Greater Sydney Parklands Trust

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2023 - March 2024







Thank you

This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is our first step in Reconciliation Australia's RAP Framework. We will draw on the knowledge, experience and expertise of the following Aboriginal custodians, community, and consultants in the implementation of this plan; Daniele Hromek, Chris Tobin, Jordan Ardler, Deborah Lennis, Steven Randall, Josh Staines.

We show our appreciation and give special thanks for their time, their wisdom and guidance.

We also thank Melissa Haigh, Head of Indigenous Affairs, Property, Lend Lease; Josh Brown, Director, JB Aboriginal Strategy Consulting and Dave Madelly, Co-founder Spirit Creative whose guidance was instrumental in producing this plan. We also thank our Aboriginal custodians, community, and consultants whose advice we have relied on in our Reconciliation Journey and in the preparation of this plan as well as Reconciliation Australia for its support and advice.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised this publication may contain names and images of deceased persons. Readers should be aware that, in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, seeing images of deceased persons in photographs may cause sadness or distress, and in some cases, offend against strongly held cultural prohibitions.

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Our vision

We engaged Spirit Creative Agency to create an artwork that represents the purpose, values and connection to Country shared throughout our organisation.

Caring for parklands across Sydney's Saltwater and Freshwater Countries, we worked with Spirit Creative on a unique collaborative approach to engage with Traditional Custodians and artists from each country to create an artwork that represents the traditional stories of both countries.

Utilising some of the components from the artwork interpretations, the key elements have been weaved throughout this Reflect RAP, representing Greater Sydney Parklands' reconciliation journey.

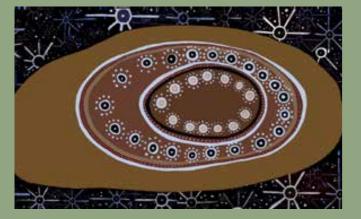


Jessica Tobin Freshwater Country

Jessica's artwork references sky as an important part of Aboriginal storytelling as images of the stars reflect on the waters of her Country. This brings the connection between sky, water and land.

Jessica Tobin is an emerging Darug artist, born in the Blue Mountains with ongoing connection to her traditional Country. She is a descendent of the Boorooberongal and Wumali clans of the Darug, the traditional custodians of the Greater Western Sydney region. She is a currently studying a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Communication and Art history at the University of Newcastle.

Throughout her childhood, Jessica maintained a connection to her father and country, after moving to Bellingen at age 5. She then relocated to Newcastle in her teenage years in order to become closer with her maternal family. She now lives in Redfern, whilst operating Durunanang from her father's studio in Katoomba. Jessica is also a practicing artist, who recently secured a studio space at the 107 Projects, Redfern, as a resident artist.





Dakota CampbellSaltwater Country

Dakota's artwork explores topographical top view patterning of her Country by illustrating the parks with cultural symbols that speak of pathways and gatherings.

Dakota Campbell is a proud Dharawal-Dhungatti woman from the La Perouse area and a descendant of the traditional owners of Sydney Harbour. She is currently First Nations Creative Programs Producer at the Australian Design Centre. Dakota has worked on several projects at Barangaroo including a Welcome to Country film 'Wellema' and has worked with Lendlease on outdoor public art sculptures in the Barangaroo area. She aims to work with local community to highlight the talent of Indigenous designers and makers. She has a background in graphic design and enjoys painting in her spare time.





Dennis Golding Lead Artist

Dennis worked with both artists to incorporate their imagery and connections to Country in the finished artwork.

The centre of the artwork shows a large circular motif that references a meeting place. Surrounding the meeting place is a track pattern with smaller dots to show the movement of people and the pathways they create. Outside this track of movement, there are brown (land pigment) lines that trail into five other circular patterns. These patterns are references to each of the parklands Greater Sydney Parklands cares for.

The parks are visualised from a topographical top view and coloured with greens and ochres to show how the artists see their Country. On the outside of the parklands, there are reflections of the stars that spread across the water.

This is to show how the parks are all connected with their surrounding waters such as the riverstreams, waterholes and coastlines. Between the artists as freshwater and saltwater people, they each share a common theme in how their stories of culture, identity and land are reflected upon what they see from above, and below.

Dennis is a descendant of the Kamilaroi / Gamilaraay people from the north west of New South Wales. He spent most of his childhood living in Redfern and now resides in the south east Sydney suburb of Little Bay.

