index scores reflect whether respondents feel their health and wellbeing is supported.

The Wellbeing Index score for the APS overall is 68%.

Employee Engagement Index score

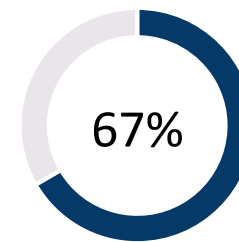


Indigenous employees

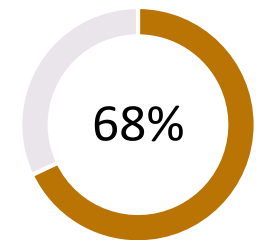


Non-Indigenous employees

Wellbeing Index score



Indigenous employees

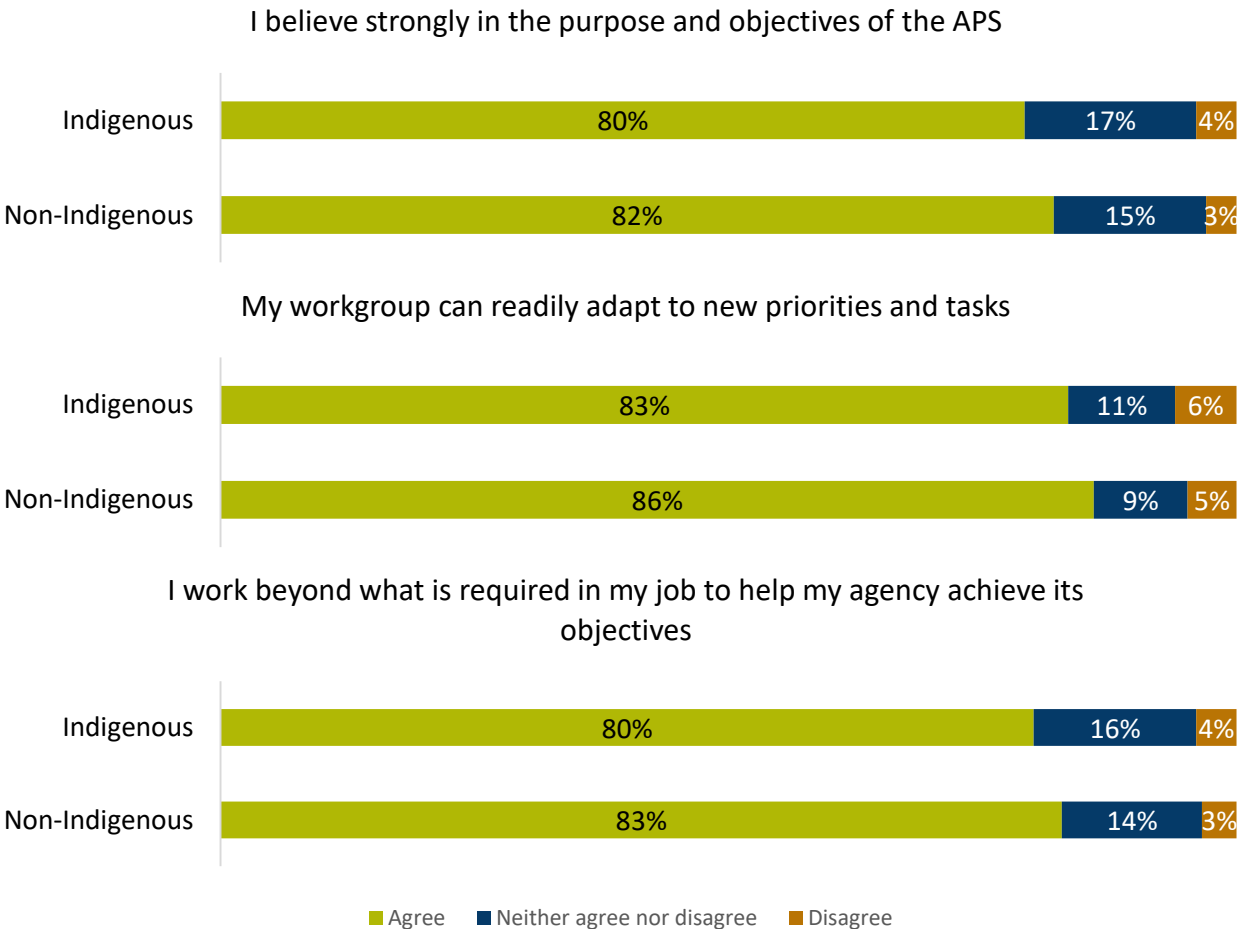


Non-Indigenous employees

# Indigenous employees believe strongly in the APS and are a vital part of an adaptive workforce striving to achieve its objectives

Similar to their non-Indigenous colleagues, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees show strong belief (80%) in the purpose and objectives of the APS.

They demonstrate this purpose through their flexibility to prioritise and adapt with colleagues to complete workgroup tasks, and their willingness to work beyond what is required by their job to help achieve their agency’s objectives.

