



# Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

July 2024 – Feb 2026





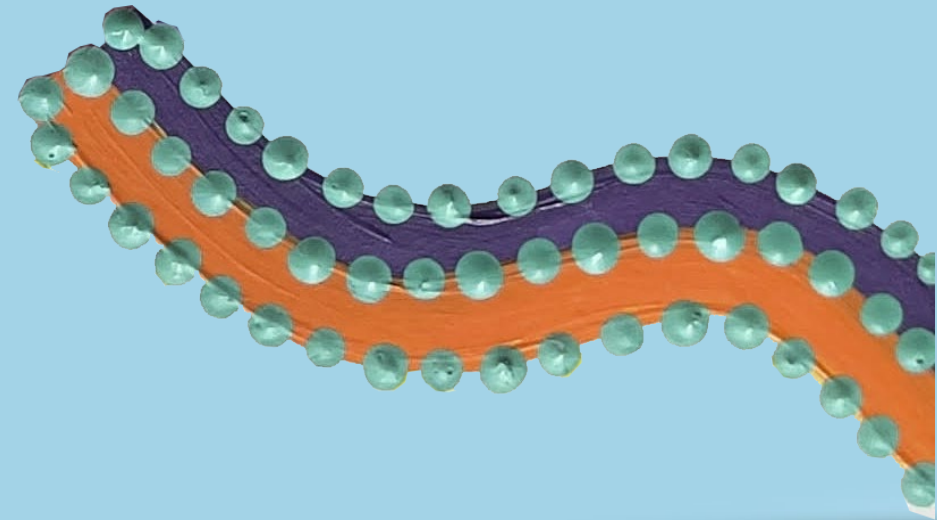
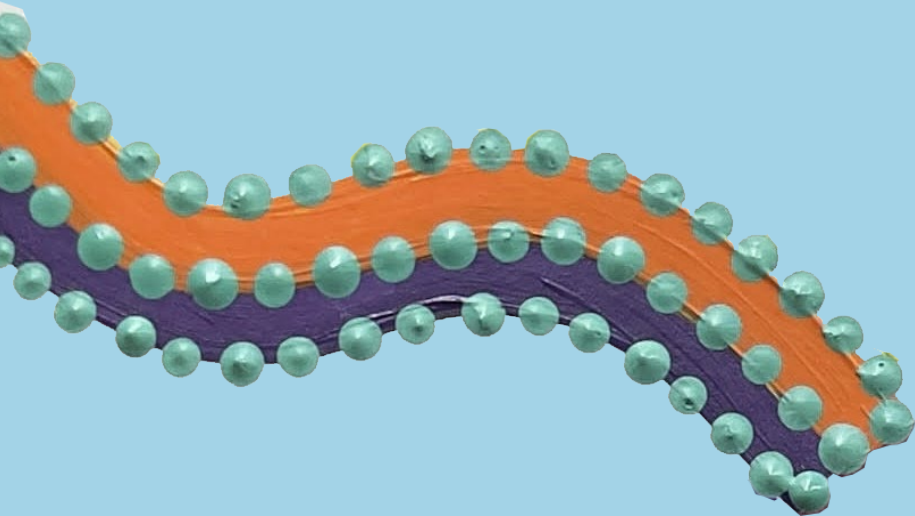
# Acknowledgement to country.

Foundations Care wishes to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of land throughout Australia, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and to Elders past, present and emerging.



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## A Message from Tony O'Hare, Foundations Care Chairman

It is with great pleasure and a profound sense of responsibility that I present this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) on behalf of Foundations Care. Our commitment to reconciliation and the journey towards a more inclusive and equitable Australia is at the heart of our organisation's values.

Reconciliation is not just a word; it is a powerful idea that embodies our collective aspiration to heal the wounds of the past, bridge the divides that persist and build a brighter future together. As we embark on this important journey, we recognise the rich tapestry of cultures, histories, and stories that make up this vast continent. We also acknowledge the pain, suffering, and injustices endured by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout our nation's history.

Our RAP is a testament to our unwavering commitment to righting the wrongs of the past and forging a better future through genuine partnership, respect, and understanding. It is our pledge to contribute positively to the reconciliation process and to foster lasting relationships built on trust, empathy, and mutual respect. This RAP is not merely a document, it is a roadmap that guides our actions and decisions as we strive to become a more culturally competent, diverse, and inclusive organisation. It sets out clear goals, strategies, and measurable targets to ensure that reconciliation is not just an aspiration but a reality within our workplace and the communities we serve.