Dennis has a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Hons) degree from UNSW Art & Design. In addition to creating his own pieces, he has been commissioned to create artworks for a range of high-profile projects including the inaugural Indigenous Wallabies jersey for Rugby Australia, the Indigenous jersey for the Wests Tigers NRL club, and the Indigenous jersey for the Sydney Swifts netball club. Dennis has also been commissioned to create artworks for the Cancer Institute of NSW, Infrastructure Australia, Sydney Water, EY, Dolby Australia and Supply Nation just to name a few.



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2024

MESSAGE FROM THE

Board Chair

As the first city-wide parks agency, we have an opportunity to work towards reconciliation with our Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on and with Country, and to share this reconciliation journey with all our park communities across Greater Sydney.

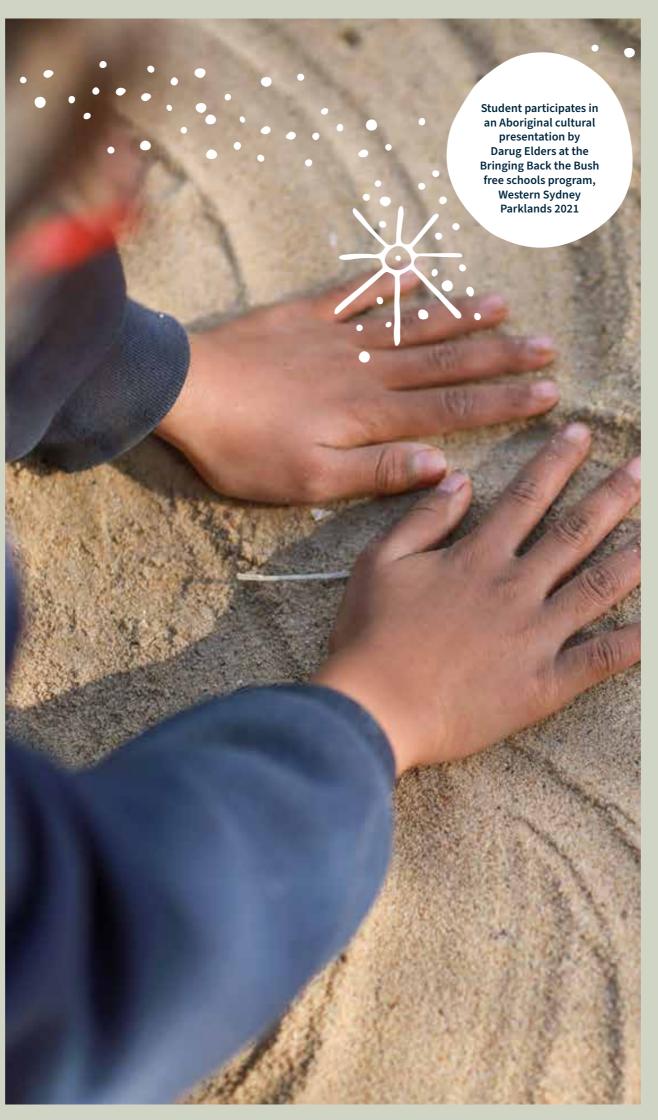
Greater Sydney Parklands is the advocate for the NSW Government's 50 Year Vision for Open Space and Parklands. As we create a legacy for Greater Sydney of a city in a park, we acknowledge the tens of thousands of years of Aboriginal custodianship of the Country upon which all our parks sit and Traditional Custodians' deep knowledge of Country.

As we share this action plan and progress our reconciliation journey with you, we will continue to facilitate a connection to Country for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Greater Sydney that recognises and conserves their cultural heritage and values through their use of the parklands. We will also continue to establish and facilitate long-term and mutually beneficial partnerships that give effect to the ongoing relationships of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with Country.

On behalf of the Board of Greater Sydney Parklands, I commit to our ongoing work towards reconciliation as we put this plan in action.

Michael Rose AM Board Chair





MESSAGE FROM THE

Chief Executive

Greater Sydney Parklands manages more than 6,000 hectares of parks and parklands that stretch across the Sydney basin, from the eastern coastland to the foot of the Blue Mountains in the west. These lands tell us the stories of the world's oldest continuing culture and the people who have managed this Country for tens of thousands of years.

