

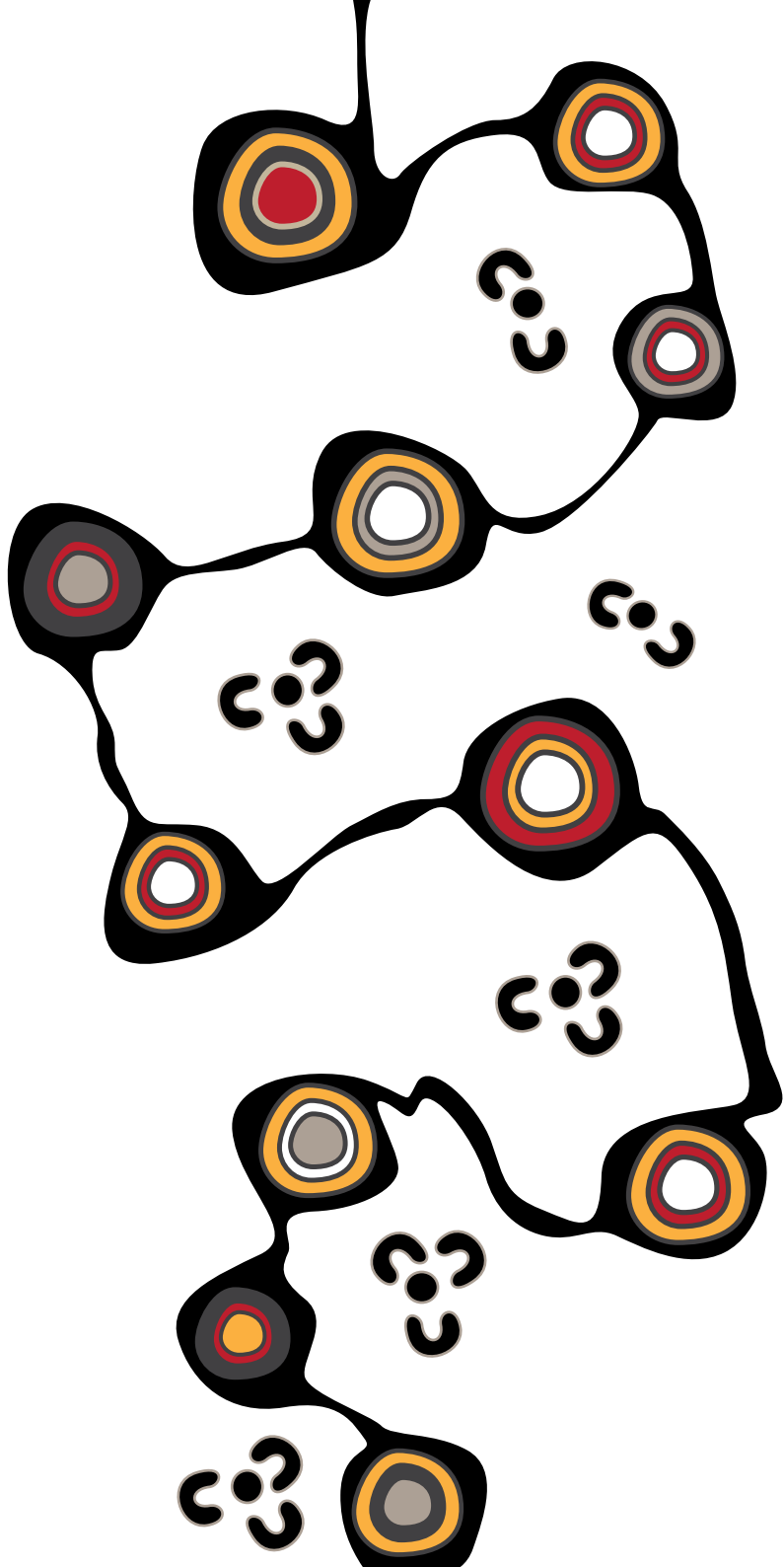
# Reconciliation Australia

## Reconciliation Action Plan 2014-2017



Artwork by Mazart Design Studio





Reconciliation Australia  
Reconciliation Action Plan 2014-2017



# Message from the CEO

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People sometimes ask why Reconciliation Australia needs to have its own Reconciliation Action Plan given that reconciliation is our core business.

And it's true, our staff already have real passion and commitment to help improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, that's why they happily choose to work here. But a RAP reflects an important aspect of an organisation's culture. Having our own RAP promotes sound internal discussion about the nature of what we do and inspires us to aim even higher. It also helps us to appreciate the diligent process that other organisations go through in formulating their own RAPs.