As we move forward, we are mindful of the wisdom of the Elders and the voices of the younger generations who remind us that reconciliation is a journey that requires constant commitment and effort. It is a journey that transcends organisational boundaries, political affiliations, and personal beliefs, uniting us in a shared vision of a reconciled Australia. In the pages that follow, you will find our RAP's key initiatives, actions,



and timelines. These commitments have been developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and reflect their aspirations, values, and priorities. It is through this collaborative approach that we hope to foster meaningful change and make a positive impact on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of this RAP – our employees, community partners, and the broader reconciliation movement. Together we are stronger, and together, we will achieve the reconciliation goals outlined in this plan.

As Chairman, I am personally committed to championing reconciliation within our organisation and within our sphere of influence. I invite all our stakeholders, employees, and partners to join us on this journey. Together, we can write a new chapter in Australia's history, one where reconciliation is not just a goal but a lived reality for all.

Thank you for your commitment and dedication to this important cause.



## A Message from Shelly Middelbosch, Foundations Care CEO

At Foundations Care, we are committed to fostering a workplace culture that reflects the values of inclusion, diversity, and respect.

We recognise that reconciliation is a journey towards healing and unity, and it is our privilege and responsibility to be a part of this important process. I am proud to introduce our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as a significant step forward in our commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community and across our nation. This RAP is a testament to our dedication to creating a more just and equitable society, where the rights, cultures, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are acknowledged, respected, and celebrated. It reflects our commitment to building meaningful relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, organisations, and individuals.

As an organisation, we understand that reconciliation requires more than words; it requires action. Our RAP outlines a comprehensive framework that will guide us in making tangible and sustainable contributions to reconciliation.

It encompasses a range of initiatives, including but not limited to:

- 1. Cultural Awareness and Competency:** We will invest in cultural competency training for all our employees to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples cultures and perspectives are respected and integrated into our workplace.
- 2. Employment Opportunities:** We will work to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples employment within our organisation, recognizing the importance of diversity in our workforce.
- 3. Business and Community Engagement:** We will seek out and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses and engage in community initiatives that contribute to the well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities.
- 4. Education and Awareness:** We will promote awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples history, issues, and contributions among our employees and stakeholders.



**5. Partnerships and Collaboration:** We will actively seek partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples organisations and communities to co-create solutions and opportunities for mutual benefit.

**6. Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Land and Heritage:** We will acknowledge and respect the traditional owners of the land on which we operate and work collaboratively to protect and preserve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples heritage.

Our RAP is a living document that will evolve and adapt as we continue to learn, grow, and deepen our commitment to reconciliation. We are determined to measure our progress, report transparently and hold ourselves accountable for achieving the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.

The journey around the development of this RAP has inspired us to do better and be better. Together, we can create a more inclusive and harmonious future for all. I invite all our employees, partners, and stakeholders to join us on this important journey towards reconciliation. It is through our collective efforts that we will create a brighter, more equitable future for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Shelly Middelbosch

## A Statement from Karen Mundine, Reconciliation Australia CEO

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Foundations Care to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Foundations Care joins a network of more than 2,500 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives. The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.



This Reflect RAP enables Foundations Care to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions.

Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Foundations Care, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



## Our vision statements

### Our Values

Built on the values of Excellence, Innovation, Passion, Integrity and Respect, Foundations Care will strive to create a culture of continuous improvement designed to challenge and empower our people and foster their profession development to result in leading client outcomes.

Our success comes from great teamwork and exceptional individual effort, so we strive to reward collaboration and the pursuit of excellence. Our growth depends on building deep, long-lasting client relationships and putting them at the centre of all we aspire to do. We are at our very best when our geographies, practices, specialties and client teams work together on our clients' behalf.

We celebrate diversity and inclusion — of culture, of background, of experience and thought — and recognise it as a key to our ability to deliver insightful and creative client outcomes. We recognise the need for our people to balance and integrate their work and personal lives in order to be the best they can be both personally and professionally.

Our leaders inspire and in turn, our people are afforded the opportunity to learn and grow. We retain the relational values that have shaped our culture since Foundations Care's inception, and we relish our heritage as one of the industry's longstanding thought leaders and trusted partners.

