Australian Government crest
Department of Social Services

Reconciliation Action Plan (Stretch)

June 2021– June 2024

A digital artwork representation of a map of Australia joined by together by Indigenous artwork lines. including stars of the Southern Cross, as well as a range of colours and semi-circles representing various groups such as Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples, Mature, Aged and Youth, LGBTQI+, People with Disability, CALD and more. 


# SECRETARY’S MESSAGE

Last year marked the start of a new era of partnership between the Australian Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The National Agreement on Closing the Gap brings a new focus of shared responsibility and ownership, putting the views and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the centre of its implementation.

It is in this context of genuine partnership that I am proud to present the Department of Social Services’ next Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021–24.

Our staff contributed their ideas to develop this RAP and helped shape the 18 actions. Based on themes of relationships, respect, opportunities and governance, it will be together, in partnership, that we deliver on these actions.

This RAP focuses on implementing longer-term strategies within our sphere of influence to advance reconciliation, both externally and internally.

As we look to be leaders in reconciliation, we will harness opportunities to partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the development of our policies and advice to Government.

We will strive to improve the relevance and standards of programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by sharing the development, delivery and ownership of programs.

We will also work with portfolio agencies and our service provider partners to embed reconciliation into everything we do.

Looking inwards, this plan provides the department with opportunities to continue to acknowledge and embed Indigenous cultures, experiences and perspectives in our every day. Our upcoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy outlines career pathways and development opportunities for our staff.

I encourage our staff and partners—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, portfolio agencies and service providers—to join us on our reconciliation journey.

Kathryn Campbell AO CSC

Secretary

# Reconciliation Australia CEO MESSAGE

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate the Department of Social Services on its continuing commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its second Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), its third RAP overall.

Formed around the pillars of *relationships*, *respect*, and *opportunity*, since 2006 RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. Through the creation of this Stretch RAP, the Department of Social Services continues to contribute to this ever-growing community.

The Department of Social Services improves, supports and safeguards the lives of some of Australia’s most vulnerable people and communities. With a number of portfolio bodies that influence health and social wellbeing policies and programs, the department has considerable capacity to model and drive reconciliation.

The department has established strong foundations for this Stretch RAP on its reconciliation journey so far, putting in place ambitious and structured processes to bring its RAP into its every day. These successes include a commitment to 100 per cent completion of its online cultural learning training, and the creation of an Indigenous Champion role. The department’s previous RAPs evidence its commitment to prioritising First Nations peoples’ inclusion and opportunity, impressively reaching an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment target of 6 per cent. This, paired with its Indigenous procurement policy, show the department actively investing in the economic empowerment of First Nations peoples through its work.

The department is honest and up front about the challenges it has faced over its reconciliation journey, with extensive staff engagement mapping what it has done well, and what it needs to work on. This capacity for reflection has produced the strong commitments in this Stretch RAP—including a Reconciliation Communication Framework, to ensure staff are aware of and feel ownership for the RAP. The department is also considering how real collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations can improve its services, partnering with the First Peoples Disability Network to engage in culturally safe advocacy for its Disability Royal Commission. These initiatives, as well as the critical and open way it has approached its commitments, show the department is thinking strategically and sustainably about how best it can respectfully bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, cooperation, and knowledge into its work.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend the Department of Social Services on this ambitious, thoughtful, and engaging Stretch RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer, Reconciliation Australia

# OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision and ultimate goal for reconciliation is the sustained wellbeing of individuals and families in Australian communities. We will embed reconciliation in the department’s culture to instil its dimensions – race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unit and historical acceptance – at the core of how we conduct our work.

Reconciliation will be at the forefront of our work as we engage with third parties, key peak bodies and states and territories, in the development and delivery of Australia wide policy solutions.

Our culture of reconciliation will be reflected through the actions of our leaders and staff, visible in our interactions with each other, and in how we develop and deliver social policies and programs for all Australians, to ensure the knowledge, diversity, skills and life experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are acknowledged and respected.

# OUR BUSINESS

*The Department of Social Services improves the wellbeing of individuals and families in Australian communities.*

We touch the lives of almost every Australian at some point —including supporting hundreds of thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As the lead department in the Social Services Portfolio we work closely with our other agencies, government and non-government organisations to support the management and delivery of mainstream and targeted payments, policies, programs and services to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and businesses.

The four core areas in which we seek to assist people are:

* **Social Security –** Encourage self-reliance and support people who cannot fully support themselves by providing sustainable social security payments and assistance.
* **Families and Communities** – Contribute to stronger and more resilient individuals, families and communities by providing targeted services and initiatives.
* **Disability and Carers** – Improved independence of, and participation by, people with disability, including improved support for carers, by providing targeted support and services.
* **Housing –** Increased housing supply, improved community housing and assisting individuals experiencing homelessness through targeted support and services.

Internally, our influence lies in the opportunities we offer our staff, our workplace culture and the corporate policies, protocols and accountability mechanisms that underpin them.

As at 31 March 2021, the department has 2,390 staff, with 133 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff making up 5.6 per cent of our workforce.

The department has a national footprint, with offices in all states and territories including all capital cities and regional locations such as Newcastle, Orange, Townsville, and Bendigo.

## An image of Australia showing 11.3% in Western Australia, 17.2% in Northern Territory, 14.6% in South Australia, 19.8% in Queensland, 6.2% in New South Wales, 3.6% in Australian Capital Territory, 10.7% in Tasmania and 4.4% in VictoriaAboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff percentages by state and territory

## The department’s sphere of influence

An image of three circles, one inside each other. The outer circle includes floating text: Grants for external service providers; Partnerships with external organisations; Partnerships with portfolio and other government agencies; and Procurement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses; Policies and programs for the Australian public
The middle circle includes text: Investing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce; Building a culture of openness, respect and curiosity; Empowering all staff through internal policies, procedures and guidelines; Communicating regularly about our reconciliation initiatives and achievements. The inner text includes Leadership and accountability from the top.


# OUR RAP

*The department is committed to progressing reconciliation. It is critical to the way we work, and the work we deliver.*

Through targeted and mainstream policies and programs, the work of the department touches the lives of tens of thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As a government department, we understand the importance of building strong and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners. A foundation of these relationships is the department’s awareness of the impact of past government policies on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and a demonstrated commitment to listen, reflect and improve our practices as we continue on our reconciliation journey.

The department is committed to diversity champions. The Indigenous Champion who also has responsibility for the RAP, is supported by Indigenous Senior Executive Service (SES) Advisors. The role of the Indigenous Champion is at our most senior levels, to ensure effective department-wide promotion that signals to all staff that reconciliation is a priority in the department.

Reconciliation is supported by the RAP Working Group. The RAP Working Group is made up of volunteers from groups across the department and from a range of levels, including senior executives. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation is embedded in the RAP Working Group (WG) through the standing membership for the Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee. This ensures diverse experiences, skills and perspectives contribute to identifying challenges and solutions for progressing reconciliation.

