



Australian Government  
Department of Employment  
and Workplace Relations



# Reconciliation Action Plan *Innovate*

December 2025–  
December 2027



# Artwork: Our Story on Country

'Our Story on Country' was created by Bree Buttenshaw.

The artwork tells the story of growth and learning to create a diverse and safe workplace for everyone – ideals that are shared by both the department and Bree.

**"We all deserve to feel safe in any space to share our cultures and be our true and authentic selves."**

The design features connecting circles that represent the offices of the department. Although geographically separated, we are all connected through Country, song lines, land, waterways and the air we breathe.

The central circle is a motif that represents the core of reconciliation and the importance of Department of Employment and Workplace Relations purpose of enabling access to skills, training and employment. Throughout the artwork are the symbols for people – because our people and communities are the heart of everything we do.



## About the artist



Bree Buttenshaw is a Kalkadoon woman living on Quandamooka Country in southeast Queensland. Bree is a talented digital artist who integrates her proud Aboriginal culture with a contemporary digital approach. Bree is known for her use of vibrant colour palettes, intricate patterns, love, fun, cultural resilience and pride. At the core of Bree's work is community, culture and Country. The artwork guides us by looking ahead through the opportunity of learning and growth, for both our department and the community we serve.



## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to the peoples, the cultures, and Elders past and present, including within the department, in our communities and among those we collaborate with to deliver our work.

## Use of sensitive terms

The terms 'Aboriginal', 'Torres Strait Islander', 'Indigenous' and 'First Nations' may be used interchangeably throughout this document. Using these terminologies, we seek to acknowledge and honour diversity, shared knowledge and experiences as well as the right of stakeholders to define their own identities.

## Cultural Sensitivity Advice

First Nations peoples should be aware that this document may contain the names and images of deceased persons.

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# Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

## First Innovate RAP

Reconciliation Australia commends the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, the Department of Employment

and Workplace Relations will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of *relationships, respect, and opportunities* emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With over 5.5 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

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

Congratulations the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.



**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia

# Message from the Secretary

## #TeamDEWR's *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)* represents our commitment to transformational change and reconciliation.

At the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (the department), we are not just implementing policies and delivering programs: we seek to fundamentally reshape how we work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to achieve reconciliation and close the gap.

We must put respectful relationships at the heart of everything we do. It is the foundation of true collaboration. Only through doing so, can we achieve genuine partnership, shared decision-making and truly recognise and honour First Nations expertise and self-determination.

Since the department's establishment in July 2022, we have prioritised Closing the Gap and embarked on a deliberate and unique reform journey that has seen the development of our *Closing the Gap Strategy 2024–2027* and this RAP.

We continue to grow our number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SES and, critically, we have reshaped our governance to embed First Nations voices in our decision-making. Our newly established First Nations Executive Board—with equal First Nations and non-Indigenous representation—will support strategic oversight of all policies and programs impacting First Nations peoples. We have embedded the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms into each of our Tier 2 committees and begun amending our business-as-usual practices, ensuring every part of our organisation is maximising opportunities to improve outcomes for First Nations people.

Reconciliation is not a destination but a continuous journey of action, accountability, and transformation. This RAP will reinforce our reform journey with measurable actions, accountable timelines, and build deepened relationships between #TeamDEWR and First Nations peoples. Together with our Closing the Gap Strategy, it forms our comprehensive commitment to the systemic and structural change that reconciliation demands.

I call on every member of #TeamDEWR to play your part in the concrete actions in this plan, as we work together to close the gap and deliver positive outcomes for Australia's First Nations people.



**Natalie James**  
Secretary

# Message from our Champions

We are pleased to support the department's *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan* December 2025–December 2027. This RAP demonstrates our ongoing commitment to reconciliation which underpins our dedication and priority reform actions under the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*.

We are proud of the efforts of Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAP Working Group) and commend them for embodying the essence of reconciliation through their collaborative approach to developing and co-designing a meaningful and impactful RAP.

We are paving the path to reconciliation by building strong foundations that foster social justice, equity and inclusion for all Australians. Over the next two years, our actions and initiatives will further strengthen our relationships with First Nations peoples, communities and organisations.

Our RAP embeds reconciliation into our daily work. Through meaningful relationships, respect, opportunities and collaboration, we will continue to foster and achieve our purpose of supporting people to have safe, secure and well-paid work with the skills for a sustainable future.

We believe that reconciliation is not just a destination. It is an ongoing journey requiring collective effort and shared commitment from all of us to make meaningful and lasting change. Join our journey and stand with us as we champion and recognise the importance of reconciliation in building stronger and more harmonious relationships for generations to come.



**Jason Stott**  
**Reconciliation Champion**  
First Assistant Secretary  
Pacific Labour Operations



**Alistair Beasley**  
**First Nations Champion**  
Assistant Secretary  
Office of the Chief Economist

# Our vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for a reconciled Australia is for workplaces and communities where First Nations peoples have autonomy, choice and prosperity through meaningful employment, career progression and socio-economic empowerment. We ensure that respect for First Nations communities and cultures is embedded in workplaces, fostering more inclusive opportunities, and celebrating over 65,000 years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge, histories, and their ongoing connection to land, waters, skies and communities.