Beginning with just eight 'trailblazers' in 2006, our RAP family now numbers around 600 organisations. We are excited that this revolutionary program today delivers measurable improvements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in workplaces all around Australia and is also recognised internationally. We are equally proud to be one of those organisations ourselves, it's good company to be in.

Our 2014-17 RAP was developed by our RAP Working Group comprising staff members across all teams. They collaborated extensively with other staff, Board members and kindred groups to create a RAP worthy of an organisation fully engaged in reconciliation projects and initiatives.

At their heart, RAPs are largely about people and ours is no different. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff already share a certain kinship that comes from working together on something we all believe in. Much like a professional football team where everyone's skills are needed, we each play a complementary role in pursuit of the prize. And when it's time to celebrate the success of a special event such as National Reconciliation Week or on reaching a key RAP benchmark, we all share the moment together.

Since our initial RAP was formulated in 2008, faces have changed, we have grown in number and we are now located in Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. All along, having our own RAP has provided helpful guidance and a defined set of aspirations for staff. In 2014, as we embark on a Stretch RAP, we intend to push ourselves even further.

*Leah Armstrong*



## Our vision for reconciliation

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**Our vision is for everyone to wake to a reconciled, just and equitable Australia.**

Our aim is to inspire and enable all Australians to contribute to reconciliation and to break down stereotypes and discrimination.

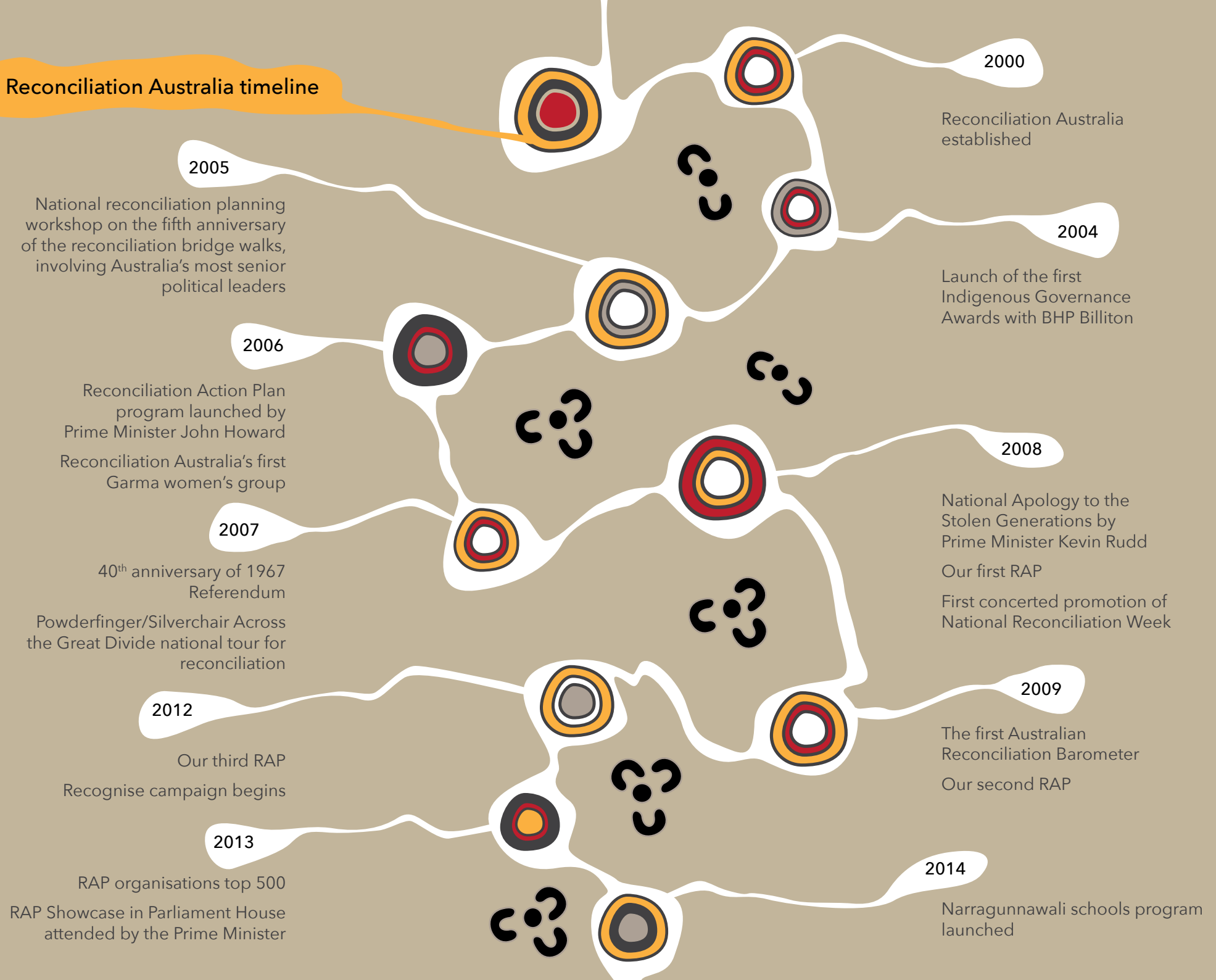
We expect a lot from others and no less of ourselves, and so we work each day to ensure that our own practices model the core aspects of reconciliation.