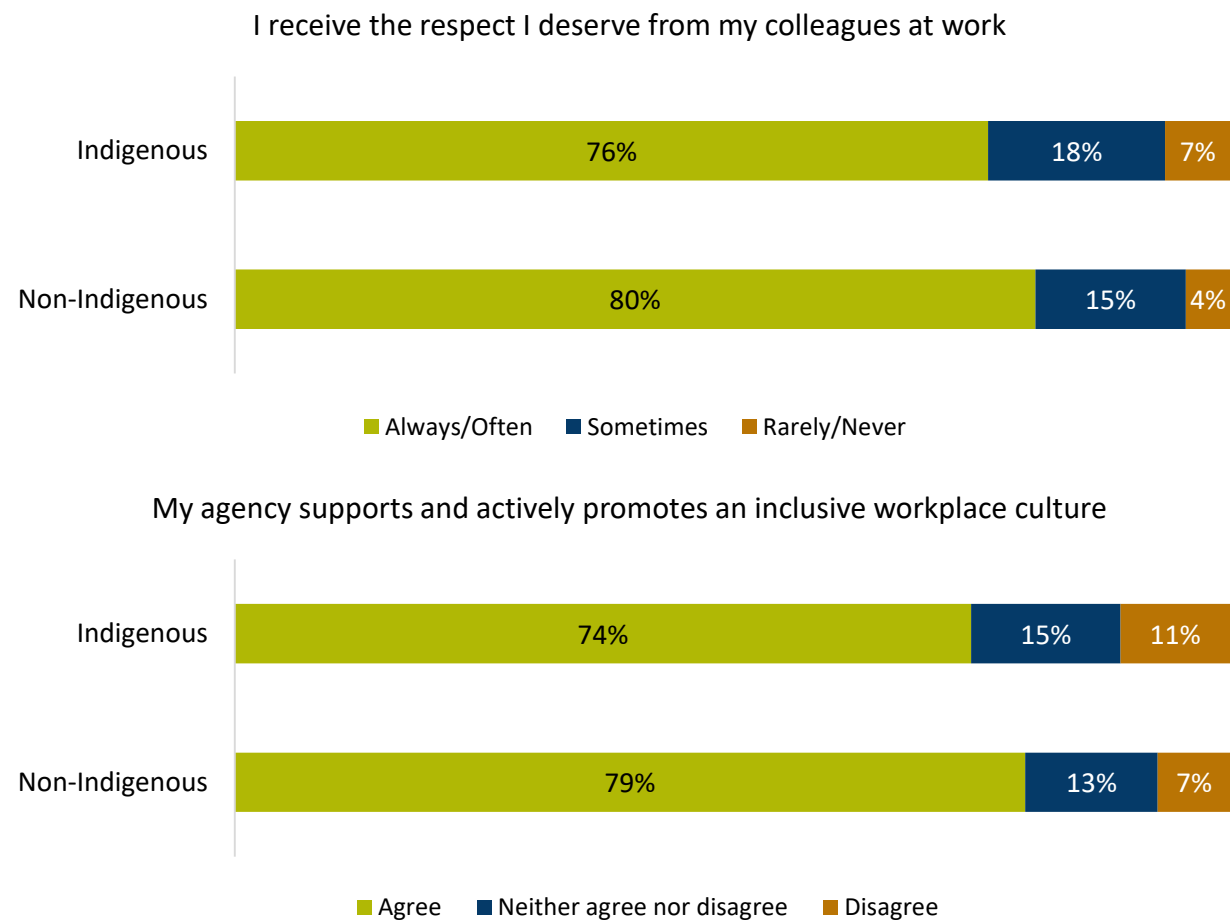


Source: 2021 APS Employee Census

# The majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the APS perceive respect and inclusion in their workplaces

2021 APS Employee Census responses indicate that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and non-Indigenous employees share similar perceptions about the respect they receive from colleagues in the workplace.

The majority of Indigenous employees agree their agency supports and actively promotes an inclusive workplace culture. However, this proportion is lower than that agreed by non-Indigenous employees.

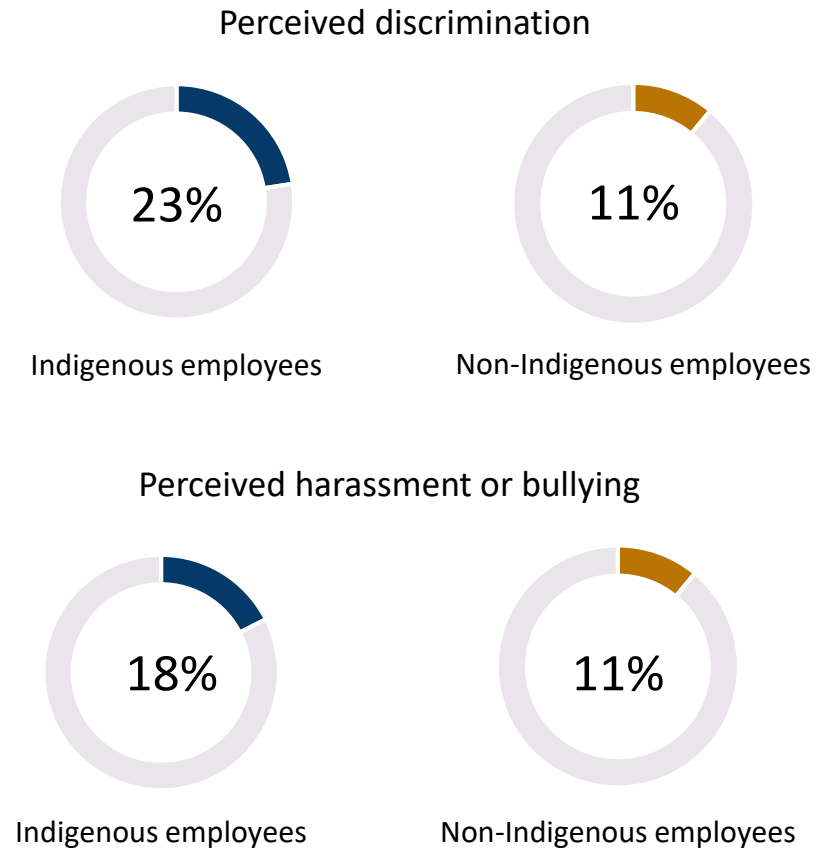




# A larger proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees perceived discrimination and harassment or bullying

Nearly one in four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees perceived discrimination on the basis of their background or a personal characteristic in the course of their employment over the previous 12 months. The most common form of discrimination was on the basis of identification as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person (43%).

Nearly one in five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees perceived that they had been subjected to harassment or bullying in their current workplace during the previous 12 months.



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