We see our vision being achieved through:



safeguarding the rights, opportunities and working conditions that help all Australians thrive



achieving greater economic and social inclusion by delivering initiatives to upskill and train First Nations peoples



delivering employment programs and services



aligning the needs of employers and industry with the aspirations of First Nations peoples



setting the standard as a model employer who engages, embraces and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and practices.

We recognise the importance of truth-telling as an important starting point in the pursuit of reconciliation and self-determination for First Nations peoples and the foundation for our *Innovate* RAP.

# The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is a federal government department. We operate under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, which establishes Australia's minimum employment standards to ensure safe, secure and fair work conditions. Our core business includes fostering a productive and competitive labour market, facilitating job growth, stewardship of Australia's skills system, and delivering workplace relations reforms.

Secure jobs are vital for our nation to prosper—driving future economic growth and providing people with certainty. During fast-paced social, economic and global changes, we focus on equipping Australians who are starting, advancing or changing their careers with the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to secure employment.

Our skills and training programs help people develop the skills they need for the jobs of today, tomorrow and beyond to drive productivity and economic prosperity. We work with stakeholders to build strong sustainable skills and training systems to enable Australians to skill and reskill in response to changing technologies and workforce needs.

We deliver and support national policies and programs that help Australians find and keep a job, change jobs or generate their own income through self-employment. We foster a productive and competitive labour market by helping people into secure work and increasing workforce participation.

Our work helps protect workers' entitlements and supports local, safe and secure employment underpinned by a safety net of minimum terms and conditions, pay and workplace rights and responsibilities that engender confidence in both employers and employees. Our policies and programs promote fair, productive and safe workplaces.

We are committed to implementing the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, working in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to foster self-determination and help build and sustain economic prosperity for First Nations peoples.

We administer policies and programs that directly impact on 7 of the 17 outcome areas of the National Agreement ensuring systemic and structural transformation as part of our commitment to Closing the Gap Priority Reforms—including Priority Reform Three which focuses on transforming government organisations. Through the guiding principles of 'engage, embrace and evolve', we help to overcome the inequality faced by First Nations peoples. Through training, and safe and secure employment outcomes, we are reforming the way we support First Nations self-determination.

Our workforce is nationally dispersed with offices and staff located in every state and territory, both in metropolitan and regional areas. We have staff working remotely and internationally. As of 30 June 2025, DEWR employed 4,454 Australian Public Servants, with 113 people (or 2.5 per cent) identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. 52 per cent of our First Nations staff work outside the ACT. Across our geographical footprint, we aim to tread lightly and engage respectfully with First Nations peoples and Countries where we live, work and play.



