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CHALLENGING
AND PROGRESSIVE
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RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA’S VISION FOR A RECONCILED NATION

OUR VISION IS TO WAKE TO A RECONCILED, JUST AND EQUITABLE AUSTRALIA.

We are an independent not-for-profit organisation which promotes and facilitates reconciliation by building relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our vision for reconciliation is based on five inter-related dimensions: race relations, equality and equity, unity, institutional integrity, and historical acceptance. We ambitiously work to meet the challenges of reconciliation through a framework of these five dimensions.
This year has been an extraordinary year for Reconciliation Australia, a year of progress, challenges and importantly, of celebration.

In 2016, we marked 25 years of formal reconciliation in Australia and took the opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved and to acknowledge the many important contributors whose hard work and commitment have laid the foundations for our current efforts and successes. Against this background, we have been determined to recalibrate, re-energise and re-mobilise the reconciliation movement. In February we launched The State of Reconciliation in Australia report which has done exactly that – it is a clear mandate for the next generation of change.

This year we also worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to deliver the Redfern Statement, and made submissions on a range of important issues including the NSW Inquiry into Stolen Generations reparations, the Federal Inquiry into Education Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and ACT Reconciliation Day.

We have contributed strongly to the national conversation on reconciliation and responded to a range of issues, including juvenile justice, health, constitutional recognition, family violence, and racism. In June we released our 2016 Federal Election Platform which focused on seeking five key commitments to reconciliation from government. In August we boldly responded to a cartoon published in The Australian which spoke to the racism, discrimination and denial of history that still mars our nation today.

Our consortia programs continue to go from strength to strength. 2016 saw 146 Reconciliation Action Plans endorsed, a record number of 138 entries in the Indigenous Governance Awards, and the Narragunnawali program extending its reach to 650 schools.

The RECOGNISE campaign has continued to build support and awareness across a range of Australian communities for constitutional recognition. The campaign has more than 295,000 supporters working to recognise First Australians in the Constitution, and to deal with the racial discrimination within it. At the launch of National Reconciliation Week in May we launched the Alumni of the reconciliation movement. It was a joyous occasion, a reminder of a movement which has achieved astonishing progress. It was also a timely reminder of all that remains to be done if we are to achieve a just and equitable Australia for all.

None of this would be possible without the dedicated and hardworking teams at Reconciliation Australia and RECOGNISE. Our sincere thanks and gratitude goes to each and every one of them for their commitment and resilience.

As co-chairs specifically, must go to Tanya Hosch, co-campaign director at RECOGNISE, who for the last four years has campaigned passionately for constitutional recognition and to remove the racial discrimination that exists within our founding document. Tanya has made an enormous contribution to the campaign and her driving force and insights will be deeply missed. We wish Tanya every success in her new career opportunity.

We also would like to welcome Mark Yettica- Paulson who has been appointed as the new Joint Campaign Director for RECOGNISE. Mark is a respected Aboriginal leader with almost three decades of experience in advocacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Mark is an outstanding person to fill this national role.

Finally, we would like to thank our dedicated supporters and partners for helping us to progress our nation’s vision for reconciliation. We could not do it without you.
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2016 Reconciliation Australia celebrates 25 years of formal reconciliation in Australia.

Twenty-five years ago, members of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation knew that advancing reconciliation would be a generational project.

Twenty-five years on, Reconciliation Australia continues to drive our vision for reconciliation into the future with the launch of our landmark report, The State of Reconciliation in Australia. The Report, launched in February 2016, highlights the milestones achieved in Australia’s reconciliation journey over the past 25 years and provided recommendations for the nation’s way forward if we are to realise our potential as a reconciled nation.

The Report gives us a clear framework to define reconciliation and measure our progress, defining reconciliation in five important dimensions: race relations, equality and equity, unity, institutional integrity and historical acceptance. These dimensions, when woven together, will form the fabric of a reconciled Australia.

This comes at a critical time in Australia’s history—at a time when reconciliation is an increasingly important part of the national conversation. Across our programs, Reconciliation Australia is increasingly engaging Australians in moving this conversation forward.

Today, in workplaces across Australia, Reconciliation Australia’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program works to advance trust, respect and understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians. In 2016, the RAP program has made significant strides: with more than 700 organisations employing more than three million Australians engaged through endorsed RAPs. RAPs continue to drive widespread positive social change, lower prejudice, and engender greater trust—in turn, contributing significantly to the realisation of our nation’s vision for reconciliation.