Through building relationships, demonstrating respect, and creating opportunities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to achieve their full potential, Australia and all Australians are enriched.

Kimberley Benjamin from Reconciliation WA and Susanne Bowles from Reconciliation Australia at Dreamtime at the G on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Long Walk.

Photo by Karen Mundine

# Reconciliation Australia timeline





## Our business

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As a national, independent not-for-profit organisation, we seek to build better relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider Australian community.

Better relationships remove barriers, foster understanding, engender respect and expand opportunities. As the driving force for change, our role is to encourage all sectors of the Australian community to join the reconciliation quest.

In doing this, we work with large and small enterprises, schools, sporting bodies, community organisations and individuals to bring people together, share information and promote the success stories.

Like most organisations these days, we are accessible through our website where visitors can obtain information about us and download resources. We are also active on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and have our own blog.

As at 1 July 2014, Reconciliation Australia and the Recognise team comprise 51 staff, 20 of whom are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

The artwork depicts the human journey throughout our landscape. The connections of people with country, rivers and meeting places that are important for sharing knowledge, wisdom and stories from generation to generation.

Artwork by Mazart Design Studio



▶ promoting social, economic and financial inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. Continuing to focus on building our relationships across Australia with our partners.

## Our own RAP journey

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As the RAP program began to grow and organisations large and small came on board, it occurred to us that we too should walk the talk and develop our own RAP.

Following wide consultation with staff and others, our working group finalised our first RAP in 2008. Six years on and that document has now reached its fourth iteration and so, rather than simply updating or revising our existing commitments, we have decided it was time to go further by adopting a Stretch RAP spanning three years. As the name suggests, signing up to a Stretch RAP means we have resolved to expand our cultural understanding and adopt even more ambitious goals.

In preparation for our graduation to a Stretch RAP, we first conducted a review of our previous three RAPs to determine their impact so far and to consider where we might further extend ourselves. Ideas and comments were sought and all staff and the Board were involved in its development and refinement.

Having our own RAP over these past six years has helped us appreciate its value as a tool for organisational reflection and improvement. It has afforded us a practical understanding of the steps we needed to take in identifying and fulfilling meaningful actions and targets - i.e. to practice what we preach.

Anna Jovanovic interviews Phil Lockyer representing the Commonwealth Bank at the 2013 RAP Showcase at Parliament House.

Photo by Jo Mayers



TREASURES  
GALLERY



# Key lessons

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The key lessons learnt from our earlier RAPs include:

- The road to reconciliation has its challenges and rewards, its victories and its setbacks, but with the best of goodwill from all concerned continues to lead us forward.
- Personal commitment to reconciliation actions is fundamental and it's vital that each member of staff feels that they have ownership of the RAP for it to achieve its purpose.
- RAP actions should always have both an outward and inward focus.
- It is acceptable to fall short of a target from time to time provided we understand the reasons why.

Emma Hedditch and Elle Shepherd at  
Judy Watson's *Fire and Water* artwork  
in Reconciliation Place in Canberra.

Photo by Kylie Kluger



Reconciliation Action Plans Showcase  
**Relationships Respect Opportunities**



## Stretch RAP

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As it should be, our new Stretch RAP is bold and challenging, designed to move our organisation to a higher reconciliation level.

All staff have a stake in its eventual success and for new staff it provides a blueprint of our commitments. While the RAP aims high, we have been mindful of implementation limitations dictated by our size, resources and strategic priorities. But having said that, we agree that where possible each target should be embraced with an eye to exceeding expectations.

