



Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2020 – February 2021



**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**

REFLECT



QPRC Reconciliation Action Plan - Reflect

Offices: Council headquarters – 256 Crawford St
Bungendore Office – 10 Majara St
Braidwood Office – 144 Wallace St

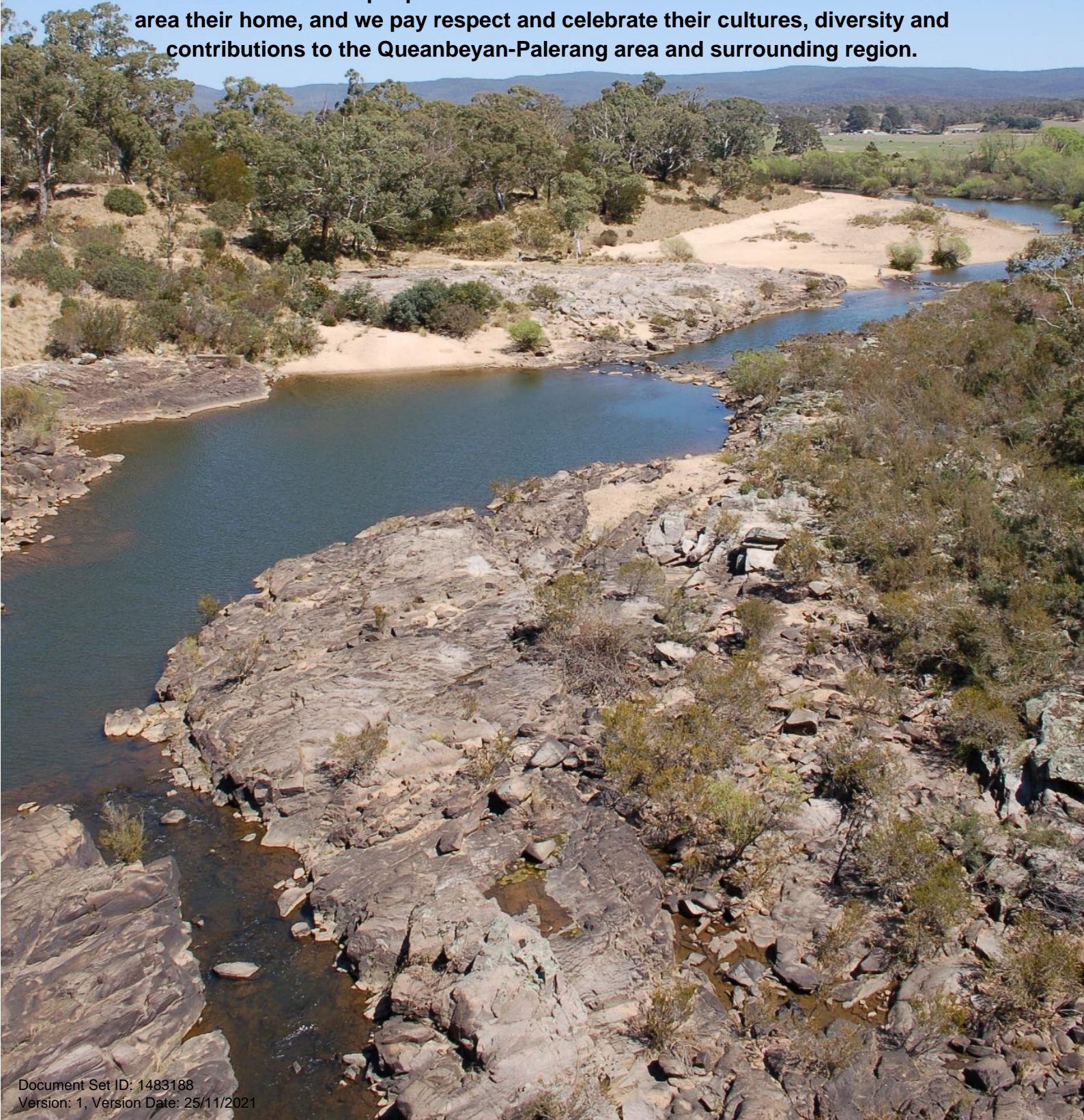
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Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

We pay our respect to the Traditional Custodians of the Queanbeyan-Palerang area, the Ngunnawal and the Walbunja peoples on whose land we live and work. We acknowledge that these lands are Aboriginal lands and pay our respect and celebrate their ongoing cultural traditions and contributions to our surrounding region. We also acknowledge the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from across Australia who have now made this area their home, and we pay respect and celebrate their cultures, diversity and contributions to the Queanbeyan-Palerang area and surrounding region.