Similarly, our journey towards reconciliation is furthered by Reconciliation Australia’s Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning program, which provides support to more than 21,000 early learning services, primary and secondary schools by fostering a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. In only three years, Narragunnawali has moved from strength to strength—engaging and supporting educators with key materials, curriculum resources and professional learning opportunities to increase their knowledge and confidence teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

This year we also celebrated National Reconciliation Week. This year’s theme—Our History, Our Story, Our Future—saw millions of Australians come together to reflect and consider how, together, we can progress further in our nation’s reconciliation journey. The week’s highlights included a dinner celebrating 25 years of Reconciliation in Australia which saw many of the reconciliation movement’s leaders and visionaries gather together to reflect on the progress we have made in this journey, and the journey that lies ahead.

In this, our 25th year, there is no better time to reaffirm our commitment to making reconciliation a national priority, and our dedication to building this momentum toward a better nation.

Thank you for your interest in our work, and for your commitment to playing your part as we work towards another generation of achievements in reconciliation.

Justin Mohamed
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia
In the 25th year of formal reconciliation in Australia, Reconciliation Australia released the State of Reconciliation in Australia report. The report highlights reconciliation milestones over the last 25 years while providing a vision for action into the future.

The State of Reconciliation in Australia report measures our progress towards reconciliation. Analysing reconciliation using five dimensions: race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity, and historical acceptance. The Report also provides recommendations as to how we can progress reconciliation into the next generation. Recommendations including, zero tolerance for racism, a renewed focus on Closing the Gap, and a reaffirmed recognition and respect for the rights of First Australians.

The State of Reconciliation in Australia report finds that almost all Australians (86 per cent) believe the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians is important. Yet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples still experience high levels of racial prejudice and discrimination, crisis levels of incarceration and out-of-home care. Trust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians also remains unacceptably low.

The Report sees support for reconciliation growing across all sections of the community, citing significant milestones over the last 25 years, including the establishment of Native Titles, Closing the Gap, the Bridge Walks, the National Apology, progress towards constitutional recognition of First Australians and the Reconciliation Action Plan program.

The State of Reconciliation in Australia report provides us with a blueprint for driving our nation’s decision for reconciliation and a platform for action.
Each year National Reconciliation Week celebrates and builds on the respectful relationships shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

From 27 May to 3 June this year, thousands of Australians came together to share in our nation’s vision for reconciliation. We saw this goodwill for a reconciled future in the more than 1,200 events which took place across the nation: in schools, workplaces, local communities, in our institutions, and in Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) partner organisations.

It is increasingly clear that Australians see reconciliation as a national priority, and that National Reconciliation Week provides a platform for all Australians to meaningfully engage in our reconciliation journey.

To fulfil Reconciliation Australia’s primary role as leader of the ‘national conversation’, a series of high-level national speaking and engagement opportunities were undertaken during the week by key spokespersons Justin Mohamed and Karen Mundine, including:

- National Reconciliation Week Parliamentary Lecture – The State of Reconciliation in Australia, Parliament House, Canberra
- The Long Walk – Federation Square, Melbourne
- Victoria Treaty consultations
- Native Title Conference – Darwin
- Elevate RAP partner workshops (11 partners) Richmond Football Club and Korin Gamadji Institute, Melbourne
- Defence Science and Technology – Education as a Lifelong Journey – Canberra
- City of Melbourne – Employment Breakfast Forum
- Songlines at the Sydney Opera House – Vivid Festival. Photography series at the Sydney Opera House with SOH CEO Louise Herron AM
- Barangaroo Sea of Hands – ANTaR. Photography series at Barangaroo with ANTAR CEO Andrew Meehan
- Balmain Sea of Hands – ANTaR. Photography series at Balmain with ANTaR CEO Andrew Meehan

Reconciliation Australia marked National Reconciliation Week with a celebration of 25 years of formal reconciliation in Australia, recognising the work of the alumni of the reconciliation movement. A dinner event brought together former Chairs, Deputies, members and staff of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and Reconciliation Australia, whose vision, achievements and leadership have progressed our nation’s reconciliation journey.