## Our workforce

EMPLOYEES  
IN AUSTRALIA

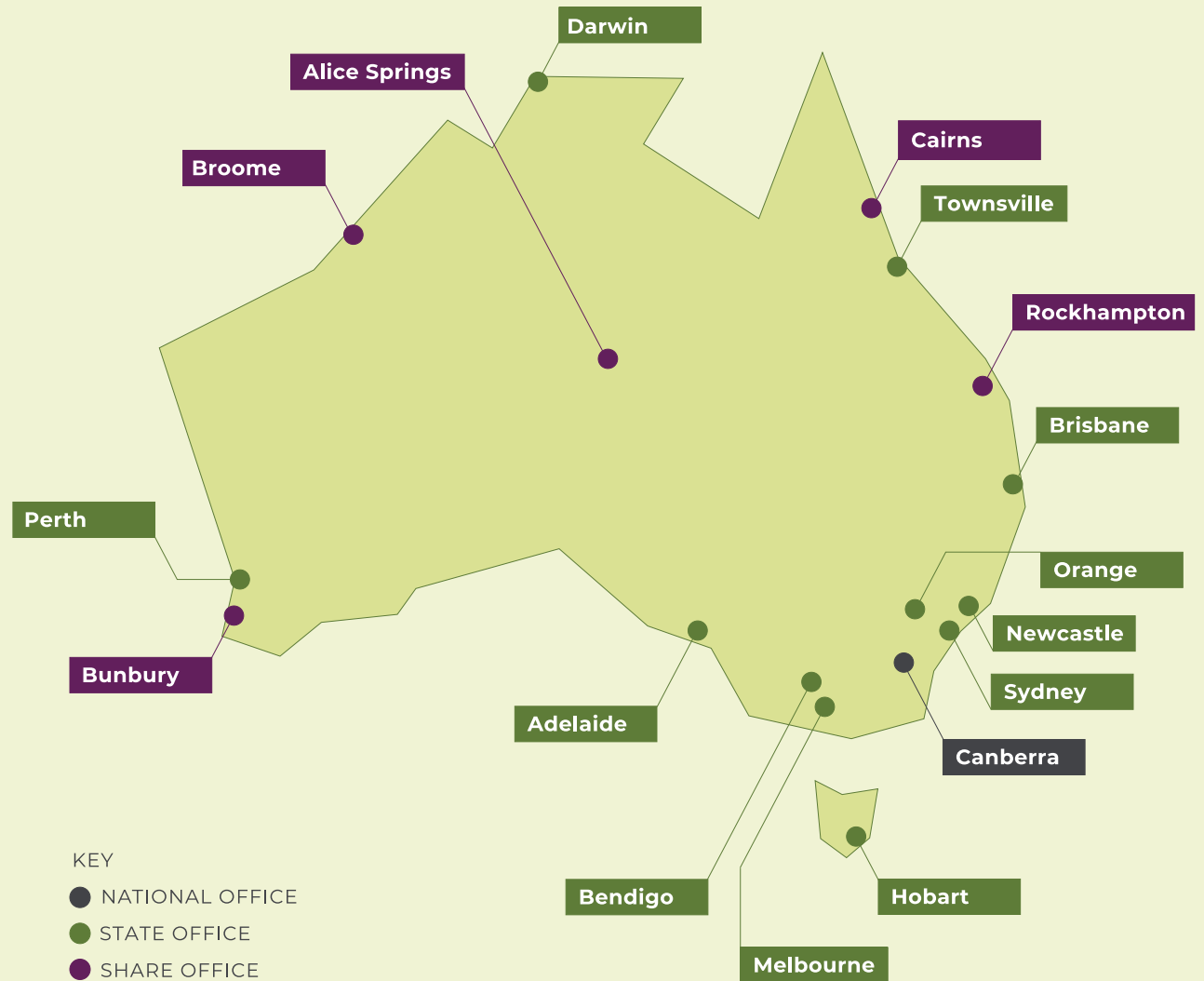
4,454

FIRST NATION  
EMPLOYEES

113

FIRST NATIONS  
EMPLOYEES

52% OUTSIDE  
ACT



# Our Reconciliation Action Plan

This is our first Reconciliation Action Plan as the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. We have chosen to develop an *Innovate* RAP as we have matured programs and policies that deliver socio-economic, education and employment outcomes for First Nations peoples and communities.

We recognise that there is still more work to be done, and this RAP represents our commitment to deepening our impact and driving change. Through this RAP, our actions will achieve meaningful progress towards reconciliation and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This RAP focuses on strengthening relationships with First Nations peoples, including through the programs and services we administer for individuals; promoting reconciliation and positive cultural relations; being culturally responsive; and supporting and growing our First Nations workforce.

Jason Stott, First Assistant Secretary, Pacific Labour Operations, is our RAP Champion and will lead advocacy for the RAP both within the department and externally.

## Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group

We established a RAP Working Group to co-design the development of this RAP and it comprised members of staff from across the country, at various classifications and included both Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees.

The department extends its gratitude to the members of our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group for their contributions.

- Jason Stott (Chair), First Assistant Secretary (FAS)
- Aaron Russell, Advisor
- Alistair Beasley, Assistant Secretary
- Angelique Davis, Indigenous Liaison Officer
- Caitlin Hanvey, Assistant Director
- Carmel Geier, Program Officer
- Carmen Mendel, Assistant Director
- Connor Crouch, Program Officer
- Cris Castro, Assistant Secretary
- Daniel Conte, Economist

- Dianne Clare, Senior Delivery and Engagement Officer
- Helen Gladman, Assistant Director
- Jan Lewis, Assistant Director
- Jane Stoddart, Assistant Director
- Janine Culnane, Senior Program Delivery Officer
- Jessica Farmer, Assistant Director
- Jo Verden, State Manager
- Kelly Drury, Assistant Director
- Lynn Rackley, Diversity and Inclusion Officer
- Macarena Ortega, Delivery and Engagement Officer
- Mark Gradidge, Employment Services Officer
- Martin Spindler, Assistant Director
- Mary Cripps, Assistant Director
- Melanie Harwood, Assistant Director
- Michelle Reid, Senior Compliance Officer
- Paul Tily, Corporate Support Officer
- Polly Kretschmer, Indigenous Liaison Officer
- Vicky Xirakis, Assistant Director
- Ying-Cheng Chang, Evaluation and Data Analyst

With the support of our RAP Working Group members, a RAP Implementation Oversight Committee has been established to oversee the full implementation of our deliverables and actions as detailed throughout this RAP. Our RAP Implementation Group comprises both Indigenous and non-Indigenous representatives from across the department and is proudly sponsored by our Reconciliation Champion.

As part of our vision for the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, we are committed to embracing First Nations perspectives and expertise. This includes supporting strategic alignment across initiatives that contribute to the Closing the Gap and ensuring our internal and external policies and programs reflect this commitment—including through the implementation of this RAP.

