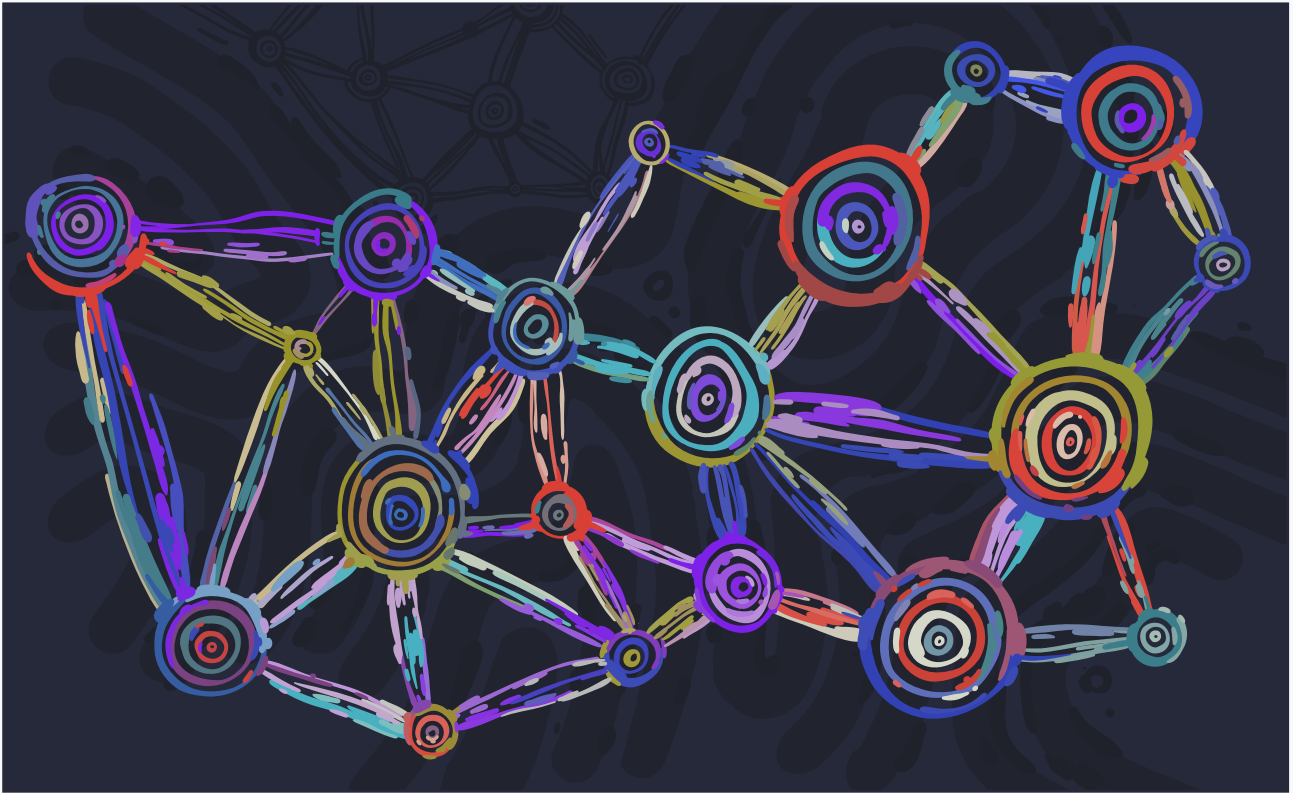


Innovate

Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2023 – March 2025



Acknowledgement of Country

Infrastructure Australia proudly acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Australia, and their continuing connections to the land, waters and communities. We pay our respects to them and to their Elders past and present. In preparing for the future of our infrastructure, we acknowledge the importance of looking beyond the immediate past to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique history of land management and settlement, art, culture and society that began over 65,000 years ago.

As part of Infrastructure Australia's commitment to reconciliation, we will continue to develop strong, mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners who can help us to innovate and deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, recognising their expertise in improving quality of life in their communities.

About our artwork:

"Through sharing culture, we can create a sense of belonging, by connecting to the land we stand on. This connection of people and our communities is shown through connecting campfires. These being places we sit, yarn and share knowledge.

The Infrastructure Australia values, expressed by the colours blue, green, orange, purple and teal weave through the artwork to represent the opportunities and benefits for our communities.

Under this sits our rivers, lakes, oceans and waterways. Water being the giver and supporter of life and flows through us all. I see the reconciliation journey as the water along the path to benefiting our people.

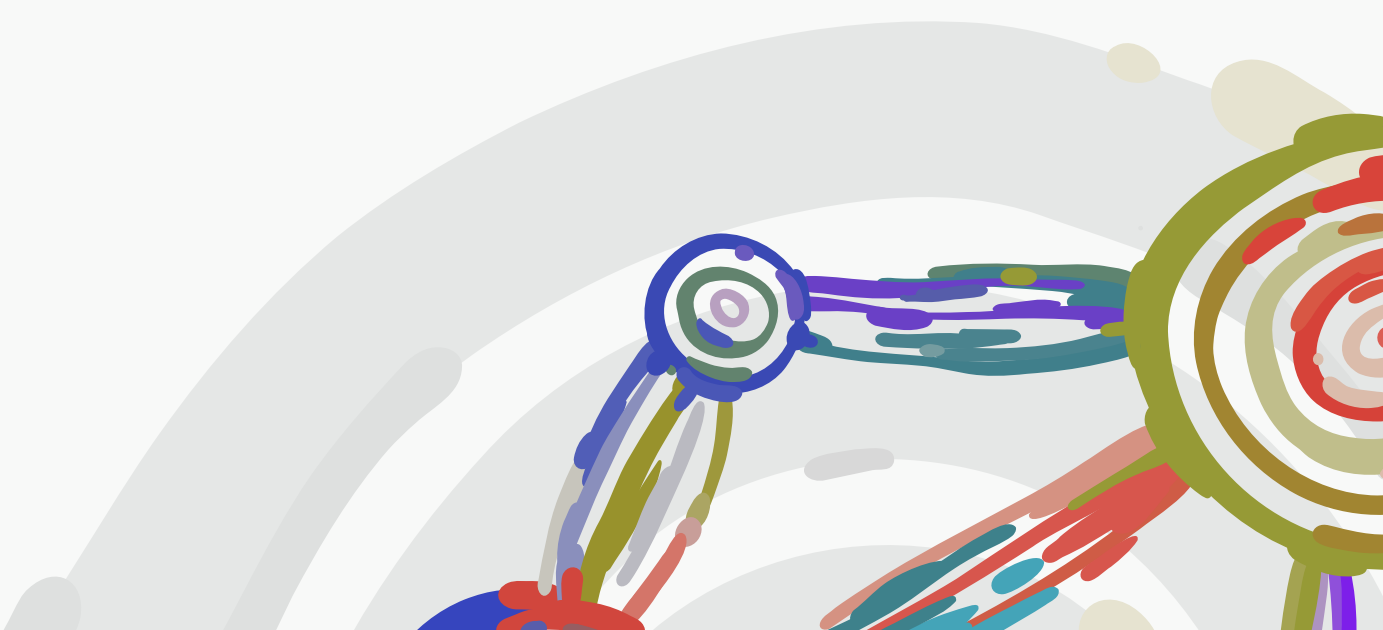
Around our waterways I've shown our traditional infrastructure. Our connections and songlines. The systems set up by the First Peoples of this place that we aim to weave into the modern landscape."