### Our Mission

Our mission serves as the framework for our strategic blueprint and guides every aspect of our business by describing what we need to accomplish in order to continue achieving sustainable, quality growth. To provide responsive and flexible support services and advocacy that make a positive impact on the lives of children, young people and families.

### Our Commitment

Foundations Care is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We are dedicated to providing care environments where children and young people feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Foundations Care is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have a zero tolerance of child abuse, and all safety concerns and allegations will be treated very seriously and responded to consistently in line with our policies and procedures. All Foundations Care Board members, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to understand the role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of children and young people is at the forefront all actions taken and every decision made.



## About the artist:



**Lalanía Tusa – Burrumunji  
Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owner and  
Descendant**

Lalanía Tusa is a contemporary Aboriginal Artist of the Kuku Yalanji Tribe in the rainforest of Far North Queensland. Growing up on Kuku Yalanji country Lalanía has always felt a strong connection to the land and enjoys translating traditional customs and knowledge through a variety of techniques and art mediums. Many of Lalanía's works are direct translations of dreamtime stories passed down through the long line of generations who have received special tools and training from her ties to land and country.

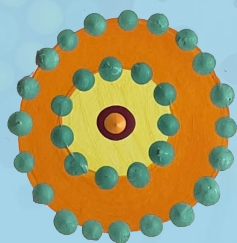
Lalanía's intention is to immerse herself and other souls in the sensitive space of cultural knowledge, awareness, appreciation and connection to land and sea in order to create a better understanding of First Nations cultural practices.

All proceeds of the Artwork sold goes directly to community and First Nations descendants.

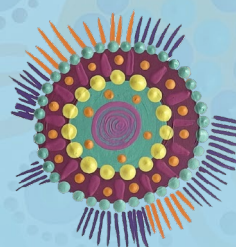




## The artwork: Journey through Community



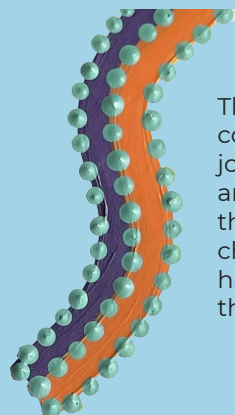
The story begins at the centre with a “Meeting Place” that is a representation of the precious young person in the orange and yellow circle, committed carers in the yellow circle and the staff and wider community of Foundations Care walking alongside the child on the outer orange circle.



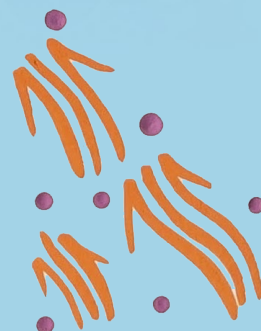
The large purple, pink and aqua circle represents the overarching organisation - Community Services Australia that plays an important role in ensuring Foundation Care’s core values are upheld for the protection and support of each child - Respect, Excellence, Innovation, Passion and Integrity.



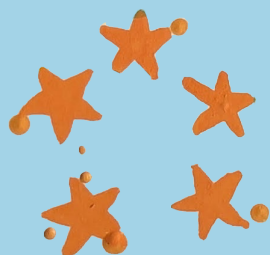
The six U-shaped symbols circling the meeting place represent the six elements of Foundation Care’s services that include: Foster Care/Kinship Care, Residential Care, Youth Justice Services, Caseworker Support Scheme, Premier Youth Initiative – PYI and Alternative Care.



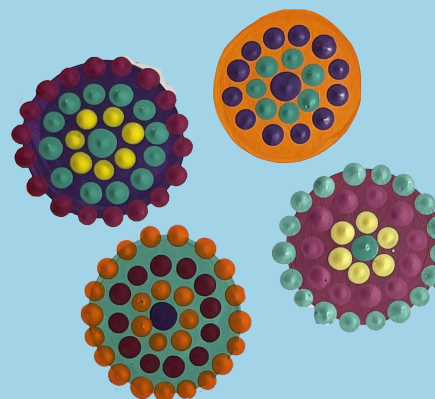
The two purple and orange lines coming off the center circle is the journey lines of both Foundation Care and Community Services Australia and their commitment to ensure all children, young people and families have a right to feel safe and a right to thrive.



The sets of orange Kangaroo tracks leading in the direction of the meeting place symbolizes the children, carers, families and community coming together to work alongside one another. The tracks also cover a wide footprint of traditional lands and clan groups across the country that include the states of New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. The long line of aqua swirls at the top is a depiction of the waterways, ocean, rivers and creeks. At the base is a depiction of the land, mountain ranges and bush leaves that have provided the nourishment and food source for many generations.