## RAP Working Group

### Chief Operating Officer

### Chair

Branch Manager, People Services

### Member

Account Manager, Disability and Royal Commission

## Social Security

### Members

Executive Officer to Finance Group

Director, Housing Policy and Design

Departmental Officer, Data Exchange Policy and Operations

## Disability and Carers

Members Branch Manager,

Participant Outcomes

Assistant Director, Mainstream Interface

Assistant Director,

Disability Royal Commission Governance and Supports

National Disability Policy Policy Officer

## Families and Communities

### Deputy Chair

Director, National Plan Delivery

### Observer

Branch Manager, Grants Service Office – Indigenous SES Advisor

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network Committee Chair

Government Action Coordinator

### Members

Executive Assistant to Branch Manager, Family Safety

Branch Manager, Cashless Welfare Policy and Technology

Funding Agreement Manager

Funding Arrangement Manager

Assistant Director, Community Grants Hub

Team Leader,

### Grants Support Team

Assistant Director, National Redress Scheme

Director, South Australia State Office

Director, Place-Based Initiatives

Grants, Victoria State Office

## OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

*There are four types of RAP organisations: Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate.*

The department is proud to have previously implemented two RAPs and to be implementing our second Stretch RAP.

## Our first Innovate RAP 2015-17

In 2015, when the Department of Social Services had just formed, we developed our first RAP. This Innovate RAP set the new department on a clear path towards reconciliation. Its impact is still present in 2021, with a number of achievements continuing to shape reconciliation in the department, including:

* creation of the Indigenous Champion role
* development of the 2015–18 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy
* exceeding the four per cent target of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members, with a final percentage of 5 per cent
* cultural appreciation training for all new staff, contractors and graduates
* implementation of a cultural protocols document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country
* departmental events to celebrate NAIDOC Week, including the establishment of Secretary’s NAIDOC Week awards
* update of the department’s PowerPoint template to include an Acknowledgement of Country slide
* implementation of the Indigenous Procurement Policy
* Twelve secondments through the Jawun Program.

Our first Stretch RAP 2017–20

Following the successful implementation of the department’s first RAP, we received Reconciliation Australia’s endorsement of our first Stretch RAP. This RAP has led to the continuation of a number of achievements from our Innovate RAP, as well as the successful implementation of new initiatives. Some of the key achievements under our first Stretch RAP include:

* a commitment to 100 per cent completion of online Core Cultural Learning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia
* achieving a six per cent target of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members
* naming National Office conference suite meeting rooms after seven sites of significance in the Ngunnawal language
* displaying Acknowledgement of Country plaques in all meeting rooms
* developing and distributing Acknowledgement of Country cards to all staff
* strong staff participation in National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events, including a range of fully booked activities such as film screenings, language and culture workshops, excursions to exhibitions and yarning circles
* exceeding targets for contracting Indigenous businesses through the Indigenous Procurement Policy, which has been successfully embedded into standard procurement processes.

### A survey conducted at the completion of the 2017–20 RAP confirmed these achievements. This anonymous survey that was open to all staff and approximately 800 staff participated. It identified Acknowledgements of Country as the most common activity engaged in by staff and widespread support for the effectiveness of NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week events in progressing reconciliation in the department.

## Challenges and lessons learned

*While the department has achieved a lot on our reconciliation journey, we understand the value of honest reflection on areas where we can still improve.*

One of the challenges the department faced in the implementation of our first Stretch RAP was associated with driving deliverables. We found that while some larger projects, like the development of a stakeholder engagement strategy, did commence, they were not all finalised and promoted in the planned timeline due to unclear accountability. This may be attributable to organisational structure and staffing changes.

Not having dedicated resources and clear areas responsible for driving the development and delivery of actions has a flow-on effect on the level of awareness of the RAP, our achievements, and action items within the department. According to our survey, 18 per cent of staff were not aware of the RAP or the things the department has achieved under the RAP.

To address these challenges, the new RAP sets out three key priorities to improve continuity, visibility and accountability.

* Renewed focus on senior leaders to drive reconciliation in the department, through:
  + Action 14f) – Development of a framework for SES to oversee and be accountable for the successful implementation of the RAP
  + Action 14b) – Inclusion of RAP deliverables in all SES performance agreements.
* Consistent and strategic communications to support all staff to progress reconciliation, through:
  + Action 3a) – Undertake ongoing strategic internal and external communication to promote reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; enable all staff to drive reconciliation outcomes; and promote the department as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employer of choice
  + Action 6g) – Standing place for a communications officer to attend Garma Festival to provide greater coverage and insights to all staff in the department
  + Action 13a) – Include a communication representative in the RAP Working Group to provide advice and raise awareness of upcoming activities more efficiently.
* Improved lines of accountability and regular reporting, through:
  + Action 15e) – Development of a RAP reporting tool to be administered quarterly for managers and staff to keep track on the progress they are making against RAP.

## Our current stretch RAP

*Our new RAP sets a clear plan for all staff to progress reconciliation as part of their everyday work.*

It is the culmination of extensive staff engagement. Feedback and ideas were gathered through an anonymous online survey and in-depth focus group discussions with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and non-Indigenous staff in every state and territory. Close to 800 people participated in consultations. As a result, this RAP belongs to everyone in the department.

The consultation process identified the overwhelming support and passion for reconciliation within the department. Staff input was instrumental in identifying opportunities to proactively progress reconciliation. In this RAP, we aim to leverage these opportunities and build actions that directly respond to staff feedback.

The honesty and enthusiasm shown at every stage of the consultation process set an important tone for the development of this RAP and for the coming three years of reconciliation in the department.

## You spoke, we listened

From the survey, we learned that the most common obstacle people faced in progressing reconciliation was a feeling that there was not enough communication and support to empower staff to take action.

From the focus group discussions, we heard a strong desire from staff to have reconciliation promoted consistently all year round, to help keep it front of mind to foster a culture where reconciliation is embedded in the everyday.

Action 3a) Undertake ongoing strategic communication internally and externally to promote reconciliation and Indigenous culture

The department will develop a Communication Framework to guide the strategic development and implementation of internal and external communication to:

* raise awareness of reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
* enable staff to drive reconciliation outcomes
* promote the department as an employer of choice.

Many staff reported feeling unsure about what they could do on an individual level. Staff shared their hesitancy to talk about reconciliation for fear they may inadvertently cause offense.

Action 3f) Reconciliation Toolkit

Under this RAP we will publish a Reconciliation Toolkit to provide staff at all levels with practical suggestions about what they can do to progress reconciliation on an individual and organisational level. The Reconciliation Toolkit will also be added to and promoted across the life of the RAP.

The survey identified a strong desire in the department to undertake face-to-face cultural awareness training. Through the focus group discussions, staff spoke passionately about the powerful experiences that have come from the personal connections and educational opportunities of face-to-face training.