We will endeavour to incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and land practices in our work and recognise that not only do we need to protect this heritage but can also learn from generations of knowledge on sustainable land management practices.

We will continue to work, and grow our relationships with Traditional Custodians, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, each Park's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and Aboriginal consultants and service providers to co-design elements, projects, and programs in the parks - to give a voice and presence to the parks' Aboriginal heritage and Custodians and to share this ancient culture with all our park communities.

We will endeavour to improve this practice and will always be ready to listen and learn from our parks' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as we care for and walk on Country together.

Joshua French Chief Executive



Welcome to Country Smoking Ceremony with Bidjigal Elder Uncle Vic Simms at the opening of the Guriwal Trail, Centennial Parklands 2021

MESSAGE FROM

Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Greater Sydney Parklands to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Greater Sydney Parklands joins a network of more than 1,100 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 Greater Sydney Parklands 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 Greater Sydney Parklands, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine CEO





Our business

Greater Sydney Parklands cares for some of Sydney's most iconic and special parks including Fernhill Estate, Callan Park, Parramatta Park, Western Sydney Parklands, Centennial Park, Moore Park and Queens Park.

On behalf of the people of NSW, we welcome over 40 million visitors each year to more than 6,000 hectares of parklands across Greater Sydney.

Our work is guided by the NSW Government's 50-Year Vision for Open Space and Parklands. Our purpose is to champion this vision to make Greater Sydney a 'city within a park'.

To achieve this purpose, we:

- Protect, respect and care for the natural environment
- Ensure best practice community involvement in parkland planning, activation, and management
- Have a local focus and a city-wide perspective
- Nurture important and unique heritage landscapes
- Advocate for whole of city strategic thinking in the planning of Sydney's network of parklands

- Commit to design excellence in providing recreational amenity for our communities
- Create and manage a sustainable network of Sydney's iconic State-owned open space and parklands
- Support the NSW Government's city-wide objective for a green, cool city

As part of the 50-Year Vision for Open Space and Parklands, we will continue to recognise and conserve Aboriginal peoples' cultural heritage and values. We will facilitate and support opportunities for Aboriginal people to connect with Country and establish and foster long-term and mutually beneficial partnerships that give effect to the ongoing relationships of Aboriginal peoples with Country.

Greater Sydney Parklands has offices in Parramatta, Callan Park and Centennial Park and employs just over 90 people. While the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is currently not known, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand this.



Our vision

Our vision for Greater Sydney Parklands is:

- A living, breathing city within a network of connected rivers, creeks, parks and bushland across Greater Sydney
- Accessible, significant, and sustainable parks that are a part of people's everyday lives
- Places to connect with each other, be healthy, and be a part of nature
- To take care of our natural and cultural heritage, creating a legacy for future generations to enjoy and connect with nature.

This vision makes people central to the experience of the parks – our Aboriginal Custodians and communities, people who live near their parks, people who visit from near and far, local park businesses and community groups.

This vision is inclusive, and its purpose is for people to be active in and engaged with the parklands.

The vision is realised through the experience of people engaging with the parklands, our Aboriginal Custodians and communities and building partnerships with each other and Greater Sydney Parklands, and with the growth of a green and sustainable Greater Sydney.





Our Country

To be clear, when talking about Country, it is not the countryside or the area outside of metropolitan spaces being referred to, it is to the lands to which First Peoples belong, yearn for, find healing from, and will return to.

Country is the places from which Ancestors originated and still exist within as life forces. Country cannot be owned or tamed, as Country is also a relationship that must be honoured and nurtured.

Danièle HromekBudawang/Yuin researcher and spatial designer





Freshwater Country

Fernhill Estate is situated on the lands of the Boorooberongal people of the Darug language group, in the area of the Mulgoa Valley.

Mulgoa Valley sits between an important boundary between the Gandangara and Darug language groups. Both groups would use the valley to travel to attend ceremonies, trade with neighbouring groups and during periods of drought. During drought times the Nepean River could be relied upon for resources.

The area saw numerous bloody encounters between the European and Aboriginal inhabitants, especially when food sources were scarce during drought periods. The clashes were mostly between Gandangara groups and Europeans, rather than the Mulgoa band of the Darug clan, which remained peaceful.