Message from the Mayor



As Mayor of Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, I am committed to strengthening the relationships and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other members of our community.

I encourage Council to continue to deliver culturally appropriate programs which enrich the lives of all, and work to build a harmonious, strong and respectful community which celebrates the unique knowledge, history and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

I recognise and support the Reconciliation Action Plan – Reflect as an important tool to outline the QPRC vision for reconciliation. This is the first milestone of our journey and commitment to our own formal Reconciliation Action Plan.

Cr Tim Overall
Mayor

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



As Chief Executive Officer of Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, I am proud to support Council's journey of reconciliation and the development of the first stage of our Reconciliation Action Plan. I recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of our region, and support the need to develop greater commitment and cultural awareness across the organisation.

As we aim to serve all members of the community through our diverse range of programs, we acknowledge and respect the contributions of the Traditional Custodians of this region, the Ngunnawal and Walbunja people.

Peter Tegart
QPRC CEO

Introduction

Welcome to Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council's (QPRC) Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The RAP is a strategic document that will provide the framework for QPRC to support the national reconciliation movement. It includes practical actions that will drive our organisation's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities in which we operate.

On 12 May 2016, Palerang Council and Queanbeyan City Council were merged to establish the QPRC.

We are excited to embark on our first RAP as QPRC.

We recognise the Ngunnawal and Walbunja as the First Peoples of the land on which the local government area is located. We also recognise the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the region who make up the rich and diverse communities to which our organisation provides services. We respect and work with neighbouring clans and traditional groups to foster inclusive relationships and partnerships.

We commit to work positively today and in the future with our first peoples and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to learn, acknowledge and move forward with the whole Queanbeyan-Palerang community.

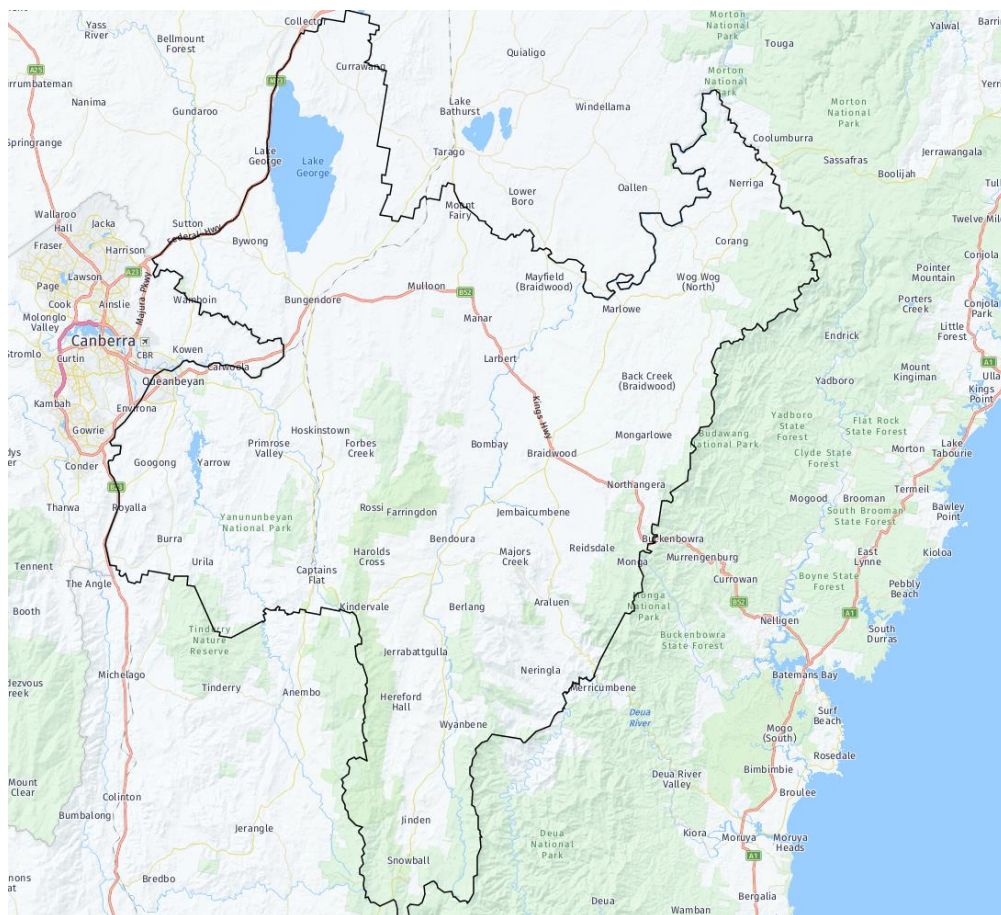
It is our intent to embrace this Plan as an evolving document and process that guides and facilitates our learning, growth, and continuous improvement as we work towards reconciliation.