Action 6f) Face-to-face training for all staff

The department has committed to delivering face-to-face cultural awareness training to all staff.

Staff who have participated in secondments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations have said their secondments were transformative in their understanding of reconciliation. Many other staff have expressed a strong interest in increasing opportunities to attend secondments.

Action 3g) Secondments to Reconciliation Australia

Action 3h) Continued participation in Jawun secondments

Action 3i) Secondments to Yothu Yindi Foundation

Action 3j) Entry level secondments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

The department is committing to increasing the number of secondment opportunities for staff at all levels. This will build invaluable skills and awareness among our staff while building strong two-way relationships with community organisations.

Staff have requested greater support for supervisors to ensure they have an appropriate level of cultural awareness and a working understanding of their additional responsibilities their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff may have, as well as the specific entitlements available.

Action 4a) Supervisor’s Guide

A guide for supervisors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff will be finalised and released to ensure all supervisors have resources to appropriately support their staff.

Staff in the Community Grants Hub have identified a number of opportunities for improving access to grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Action 12) Improved access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

The Community Grants Hub will undertake a project to improve access to Department of Social Services Grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. This leverages one of the department’s significant spheres of influence in the administration of grants.

Feedback called for a united front to reconciliation, with greater involvement from and support for non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to progress reconciliation together.

Action 2d), 8e) and 14h) Reconciliation sub-groups made up of non-Indigenous staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

Each state and territory office will have a reconciliation sub-group to organise and drive National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events.

Many staff reported limited awareness of how the department was tracking against RAP actions and deliverables.

Action 14c) and 15e) Reporting tool and staff surveys

The RAP Working Group will review its existing reporting mechanisms with a view to create a new tool to measure progress against all RAP targets across the department.

Staff at all levels reported strong interest in greater support for leaders to drive reconciliation.

Action 14b) Performance Agreements

All senior managers will commit to supporting RAP actions by recording in their individual performance and development agreement.

Consider opportunities for the department to include Indigenous artwork in its branding and/or uniform where appropriate (for example, T-shirts)

Action 3k) Reconciliation T-shirts

The artwork featured on this RAP will be printed on T-shirts for staff who are consulting in community or attending Garma.

## Showcasing leadership and innovation

*As part of our second Stretch RAP, we have committed to providing opportunities and incentives for areas within the department to develop their own reconciliation initiatives appropriate to their specific responsibilities.*

As part of their quarterly reporting, all Groups in the department will be required to outline any reconciliation initiatives they are progressing beyond the actions and deliverables set out in this RAP. Twice a year, the Indigenous Champion will select one of these initiatives and showcase it across the department. The chosen initiative will also be presented to the Executive Management Group. This process, committed to in Action 3) of our RAP, will give senior executives exposure to the range of reconciliation initiatives taking place in the department so they are well placed to select possible marquee activities the department will present to Reconciliation Australia in the development of our next RAP.

## What you can do

*An integral part of reconciliation is engagement from everyone – Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples.*

If you are not sure what you can do at an individual level, here are just a few things you can do today, and everyday, to progress reconciliation.

### Relationships

Under the new RAP there are lots of opportunities for you to strengthen your relationships. You could:

* put in practice some of the simple actions in the Reconciliation Toolkit (Action 3f)
* participate in National Reconciliation Week and other related events in the department and community (Action 2)
* learn more about reconciliation through departmental news and resources (Action 3a)
* get to know our policies and procedures, including reading the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supervisor’s guide (Action 4a)
* apply for a secondment or to attend the Garma Festival (Actions 3g-j & 6g)

### Respect

A part of reconciliation is ongoing learning and engagement. You can do this by:

* learning more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through departmental news and resources (Action 3a)
* taking part in face-to-face cultural awareness training (Action 6)
* undertaking a refresher course of the CORE (cultural training) modules—especially if you are new supervisor (Action 6)
* familiarise yourself with the Acknowledgment of Country protocols on STAFFnet (Action 7b)
* engage in NAIDOC Week events in the department and community (Action 8)

### Opportunities

There are a number of ways we can increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our everyday. You could:

* use with the Indigenous Procurement Policy and consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander companies through Supply Nation (Action 11)
* invest in development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff (Action 10e)
* remove barriers in your recruitment rounds by considering affirmative measures (Action 10c & 10d)

### Governance

Good governance keeps us accountable and helps us track our progress against our reconciliation goals. To support the ongoing governance of our RAP, consider:

* joining the RAP Working Group or a sub-group within your state or territory office (Action 13a & 14h).

# Informing our people to support our Reconciliation journey

1 JANUARY 1901

The Australian Constitution takes effect

26 JANUARY 1938

Day of Mourning

4 FEBRUARY 1939

Cummeragunja Walk off

1 MAY 1946

Pilbara Strike

14 AUGUST 1963

Yirrkala Bark Petition

FEBRUARY 1965

The Freedom Ride

24 AUGUST 1966

Wave Hill Walk-Off

27 MAY 1967

Referendum

1970

First Aboriginal Legal Service Founded in Redfern NSW

1971

First Aboriginal Medical Service Founded in Redfern NSW

11 JUNE 1971

First Indigenous parliamentarian to serve in Parliament of Australia

12 JULY 1971

Aboriginal flag flown for first time

26 JANUARY 1972

Aboriginal Tent Embassy established in Canberra

1975

Australian Parliament passes the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act

1976

Pastor Sir Douglas Nicholls becomes the first Aboriginal Governor of South Australia

16 DECEMBER 1976

Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act passed

26 OCTOBER 1985

Uluru returned to its Traditional Owners

1988

Barunga Statement presented to PM Bob Hawke

26 JANUARY 1988

Bicentennial March

3 MAY 1990

Establishment of ATSIC

15 APRIL 1991

RCIADIC report released

29 MAY 1992

Torres Strait Islander flag flown for first time

3 JUNE 1992

Mabo Decision handed down by High Court of Australia

10 DECEMBER 1992

The Redfern Address by PM Paul Keating

JANUARY 1993

Australian Government appoint first Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander, Social Justice Commissioner

17 APRIL 1993

Nicky Winmar makes public stance against racism in Australian sport

14 JULY 1995

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island flags officially recognised by Australian Government

26 MAY 1997

Bringing Them Home report released

28 MAY 2000

Walk for Reconciliation

25 SEPTEMBER 2000

Cathy Freeman wins gold at the Sydney Olympics

23 MARCH 2005

Abolition of ATSIC

13 FEBRUARY 2008

PM Kevin Rudd delivers National Apology

24 JANUARY 2017

First Aboriginal person ever appointed as a Minister of the Crown

# RELATIONSHIPS

*The department’s mission is to improve the wellbeing of individuals and families in Australian communities.*

This includes strengthening respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. Our department’s programs and services build on these relationships, making positive steps towards reconciliation. Our advocacy work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability, and our plan to increase engagement with service providers across the states and territories are just two examples of how we are following through on our commitment to strengthen relationships.