The focus for our 2014-17 RAP includes actions around:

- Fostering relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Attracting, developing and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to achieve a 50:50 ratio by 2017
- Expanding the opportunities for staff to expand their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, collective identity and successes.

**Within our organisation:** We will build strong two-way relationships between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
1. Maintain an active RAP working group (RWG) to coordinate and monitor the development and implementation of our RAP.	Deputy CEO	September, December, March and June each year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold four RWG meetings each year.</li> <li>• Conduct a minimum of two presentations to all staff on progress and key issues.</li> <li>• Ensure at least 50 per cent of the RWG are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</li> <li>• Ensure RWG comprises representatives from all levels and key areas of the organisation and 2 external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members.</li> </ul>
2. Actively participate in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) activities.	GM Communications and Engagement	National Reconciliation Week 27 May to 3 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver one flagship NRW event in collaboration with one of our community or RAP organisation partners.</li> <li>• Encourage and support all staff to participate in at least three external events during NRW.</li> </ul>
3. Develop stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations, locally and around the country.	CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalise a minimum of two partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations or businesses that support the achievement of reconciliation.</li> <li>• Meet with a minimum of 20 leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations each year.</li> <li>• Invite Traditional Owners to meet with our staff at least once a year in each of our office locations.</li> </ul>
4. Increase our engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an annual reconciliation roundtable with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders to seek their views on reconciliation and the work of Reconciliation Australia.</li> <li>• Conduct an annual survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders to seek their views on reconciliation and the work of Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>
5. Support the Australian Reconciliation Network	GM, Communications and Engagement	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate a minimum of three Australian Reconciliation Network teleconferences and one face to face meeting annually.</li> </ul>



**Within the Australian community:** We will connect people through forums, networks and events to educate the community about how the quality of the relationship between us affects outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the nation.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
6. Increase community and organisation participation in NRW.	GM, Communications and Engagement	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of registered NRW events to 1,500 by 2017.</li> <li>• Consolidate NRW as the premier reconciliation event in all states and territories.</li> </ul>
7. Facilitate improved relationships across Australia through the RAP program.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of organisations across Australia with RAPs to 1,000 by 2017.</li> <li>• Drive and monitor implementation of relationship actions within RAPs.</li> <li>• Facilitate increased partnerships between RAP organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.</li> <li>• Monitor and report on the pro-bono contribution from RAP organisations towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities.</li> </ul>
8. Facilitate improved relationships across Australia through the <i>Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools</i> program.	National Schools Manager	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of early childhood, primary and secondary schools participating in the program to 500 by June 2017.</li> <li>• Encourage stronger relationships between participating early childhood, primary and secondary schools and their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.</li> </ul>
9. Bring organisations and community together to learn from each other.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a minimum of six Learning Circles each year across Australia to bring the RAP community together to discuss key issues.</li> </ul>
10. Track the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.	Deputy CEO	Public release in 2015 and 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to conduct the Australian Reconciliation Barometer biennially.</li> <li>• Communicate results widely to key stakeholders and the media.</li> </ul>

**Within our organisation:** We will develop a culturally proficient workforce and demonstrate our respect for Australia's First Peoples.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
<p>1. Continue to expand our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, languages, cultures, collective identity, aspirations and successes.</p>	<p>Deputy CEO</p>	<p>June 2015, reported annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve 100 per cent staff participation in the RA cultural proficiency program.</li> <li>• New staff to complete online Share our Pride learning within one month of commencement.</li> <li>• Achieve 75 per cent staff participation in annual cultural proficiency workshop with focus on reconciliation and issues of national significance.</li> <li>• Achieve 75 per cent staff participation in annual local cultural proficiency session with traditional owners.</li> <li>• Achieve 25 per cent staff participation in cultural immersion program.</li> <li>• Include cultural competency training in individual development plans.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land and waterways on which we work and meet.</p>	<p>Deputy CEO</p>	<p>June 2015, reported annually</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge Traditional Owners and Elders at internal meetings, including staff meetings and Management Group meetings.</li> <li>• Display in our main offices a statement prominently acknowledging country.</li> <li>• Include Acknowledgment of Country and of Elders in our email signature block.</li> <li>• Engage with Traditional Owners and Elders to perform Welcome to Country at major events.</li> <li>• Develop protocols for Acknowledgment of Country for all key locations in which we work around Australia.</li> <li>• Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in our main offices at all times.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Participate in and support NAIDOC Week activities and other key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and celebrations.</p>	<p>Deputy CEO</p>	<p>NAIDOC Week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support all staff to attend at least one NAIDOC Week activity.</li> <li>• Host at least one major NAIDOC Week event.</li> <li>• Purchase a table at the ACT NAIDOC Week ball and invite local Elders to attend with our staff.</li> </ul>