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About QPRC

QPRC delivers local government services to the Queanbeyan-Palerang area.

QPRC delivers a variety of services which impact almost all areas of day-to-day life including community development, cultural facilities and services such as libraries and museums, administration and provision of recreation and community facilities, water, sewer and waste services, community events, sustainability and environment planning, community services and planning and development approval.



The QPRC Community Strategic Plan 2018 – 2028 distils a long term vision which reflects where the community sees their region heading over the coming years. It identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and strategies for achieving these.

QPRC is located in south-eastern NSW. The region spans 5,319km² and has a population of approximately 59,959 (QPRC Community Profile – October 2019).

The region comprises the city of Queanbeyan, towns of Bungendore, Braidwood and Captains Flat, and the villages of Araluen, Majors Creek, Mongarlowe and Nerriga. It also encompasses the localities of Wamboin, Bywong, Burra, Urila, Hoskinstown, Rossi, Carwoola, Royalla, and Sutton.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make up 3.1% of the overall population, which is below the NSW regional average of 5.5%, but above the NSW average of 2.9%

QPRC has customer service centres in Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Braidwood. Our organisation employs approximately 580 staff, of which seven people, or 1.22% (QPRC Annual Report 2018-19) identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. This representation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in QPRC's workforce is below the 2.6% target set by COAG's 'Closing the Gap' initiative.

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Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

QPRC seeks to ensure reconciliation is at the core of our organisation and a foundation to all our services and business.

QPRC has developed a Reflect RAP in recognition that our organisation is in the formative stages of our reconciliation journey.

The Reflect RAP provides a platform for us to embed respect and awareness within the organisation and lay strong foundations for the development of future RAPs. Our Reflect RAP will begin to explore how we can strengthen internal processes and build the cultural competency of our staff. QPRC intends to evaluate this process annually.

This RAP was developed by the QPRC Community Development Unit in consultation with Management and Executive staff and the QPRC Aboriginal Consultative Committee. The Portfolio General Manager - Community Choice is the identified RAP champion, responsible for driving internal awareness and engagement of the RAP. A RAP working group will be established to oversee the progress of the Plan.

The actions outlined in the RAP are guided by Reconciliation Australia's key themes; Relationships, Respect, Opportunities, Governance and are specific to our business, service delivery and sphere of influence. Reconciliation Australian provides organisations with four RAP levels: Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, Elevate. Each RAP is designed to suit an organisation at different stages of their reconciliation journey. QPRC would like to aspire for an Elevate RAP, becoming a strong leader in reconciliation.

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Our Partnerships and Current Activities

Council actively fosters relationships with Ngunnawal and Walbunja Elders to strengthen and build robust partnerships to progress reconciliation and community development opportunities.

The QPRC Aboriginal Consultative Committee was established to represent the interests, concerns and ideas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. The Committee is a vital link between Council and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

QPRC employs an Aboriginal Community Liaison and Projects Officer who is responsible for coordinating and delivering a range of community development and capacity building initiatives, implementing strategic plans and policies, supporting the Aboriginal Consultative Committee and advising on Aboriginal culture and heritage and social justice matters.