Kevin Wilson (Maduwongga, Wongutha)



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Message of commitment from our CEO

In 2020, we embarked on our first Reconciliation Action Plan (Reflect). It was an opportunity for us to learn, innovate and reaffirm how we want to contribute to Australian society through our work.

We learned that Infrastructure Australia's national reach and our partnerships with government and industry across the country gives us a unique opportunity to contribute to the national reconciliation movement.

Through the invaluable cultural competency training we participated in with Shelly Reyes from Arilla, and with Dalmarri Group, we began a process of truth telling in our workplace, understanding that we cannot plan for our shared future without understanding our shared history and showing respect to the Traditional Custodians of Australia's land and waterways.

We learned that a focus on partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and on earning the trust of these stakeholders through respectful and genuine relationships, is the cornerstone of any contribution we can make to the national reconciliation movement.

These are lessons that we will take into this next stage, as we embark on our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. Over the next two years, we are excited to work with new partners to pilot new initiatives and innovate our ways of working.

Infrastructure Australia will:

- review our consultation processes and develop an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations
- use our position as a thought leader at the national level to promote placed-based First Nations engagement in infrastructure planning and development, in pursuit of shared-decision making in line with the national agreement on Closing the Gap
- develop internal governance processes to ensure we fulfil and report on the commitments in the Reconciliation Action Plan.

We thank our partners who have been part of our reconciliation journey so far and we look forward to the new partnerships we will grow now.

Our strategy and values

Our strategy

Infrastructure Australia has a 5-year strategy that drives our operations and engagement including the vision and activities of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

Purpose

To provide robust, independent advice on infrastructure planning, decision-making, policy and priorities.

Mission

Drive change for sustainable, resilient and productive infrastructure that benefits Australians now and in the future.

Aspiration

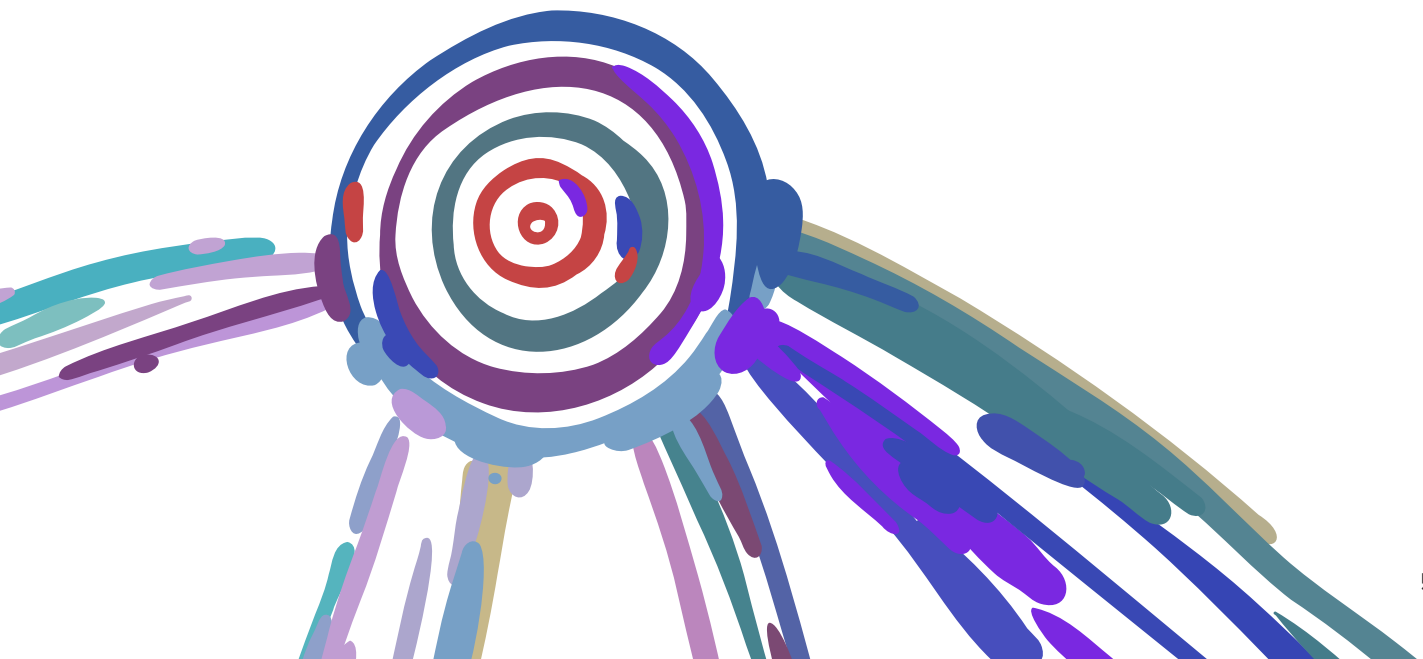
Be an influential and trusted independent advisor for infrastructure assets and services that deliver better access, quality and affordability.

2021-25 Strategic Goals

Strategic goals have been formulated to cover the two key components of the strategy – our ways of working and the outcomes we pursue.

Most importantly for this Reconciliation Action Plan, we strive to develop and use our influence to improve every Australian’s quality of life no matter who they are or where they live.

Influence	Advise	Capability	Social	Economic	Environment	Governance
Influence governments' agenda for transformation in the sector.	Viewed as a trusted advisor to government on decision-making and policy.	Be a high performing workforce with diverse expertise supported by efficient systems.	Improve the quality-of-life of people living in regional, remote areas and cities.	Guide the improved performance of networks.	Have a net positive impact for current and future generations.	Robust and transparent decision-making.
WAY WE WORK			OUTCOME FOCUSED			



Our values

In 2020, we worked with our staff to co-design a set of organisational values to guide our work. These values demonstrate the type of impact we want to make as an organisation. They help orient each of us in how we go about our work on a day-to-day basis.