The dinner took place on Friday 27 May 2016 at Crown Melbourne and was hosted by Stan Grant. Over 200 guests attended, including the Hon Alan Tudge MP representing the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, The Hon Bill Shorten MP, Senator Pat Dodson, and Senator Rachel Siewert, who all addressed the event.

The theme for National Reconciliation Week 2016 was ‘Our History, Our Story, Our Future’. The theme asked all Australians to reflect on our national identity, and the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights in our nation’s story. ‘Our History’ reminded us all that historical acceptance is essential to our reconciliation journey. ‘Our Story’ reflected that this journey is a significant part of Australia’s national identity. In looking to ‘Our Future’, the theme affirmed that reconciliation must live in the hearts, minds and actions of all Australians as we move forward.

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Reconciliation Australia has been participating in the Garma Festival since 2006. This year we hosted a group of 13 Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous women from the health, corporate, not-for-profit, early childhood and arts sectors. Now in its 18th year, the annual Garma Festival, held in Gulkula, the traditional meeting place of the Yolngu people, provides a meaningful and safe place for participants to learn, understand and discuss the issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation. The Festival attracts Indigenous Australians, Garma attracts Straits Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians. Garma attracts approximately 2,500 people, including opinion and business leaders, decision makers, academics, and politicians from across the nation. The Festival provides a meaningful and safe place for participants to learn, understand and discuss the issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation. This year the festival was held from 20 July to 1 August and celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth) through the theme “Waŋa ŋaraka Ga Djapirri Mununggirritj, the group were immersed in conversations, culture and stories of the Yolngu. By hosting a Women’s Group, Reconciliation Australia provides a forum for increasing the understanding of issues of Australia’s First Peoples, along with learning what reconciliation means at the individual and national level. It also provides a forum for participants to build their capacity to lead change and innovation in their organisations.

By understanding and engaging with reconciliation through the Garma group, we seek to provide participants with the will, commitment and tools for spreading the message of reconciliation and to broaden the circle of reconciliation advocates. Our current Co-Chair Melinda Cilento became increasingly involved in reconciliation as a result of her experience at Garma. Testament to the number of previous participants who are all extremely important changes which continue to make, to our nation. Each of the finalists are making change, and work to strengthen the five dimensions of reconciliation. With the efforts and passion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander finalists the nation is taking significant steps toward achieving a reconciled, just and equitable Australia.

This year we hosted a group of 13 Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous women from the health, corporate, not-for-profit, early childhood and arts sectors. The Elevate RAP partners came together at the Korin Gamadji Institute within the Richmond Football Club to consider issues common across their organisations. Discussions included how to provide solutions to the challenges of procurement, recruitment, professional development and cultural competency.

ELEVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN GATHERING
During National Reconciliation Week 14 RAP partners came together as leaders in the Reconciliation Action Plan space to ambitiously discuss challenges and solutions for driving change. During National Reconciliation Week 14 RAP partners came together as leaders in the Reconciliation Action Plan space to ambitiously discuss challenges and solutions for driving change. During National Reconciliation Week 14 RAP partners came together as leaders in the Reconciliation Action Plan space to ambitiously discuss challenges and solutions for driving change.

Over sixty guests attended the breakfast which was an opportunity to highlight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander success and to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the finalists in their field. Reconciliation Australia Co-Chair, Professor Tom Calma AO, spoke at the event and expressed that on Australia Day, a day that can be difficult for many First Australians, it is important that we recognise and show our appreciation for the contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have made, and continue to make, to our nation.
AMBITIOUS, CHALLENGING, WORKING

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS

More than three million Australians work or study in organisations with a RAP – organisations committed to promoting understanding and action to progress reconciliation.

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program contributes to achieving reconciliation by developing relationships, respect, and trust between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and other Australians.

RAPs advance social change by transforming the attitudes and behaviours of the people working or studying in a RAP organisation. Currently, three million people do exactly that.

This year we celebrated ten years of the RAP program which has grown to more than 700 RAP partners with 300 more organisations wanting to develop a RAP.

In 2015–2016 we welcomed another 100 RAP partners, which included four at the elevate level; the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Rio Tinto, Lendlease, and Woodside, taking the number of elevate RAP partners to 17. Elevate RAP partners go beyond ‘business as usual’ and embed reconciliation actions into the delivery of core business practices and decision-making at the highest level. As a result, they have the capacity to have the capacity to accelerate meaningful and sustainable change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

This year, our RAP impact measurement report captured data from 459 RAP organisations.