“ Reconciliation should be central to the work of DSS, both as an employer and as an organisation that develops and administers programs and policies to support Australians, including First Australians.

Building better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the benefit of all Australians. ”

Non-Indigenous staff member

# Staff Profile - Kostas Varnavides – Perth

Kostas Varnavides believes respect is a key element of reconciliation in Australia, after witnessing the prejudice and disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

“I saw it throughout school, university and my career and it saddens me this inequality continues to exist in our country. I believe respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is a key part of reconciliation and establishing equal opportunity,” he said.

As part of the department’s Graduate Development Program, Kostas was seconded to Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service for a month. While there he gained an understanding of the importance of reconciliation and the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

“This was an eye-opening experience. I had the opportunity to talk to the staff and Chief Executive Officer who shared what reconciliation means to them, and the impact it has on their lives,” said Kostas.

Inspired by his secondment, Kostas began sharing his experiences, knowledge and appreciation for reconciliation with others.

“My vision of reconciliation is where communities work together to achieve inclusion and equal access to all services, such as health care and education services,” he said.

One of the most important points for Kostas, is that he found people were receptive to talking about reconciliation. “People listen – this is the biggest point to raise here. Reconciliation is something that previously was not talked about, but the majority of people are willing to listen, so let’s keep the conversation going,” he said.

For people who want to take action but aren’t sure where to start, Kostas has some advice.

“Research reconciliation – talk with friends, family and colleagues and put your hand up for opportunities to broaden your understanding.”

To continue learning about reconciliation, visit the Reconciliation page on STAFFnet or Reconciliation Australia.

## Action 1: Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to continuously improve guiding principles for engagement across the department. | **October** Report | **January** Report | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
| **b)** Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. | **December** Publish engagement plan | **July** Promote engagement plan | **July** Review engagement plan | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
| **c)** Establish and maintain at least two formal two-way partnerships for departmental staff with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations, for example Yothu Yindi Foundation (Garma Festival) and entry level program secondment to Indigenous Community Controlled Organisations (e.g. NACCHO and IAHA). | **October** Pilot partnerships | **December** Formalise partnerships | **December** Review partnerships | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Support:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the development of policy through biannual policy round tables and promote benefits of roundtables to portfolio agencies. | **December** Hold two roundtables | **December** Hold two roundtables | **December** Hold two roundtables | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff National Committee and Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Expand the opportunity for Funding Arrangement Managers (FAMs) to participate in place-based co-design workshops and projects with local communities such as Try, Test and Learn and Stronger Places, Stronger People. | **October**  FAMs attend workshops and report back to department | **October**  FAMs attend workshops and report back to department | **October**  FAMs attend workshops and report back to department | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
| **f)** Build relationships and learning opportunities through facilitating Yarning Sessions with staff, portfolio funded providers with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and other portfolio agencies like Services Australia and the National Disability Insurance Agency. | **October**  Hold two Yarning Sessions with funded providers | **October**  Hold two Yarning Sessions with funded providers | **October**  Hold two Yarning Sessions with funded providers | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |

## Action 2: Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to all staff. | **July** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** RAP Working Group members to participate in at least two external NRW events. | **June** Achieve and share with RAP Working Group | **June** Achieve and share with RAP Working Group | **June** Achieve and share with RAP Working Group | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Encourage and support all staff and senior leaders to participate in and support at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW, including: school, community and sporting events. | **June** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Hold one internal NRW event each year in all states and territories, led by reconciliation sub-groups established under Action 14h), including at least one department-wide NRW event. | **June** Hold at least one event in each state and territory | **June** Hold at least one event in each state and territory | **June** Hold at least one event in each state and territory | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website. | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **f)** Encourage NRW event collaborations with Portfolio Agencies and other Government agencies through sharing resources, event coordination logistics and costs, particularly within the State Office Delivery Network where several agencies are in one location. | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **May** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **April** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |

## Action 3: Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Undertake ongoing strategic internal and external communication to promote reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and encouraging all staff to make a personal commitment to drive reconciliation outcomes. | **June** Finalise Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Review Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Review Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Develop new Reconciliation Communication Framework | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publically, for example promoting our achievements on our website, at meetings and events. | **January** Report | **January** Report | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Implement strategies to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes. | **Quarterly** Invite portfolio agencies to RAP Working Group meeting | **Quarterly**  Invite portfolio agencies to RAP Working Group meeting | **Quarterly**  Invite portfolio agencies to RAP Working Group meeting | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Collaborate with RAP organisations, including the agencies in the Social Security portfolio. | **July** Establish an APS RING | **January** Hold two meetings | **January** Hold two meetings | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Support Services Australia, via the RAP Digital Collection Advisory Group, with their marquee activity to create a digital collection. | **October** Report | **January** Report | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **f)** Create toolkit of practical actions all staff can take to progress reconciliation in the workplace and their lives, and promote through the Reconciliation Communication Framework. | **June** Publish | **June** Update and promote | **June** Update and promote | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate and RAP Working Group |
| **g)** Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationship with Reconciliation Australia through the development and ongoing implementation of secondment opportunities. | **October** Investigate | **January** Develop partnership | **January** Implement and promote | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **h)** Staff participate in Jawun secondments annually and report back to department. | **November** Two staff do secondment and report back to department | **November** Two staff do secondment and report back to department | **November** Two staff do secondment and report back to department | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **i)** At least two staff selected through a joint expression of interest process, to undertake a secondment to the Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF) in the lead up to and during the Garma Festival. | **November** Develop secondment MOU with YYF | **January** Two staff do pilot secondment | **January** Two staff do secondment | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **j)** Provide opportunities for entry level program participants selected through an expression of interest process, to undertake a secondment with Indigenous Community Controlled organisations. | **November** Formalise MOUs with organisations | **May** Entry level program participants do secondment and report back | **May** Entry level program participants do secondment and report back | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **k)** Develop departmental reconciliation T-shirts showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork, to highlight the department's ongoing commitment to reconciliation and increase recognition of the department as a Stretch organisation at events like Garma Festival and during consultation in community. | **December** Investigate | **November** Produce | **November** Promote | **-** | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **l)** Promote reconciliation activities taking place in the department beyond the RAP actions and deliverables through biannual Indigenous Champion's reconciliation message. | **October** Indigenous Champion selects and promotes reconciliation initiative | **June, January** Indigenous Champion selects and promotes reconciliation initiative | **June, January** Indigenous Champion selects and promotes reconciliation initiative | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate and Indigenous Champion |