We are independent

Our position as an independent agency, and our national reach, enables us to act as a champion for reconciliation, advocate to government and industry to improve their engagement with First Nation's peoples and promote infrastructure policy and projects that makes a real difference to First Nation's peoples.

We make a difference

We will play our part to deliver the outcomes. We will use our unique national platform in Australian infrastructure to advocate for project development that has regard to First Nation's culture and engages with affected First Nations peoples. We will work in partnership to promote best practice approaches to achieve these ends.

We collaborate

We will earn the trust of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and work in partnership with them. We will draw on the expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and learn how we can better support them.

We are respectful

We acknowledge and show our respect to the Traditional Custodians of Australia. We value their histories, cultures and knowledge as an integral part of Australia's national heritage.

We continuously improve

We are ready to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, and other organisations leading best practice approaches, to adapt and tailor our work practices in order to deliver outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

Our vision for reconciliation

Infrastructure Australia is the nation's independent infrastructure advisor.

We advise Australia's governments, industry and the community on the investments and reforms needed to deliver better infrastructure for all Australians.

Consistent with our strategy and values, we understand that our greatest contributions to the national reconciliation movement will be through using our influence as a national advisor.

Our vision for infrastructure in a reconciled Australia

- That as a nation, we have gone through a process of truth telling, so that the future we plan for is grounded in an understanding of our past and present.
- That Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a share in the nation's infrastructure planning and decision-making, grounded in the understanding that all Australian land is First Nations land.
- That employment and procurement opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and businesses are a standard consideration of infrastructure development.
- That infrastructure planning and decision-making values are strengthened by and incorporate local First Nations knowledge and understanding of Country, which have been developed over more than 65,000 years of continuous culture on this continent.
- That infrastructure planning, decision-making and delivery protects Country and First Nations cultures as national heritage.

We will seek to pursue the achievement of this in our Reconciliation Action Plan by:

- Investigate truth-telling initiatives amongst our peers in the infrastructure sector.
- Developing our skills and promoting best-practice engagement with First Nations peoples on infrastructure projects and policies with stakeholders in our sphere of influence.
- In collaboration with suitable stakeholders, develop guidance for proponents on engagement with First Nations people and active consideration of Country in infrastructure project development.
- Modelling standard consideration of employment and procurement opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our own procurement practices.
- Proactively advocating for project submissions to the *Infrastructure Priority List* that will positively drive reconciliation and Closing the Gap outcomes.



Our partnership with Reconciliation Australia

Infrastructure Australia has developed this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in partnership with Reconciliation Australia.

The RAP program, developed and overseen by Reconciliation Australia, provides a framework for any Australian organisation to support the national reconciliation movement.

What is an 'Innovate' RAP?

A RAP is a strategic document that outlines the practical actions that will drive an organisation's contribution to reconciliation, both internally and in the communities in which it operates.

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

In May 2020, Infrastructure Australia launched its Reflect RAP as the first step in our reconciliation journey. This allowed us to lay the foundation for future reconciliation initiatives. In our first year under a RAP, we focused on growing relationships, providing our staff with cultural competency training and promoting respect for the cultures, histories and achievements of First Nations peoples.

This RAP is the next step in our journey: an **Innovate RAP**.

The focus of an Innovate RAP is to: Develop and pilot strategies for reconciliation initiatives; set aspirational deliverables and publicly report on these initiatives.

The commitments we have made in this RAP have been guided by the framework developed by Reconciliation Australia and align with Infrastructure Australia's *Corporate Plan*.

This foundational work will allow us to, in successive RAPs, commit to actions or initiatives that are meaningful, mutually beneficial and sustainable.



Our first Innovate RAP

Infrastructure Australia released its first RAP (Reflect) during National Reconciliation Week in May 2020 after a 12-month development period. The RAP process has been critical to Infrastructure Australia's success as an organisation through the stakeholder relationships and knowledge we have developed with First Nations peoples and the broad-based engagement with our staff.

Necessarily, our Reflect RAP has focused on learning as much as possible as we formulate how we can best and most uniquely advance the cause of reconciliation through our position and work. This Innovate RAP provides an opportunity to continue to learn but also to start to leverage our unique position in infrastructure to advance reconciliation with First Nations peoples.

This Innovate RAP was developed primarily through the cross-functional Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group. The Working Group is a combined task force from across the organisation, including:

- Adam Copp, Chief Executive Officer; RAP Champion
- David Tucker, Chief of Project Advisory & Evaluation, Chair of RAP Working Group
- Coralie Williams, Director, Project Advisory & Evaluation
- Isobel Marasigan, Manager Internal and Strategic Communications
- Robert Ephraums, Associate Director, Communications and Engagement
- Carmen Pennisi, Associate Director, Policy & Research
- Euan Brown, Associate Director Project Advisory and Evaluation
- Umang Bhalla, People, Culture and Talent Acquisition Advisor
- Peter Pazin, Finance Manager
- Elaine Wager, Brand and Digital Experience

First Nations representation is provided by:
Elle Davidson, Director, Zion Planning



Our role

Organisation and core business

As an independent statutory body established under the *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008* (Cth), we advise governments, industry and the community on the investments and reforms needed to deliver better infrastructure for all Australians.

We maintain the *Infrastructure Priority List* to help ensure that public funds are directed towards projects that will deliver the best outcomes for our growing communities.

We also develop research and advice on broader opportunities for infrastructure reform and publish new and interactive data to support better infrastructure decision-making.

Working closely and collaboratively with stakeholders across government and the infrastructure sector, we are committed to raising the quality of infrastructure planning and delivery throughout Australia.

Infrastructure Australia's five-year policy and advisory cycle

Infrastructure Australia's responsibilities over a five-year cycle are to:

- **strategically audit the nation's infrastructure** by developing the *Australian Infrastructure Audit*
- **develop a clear roadmap** for reform in the *Australian Infrastructure Plan*
- **maintain a credible pipeline** of nationally significant infrastructure investment opportunities via the *Infrastructure Priority List*
- **assess infrastructure business cases** that are requesting more than \$250 million of Commonwealth funding.

There are 32 permanent and contracting staff members who are employed by Infrastructure Australia.

Infrastructure Australia operates from a single office location, on Martin Place in Sydney, New South Wales, on Gadigal land. We also have staff based on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung land in Melbourne, Yuggera Country in Brisbane and Ngunnawal Country in Canberra. We fulfil our roles and responsibilities with a strong emphasis on collaboration and stakeholder engagement across the country, which informs our approach to advice and reform.