The five orange stars are symbolic of the Torres Strait Island groups that have used navigation and the solar system for many generations to guide and direct them on their journeys across the sea. This is also emblematic of the guidance and direction that the First Nation’s staff within the organisation can offer to the wider staffing group when navigating the community.



The four outer circles depict the cultural connection that is crucial for the young First Nation’s children living in Out of Home Care to embed within their everyday lives. These are Country, Family, Community and Spirit. The purple and aqua blue smaller circles joining these are the journey lines of each individual child and their connections as they develop and grow.

## Our Business:

Foundations Care is a not-for-profit organisation that is passionately dedicated to the core needs of helping children/young people, to feel safe, accepted and valued within their family and community.

Foundations Care provides foster care, residential care, and youth justice services to over 300 children/young people and their foster and biological families in communities across New South Wales, Queensland, and Western Australia.

We meticulously pair children with carers, ensuring that placements are thoughtfully matched to maximize the likelihood of success. This careful matching process reflects our dedication to providing the best possible environment for children under our care.

Our passion lies in empowering individuals with skills, knowledge, and hands-on support. We offer a variety of services to foster carers throughout their journey, encompassing training sessions, workshops, caseworker meetings, and continuous encouragement. Our commitment is to provide comprehensive support that equips foster carers with the tools they need to excel in their vital role.

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children/young people, ensuring they feel secure, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

We are steadfast in our commitment to ensuring the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as well as children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. Additionally, we are dedicated to creating a secure environment for children with disabilities. Our organisation prioritizes cultural inclusivity and the well-being of all children under our care.

The primary goal is to maximise safe and meaningful outcomes for children, young people and families through a commitment to ensuring that the people we work to support can access quality services that are safe, individualised, evidenced-based, informed by contemporary approaches to service delivery, and supported by a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.

Our organisation boasts a robust workforce comprising approximately 150 employees nationwide, with a significant number hailing from diverse cultural backgrounds. Within our team, we are proud to have approx. 10 individuals who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. Notably, our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is championed by Foundations Care's Chief Executive Officer, a proud Aboriginal woman from the Dharawal nation in the Illawarra region of New South Wales. This reflects our commitment to diversity and leadership within our organisation.

We are proud to champion a fundamental commitment to human rights as the key element that defines and connects the components of our framework. Allowing respect for people to define our practice approach ensures our clients remain central to all we do and aspire to achieve.

## Our Reconciliation Action Plan:

The Foundations Care Reconciliation Action Plan has been crafted and formulated by a dedicated working group. This team is actively involved in the creation of a comprehensive framework comprising impactful initiatives, with a specific emphasis on the five dimensions of reconciliation: Race Relations, Equality and Equity, Institutional Integrity, Unity, and Historical Acceptance.

The establishment of the Foundations Care Reconciliation Action Plan marks a significant milestone, offering a crucial pathway to identify opportunities for enhancing connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous communities. This development involves extensive consultations with Foundations Care staff, Carers, Community Elders, and the formation of a Foundations Care Cultural Advisory Group.

It is essential to note that the Foundations Care Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Group does not possess delegated decision-making power from Foundations Care. Instead, it serves as a guiding force to foster a collective organisational commitment and enthusiasm for the plan's development and implementation.

The Guiding Principles of our Reconciliation Action Plan embody inclusivity, an open-minded approach, and respect, setting aside personal agendas to offer guidance for the greater good of the diverse Foundations Care community. Foundations Care is steadfast in its commitment to cultivating a comprehensive organisational focus on reconciliation, respect, understanding, and knowledge of Australia's First Nations Peoples, evident across all facets of our business.

We actively seek to enhance our cultural knowledge, understanding, and guidance, ensuring that our services are inclusive and culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our commitment extends to the demonstration of good cultural practice in our policies, procedures, and workplace practices.

Foundations Care is dedicated to creating and maintaining safe, welcoming, and inclusive working environments for children/young people, staff, and the entire community we serve.