## Action 4: Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Continuously improve HR policies and procedures concerned with anti-discrimination, including training for specialist roles, officers, managers and supervisors. | **December** Encourage nominations from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff for harassment contact officer roles | **December** Seek nominations for harassment officers | **December** Review coverage of harassment contact officers | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **October** Publish Supervisor's Guide | **January** Promote Supervisor's Guide | **January** Review Supervisor's Guide | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to continuously improve our anti‑discrimination policy. | **December** Two-yearly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff conference | **December** Indigenous Liaison Officer consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff National Committee and state and territory offices | **December** Two-yearly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff conference | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Implement and communicate anti-discrimination policies for our organisation, such as the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019-21 and the DSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy, through the Reconciliation Communication Framework. | **October** Achieve as per strategies | **January**  Achieve as per strategies | **January** Achieve as per strategies | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Provide ongoing education opportunities for senior leaders and managers on the effects of racism through the Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training suite and the Unconscious bias training program. | **October** Run ongoing training for SES | **October** Run ongoing training for SES | **October** Run ongoing training for SES | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Senior leaders to publicly support stances against racism. | **July** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **July** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **July** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |

## Action 5: Improve services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Develop a coordinated, integrated approach across the Disability and Carers Stream to embed the Closing the Gap reforms so that outcomes, policies and programs for people with disability are equitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | **October**  Report on activities developed | **January**  Report on activities conducted | **January**  Report on activities evaluated | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Disability and Carers  **Support:** Group Manager, Disability, Employment and Carers |
| **b)** Support the delivery of culturally safe advocacy for the Disability Royal Commission through a partnership with First Peoples Disability Network. | **October**  Report on support provided and outcomes achieved | **January**  Report on support provided and outcomes achieved | **January**  Report on support provided and outcomes achieved | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Disability and Carers  **Support:** Group Manager, Disability, Employment and Carers |
| **c)** Provide culturally appropriate counselling and advocacy services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability during the Royal Commission into violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability. | **October**  Report on counselling and advocacy services provided | **January**  Review counselling and advocacy services and report on successes and challenges | - | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Disability and Carers  **Support:** Group Manager, Disability, Employment and Carers |
| **d)** Support non-Indigenous Disability Royal Commission counselling and advocacy service providers to build capability in delivering culturally appropriate services. | **October**  Report on activities conducted | **January**  Review activities of services and report on successes and challenges | - | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Disability and Carers  **Support:** Group Manager, Disability, Employment and Carers |
| **e)** Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in regional rural and remote locations to test and review the Disability Gatewaytoensure the Disability Gateway is culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | **October**  Report on campaign launch and cultural appropriateness of services | **January**  Pilot finishes 30 June 2022 (subject to any additional Government funding) | - | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Disability and Carers  **Support:** Group Manager, Disability, Employment and Carers |

# RESPECT

*The department understands cultural differences and is a proud champion of diversity.*

We respect the cultures, history, knowledge and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. To demonstrate this, the department is investing in a culturally competent workforce, providing more secondment opportunities for all staff, moving to face-to-face cultural awareness training, and increased communication around historical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and days of significance.

“The key to building trust with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples is an understanding of their culture and family, the extent of their connection with the land and or water and the system of kinship, which connects them to their community. It is very important to understand where individuals or groups see themselves culturally in order to communicate with them effectively.”

* DSS Aboriginal staff member

“Moving forward together understanding each other’s history, culture and appreciation of richness that brings through listening and sharing.”

* Non-Indigenous staff member

# Staff Profile - *Latia Jade Clift* – Canberra

Latia Clift is passionate about advancing cultural awareness within the department, bringing her personal journey to her work as an Indigenous Facilitator.

Indigenous Facilitators deliver face-to-face cultural awareness training, as well as participating in work such as developing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy, the quarterly RAP Working Group Yarning Circles, and ad-hoc presentations within the department at branch meetings and NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week events.

“My role provides the opportunity to reflect on the notion of culture for a way forward, together,” said Latia. “Culture goes beyond Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional customs, it is shaped by the events, experiences and policies of the past.”

Through facilitating cultural awareness training, Latia brings people together to find connection, further reconciliation, and help to build a stronger future.

She explains that to her, reconciliation is about healing disconnections, acknowledging the past and taking responsibility for building a stronger future.

“As an Indigenous woman, I have felt my family and I have been walking in the past for a long time. We had divided our connection from mother earth and were reliving the devastation and impact of colonisation through each generation.

“I can now feel proud of who I am, build a new history with my father to not live in shame and be the voice for our ancestors of a hidden history,” she shares.

Latia is a strong believer in people learning from each other when it comes to cultural awareness. “I believe we are meant to see ourselves through our parents, physical attributes and the sharing of culture to know where we come from, with pride. For a long time I had many regrets in the unknown of my history and having a mixed raced family, my racial and cultural identity at times felt confusing and contradictory.”

The cultural awareness training that Latia runs provides a broad overview to departmental staff with an appreciation and respect for First Nations peoples, with a focus on culturally respectful ways to work better and more effectively together.

Knowing where to start can be a stumbling block for many people when approaching their role in reconciliation.

“Start your journey, I would encourage anyone to take the steps to make a connection, begin to learn and gain a deeper sense of self-awareness— everyone has a valuable role in shaping the future,” said Latia.

For more information about the Indigenous Facilitator network email IndigenousCapability Development@dss.gov.au. To continue learning about reconciliation, visit the Reconciliation page on STAFFnet or Reconciliation Australia.

## Action 6: Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation, including consulting with other subject matter experts within the department. | **November** Report on post-training feedback and additional consultations | **January** Report on post-training feedback and additional consultations | **January** Report on post-training feedback and additional consultations | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and SES Advisors) on the implementation of a cultural learning strategy. | **November** Consult at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff conference | **January** Consult with facilitators | **January** Consult at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff conference | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Implement a cultural learning strategy for our staff. | **November** Report on cultural learning delivered | **January** Report on cultural learning delivered | **January** Report on cultural learning delivered | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Communicate a cultural learning strategy for all staff as per the Reconciliation Communication Framework. | **November** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **January** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **January** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Commit all RAP Working Group members, HR officers, senior executive group and all new staff to undertake formal and structured cultural learning. | **September** Present tailored cultural awareness training to specific areas | **July** Present tailored cultural awareness training to specific areas | **July** Present tailored cultural awareness training to specific areas | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **October** Run SES face-to-face Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training | **October** Run SES face-to-face Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training | **October** Run SES face-to-face Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **March** Review reconciliation resources in on-boarding kits | **March** Review reconciliation resources in on-boarding kits | **December** Review reconciliation resources in on-boarding kits | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **October** All RAP Working Group members completed face-to-face training | **January** All RAP Working Group members completed face-to-face training | **January** All RAP Working Group members completed face-to-face training | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **f)** New supervisors refresh cultural awareness training via face-to-face or online | **October** New staff complete CORE within six months | **January** New staff complete CORE within six months | **January** New staff complete CORE within six months | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **October** 10% of staff complete face-to-face training | **January** 40% of staff completed face-to-face training | **January** 80% of staff complete face-to-face training | **June** Final report (95% completed face-to-face training in past three years) | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **October** New supervisors refresh Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training | **January** New supervisors refresh Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training | **January** New supervisors refresh Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **g)** Up to four staff, including one senior executive and one communications officer, selected through an expression of interest process, to undertake cultural immersion learning activities through the Garma Festival and report learnings back to department. | **October** Four staff attend Garma and report back to department | **January** Four staff attend Garma and report back to department | **January** Four staff attend Garma and report back to department | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **h)** Develop and implement an interactive map of Australia (AIATSIS language map) that showcases the department’s programs and policies, working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (e.g. the *Stronger Places, Strong People* communities) featuring local language, culture and stories. | **October** Investigate | **January** Develop | **NRW** Implement | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
| **i)** Share cultural training resources with portfolio agencies. | **October** Investigate | **January** Outreach | **January** Share | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **j)** Raise internal awareness of the 50th anniversary of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on 26 January 2022 including the significance it has in promoting the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | **June** Investigate | **January** Promote activities internally | - | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **k)** Promote the history of Australia's reconciliation journey through the publication and promotion of a historical timeline. | **June** Publish | **June** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |

## Action 7: Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols, through cultural awareness training and promotion through the Reconciliation Communication Framework. | **July** Report promotional activities and share with portfolio agencies | **May** Report promotional activities and share with portfolio agencies | **May** Report promotional activities and share with portfolio agencies | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **October** Include Acknowledgement of Country on homepage of internally facing and externally facing websites | **June** Maintain Acknowledgement of Country on homepage of internally facing and externally facing websites | **June** Maintain Acknowledgement of Country on homepage of internally facing and externally facing websites | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. | **December** Update and promote protocols | **July** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **July** Review protocols | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at least six significant events each year, including*:* NRW, NAIDOC Week, Secretary's Excellence Award, Wear it Purple Day events, International Day of People with Disability and orientation for new entry level program intakes. | **In line with events** Welcome to Country provided | **In line with events** Welcome to Country provided | **In line with events** Welcome to Country provided | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings, as per Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country protocols. | **October** Report | **January** Report | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Staff and senior leaders provide an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events. | **October** Report | **January** Report | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **f)** Display Acknowledgment of Country plaques in our National Office and all seven of our head state and territory offices. | **July** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **July** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **July** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **g)** Update the Acknowledgement of Country template in standard departmental PowerPoint presentations to include Traditional Owners for all departmental offices, where appropriate. | **November** Investigate and consult | **January** Implement where appropriate | **January** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |

## Action 8: Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** RAP Working Group to participate in and/or actively contribute to an external NAIDOC Week event, and share with the department. | **July** Achieve and share with team | **July** Achieve and share with team | **July** Achieve and share with team | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Ensure the continuation of HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week and promote these provisions across the department in the lead up to NAIDOC Week through the Reconciliation Communication Framework. | **June** Review policies and promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Review policies and promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Review policies and promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Support:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Support all staff to participate in at least one NAIDOC Week event in our local area, including department-wide promotion of events local to all departmental offices through the Reconciliation Communication Framework. | **June** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, support external NAIDOC Week events each year based on activities local to departmental offices. | **July** States and territories support external NAIDOC week event | **July** States and territories support external NAIDOC week event | **July** States and territories support external NAIDOC week event | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Hold one internal NAIDOC Week event each year in all states and territories, led by reconciliation sub-groups established under Action 14h), including at least one department-wide NAIDOC event. | **June** Hold at least one event in each state and territory | **June** Hold at least one event in each state and territory | **June** Hold at least one event in each state and territory | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate and RAP Working Group |

## Action 9: Build respect and understanding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, strengths and perspectives through improved quality and accessibility of the department’s relevant data holdings, including the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC).

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Ensure LSIC findings are fed back to participating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities. | **December** Publish and distribute resources | **December** Publish and distribute resources | **December** Publish and distribute resources | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **b)** Promote LSIC methods, findings and data usage opportunities throughout the department's data and policy networks. | **October** Outreach to policy areas to promote LSIC usage | **March** Present to Data Analysts' Network | **March** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **c)** Explore opportunities to use LSIC data to demonstrate how school RAPs make a difference to outcomes for LSIC kids. | **October** Investigate | **January** Investigate | **January** Investigate | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **d)** Improve national longitudinal data quality by promoting opportunities for National Centre for Longitudinal Data (NCLD) survey respondents to identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. | **October** Investigate | **January** Implement | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **e)** Improve national longitudinal data quality by promoting inclusion of questions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in future survey waves. | **October** Investigate | **January** Implement | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **f)** Enable all NCLD surveys to use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander translator services. | **October** Investigate | **January** Implement | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **g)** Improve understanding of LSIC and other NCLD datasets, by working with policy and program areas to identify and provide policy relevant findings. | **October** Engage | **January** Engage | **January** Engage | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager,Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **h)** Embed the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) *Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research* into ongoing design, implementation and analysis practices of LSIC and assist others in the department with implementing the code. | **October** Investigate | **January** Implement | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Executive Manager, National Centre for Longitudinal Data |
| **i)** Promote adoption of the AIATSIS *Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research* across department and portfolio agencies where applicable. | **October** Invite AIATSIS to speak at Data Analysts' Network meeting | **July** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **July** Investigate opportunity for department-wide adoption | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security **Support:** Group Manager, Data and Evaluation and Group Manager, Corporate |

# OPPORTUNITIES

*The department advocates for a diverse workplace with equal opportunities and offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples meaningful careers, with their culture a valued part of the department’s day-to-day operations.*

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy developed by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff will build career pathways, strengthen career development and continue to embed cultural knowledge and understanding into our workplace culture. We are also committed to increasing opportunities in the broader community, through the Indigenous Procurement Policy and improving access to grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

“Reconciliation is important to allow the department and the public service to grow to be a fully inclusive workplace and continue to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people”.

* Torres Strait Islander staff member

**Staff Profile – *Mitchell Dahlstrom* – Canberra**

Seizing opportunities to advance reconciliation is something that Mitchell Dahlstrom lives by and advocates.

“Everyone has a role to play in reconciliation. I knew I needed to play my part in the journey, something I could do by sharing my experiences,” said Mitchell.

Mitchell, a Gamilaraay/Gomeroi man from Moree NSW, has worked within several government agencies to promote and advance reconciliation. This included taking up leadership roles within diversity networks and working with Reconciliation Action Plan working groups, creating a space for a respectful exchange of ideas and questions, as well as sharing stories and learnings with colleagues.

“Reconciliation is about unification, creating an Australia where the unique place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold is core to the country’s values, narrative, and future,” said Mitchell. “A country of genuine exchange and positive relationships where we can all feel a sense of place, belonging and pride.”

Mitchell says Australia’s complex history needs to be recognised, accepted and taught, so we all have a shared knowledge and understanding. “I believe that acknowledgment and education are the most important steps towards a reconciled Australia.”

Reflecting on who can advance reconciliation and how, Mitchell says it’s up to everyone. “Reconciliation isn’t something driven only by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We all need to take steps towards reconciliation, and the first step is acknowledging you have a role to play.”