At the time of writing, Infrastructure Australia does not employ any staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

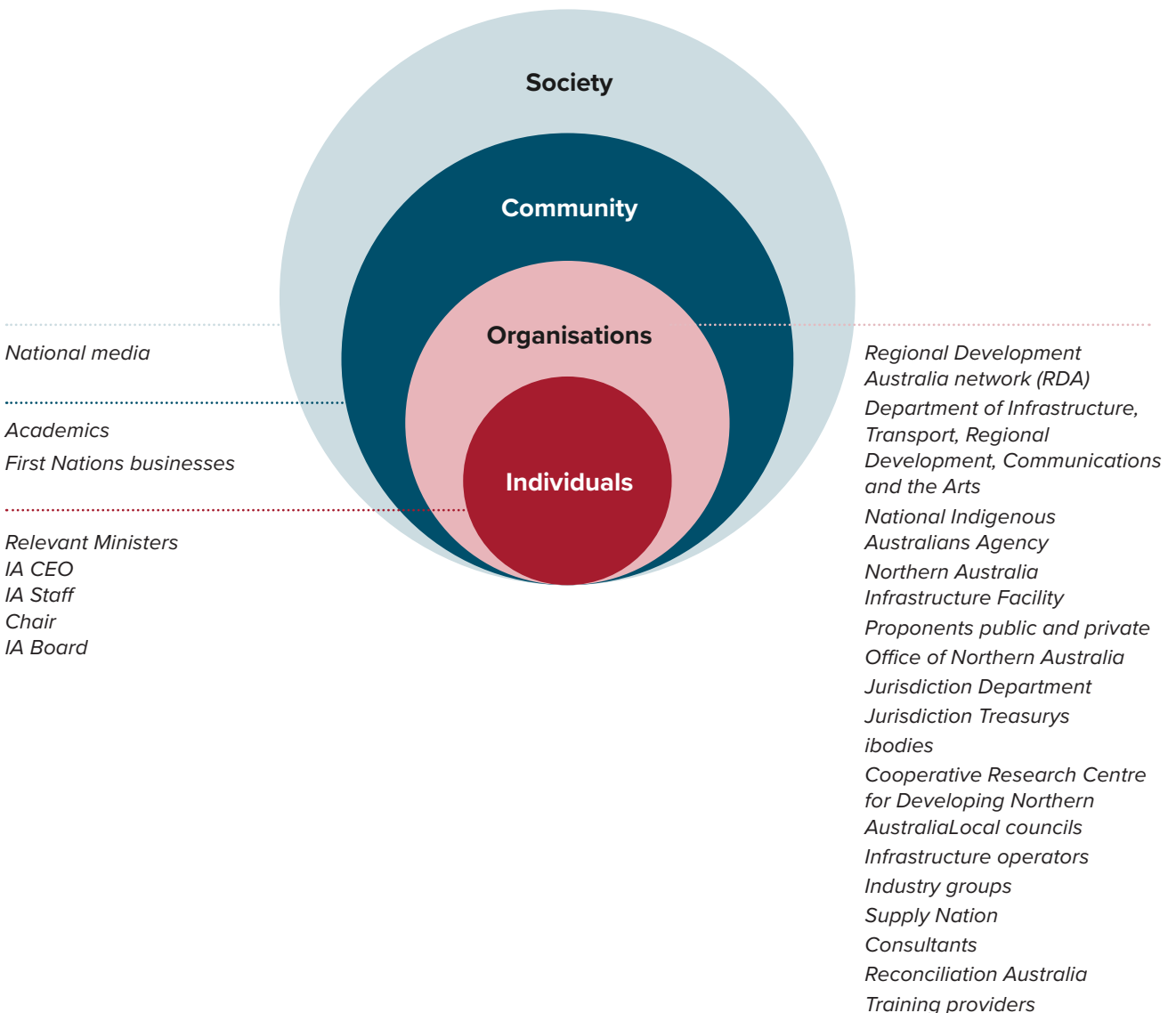
Stakeholders and sphere of influence

Infrastructure Australia is the nation’s independent infrastructure advisor. Consistent with our role as an advisor, we must be trusted and influential with our stakeholders. To do this, we need to enhance our relationships by engaging often, with purpose and strategically.

The achievement of our strategic goals relies on our capability to engage and build trusted relationships over the long term, recognising that implementing reform takes time. We recognise the need for ongoing active engagement and advocacy to drive the achievement of our reconciliation goals.

We will use our national platform and engagement capability to encourage governments, proponents, industry groups, infrastructure owners and operators to progress reconciliation outcomes in their own sphere of influence.

MAKE TOWARD ENGAGING ALL AUSTRALIANS IN RECONCILIATION?	INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS?	AFFECTED BY IA'S CORE BUSINESS?	INFLUENCE OVER IA'S CORE BUSINESS?	PROMOTE RECONCILIATION ACTIVITIES?	DERAIL RECONCILIATION ACTIVITIES?
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Our reconciliation journey

In 2020, during National Reconciliation Week, we launched our first RAP. It outlined our public commitment to the national reconciliation movement.

As an organisation we committed ourselves to learning, exploring partnerships in our sphere of influence, and enabling our staff to take practical, actionable steps to contribute to reconciliation.

Key achievements from our Reflect RAP

- Established a RAP Working Group that now reports monthly to the Leadership Team
- Cultural awareness training
- Introducing Acknowledgement of Country to meetings
- Review of our anti-discrimination policies
- Supply Nation membership
- Procured artwork from Aboriginal artists
- Artwork incorporated throughout Infrastructure Australia in screensavers, lanyards, shirts, and email signatures
- Launch of new meeting room names inspired by National Reconciliation Week as a daily reminder of our RAP commitments
- Standing agenda item in fortnightly morning teas and internal newsletter section on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander information
- Established/grew relationships with Reconciliation Australia, our Local Aboriginal Land Council, NAIIF's Indigenous Engagement Team, National Indigenous Australians Agency, Zion Group, and other RAP organisations, like the Planning Institute of Australia and NRMA.
- Our 2021 Infrastructure Australia *Assessment Framework* and *Pathway to Infrastructure Resilience Project* encourages engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout the project development process.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community engagement occurred through the development of our *2022 Regional Strengths and Infrastructure Gaps* project.

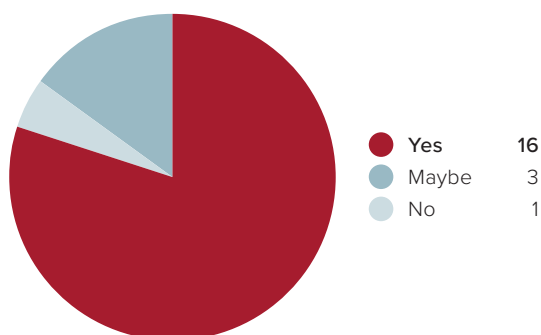
Bringing staff along on the journey

One of the most significant goals for our Reflect RAP was to build staff interest in the RAP process. In large part, this was supported by formal cultural awareness training, for which we would like to express our gratitude to Shelley Reys AO from Arilla, as well as Dalmarri. We also found that more informal cultural initiatives had a big impact on increasing staff interest in the RAP process.