Our RAP is set against the three pillars of:

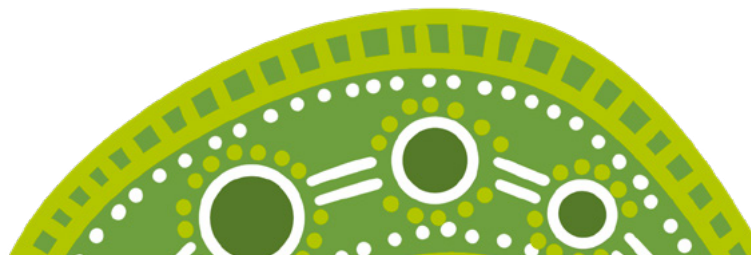
- Relationships, as these lie at the heart of reconciliation between the broader Australian community and First Nations peoples.
- Respect, which acknowledges that ongoing cultural learning increases understanding of and support for truth-telling over time.
- Opportunities, recognising that First Nations peoples' equal and equitable participation in a range of life opportunities is crucial to reconciliation.

The deliverables will be action orientated and measurable, underpinned with commitment to accountability and integrity.

This RAP, developed under Reconciliation Australia's RAP Framework, supports the department's broader commitments, including elements of the department's *Closing the Gap Strategy 2024–2027* which will deliver, through partnerships with First Nations peoples, positive socio-economic, education and employment outcomes. DEWR contributes to 7 of the 17 socio-economic outcomes of the National Agreement which are:

- **Outcome 5:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full potential.
- **Outcome 6:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students reach their full potential through further education pathways.
- **Outcome 7:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth are engaged in employment or education.
- **Outcome 8:** Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- **Outcome 10:** Adults are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.
- **Outcome 11:** Young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.
- **Outcome 14:** People enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing.

Both the RAP and the Closing the Gap Strategy represent comprehensive approaches to advancing reconciliation. The RAP establishes a structured framework that guides reconciliation efforts not only within the organisation but also across its broader sphere of influence, including stakeholders, partners, clients, and the wider community. Concurrently, the Closing the Gap Strategy reinforces national accountability. Together, these aligned initiatives ensure that our reconciliation efforts are consistent with national priorities and contribute to enduring, meaningful change for First Nations peoples.



## Walking Together: RAP Working Group members reflecting on our RAP journey and commitment



“I’m a proud Māori man from New Zealand who has spent most of my life on Wangan and Gayiri Land. My involvement with our RAP Working Group was driven by the feeling that I can help make genuine change happen within government. I take great pride in the work we do and hope our RAP sets a new benchmark for the Australian Public Service to follow. My experience with the RAP Working Group gives me hope that real change will happen.”

– Paul

**Image:** RAP Working Group Members: (left to right) Paul, Macarena, Janine, Polly, Dianne and Jessica





“Representing our Northern Territory State Office, I feel privileged to have worked with our RAP Working Group. As a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse person living on Larrakia Country, I have shared my insights through my own personal experiences. This collaborative experience demonstrates true stewardship, as it is in our own day-to-day actions that we can make real change.”

– **Macarena**

“As a proud Kurna woman, I believe genuine reconciliation begins with meaningful consultation with our community and Elders – ‘nothing about us without us’. It creates safe spaces where we feel heard, valued and respected through truth-telling and deep listening. Reconciliation requires strong leadership at all levels of government and financial commitment to ensure RAP targets are met, and our mob have increased access to culturally safe employment pathways in the APS.”

– **Polly**

“Working with the RAP Working Group leaves me hopeful for positive change, as I know that with good people and genuine willingness we will achieve change, understanding, openness and collaboration.”

– **Dianne**

“I’m grateful to have worked alongside my colleagues to bring together our RAP. We’re a passionate group with a shared focus on driving reconciliation within our department and broader communities. Our efforts will help achieve reconciliation, acknowledge our shared histories and embrace a collective responsibility.”

– **Jessica**

“I believe reconciliation is everyone’s business. I acknowledge my own learnings and the work I need to do. My experience working on our RAP immersed me in opportunities of connection for positive change, which led me to further my learnings with the Jawun Secondment Program in Northeast Arnhem Land.”