Our current RAP working group comprises of the following staff members:

Shelly Middelbosch – FDC CEO (RAP Champion)

Shane Ferguson – Project Manager

Monica Roche - Administration Officer  
Unas Morgan - Case Worker

Lesley Dickenson - Senior Specialist Tender and Submissions

Shandi-Lee Reti - Child Youth Family Support Manager – Youth



## Our partnerships/current activities:

### Unity Day 2023

Foundations Care participated in a Unity Day event in Association with the KARI Foundation. The Kari Foundation aims to service first and foremost Aboriginal people and communities across Australia whilst also supporting collective and corporate Australia on the journey to a more reconciled Australia.

### Kari Unity Day

Event was held on 05 April 2023 and provided a one-stop shop for members of the community to explore and experience Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture firsthand. KARI's Community Unity Event provides us with an opportunity to come together and celebrate and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture while also providing access to resources and support services.

### Yarning Circles

Foundations Care actively engages in weekly community gatherings where participants from various sectors, including Employment Services, local elders, sporting associations, and Services Australia, come together for open discussions on current issues. These sessions provide a safe and collaborative space to enhance cultural awareness and support initiatives aimed at strengthening our community network.

### Naidoc Week

Foundations Care actively contributed to NAIDOC Week by participating in the Services Expo on July 5, 2023, in collaboration with the Gladstone Regional Council. Additionally, we promoted this engagement within our Carer's network to enhance knowledge and awareness among our community.

### Jarjums Connect Group

Foundations Care actively endorses the Jarjums Connect Group, facilitated by Lalan Tusa of Bamatales, to both its Carers and staff, encouraging their attendance. These sessions prioritize cultural connectedness, inclusion, and awareness, fostering a strong sense of knowledge and understanding among children and carers within themselves and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This initiative plays a crucial role in raising awareness, fostering healthy relationships with First Nations people and staff, and contributing to the promotion of reconciliation.

### Carer Advisory Group

We facilitate a quarterly Carer Advisory Group that includes committed carer representatives and staff, offering essential feedback on Foundations Care's initiatives and relevant issues. This group is strengthened by the inclusion of First Nations representatives, enhancing our awareness of cultural initiatives and ensuring that their perspectives play a vital role in our decision-making processes.



## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.Continue to establish, maintain, and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	•Continue to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	July 2024	Chief Executive Officer and General Manager
	•Continue to research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	July 2024	Cultural Advisor –
2.Continue to build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	•Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2025	National Service Support Team
	•RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	July 2024 – Sept 2024	RAP Working Group Project Manager Leader Administration Officer Case Worker Senior Specialist Tender and Submissions Child Youth Family Support Manager – Youth
3.Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	•Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	July 2024 – Sept 2024	General Manager
	•Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	Aug 2024	Board of directors and Chief Executive Officer
4.Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	•Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	Aug 2024 – Oct 2024	Cultural Advisor
	•Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Aug 2024 – Oct 2024	Cultural Advisor
	•Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	August 2024	Chief Executive Officer and General Manager
	•Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Sept 2024	Human Resources and Support Leader

## Our Reconciliation Commitments:



### Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	•Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	Sept 2024	Human Resources and Support Leader
	•Maintain understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Sept 2024	Human Resources and Support Leader
2.Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	•Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Sept 2024	National Business Operations Leader
	•Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Sept 2024	National Business Operations Leader



### Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	•Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation.	Oct 2024	RAP Working Group Project Manager Administration Officer Unas Morgan - Case Worker Lesley Dickenson - Senior Specialist Tender and Submissions Shandi-Lee Reti - Child Youth Family Support Manager – Youth
	•Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	Feb 2026	Human Resources and Support Leader
2.Continue to demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	•Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	Feb 2026	Cultural Advisor
	•Continue to increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Feb 2026	Chief Executive Office and General Manager
3.Maintain and continue to build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	•Continue to raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	Feb 2026	National Service Support Team
	•Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	Feb 2026	Carer Engagement Leader
	•RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	Feb 2026	Cultural Advisor



## Our Reconciliation Commitments:



### Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	•Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	July 2024 – Feb 2026	Cultural Advisor
	•Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	July 2024 – Feb 2026	Cultural Advisor
	•Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	July 2024 – Feb 2026	Cultural Advisor
2.Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	•Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Aug 2024	Cultural Advisor
	•Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Feb 2026	Cultural Advisor
	•Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	Sep 2024 – Feb 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	•Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Oct 2024	Cultural Advisor
3.Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	•Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	Cultural Advisor
	•Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 Aug annually	Cultural Advisor
	•Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 Sep annually	Cultural Advisor
4.Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	•Register via Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">website</a> to begin developing our next RAP.	Oct 2024	Cultural Advisor