As an example, some staff identified that their interest in the RAP was first sparked by the artwork Moving Along Pathways, which was developed for our offices by Kamillaroi artist Dennis Golding, to commemorate the launch of our Reflect RAP.

Findings from staff survey in May 2021 for our Reflect RAP

Have you felt engaged with the work to implement our Reconciliation Action Plan?



Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan has been running for a year. It is the first step in our reconciliation journey, and aimed to lay the foundation for future initiatives. How do you think we have progressed?

I can see the momentum building for our next RAP (10)

We have taken small, worthwhile steps (6)

We have made significant progress (3)

Change 'Other' to 'I haven't been here long enough to understand the scale of the RAP progress' (1)

Progress has been too slow (0)

I haven't seen any useful change (0)

I haven't seen the changes I wanted (0)

"Designing our Reconciliation Action Plan was such a great way to really hear the thoughts and perspectives of colleagues, in addition to knowing that each individual was being invited to engage in an open space."

"I don't think we have been as individually proactive as we could have been. I think we've been largely 'pulled' by the RAP. It would be good to get some organic momentum from individuals (myself included)."

"The artwork (Dennis Golding) made me curious initially – touchpoints like the cultural awareness training kept my engagement up. I also like the tone of RAP meetings and other RAP touchpoints - very genuine - we're not doing this as a tick box but are really passionate about doing it properly and well."

"New to IA and unaware of our RAP until Cultural Awareness half day training (which I loved). It was great to be part of the recent all staff workshop (great approach). So I can see that we are actively taking steps to engage all staff with our RAP."

We've taken this staff feedback, from surveys and workshops, and incorporated it into this Innovate RAP. We have put a focus on spreading responsibilities for RAP actions across departments, and giving staff a clear understanding of what their personal responsibilities are under the RAP.

Staff told us that going forward they would be most motivated by:

- More learning opportunities and detailed training (e.g. engagement training or cultural visits)
- New partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and stakeholders
- Scoping of how the RAP deliverables will be integrated into my BAU workload
- Clear deliverables assigned to different staff members.

Incorporating reconciliation into our work program

As we pursued our RAP, and as staff engaged with cultural awareness training, our work on the RAP began to influence existing major work programs and add new dimensions to them. Staff began to build new partnerships with new stakeholders, to consider new directions for our approach to stakeholder engagement and to find new areas in which we could use our sphere of influence to contribute to the national reconciliation movement.

This foundational work has informed the commitments made in this Innovate RAP.

2022 Regional Strengths and Infrastructure Gaps

Our 2022 *Regional Strengths and Infrastructure Gaps* project enhanced our engagement practices with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and built our own capacity in this area.

The program partnered with local stakeholders to identify regional strengths and infrastructure gaps. This was grounded in over 100 hours of consultation with 735 stakeholders, across 51 workshops between April to June 2021.

First Nations engagement was embedded in the project's national consultation. Partnering with the Regional Development Australia (RDA) network, community leaders and representative groups were invited to participate in regional workshops. This included local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members who provided local expertise and diverse perspectives.

Three targeted hybrid workshops (in-person and online) were tailored to stakeholders from First Nations communities, First Nations businesses and service providers who work closely with First Nations populations. These workshops aligned with the RDA regions in the Northern Territory, Kimberley and Tropical North.

WSP's Indigenous Specialist Services team supported this process, helping us develop the workshops in an appropriate format to garner genuine and informed engagement. The workshops targeted to First Nations participants presented research material to participants in a flexible setting focused on facilitating open discussion.

2021 Assessment Framework

The *Assessment Framework* published in July 2021 drew on extensive stakeholder engagement with government and industry, including input from a formal cross-jurisdictional Reference Group.

To inform this work, we consulted with the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility's Indigenous Engagement Team and the National Indigenous Australians Agency to gain an understanding of their Indigenous Engagement Strategies and provide guidance on key changes to the *Assessment Framework*, which directly related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. These were:

- Highlighting the importance of transparent and meaningful stakeholder engagement activities during each stage of project development, including engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, to improve endorsement for each proposal.
- Acknowledging the value of learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique history of land management and settlement, arts, cultures and society that began over 65,000 years ago.
- Specifying characteristics for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholder engagement strategy, including cultural understanding and respect, accountability, empowerment and developing meaningful relationships
- Identifying that any of Australia's governments submitting an infrastructure proposal to us for assessment has commitments under the Closing the Gap National Agreement. Their proposals should consider how they contribute to the policy targets of this strategic objective.
- Defining specific characteristics of quality of life that are not typically monetised through economic appraisal. These include culture, living standards, learning and development, health and safety, and economic and social participation.

Planning for infrastructure resilience

During 2019–2020, Australia faced the COVID-19 pandemic, a record-breaking bushfire season, extensive flooding and drought, geopolitical risks, and cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure networks. These events showed just how critical infrastructure is for maintaining community safety, biodiversity and a functional economy, and focused Australia's attention on our resilience to all hazards.

Resilient communities have the ability to resist, absorb, accommodate, recover, transform and thrive in response to the effects of shocks and stresses in a timely, efficient manner to enable positive sustainable economic, social, environmental and governance outcomes.

Throughout 2020 and 2021 we partnered with Infrastructure NSW to develop *A Pathway to Infrastructure Resilience*. This project produced a set of two advisory papers that identify short and long-term opportunities to improve infrastructure planning's contribution to building resilient communities. We had a shared vision for a resilient future, where Australian communities can resist, absorb, accommodate, recover, transform and thrive in response to the effects of shocks and stresses in a timely, efficient manner to enable positive sustainable economic, social, environmental and governance outcomes.