– **Janine**

# Experiencing the Jawun Secondment Program

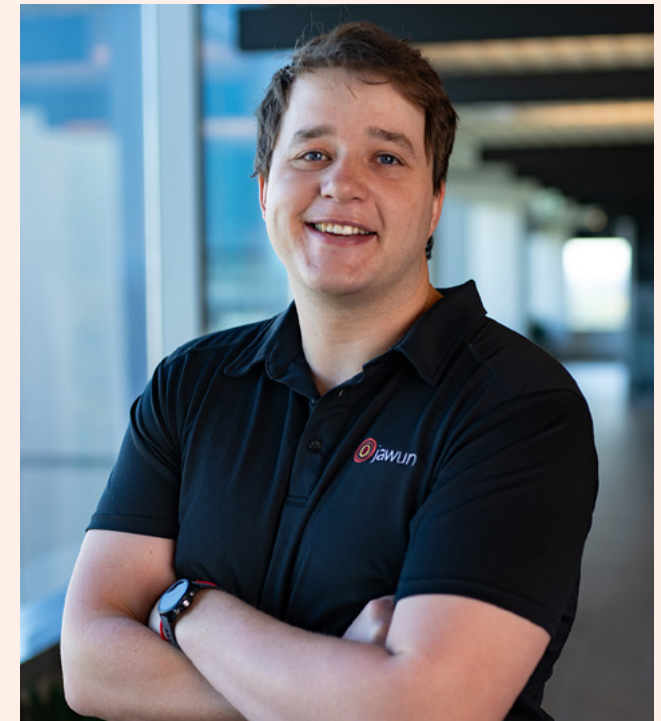
The Jawun Secondment Program connects skilled staff from government and corporate organisations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to support locally driven projects and deliver socio-economic outcomes. Our department supports the program by releasing team members on short-term secondments, where they contribute their expertise while learning from community leaders. This helps build stronger relationships, supports community goals, and gives staff valuable cultural understanding and leadership experience.

## Tyler's Jawun story

My name is Tyler Hesketh. I work in the Place-based Delivery and Data Access Team in the First Nations and Inclusion Branch. In 2024, I was extremely fortunate to be selected on the Round 3 Jawun Secondment to the Goulburn-Murray region in Victoria. The Goulburn-Murray region is the traditional land of the Yorta Yorta people and is one of the twelve regions where the Jawun partnership model operates across Australia.

For my secondment, I was assigned to Njernda Aboriginal Corporation in Echuca, Victoria. Njernda is a community-controlled organisation that delivers holistic services and programs aimed at enhancing the physical, emotional, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of the Aboriginal community and surrounding areas. My main assignment was to complete an Organisational Health Check to understand the current operating environment of Njernda, providing a base for thinking and talking about Njernda's organisational health, helping to identify areas of strength, future focus and development. I consulted with Senior Leadership across all of the main business areas within Njernda to understand their perspective and beliefs, and to create meaningful activities that support their goals. This culminated in a presentation to the CEO of Njernda, which guided further discussions on business initiatives and helped embed the importance of evaluation and monitoring practices within the organisation.

This was one of the most enriching experiences of my career, deepening my appreciation of Aboriginal culture and the power of connection—both to Country and to people—while challenging my thinking, pushing me beyond my comfort zone, and reinforcing that meaningful relationships and impact are what truly endure.



**Image:** Tyler Hesketh, Senior Project Officer, Central Australia Training Hubs

## Deborah's Jawun Executive Visit

Living and working on Gadigal Land, a Jawun Executive Visit on my back doorstep in Inner Sydney, was the perfect opportunity to start to understand better, the history of the place I now call home. This immersive experience offered a powerful opportunity to connect with First Nations leaders and organisations, and to deepen my understanding of their enduring cultural significance and community impact.

Engaging directly with First Nations organisations in Redfern and La Perouse I listened to leaders speak with strength and honesty about the challenges their communities face. Their stories highlighted the resilience, wisdom, and leadership that continue to drive healing and positive change for future generations.

What resonated most was the emphasis on empowerment, not just for today, but for future generations. The importance of educational and employment opportunities in these communities was clear. These conversations were deeply moving and reinforced the importance of walking alongside First Nations peoples in genuine partnership.

At DEWR, we remain committed to supporting First Nations-led change. Our ongoing engagement with Jawun reflects our dedication to reconciliation and to amplifying First Nations voices. We continue to encourage our Senior Executive to participate in on-Country experiences, recognising that these moments of connection are essential to understanding our shared history and strengthening relationships with First Nations organisations and communities.



**Image:** Deborah Jenkins, Deputy Secretary Corporate and Enabling Services, Chief Operating Officer

# Celebrating NAIDOC Week through sport and culture

Each year, as part of our NAIDOC Week celebrations, we proudly participate in the NAIDOC Week Australian Public Service Touch Football Carnivals held in the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia. These events bring together Australian Government agencies to celebrate culture, foster connection, and strengthen community through friendly and spirited competition.

In 2025, both our National and South Australia offices teamed up with the Department of Education, competing with enthusiasm and pride – reflecting the values of respect, unity, and reconciliation. This annual event continues to highlight the importance of cultural visibility and inclusion and demonstrates how sport can bring people together in celebration of shared purpose, common goals, and progress.

Beyond the competition, the carnival was a meaningful opportunity to showcase our commitment to reconciliation. Our two teams proudly wore jerseys featuring the artwork from our Reconciliation Action Plan – an inspiring design that reminds us of our purpose and the journey we're on together.



Images: #TeamDEWR NAIDOC Week Touch Football Carnival Players from both the ACT (top) and SA Office (bottom)

# Case study – On-Country learning: Expanding access to vocational training in remote communities



## Empowering communities: Supporting reconciliation through place-based education and employment pathways

Through the Remote Training Hubs Network, the department is working in partnership with First Nations peoples to improve access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) in remote Central Australia. This initiative responds directly to community-identified barriers to participation in training, including cultural obligations, caring responsibilities, and the inability to travel long distances.