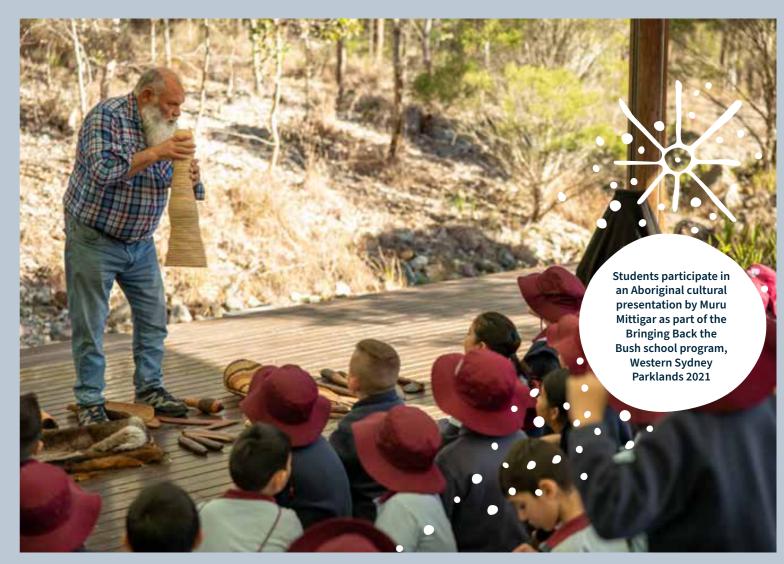




Western Sydney Parklands

Western Sydney Parklands is a narrow corridor of bushland, with its boundaries said to be predominately shared between four Darug clans of the Blacktown area being Gomerigal people - South Creek area; Wawarawarry people - Eastern Creek area; Warmuli people - Prospect area; and Gabrugal people - Liverpool/Fairfield area. Along the southern boundary, traditionally this area was shared land between the Darug and Gandangara language groups.

Oral history reveals that the Cumberland Plain, where the Western Sydney Parklands are found, was an important camping and meeting place for Aboriginal people travelling across the Blue Mountains and into Parramatta and Sydney, even after colonial times.





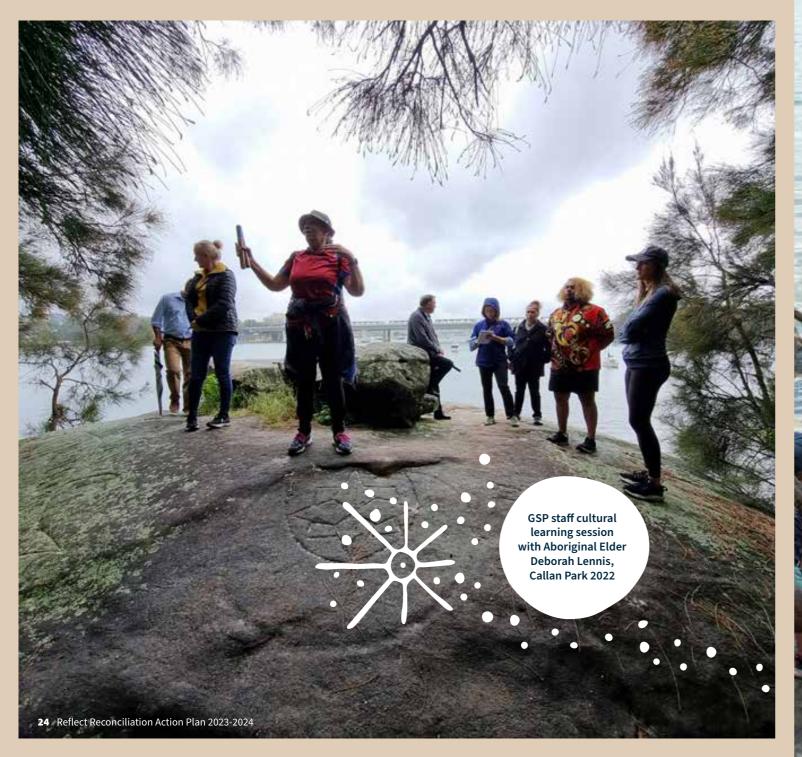


Saltwater Country

Callan Park is situated within the traditional lands of the Wangal people. The Wangal people are a clan of the broader Darug language group.