For people who don’t know what to do, he says the department’s Reconciliation Action Plan is a good place to begin to get an understanding of the issues, as well as the CORE cultural training. “Change takes time. Be open to attending cultural immersion training/programs, read books by Indigenous authors and about Indigenous history – Australia’s history, and most importantly share your learnings with others and encourage them to start doing more as well,” said Mitchell.

## Action 10: Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our DSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy in line with the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024. | **December** Two-yearly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff conference | **December** Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff National Committee | **December** Two-yearly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff conference | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Review and update the DSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy in line with the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024. | **July** Develop and publish strategy | **January** Promote strategy | **January** Review strategy | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. | **October** Achieve as per departmental recruitment policy | **January** Achieve as per departmental recruitment policy | **January** Achieve as per departmental recruitment policy | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace. | **October** Review as per DSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy | **January** Promote as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **January** Review | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be supported to take on management and senior level positions. | **October** As per DSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Workforce Strategy | **January** As per DSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Workforce Strategy | **January** As per DSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Workforce Strategy | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **f)** Set targets for increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in line with the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2020-2024 and Closing the Gaps targets. | **June**  Achieve 9% of APS4 – 6 | **June**  Maintain 9% of APS4 – 6 | **June**  Maintain 9% of APS4 – 6 | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **June**  Maintain 1.5% of EL1 – 2 | **June**  Achieve 2% of EL1 – 2 | **June**  Achieve 2.5% of EL1 – 2 | **June**  Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **June**  Maintain 1%  of SES | **June**  Maintain 1% of SES | **June**  Achieve 1.5% of SES | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **g)** Continue to participate in the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program and continue to support Indigenous Graduates and Interns. | **June** 10 apprentices on-boarded | **January** 10 apprentices and 5 graduates on-boarded | **January** 10 apprentices and 5 graduates on-boarded | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **h)** Continue to implement the DSS Indigenous Internship Program | **October** Up to 10 interns on-boarded | **June** Up to 10 interns on-boarded | **June** Up to 10 interns on-boarded | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |

## Action 11: Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Contribute to meeting the required annual Indigenous procurement portfolio targets set by the National Indigenous Australians Agency through  the Indigenous Procurement  Policy. | **October** Report | **October** Report | **October** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
| **b)** Continue the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy through the Indigenous Procurement Policy, which is embedded  within standard departmental procurement processes. | **October** Report | **January** Report | **January** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
| **c)** Maintain annual membership  with Supply Nation. | **October**  Renew annual  Supply Nation  membership | **January**  Renew annual  Supply Nation  membership | **January**  Renew annual  Supply Nation  membership | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
| **d)** Continue to build awareness within the department and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff where possible. | **October** Forward targeted promotional material to relevant business areas in the department | **January** Forward targeted promotional material to relevant business areas in the department | **January** Forward targeted promotional material to relevant business areas in the department | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
|  | **October** Promote the Indigenous Business Trade Fair series | **January** Promote the Indigenous Business Trade Fair series. | **January** Promote the Indigenous Business Trade Fair series. | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
| **e)** Continue to review and update procurement practices where possible to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. | **October** Report and promote any updates | **January** Report and promote any updates | **January** Report and promote any updates | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
| **f)** Maintain commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses in line with targets set by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) Indigenous Procurement Policy and government procurement requirements. | **October** Achieve as per NIAA targets | **October** Achieve as per NIAA targets | **October** Achieve as per NIAA targets | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
| **g)** Continue training for all relevant staff related to the Procurement Helpdesk in contracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through Supply Nation or an equivalent organisation. | **October** Report and promote | **January** Report and promote | **January** Report and promote | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |
| **h)** Actively participate in the Indigenous Procurement Cross-Agency Working Group as lead by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). | **As set by NIAA** Attend meetings | **As set by NIAA** Attend meetings | **As set by NIAA** Attend meetings | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Social Security  **Support:** Chief Financial Officer |

## Action 12: Improve access to DSS grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Identify existing barriers and opportunities, including exploring how program design, program advertisement and application processes can be improved. | - | **March** Consult with Indigenous organisations, the NIAA and program designers | - | - | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities  **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
| **b)** Develop and track baseline data and key performance indicators for measuring improved access over time. | **December** Explore and develop baseline measures and scope requirement for system enhancement | **March**  (if required) Deliver system changes to capture key performance indicator data sets | - | - | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities  **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
|  | - | **Quarterly**  Track baseline measures once implemented | **Quarterly** Track baseline measures | **Quarterly** Track baseline measures | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities  **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
|  | - | **In line with Executive Management Group (EMG) forward schedule**  Report to EMG | **In line with EMG forward schedule**  Report to EMG | **In line with EMG forward schedule**  Report to EMG | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities  **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |
| **c)** Design and implement relevant changes to grant programs, informed by deliverables a) and b) and in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals, the NIAA and program designers. | **June** Finalise implementation plan  **August**  Develop guidance for program designers to implement actions  **October**  Incorporate actions into capability development plans and program compliance checks | - | **Quarterly** Report compliance rates to DSS Audit and Assurance Committee | **Quarterly** Report compliance rates to DSS Audit and Assurance Committee | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities  **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub |

# GOVERNANCE

*The department is committed to achieving and reporting on the targets in this Reconciliation Action Plan.*

A reporting tool will be developed to measure progress and hold the department accountable. The department’s Indigenous Champion also shares a biannual reconciliation message to promote reconciliation outside the RAP’s actions and deliverables.

“Our department impacts on the lives and experiences on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in many ways – they are our clients, our staff,

our communities and our leaders. I believe we can meaningfully and measurably contribute to the reconciliation agenda through our shared values, beliefs, actions and investment.”

* Non-Indigenous staff member

**STAFF PROFILE – Natasha Rees – Adelaide**

One of the key functions of the department’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is to empower staff to advance reconciliation. Director, South Australia (SA) Regional Performance, Natasha Rees, is just one example of someone who has been inspired to take action.

Focussing on developing relationships, one of the four themes of the RAP, Natasha has actively promoted reconciliation in her state office and her local community.

“Reconciliation is important to me, to value the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to listen to their views, and not repeat the mistakes of the past,” said Natasha.

Natasha’s passion for and commitment to reconciliation was sparked during a Jawun secondment to Inner Sydney Empowered Communities in early 2019.

“I was moved by the stories of the Aboriginal people in Redfern and La Perouse, their passion for their close-knit community,” said Natasha.

“I admired their resolve for self-determination and to thrive despite intergenerational trauma, racism and other barriers they face every day.

“I realised I could be a powerful ally and friend to Indigenous peoples to help amplify their voice.”

Following discussions with her colleagues in the SA state office, Natasha established a local Reconciliation Action Plan group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff with the aim of promoting reconciliation throughout the year.

After having a similar conversation with Andrew Bubb in the NSW state office, who also participated in Jawun, they combined forces to produce a consultation document to inform ideas for the next RAP.