In 2024, as part of the Government's *A Better, Safer Future for Central Australia* plan, \$30.2 million was committed over five years to establish up to seven Remote Training Hubs across Central Australia. These Hubs are being developed in partnership with the National Indigenous Australians Agency, the Northern Territory Government, and First Nations peoples. Locations include Yuendumu, Ntaria (Hermannsburg), Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa), Atitjere (Harts Range), Papunya, Ti Tree, and Mutitjulu.

To further enhance the reach and flexibility of On-Country learning, the department awarded a \$3 million grant to Desert Peoples Centre Inc. (DPC) to deliver four custom-built Mobile Training Units (MTUs). These MTUs are designed to deliver industry-standard training in carpentry, conservation and ecosystem management, hospitality (cookery), and resource and infrastructure — directly within remote communities.

The Remote Training Hubs Network supports the department's reconciliation efforts by embedding First Nations voices in the design and delivery of training solutions. It also aligns with the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, particularly in relation to Priority Reform 1 (Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making) and socio-economic outcome areas such as education, employment, and economic participation.

By enabling access to culturally responsive, place-based training, the Hubs and MTUs foster local capacity, strengthen community ties, and create pathways to meaningful employment. This initiative reflects the department's commitment to co-design, equity, and long-term investment in First Nations-led solutions.

# Case study – Reconnection, Employment and Learning Program



## Designing Indigenous-led services to improve outcomes for First Nations peoples exiting the justice system

The Reconnection, Employment and Learning (REAL) Program helps improve the economic security of First Nations peoples transitioning out of the justice system and reestablishing themselves in the community.

This voluntary program builds on community feedback to offer support and mentoring services up to 6 months pre-release and 12 months post-release, which helps participants to prepare for work, learning and connects them to community, Country, health, housing and other social services.


The program was developed through extensive consultations with First Nations communities and stakeholders, including:

- First Nations peoples and leaders
- Service providers
- Community leaders
- Government agencies
- People with lived experience

This collaborative approach demonstrates DEWR's commitment to working in partnership with First Nations communities to design solutions that genuinely reflect the experiences and insights of those it aims to serve. The feedback received during these consultations was instrumental in shaping the program, allowing it to be tailored to the specific needs of participants.

### Consultations:

In 2023, the department published a discussion paper and received 39 responses from stakeholders. Departmental staff consulted with First Nations peoples, people with lived experience of the justice system, community leaders, state and territory governments and organisations, including visits to prisons to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the gaps and support required to improve outcomes.



In 2024, the department sought stakeholder feedback on the REAL Program design, to ensure it was fit-for-purpose. This consultation included a public discussion paper, visits to places that were earmarked for the initial rollout of the new program, and online sessions with First Nations representative organisations, providers and Aboriginal legal services. These conversations helped refine the program's policy design.

In March 2025, the draft Grant Opportunity Guidelines were released for stakeholder feedback, resulting in 26 submissions. This continuing level of engagement on the program shows strong stakeholder interest in the program's success. The feedback influenced the final development of the REAL Program grant opportunity and program delivery.

The REAL Program builds on the Australian Government's commitment to the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* and the recently signed First Nations Economic Partnership through:

- establishing a service to provide mentoring and support to First Nations peoples exiting the justice system (Targets 7, 8, 10, 11 and 14).

- building the capacity of the community-controlled sector and co-designing policies with First Nations peoples when it impacts them (Priority Reforms 1 and 2).
- leveraging the First Nations Economic Partnership to strengthen co-design and economic participation.

This program is a part of the department's reconciliation journey, building stronger relationships with First Nations peoples, by taking meaningful action that incorporates the voices of the people most impacted by this program. The department's commitment to extensive stakeholder engagement will underpin future policy work and contribute to our reconciliation efforts.

# Case study – Indigenous Apprenticeships Program



## Creating meaningful employment opportunities in the Australian Public Service for First Nations peoples

The Indigenous Apprenticeships Program (IAP), coordinated by Services Australia, has provided a pathway for over 2,000 First Nations peoples to begin their career in the Australian Public Service (APS). We are a proud participant in the program, supporting stable, secure and permanent employment opportunities that help build capability and long-term careers for First Nations peoples within the APS.

In 2024 we welcomed Troy Kuiper through the IAP. Joining as a Project Support Officer, Troy balanced full-time work while studying towards a nationally recognised Diploma of Government, gaining valuable skills and experience to support his career in the public service.

Now having completed the program, Troy reflects on his time as an apprentice and shared that it afforded him with the opportunity to grow as a public servant and overcome challenges.

“The IAP has set a great example and provided inspiration for my family, including those back on Country and the people I meet in my local community,” Troy said.

More recently, Troy was a recipient of a Secretary's Award for demonstrating strong leadership among First Nations colleagues in particular trusting, empowering and growing others.