In *A Pathway to Infrastructure Resilience* we identified ten opportunities for transformational and systemic change in infrastructure planning to deliver a more resilient future. Two opportunities that are particularly relevant to this RAP are:

- **Build trust through more inclusive decision-making.** Infrastructure engagement processes often fail to capture communities' views on resilience, experiences of shocks and stresses and community knowledge on solutions.
- Inclusive and effective decision-making requires more tailored approaches, including culturally appropriate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We should move beyond passive 'engagement' and 'consultation', to 'involvement' and 'participation' of the community in decision-making, and set clear expectations for both parties.
- Best practice guidelines like 'Our Knowledge, Our Way', which outlines Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led approaches to strengthening and sharing knowledge of land and sea management, provide excellent guidance on opportunities for co-creation, building relationships through shared understanding, and opportunities for innovation and transformation.
- **Embed traditional ecological knowledge.** The proactive management of the land using fire and other traditional ecological knowledge improves the health of the ecosystems. This in turn protects communities and infrastructure from shock events.
- Despite this, decision makers are not systematically drawing on traditional ecological knowledge to manage land and natural resources. This is an unrealised opportunity to strengthen the resilience of places and people. It is also inconsistent with the principles of self-determination and co-design. The application of traditional ecological knowledge can contribute to the reduction of hazard risk to infrastructure and communities. It can also address some of the underlying stresses in an individual or community, resulting in increased community resilience.

There is an opportunity to embed traditional knowledge in a way that supports infrastructure planning by:

- **creating designated roles in infrastructure, land-use and other planning organisations** for qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to embed traditional management practices.
- **piloting a place-based program** that builds on existing guidance and initiatives to measure, evaluate and learn from the impacts of embedding knowledge practices in high risk locations.

2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan

The *2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan* (the 2021 Plan) is a roadmap for reform that prioritises community outcomes and the delivery of affordable, high-quality infrastructure services across Australia's diverse geographies. The 2021 Plan includes recommendations across six infrastructure sectors and three cross-sector themes.

Through the Place Chapter in the 2021 Plan, Infrastructure Australia acknowledges the foundation of place-based approaches in many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities. Place is an essential organising feature of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economy and communities, with attachment to land, kinship relationships and cultural heritage all important considerations for infrastructure planning.

Key points to support First Nations peoples include:

- A place-based approach to infrastructure planning that engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can help meet Closing the Gap targets.
 - The reforms proposed in the Place-based outcomes for communities reflect Closing the Gap priority outcomes. In particular, those that relate to: involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in formal partnerships; shared decision-making that responds to local priorities; and improving shared access to data and information.
 - Place-based approaches should reflect the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This should include developing an understanding of community needs and aspirations, systems in place and the role of place in design and delivery.
- Investment in social housing is required to address the shortfall in appropriate housing across the country, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on the waitlist for housing, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households experiencing overcrowding, particularly in remote communities.
- Governments need to partner with communities and water utilities to meet its obligations to deliver quality drinking water to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, no matter where they live.
 - Some communities in remote areas do not have access to reliable and safe water services that meet Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWGs), particularly in communities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.
- Participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and businesses is fundamental to sustainable Northern Australia economic development.
 - Infrastructure investment is needed in these communities to improve their economic participation and wellbeing.
 - Economic growth will require access to a highly skilled labour force and engagement of local workers, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

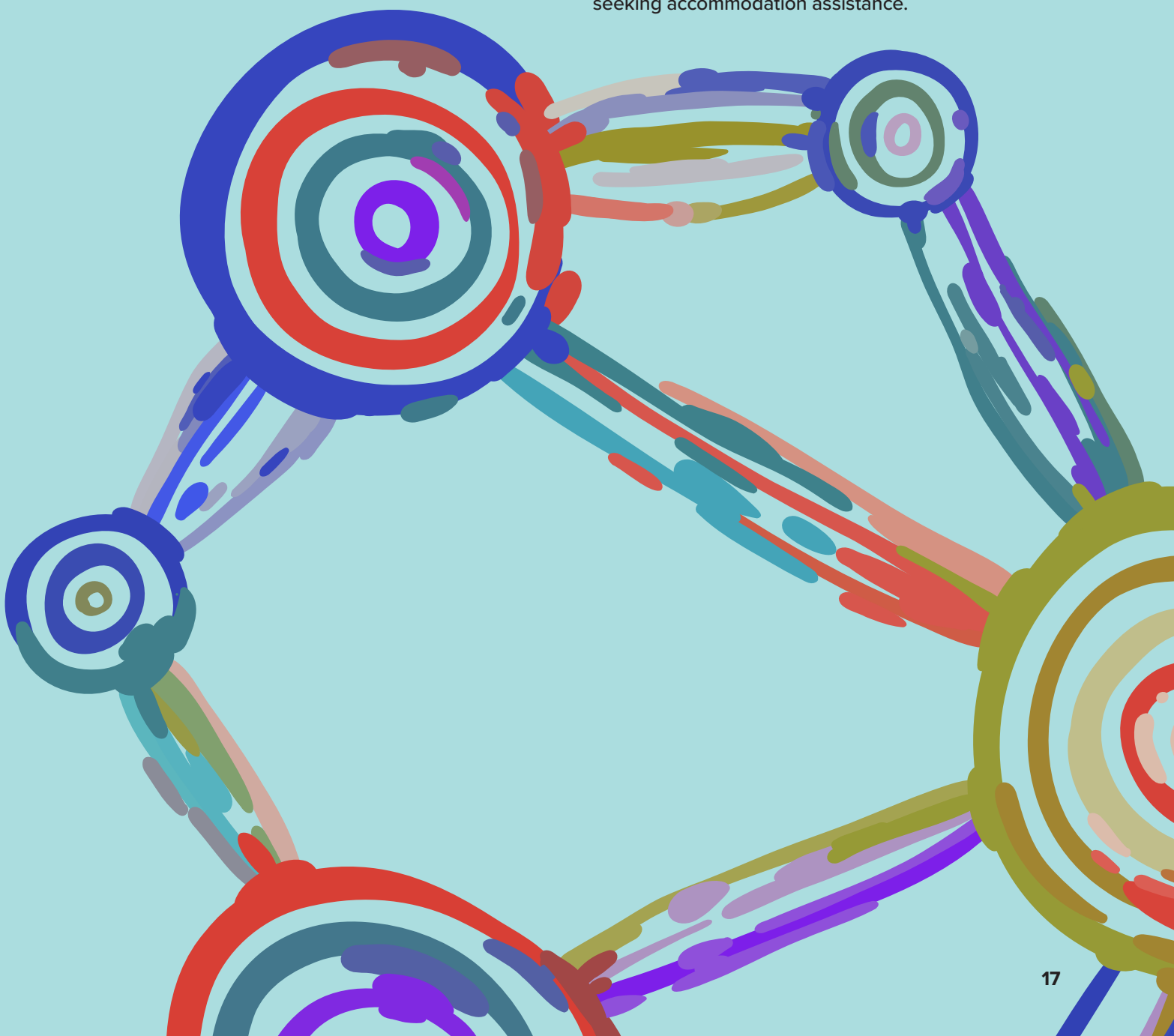
Highlighting the crisis in remote housing

Infrastructure Australia believes that housing is at the centre of addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inclusion and disadvantage across Australia.