Wangal Country is thought to have extended from Darling Harbour, around the Balmain Peninsula and up the river almost to Parramatta in the west including Me-Mel / Goat Island in the harbour. Sydney Harbour and Parramatta River forms the northern boundary, the southern boundary is uncertain due to the fast pace of colonisation in this area.

Within Callan Park there are middens and a rock shelter indicating how Wangal people lived and used the resources of this area.





Centennial Park

Centennial and Moore Park are located within the traditional lands of the Gadigal people, which stretch along the southern side of Sydney Harbour from South Head to around what is now known as Petersham. Their southern boundary is the area that now forms the Alexandra Canal and Cooks River.

This area was referred to as Kangaroo Ground in early colonial records indicating that fire management practices were used here. This area is representative of pre-colonial meeting places used for social, ceremonial and other purposes. King Billy Timbery who lived at La Perouse reportedly operated a tollgate on a main road through today's Parklands, c1860. He is believed to be the first Indigenous person officially employed in the Parklands.





Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Reconciliation Australia's RAP framework is built on the pillars of relationships, respect, and opportunities. Greater Sydney Parklands is committed to strengthening our relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Greater Sydney. We will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to seek guidance and advice in the implementation of this plan. As owners and managers of parklands for the people of NSW we will develop, maintain and nurture these relationships with respect and support. We will work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Greater Sydney to provide opportunities on Country to connect, utilise and promote Aboriginal cultures at each of the parklands for all to appreciate.

We will establish a RAP Working Group in the coming months to oversee governance and implementation of this Reflect RAP and report regularly on progress. Greater Sydney Parklands Senior Manager Heritage and Placemaking is the RAP Champion for this Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

We look forward to sharing Greater Sydney Parklands' Reconciliation Journey with all our park communities across Greater Sydney as we put this plan into action.





Our action plan

Relationships



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	June 2023	Senior Manager Stakeholders and Engagement
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	September 2023	Manager Education and Community Programs
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023	Executive Assistant to Chief Executive
	Ensure RAP Working Group members participate in an external NRW event.	27 May– 3 June, 2023	Manager, Major and Special Events
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May– 3 June, 2023	Senior Manager Callan Park
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	April 2023	Chief Executive
	Identify external stakeholders that we can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	December 2023	Senior Manager Leasing and Property
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2024	Senior Manager Business Development
	Publicly communicate our commitment to reconciliation	June 2023	Chief Executive
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	December 2023	Manager Business Services
	Review human resources policies and procedures to identify existing antidiscrimination provisions and future needs.	February 2024	Manager Business Services

Respect



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. 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.	February 2024	Ministerial and Communications Officer
	Review cultural learning needs within our organisation.	June 2023	Heritage Officer
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters within the Parklands and surrounding areas.	September 2023	Senior Manager Visitor Services
	Increase our team's understanding of the purpose and significance behind Aboriginal cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2023	Heritage Officer
	Engage with Traditional Custodians to explore opportunities for dual naming of sites across the Parklands.	March 2024	Senior Manager Open Space Planning
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information with staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2023	Head of Fundraising and Development
	Introduce staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in areas that surround the Parklands.	First week in July, 2023	Manager Events and Programs
	Ensure RAP Working Group members participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2023	Head of Marketing and Events

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Our action plan

Opportunities



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. 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.	February 2024	Manager Business Services
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	September 2023	Senior Manager Program Management Office
	Establish an ongoing partnership with CareerTrackers to further develop our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Internship Program.	October 2023	Senior Manager Assets
9. 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 Islanderowned businesses.	February 2024	Senior Manager Leasing and Property
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	June 2023	Senior Manager Operations
	Conduct an agency wide review of current contracts to identify existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and increase opportunities for engagement.	February 2024	Contract and Procurement Officer

Governance



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	April 2023	Senior Manager Heritage and Placemaking
	Draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group.	April 2023	Senior Manager Design and Strategy
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the Working Group.	April 2023	Heritage Officer
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for the implementation of this plan.	March 2023	Senior Manager Heritage and Placemaking
	Engage senior leaders with the commitments made in this plan.	March 2023	Senior Manager Operations
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on the plan's commitments.	March 2023	Senior Manager Asset and Risk Systems
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, 2023	Executive Officer
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	July 2023	Heritage Officer

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Enquiries

For all enquiries about this plan, please contact

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