The report revealed that our RAP organisations collectively provided $100.4 million in pro bono support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations or communities, employed 35,137 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, and through Supply Nation, have purchased $32.6 million worth of goods and services from accredited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

Importantly, 77 per cent of RAP employees have high trust for their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, compared with 26 per cent of people in the general community. They also have much more positive attitudes – 82 per cent of RAP partner organisation employees believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold a special place as the First Australians, compared with 71 per cent of the general community.

Further to this, 262,069 RAP partner employees completed cultural awareness training to enable them to build stronger cultural understandings and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, businesses and communities.

With the ongoing support of government and our networks, the RAP program will continue to drive widespread social change, building better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the benefit of all Australians.
Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning is designed to support the more than 21,000 early learning services, primary and secondary schools across Australia to foster a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.

Now in its third year, with the support of its funding partner BHP Billiton Sustainable Communities, Narragunnawali has moved from strength to strength. At the end of the 2015-2016 financial year, 630 schools and early learning services were participating in the Narragunnawali community through its online platform.

Over the past 12 months we have worked to develop a more robust, optimised version of our online platform, which will provide schools and early learning services with a higher level of information and support. The online platform will allow schools and services to build Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) tailored to their needs, and support the implementation of these RAP commitments by providing curriculum and professional learning resources. The platform also facilitates collaboration between RAP Working Group members, who will be able to assign responsibilities and monitor the progress of their RAP online. Collaboration between teachers and educators across schools and services is also encouraged, with the aim of creating a community for sharing learnings and ideas.

Plans to enhance Narragunnawali’s professional learning offering have also been progressed, with the completion of a rigorous tender process for the production of 14 short films illustrating RAP actions and the exploration of in-house webinar production.

The evaluation of Narragunnawali is continuing with the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR). This financial year CAEPR has delivered two reports, entitled Factors associated with developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (November 2015) and Reconciliation in the classroom, around the school or early learning service, and with the community (March 2016).

As engagement is a strong component of our work, this year we launched a Narragunnawali newsletter to support teachers and educators in an industry appropriate medium. Two editions of Narragunnawali News have been distributed to RAP Working Group members within schools and early learning services registered on the Narragunnawali platform. The special print edition published for National Reconciliation Week was sent to all schools and early learning services—over 20,000 sites across Australia.

Further engagement activities included delivering the keynote speech at Early Childhood Australia’s Reconciliation Symposium and addressing the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Conference. We also delivered a number of guest lectures to students undertaking a Bachelor of Education at the Australian National University and the University of South Australia, enhancing engagement with pre-service teachers. Extending our sphere of influence, we collaborated with Opera Australia in the development of a teaching guide for The Rabbits.

Despite their defunding under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS), we continued to work with the Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies (IECBs) in support of their important role providing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community voice to Australia’s State and Territory education systems.

In February we presented as a witness to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs inquiry into educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Reconciliation Australia’s evidence was well received by the Committee.

Narragunnawali: Creating a Community for Sharing Learnings and Ideas.

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RECOGNISE has now more than 298,000 supporters working to recognise First Australians in the Constitution and deal with the racial discrimination in it.

Engagement at the grassroots level has been significant this year, with the Journey to Recognition visiting, New South Wales, Tasmania and the Torres Strait Islands. The Journey to Recognition has travelled more than 39,722 kms across the country, engaging with 273 communities through 365 events attended by 27,240 people.

Building support for and continuing engagement with the RECOGNISE movement through social media has been key. Throughout the year RECOGNISE made over 24 million Facebook impressions leading to a significant increase in audience and fans.

Partnerships across various sectors have continued to increase in 2015-2016. Our 183 campaign partners come from various community organisations, faith groups, schools, and corporate across Australia. These partnerships included a coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, legal and educational bodies.

Also contributing their support, the South Australian Government signed on to the RECOGNISE Charter in May 2016 and ten organisations within the Culturally and linguistically Diverse alliance signed onto an accord.

High profile partners such as the AFL, Cricket Australia and the NRL have driven their large audiences to join the movement. All sporting codes produced television commercials, which were broadcast at games across the country and during some televised matches.