As at 30 June 2019 there were 12,100 households awaiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing. In the same year, 50% of very remote and 31% of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing residents were living in overcrowded conditions.

The 2019 Australian Infrastructure Audit found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today face systemic barriers to accessing stable, affordable housing that is suitable to their needs. These housing challenges are often distinct to those facing other Australians, such as overrepresentation in Australia's homeless population, the need for culturally appropriate housing, overcrowding of housing and the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in remote or very remote areas, where it is difficult and expensive to deliver new housing supply.

The Audit also found that one-quarter of those assisted by specialist homelessness services identified as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. In 2017-18, there were also 86,100 unmet requests, of which almost three in four were seeking accommodation assistance.



Our actions

Relationships

We are collaborative and communicate openly and warmly

Respectful and mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is fundamental to supporting our organisational mission to ‘drive change for sustainable, resilient, and productive infrastructure that benefits Australians now and in the future.’ We cannot drive lasting change, improve quality of life and access to infrastructure without engaging with and supporting Australia’s First Nations peoples.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	1.1 Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for our future engagement.	November 2023	Lead: Associate Director Communications & Engagement Sponsor: Chief Executive Officer
	1.2 Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations, including a post-implementation review of engagement strategies already conducted by Infrastructure Australia in the past.	November 2023	Lead: Associate Director Communications & Engagement Sponsor: Chief Executive Officer
2. Increase staff competency with best practice engagement strategies with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	2.1 Provide key staff with training from the International Association for Public Participation to increase their competency with best practice engagement strategies.	June 2023	Lead: Director Communications & Engagement. Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	2.2 Develop, promote and maintain a library of resources on best practice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement strategies.	January 2024	Lead: Associate Director, Project Advisory & Evaluation Sponsor: Director, Project Advisory & Evaluation
	2.3 Increase staff awareness of best practice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement practices by promoting foundational documents including: Uluru Statement for the Heart’s key calls to action (Voice, Treaty, Truth) Closing the Gap priority reforms: Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making Rights guaranteed under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.	July 2023	Lead: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	3.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023/24	Lead: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications
	3.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June, 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair Support: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications
	3.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June, 2023/24	Lead: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	3.4 Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May- 3 June, 2023/24	Lead: Infrastructure Australia Social Club Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	3.5 Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2023/24	Lead: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications
4. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	4.1 Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation – particularly staff training.	Ongoing. (Review June 23/24 after each National Reconciliation Week)	Lead: Director People, Culture and Talent. Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	4.2 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	May 2023/24 (during every National Reconciliation Week) and through all publishable reports	Lead: Director Communications & Engagement Sponsor: Chief Executive Officer
	4.3 Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes	June 2023/24	Lead: Director Communications & Engagement Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	4.4 Collaborate with organisations in the RAP network and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	August 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair Support: RAPWG
	4.5 Seek opportunities to hear from leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on truth-telling (i.e lectures/talks) to ensure we are up-to-date with current conversations.	August 2023	Lead: Associate Director Communications & Engagement Support: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	5.1 Conduct an annual review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Support: People, Culture & Talent Advisor Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	5.2 Continue implementing and communicating the anti-discrimination policy for our organisation (contained in our <i>Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy</i>).	Ongoing, Review progress (November 2023/24)	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Support: People, Culture & Talent Advisor Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	5.3 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy .	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Support: People, Culture & Talent Advisor Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	5.4 Educate senior leaders and other staff on the effects of racism as part of our Learning & Development program.	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
6. (E) Drive positive change in infrastructure planning, decision-making and delivery to protect Country and celebrate First Nations cultures.	6.1 Deliver best practice guidelines on place-based First Nations engagement in infrastructure planning and development in alignment with best practice First Nations cultural heritage management and legislation	November 2023	Lead: Director, Project Advisory & Evaluation Sponsor: Chair, RAPWG
	6.2 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as part of advocacy strategy for future <i>Infrastructure Audits and Plans</i> to ensure that improved outcomes for Australia's First Nations peoples are embedded in long-term infrastructure planning and policy.	November 2023	Lead: Associate Director, Policy & Research Sponsor: Director of Policy & Research

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Advocate for the development of infrastructure proposals that specifically benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	7.1 Proactively engage with proponents to bring forward proposals for the Infrastructure Priority List that contribute to outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	August 2023/24	<p>Lead: Associate Director, Project Advisory & Evaluation</p> <p>Sponsor: Chief of Project Advisory & Evaluation</p>
	7.2 Engage our employees in the importance of the development of infrastructure that decreases overcrowding in remote communities through a screening of Take Heart Deadly Heart.	June 2023	<p>Lead: Associate Director, Project Advisory & Evaluation</p> <p>Sponsor: Chief of Project Advisory & Evaluation</p> <p>Supported by: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications</p>

Respect

We are respectful and are strengthened by diverse voices

We are committed to respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures, lands, waters, histories, futures and rights. We believe for us to create a sustainable future for all, we must understand and respect the histories and context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia. Australian infrastructure is built on First Nations land and we are dedicated to working ethically and transparently in urban, remote and regional communities, acknowledging the Traditional Owners of Country.

Respect and knowledge of First Nations cultures is a critical step towards reconciliation. We aim to ensure that as an organisation, respect is shown in the language we use, the decisions we make and the work we do.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	8.1 Conduct an annual review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Support: People, Culture & Talent Advisor
	8.2 Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Support: People, Culture & Talent Advisor Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	8.3 Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Support: People, Culture & Talent Advisor Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	8.4 Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning .	December 2023	Lead: Associate Director People, Culture & Talent. Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	9.1 Maintain staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols , including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Review in June 2023/24 (after every National Reconciliation Week)	Lead: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	9.2 Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document , including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	May 2023	Lead: Associate Director Stakeholder Relations Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	9.3 Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	Ongoing, Review December 2023/24	Lead: Director Communications & Engagement Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	9.4 Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Ongoing, Review practice (November 2023/24)	Lead: Chief Operating Officer
10. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	10.1 RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair
	10.2 Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent
	10.3 Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in July, 2023/24	Lead: Manager, Internal & Strategic communications; Support: Director People, Culture & Talent; Infrastructure Australia Social Club.