**Within the Australian community:** We will educate people about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, contemporary cultures, collective identities and successes.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
4. Build awareness of reconciliation and issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples amongst the broader Australian community and proactively advocate for positive change.	GM, Communications and Engagement	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop clear policy positions on key issues related to reconciliation.</li> <li>• Provide submissions to relevant consultation processes and inquiries.</li> <li>• Convey key policy issues on social media and through the media.</li> </ul>
5. Provide publicly accessible tools to build cultural awareness and understanding among the general community.	GM, Communications and Engagement	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and distribute a minimum of six factsheets annually on key Reconciliation related topics.</li> <li>• Maintain, update and promote Share our Pride website.</li> </ul>
6. Promote the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.	GM, Communications and Engagement	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct the Indigenous Governance Awards in 2014 and 2016.</li> <li>• Promote Award winners and finalists.</li> <li>• Share the success stories from IGA applicants throughout our network, on our website and via social media.</li> </ul>
7. Facilitate greater understanding and respect through the RAP program.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive and monitor implementation of respect actions within RAPs.</li> <li>• Monitor and report on the number of people who have completed cultural awareness training.</li> </ul>

**Within our organisation:** We will continue to ensure high representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our organisation and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in our day to day business.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
1. Attract, develop and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment to 50 per cent of full time employees by June 2017.</li> <li>• Develop a retention strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by December 2015.</li> <li>• Conduct an annual review of HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and promotion.</li> <li>• Consult annually with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff on all aspects of our employment strategy, including professional development.</li> <li>• Develop and pilot a tailored internship program with a tertiary institution.</li> </ul>
2. Support our use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through Supply Nation.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure at least 10 per cent of annual procurement is with Supply Nation members.</li> <li>• Provide at least one session annually to all staff on how to procure Supply Nation business.</li> </ul>

**Within the Australian community:** We will be a catalyst for increased economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
3. Facilitate increased employment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in RAP organisations.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive and monitor implementation of actions within RAPs to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.</li> <li>• Monitor and report on number of people who are working in RAP organisations.</li> <li>• Increase the number of RAP organisations receiving support from our workplace inclusion program, REDI Australia.</li> </ul>
4. Facilitate increased procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses in RAP organisations.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive and monitor implementation of actions within RAPs to increase procurement of services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li> <li>• Monitor and report on procurement from Supply Nation accredited businesses in the RAP community.</li> </ul>
5. Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to provide services to the RAP community.	Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with RAP consultants to build their understanding of the RAP program.</li> </ul>
6. Work with RAP organisations to partner and support the Recognise campaign to raise awareness of Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their workplaces.	Operations Manager, Recognise Deputy CEO	June 2015, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage RAP organisations to include an action on the Recognise Campaign in their RAPs.</li> <li>• Provide RAP organisations the available resources in order for them to support the Recognise campaign.</li> </ul>

**Within our organisation:** We will track our progress and report regularly.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
1. Provide an annual report on the outcomes of the Reconciliation Australia RAP.	Deputy CEO	September 2014, reported annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and submit the RAP impact Measurement questionnaire annually.</li> </ul>
2. Report to the Reconciliation Australia Board on the implementation of RAP actions.	Deputy CEO	Reported quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide Reconciliation Australia RAP implementation update at all Reconciliation Australia Board meetings.</li> </ul>
3. Review the Reconciliation Australia RAP.	Deputy CEO	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-term review and update of the Reconciliation Australia RAP completed.</li> </ul>

**Within the Australian community:** We will report annually on the impact of our main programs and activities.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
1. Report on the impact of the Reconciliation Action Plan program.	Deputy CEO	March 2015, reported annually	Publicly release Impact measurement indicators for the RAP program and communicate widely to key stakeholders.
2. Report on the key achievements of major Reconciliation Australia programs.	GM, Communications and Engagement	December 2015, reported annually	Publicly release Annual Review and communicate widely to key stakeholders.



Reconciliation Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

Cover image by Wayne Quilliam | Graphic Design by Mazart Design Studio



Old Parliament House | King George Terrace, Canberra ACT 2600

PO Box 4773, Kingston ACT 2604 | Tel: 02 6273 9200 | [www.reconciliation.org.au](http://www.reconciliation.org.au)