“It was an incredible honour to receive this award and I am thankful for the support I have received since joining the department. I look forward to making a positive impact and being a positive role model for other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,” said Troy.



**Image:** Troy Kuiper receiving a Secretary's Award with Department Secretary, Natalie James

# Case study – Yarrabah Employment Services

## Co-designing innovative approaches to advancing positive socio-economic, education and employment for First Nations peoples

The Yarrabah Employment Service, co-developed by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council, is a community-led initiative tailored to the Yarrabah region. It delivers culturally appropriate employment services that support self-determination and align with the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*. By prioritising consultation and collaboration, the program embodies reconciliation—recognising and enabling the unique rights and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Launched as a pilot in 2018 and formally contracted from 2022 to 2027, the service was co-designed with Traditional Owners to promote economic participation through consultation and collaboration.

Wugu Nyambil, the local First Nations employment provider, offers job readiness training, mentoring, and work experience. It has partnered with the Queensland Government to establish the Business Accelerator and Innovation Hub and the Yarrabah Innovation and Digital Centre, enhancing digital skills and job opportunities.

A place-based servicing arrangement is currently being trialled in Broome which recognises the unique local context and needs of the community. Broome Employment Services launched in 2023 and was extended to 2027, to allow sufficient time for the trial to be fully evaluated and for consultations to occur on the ground with people directly impacted by this service, to inform a future model.

This pilot was developed utilising several aspects of the Yarrabah Employment Service, but with a view to the local Broome environment. A key new feature of this arrangement involves public servants working alongside the First Nations provider to boost its organisational capacity to improve services and employment outcomes for participants by:

- Establishing a more streamlined pathway towards secure work, including supporting people to navigate the complex services landscape.
- Strengthening service delivery and community trust through local stakeholder engagement and coordination, such as working with Broome Prison and Community Justice to support continuity of services pre and post release.

The department will engage and work with the Broome community throughout the trial, ensuring the service evolves and remains grounded in the principles of reconciliation and community empowerment.

# Case study – Indigenous Business is Everyone’s Business Committee: The First Nations Meet the Employer Forum, South Australia

## Empowering First Nations employment and bridging gaps through cultural capability uplift

**Cultural capability is a life-long learning process. Our Indigenous Business is Everyone’s Business (IBEB) Committee was established across our South Australian offices to uplift our collective cultural capability at a local level by driving awareness, understanding, inclusion and systemic change.**

The IBEB Committee advances reconciliation by increasing the awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, building collective cultural capability, delivering events, supporting meaningful and stakeholder-informed policy development, and recognising and celebrating the contributions of First Nations peoples.

In 2023, the Committee delivered the inaugural ‘First Nations Meet the Employer Forum’ – this landmark event was the first of its kind hosted by the department in Australia, connecting First Nations job seekers with employers in a culturally safe and collaborative environment.

Prior to the forum, committee members worked collaboratively with metropolitan Employment Facilitators, Support Officers and Employment Service Providers to co-design a culturally informed and safe event, addressing perceived and real barriers to employment and supporting the requirements of First Nations job seekers.

The Employment Service Providers helped the job seekers prepare their resumes, identify job roles and the employers they were interested in, and consider the questions they might want to ask to support their conversations with potential employers – enabling them to get the most from the event. Employers were approached to discuss the arrangements they had in place to support cultural safety and capability development including their broader workplace inclusion agendas, Reconciliation Action Plans and diversity programs – ensuring that they understood what First Nations employees often look for in an employer.

The forum commenced with a Welcome to Country from a Kurna Elder and a panel of First Nations professionals who shared their career journeys and established the platform for culturally respectful and meaningful conversations between the employers and job seekers.



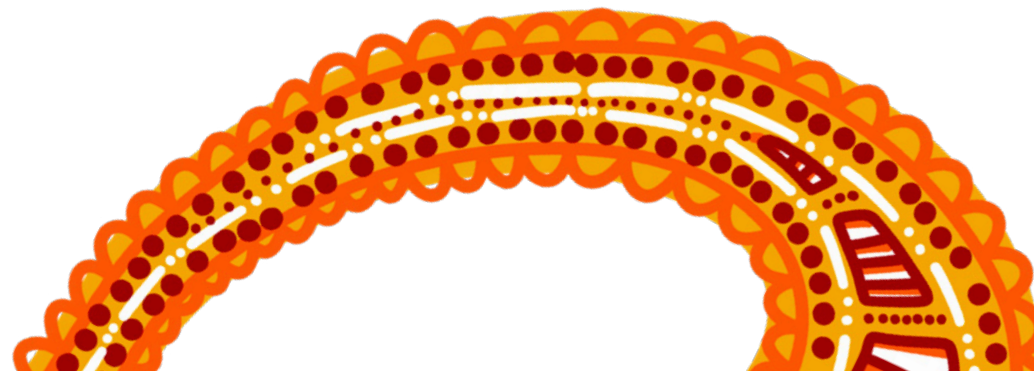
Approximately 100 participants attended the forum, visiting the booths of 34 employers who were showcasing over 400 job roles between them. Participants were able to network, discuss their careers and interests, and confidently share their resumes directly with their employers of choice.