One of their first actions was to identify practical ways to engage with Indigenous culture locally.

Given the sudden challenges of COVID-19 in 2020, Natasha worked with the SA RAP group to pull together last-minute virtual Reconciliation Week activities for the office.

Within her local community, Natasha also volunteered her time to an Aboriginal Arts company helping with their finances and identifying grant opportunities.

She currently volunteers with an Aboriginal youth service helping them to become established, including setting up their governance and Human Resource procedures and practices.

“It’s the small steps that can make a big difference,” said Natasha. “Look at the RAP and see which action speaks to you and make a start – there’s plenty of support along the way.”

## Action 13: Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RAP Working Group) to drive governance of the RAP.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Maintain appropriate representation on the RAP Working Group, including representation from all Groups across the department, Communications Services Branch, senior executives and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members. | **October** Review and update membership | **January** Review and update membership | **January** Review and update membership | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Apply a Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group. | **October** Establish Terms of Reference | **June** Review Terms of Reference | **June** Review Terms of Reference | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate and RAP Working Group |
| **c)** Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation. | **Quarterly** RAP Working Group meeting | **Quarterly** RAP Working Group meeting | **Quarterly** RAP Working Group meeting | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate and RAP Working Group |

## Action 14: Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Embed resource needs for RAP implementation. | **Quarterly** Reviewed by Executive Management Group (EMG) | **Quarterly** Reviewed by EMG | **Quarterly** Reviewed by EMG | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Embed key RAP actions in performance expectations of senior management and all staff. | **July** Update SES Individual Performance and Development Agreement (IPDA) templates **October** All SES and relevant staff to have RAP KPIs in their IPDA | **January** All SES and relevant staff to have RAP KPIs in their IPDA | **January** All SES and relevant staff to have RAP KPIs in their IPDA | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | **October** Develop quarterly reporting tool | **Quarterly** Implement quarterly reporting | **Quarterly**  Implement quarterly reporting | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management. | **June** Report | **June** Report | **June** Report | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Include our RAP as a standing agenda item at senior management meetings, for example, SES leaders report progress and challenges to the People and Culture Committee (PCC). | **Quarterly** Report to PCC | **Quarterly** Report to PCC | **Quarterly** Report to PCC | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **f)** Develop a framework with department-wide representation, such as an SES Steering Group, to provide senior executives oversight of and accountability for the implementation of RAP deliverables. | **October** Establish SES framework to drive RAP deliverables | **January** Implement SES framework | **January** Review SES framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **g)** Participate in Reconciliation Australia's leadership events. | **As set by Reconciliation Australia** Departmental representative attends leadership event | **As set by Reconciliation Australia** Departmental representative attends leadership event | **As set by Reconciliation Australia** Departmental representative attends leadership event | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **h)** Work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff National Committee, create reconciliation sub-groups, made up of non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, in each state and territory office to promote local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, events and stories of reconciliation. | **October** Establish and promote sub-groups | **January**  Promote activitiesand report on meetings | **January**  Promote activitiesand report on meetings | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Deputy Secretary, Families and Communities **Support:** Group Manager, Community Grants Hub, RAP Working Group and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff National Committee |

## Action 15: Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | **September** Submit RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire | **September** Submit RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire | **September** Submit RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly. | **Quarterly** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework and Executive Management Group (EMG) schedule | **Quarterly** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework and EMG schedule | **Quarterly** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework and EMG schedule | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **c)** Publically report against our RAP commitments annually, outlining achievements, challenges and learnings, including in the department's corporate documents such as Annual Report and Corporate Plan. | **October** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **October** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **October** Achieve as per Reconciliation Communication Framework | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **d)** Participate in Reconciliation Australia’s biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. | **-** | **May** Participate in RAP Barometer | **May** Report outcomes from RAP Barometer | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **e)** Develop and administer a RAP reporting tool and online staff survey to measure progress against all RAP targets across the department. | **October** Develop reporting tool  **Quarterly** Implement reporting tool | **Quarterly** Implement reporting tool | **Quarterly** Implement reporting tool | **June** Final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
|  | **-** | **June** Administer online staff survey | **June** Administer online staff survey | **June** Administer online staff survey and final report | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |

## Action 16: Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.

| **Actions and Deliverables** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **Responsibility** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **a)** Register via Reconciliation Australia’s website to begin developing our next RAP. | **-** | **-** | **June** Commence development of new RAP | **June** Finalise and launch new RAP | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate |
| **b)** Oversee the development, endorsement, launch and advocacy of the importance of our next RAP. | **-** | **-** | **June** Commence development of launch of our next RAP | **June** Hold department wide event to launch our next RAP | **Lead:** Chief Operating Officer **Supports:** Group Manager, Corporate and RAP Working Group |

## Contact details

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## Artists

*James (Jim) Abednego & Nikki Gallagher*

Jim proudly identifies as a Torres Strait Islander. He grew up with his father’s family in Townsville.

“My father is from the Kaurereg tribe in the western Torres Strait,” said Jim. “My family gave me a very strong identity of which I’m very proud.”

The inspiration for the RAP artwork collaboration with Nikki came from Jim’s journeys throughout Australia and the diverse connections he has made along the way.

Nikki is a contemporary Aboriginal artist from Gomeroi and Galpu country. She uses art as a powerful storytelling tool to educate and share her Aboriginal culture and history.

The artwork for the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021–2024 allowed Nikki and Jim to contribute from their own backgrounds and cultures.

“Important to me was the journey and how it was represented between all peoples who are on the pathway towards Reconciliation,” said Nikki.

“The use of symbols and vibrant colours is also part of who I am as an artist when storytelling through art pieces.”

*Claire Atteia*

Claire is an artist and graphic designer with a strong love of colour, pattern and typography. Claire traditionally loves working with her hands, and enjoyed finger painting as a child, with lino cutting and printing with ink her favourites now.

Her RAP artwork represents the passing of time using tree rings, bringing healing and making reconciliation possible. The colour palette is inspired by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags, with topographic maps representing the contours of the Earth’s surface.

Commonwealth of Australia 2021

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Artists

Mr James (Jim) Abednego and Ms Nikki Gallagher

Reconciliation Journeys

The map represents the connected pathways in conjunction with the stars, represented by the Southern Cross, as to what has been used to guide the peoples of the Australian continent not only in finding their way across, but to this land and the journey that we all take to reconciliation. The colours identify the various groups that make the journey together i.e. Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples and the diverse group being within e.g. Mature, Aged and Youth, LGBTQI+, People with Disability, CALD and many more. The people symbols show where our physical presence is in relation to map and how the department stretches across this vast land. The five people symbols grouped together represent the five dimensions of reconciliation: historical acceptance; race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity and unity. These five dimensions do not exist in isolation, but are interrelated.

The artwork depicts the journey we are all on to reconciliation, the lines bend and curve as is the nature of Reconciliation itself. The colours are warm and inviting and show passion for the cause.