Opportunities

We aim to make a difference and promote best practice

We are committed to creating genuine opportunities and promoting best practice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all areas of our work as part of our contribution to reconciliation. This includes committing to meaningfully partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and businesses in their contribution to the successful delivery of our work. We aim to position ourselves to make a difference in a manner that leads our stakeholders to consider their own opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

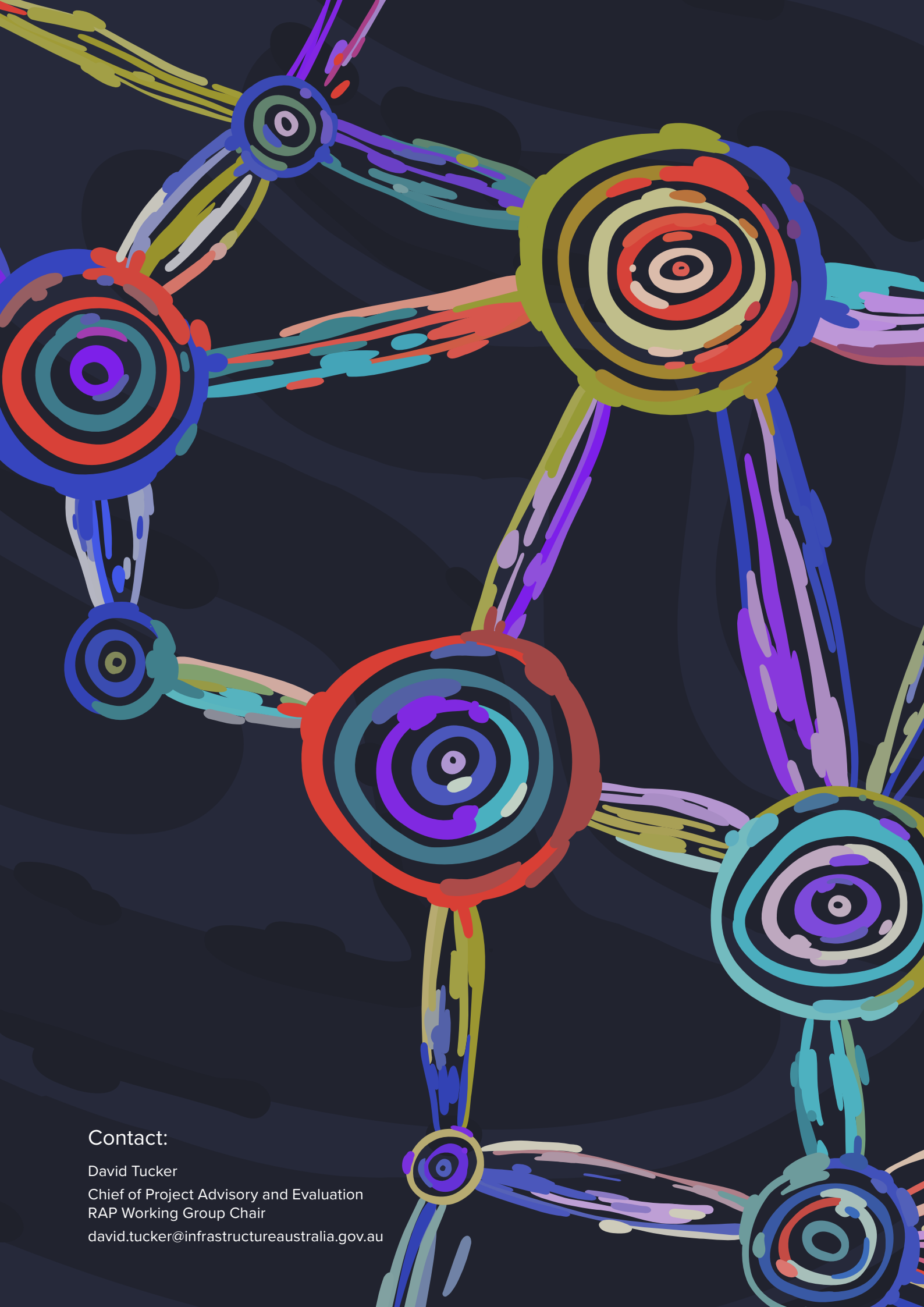
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	11.1 Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies and address any systemic obstacles that may deter Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from participation in our workplace.	August 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	11.2 In consultation with a First Nations advisor, develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2023	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	11.3 Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Ongoing, Review practice (November 2023/24)	Lead: Director People, Culture & Talent. Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
12. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	12.1 Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	December 2023	Lead: Director Finance Sponsor: COO
	12.2 Maintain Supply Nation membership.	Ongoing (Confirm at 1 June 23/24 that this is maintained into next financial year)	Lead: Director Finance Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	12.3 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	Review in June after National Reconciliation Week	Lead: Director Finance
	12.4 Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	October 2023	Lead: Director Finance Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer
	12.5 Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Review in June 2023/24 (at the end of National Reconciliation Week)	Lead: Director Finance Sponsor: Chief Operating Officer

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RAPWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	13.1 Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAPWG.	May 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair
	13.2 Consider establishing an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory group.	February 2024	Lead: RAPWG Chair
	13.3 Review the RWG's Terms of Reference and update if necessary.	August 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair
	13.4 Meet monthly to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Monthly, Review August 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair
14. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	14.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	April 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair; Chief Operating Officer
	14.2 Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Review performance in June 2023/24 after National Reconciliation Week	Leads: RAPWG Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	14.3 Explore alignment between RAP commitments and existing and work programs and identify where existing RAP commitments can be integrated into existing work programs.	March 2023 and ongoing	Lead: Director, Project Advisory & Evaluation Supported by: Chief of Digital & Data
	14.4 Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	March 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair Supported by: Chief of Digital & Data
	14.5 Appoint and maintain two internal RAP Champions from senior management.	March 2023/24	Lead: Chief Executive Officer; Chief of Project Advisory & Evaluation

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
15. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	15.1 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair
	15.2 Report progress to Executive Leadership Team monthly and to Board bi-monthly as part of CEO Reports	Ongoing, Review practice November 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair Support: Chief Operating Officer
	15.3 Regularly report on RAPWG activities to all staff via internal communications channels like the staff newsletter and IA morning tea, as well as sharing quarterly reports.	Ongoing. Review performance in June 2023/24 after National Reconciliation Week	Lead: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications Sponsor: RAPWG Chair
	15.4 Incorporate RAP actions into performance targets for major projects and the performance expectations of individual staff , including team Chiefs.	Ongoing, Aligned with Professional Development Plan. Review progress Jan and June 2023/24	Lead: Associate Director People, Culture & Talent Sponsor: Chief Executive Officer
	15.5 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	October 2023/24	Lead: Chief Operating Officer Supported by: RAPWG
	15.6 Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	March 2024	Lead: RAPWG Chair Support: Manager, Internal & Strategic Communications
	15.7 Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence	June 2023/24	Lead: Chief Executive Officer
	15.8 Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2023/24	Lead: RAPWG Chair
	15.9 Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	May 2025	Lead: RAPWG Chair
16. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	16.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2025	Lead: RAPWG Chair





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