The Aboriginal Community Liaison and Projects Officer facilitates the Koori Interagency Network Group which offers a platform for community organisations and government bodies to share information, strengthen community connection and collaboration to support community development.

QPRC hosts an annual Reconciliation Walk to acknowledge and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. We do this in partnership with other QPRC teams and community groups to raise awareness of reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history.

Our annual NAIDOC Awards Ceremony proudly recognises the outstanding contribution and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Queanbeyan-Palerang region.

QPRC also directs energy into youth and children's programs such as Koori Group and Aboriginal Playschool. These are important initiatives to support health and wellbeing and build capacity and knowledge in young people and their carers. Community Development staff have also completed face-to-face Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training.

Actions and Deliverables



Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop and maintain external relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	March 2020	Service Manager - Community and Education
	Identify and develop contact details and information of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our LGA to enable greater engagement between Council and its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents, and to help build relationships that will contribute to development of future RAPs	December 2020	Service Manager - Community and Education
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff via current publications and Intranet	May 2020	Program Coordinator - Communication and Engagement
	Register all Council's NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's website to capture support and participation	May 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June 2020	Portfolio General Manager - Community Choice
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2020	Chief Executive Officer

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Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	Raise internal staff awareness of our RAP	January 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer and Program Coordinator - Communication and Engagement
	Present to all areas of Council to ensure employees have an understanding of RAP commitments	February 2020	Portfolio General Manager - Community Choice
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey	December 2020	Program Coordinator - Community
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey	January 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	December 2020	Portfolio General Manager - Community Choice and Administration Officer- Community Choice
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Conduct a review of QPRC directives and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	December 2020	–Program Coordinator, Community

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Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning within Council.	Conduct a review of cultural awareness training requirements within Council	June 2020	Service Manager - Workplace and Culture and Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
	Review Council's staff induction processes to include key elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training program	June 2020	Service Manager - Workplace and Culture
	Develop a proposal for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	May 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer and Team Leader - Culture Arts and Museums
Raise understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	Incorporate local Elders' Welcome to Country information and Elder register on QPRC website	July 2020	Service Manager - Customer and Communication and Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
	Develop Acknowledgement of Country cards and email banners	July 2020	Program Coordinator – Communication and Engagement, Service Manager, Digital and Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
	Commence a journey with First Peoples, Koori Interagency Network Group and QPRC Aboriginal Consultative Committee to establish a QPRC Cultural Protocols handbook that will strengthen partnerships and guide internal operations	February 2020	Service Manager – Governance and Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
	Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	March 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer and Program Coordinator - Community

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Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	First week in July, 2020	Chair of the RWG and Internal Working group
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	First week in July, 2020	Chair of the RWG and Internal Working group
	QPRC staff to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2020	Chair of the RWG
Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance	Investigate mandatory staff participation in Queanbeyan-Palerang Reconciliation Walk	May 2020	Chief Executive Officer
	Raise awareness about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander significant dates and celebrations amongst QPRC staff and encourage participation	Jan 2020	Program Coordinator - Communication and Engagement and Internal Working group

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Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development	Maintain baseline data on current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	January 2020	Service Manager – Workplace and Culture
	Include in all employment advertising an equal opportunity statement encouraging all people, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability and medical history, to apply	January 2020	Service Manager – Workplace and Culture
	Develop a proposal for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation	May 2020	Service Manager – Workplace and Culture
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	Investigate Supply Nation membership	February 2020	Chief Financial Officer
	Investigate opportunities to update Council procurement policies to support traditionally underutilised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	May 2020	Chief Financial Officer

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Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP	Prepare a Terms of Reference for the RWG	January 2020	Portfolio General Manager - Community Choice and Program Coordinator - Community
	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation	February 2020	Community Development Officers
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG	February 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	Define resource requirements for RAP implementation	January 2020	Portfolio General Manager - Community Choice
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments	January 2020	Portfolio General Manager - Community Choice
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	Any actions incorporated into the Operational Plan are tracked, measured and reported on via Tech1. Responsibility of Community team to monitor progress.	February 2020	Service Manager - Customer and Communication; Service Manager - Community and Education and Planning and Productivity Coordinator
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	September 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	September 2020	Aboriginal Liaison and Project Officer