Individual NRL clubs, the Cronulla Sharks, The West Tigers, the South Sydney Rabbitohs and the NRL Indigenous All Stars, all donated publicity space on their uniforms which were branded with the RECOGNISE ‘R’. In addition to these individual clubs, major game sponsor Telstra gave its website branding to RECOGNISE for one week. During this period an estimated more than 1 million customers visited the Telstra homepage.

During the NRL and AFL Indigenous Rounds, the reach of the Campaign expanded. Fox Sports aired the NRL RECOGNISE television commercial reaching up to 300,000 viewers per match. Similarly, Channel 9 aired the RECOGNISE television commercial reaching between 500,000 to over 1 million per NRL match. An op-ed written by AFL legend, Syd Jackson and published in the Herald Sun, reached an estimated audience of 750,000 people. Throughout the AFL season nearly every AFL club sported an R on its guernseys. The Dreamtime at 3 match featured the R on field and around the ground.

Polling this year has shown that there has been continued widespread support for constitutional change. Eight consecutive large-scale polls by different organisations over four years reveal consistently high levels of support. In May 2016 independent research showed 77% of non-indigenous and 87% of Indigenous Australians said they would vote yes in a referendum to recognise First Australians in the Constitution if the referendum was held at the time of the survey. During the 2016 Federal Election Campaign, the ABC vote Compass asked participants if the Australian Constitution should recognise Indigenous people as Australia’s first inhabitants. 77% of the 200,000 people that took part in this survey agreed.

Encouraging young people to be part of the national conversation about Constitutional Recognition has been a great success for the RECOGNISE Youth team this year. RECOGNISE Youth held workshops in Tasmania, South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australia which have successfully engaged and trained 32 young people to be RECOGNISE ambassadors.

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Our partnerships and supporters at Reconciliation Australia continue to grow in strength to support our commitment to reconciliation, and to making a significant difference to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and all Australians.
FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

Across the organisation we have met the key accountability measures that our board and management team use to monitor our financial performance on a regular basis.

The result of Reconciliation Australia’s consolidated operation in 2015-2016 was a surplus of $236,990 (surplus of $799,930 in 2014-2015). Total revenue and other income for the current year was $10,885,826 ($16,721,383 in 2014-2015) and total expenditure for the current year was $10,648,836 ($15,921,453 in 2014-2015).

The reduction in our revenue (and corresponding expenditure) from 2014-2015 was due to a change in the government funding for the RECOGNISE campaign.

WHERE DO OUR FUNDS COME FROM?

Reconciliation Australia’s financial sustainability depends on four major funding sources: government grants and project funding; corporate partnerships; philanthropic trust funding and tax deductible donations from individuals.

The majority of our funding is sourced from the Australian Government, through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. However, an increasing proportion of our income is coming from non-government sources, specifically we receive funding from BHP Billiton, other corporate supporters and private donors.

WHERE DO OUR FUNDS GO?

In 2015-2016 Reconciliation Australia supported programs and initiatives which accounted for 90 per cent (92 per cent in 2014-2015) of the organisation’s expenditure.

The information below provides a summary of the financial performance and position for the financial year ended 30 June 2016. Copies of the Full Annual Financial Report including the Independent Audit Report can be obtained from our website.

Finance Manager
Reconciliation Australia
PO Box 4733
Kingston ACT 2604

Sources of income 2015-2016
- Government grants 3,525,000
- Project funding 6,727,019
- Charitable donations 260,549
- Fundraising appeals 371,988
- Other revenue 436,589
Total 10,885,826

Sources of income 2014-2015
- Government grants 3,675,000
- Project funding 11,506,895
- Charitable donations 371,988
- Fundraising appeals 729,228
- Other revenue 436,589
Total 16,721,383

Use of operating funds 2015-2016
- Programs and partnerships 2,375,107
- Reconciliation campaign 5,950,444
- Communications and engagement 1,374,199
- Operations 1,186,826
- Charitable donations 7,492
Total 10,848,306

Use of operating funds 2014-2015
- Programs and partnerships 2,297,079
- Reconciliation campaign 10,438,350
- Communications and engagement 1,981,540
- Operations 1,220,967
- Charitable donations 14,018
Total 15,021,453

OUR ONGOING FOCUS HAS BEEN ON SUSTAINABILITY, PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPACT

Total revenue and other income $10,885,826 $16,721,383
Total expenditure $10,648,836 $15,921,453