The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive with many highlighting the diversity of employers and the forum's strong sense of inclusion and cultural respect – exemplifying how culturally responsive initiatives can contribute meaningfully to bridging employment gaps and fostering inclusive workplaces.

A second 'First Nations Meet the Employer Forum' was held in 2024. Following on from the success of both forums, the IBEB Committee is continuing to drive purpose-led action and are now considering plans to expand the forum to regional areas across South Australia.



**Image:** First Nations Meet-the-Employer team members: top row, left to right – Angelina Manera, Kerry Bray, Carly MacGregor, Edwina Spanos, Tricia Hennessy, Tracey Brealey, Polly Kretschmer, Alan Sibbons. Middle – Kerrie Kartambis. Bottom row, left to right – Danielle Dowdell, Daisy Chavez and Jody Siyi Liu



# Case study – Murra Program: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander career pathways through university partnerships

## Creating connections: Supporting pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into Australian Public Service careers

The Murra Program is a pilot initiative designed to create meaningful pathways into the Australian Public Service (APS) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Launched in December 2024, the program reflects the department's commitment to reconciliation and aligns with the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, particularly Priority Reforms 1 (Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making) and 3 (Transforming Government Organisations).

The program is currently delivered in partnership with the Tjabal Centre at the Australian National University (ANU) and the Ngunnawal Centre at the University of Canberra. Personal outreach is led by department staff at informal social events held in collaboration with the student centres. This format helps to introduce students to the program in familiar and welcoming environments.

The program's person-centred approach is the product of feedback from participating students and involves recruitment tailored to individual interests and abilities, streamlined onboarding, and creating opportunities for students to build connections across the department. Students are offered a choice of flexible, non-ongoing roles selected to complement their study commitments, with candidates meeting potential host teams upfront to discuss placements. Additional supports include mentorship from the department's First Nations Employee Network, monthly yarning circles for students to connect in a culturally safe

environment, manager toolkits developed with student feedback, and sessions designed to build APS career skills.

Two ANU students commenced placements in December 2024, providing valuable feedback about their experiences of the program that informed future recruitment and support strategies. In March 2025, department staff met with students at the Tjabal Centre for an informal barbeque, further strengthening engagement and interest in the program, after which a further eight students joined the program. Amy, a current student in the program, commented that "When the team visited our university I was drawn to how enthusiastic and authentic the team was. Though I was sceptical the attitude would change after onboarding, the program team has only ever been supportive of my journey as a student and appreciate my input in all aspects of the program. My experience has been life changing for my personal confidence



## Case study – Commonwealth Indigenous Procurement Policy

### Advancing First Nations supplier diversity

and career considerations. The program is a tangible and genuine measure and a true demonstration of commitment to Reconciliation and Closing the Gap”.

In August 2025 the program held a second engagement event at the Tjabal Centre and formed a second University partnership with the Ngunnawal Centre, hosting a barbeque to meet with their students.

Twenty-eight business areas across DEWR have nominated to participate in the program, demonstrating the potential for it to expand. The initiative not only contributes to the department’s Closing the Gap Strategy by supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, but also provides opportunities for DEWR staff to develop long-term relationships and increase their cultural knowledge and literacy. Riley, a former student’s supervisor, reflected that “The learning and development flowed both ways. My understanding and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander culture, and the challenges that need to be addressed, grew from my conversations with our student intern. I’m so grateful for her openness in sharing her experiences”.

By embedding lived experience and diverse perspectives into policy and program design, the program contributes to more effective government and a stronger democracy. It exemplifies DEWR’s commitment to reconciliation and building an inclusive public service that reflects the communities it serves. Lilli, another student in the program, found that “The Murra program quashed my worries about access to job opportunities. This program has not only provided me with employment and a source of income, but also valuable work experience and skills. Everyone in my team and across the department has been so welcoming and is always willing to chat or offer advice. Anything I want to try or gain more experience in, the program has helped facilitate for me to get the most out of it”.

**In 2023–24, we contributed to First Nations supplier diversity by establishing 242 contracts with First Nations businesses. The total contract value was \$28.49m. This exceeded the target of 66 contracts that financial year<sup>1</sup>.**

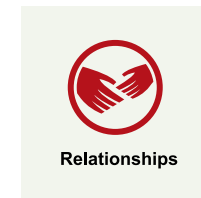
As of 31 December 2024, we have established 76 contracts, with a total contract value of \$49.16m, with First Nations businesses and are expected to exceed our targets for financial year 2024–25.

Our department is committed to growing our commercial relationships with First Nations businesses ensuring viability and economic prosperity well into the future.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Annual Report 2023–24, p. 77.

# Relationships

We recognise and value the knowledge and expertise held by First Nations peoples and organisations. We empower our workforce to build meaningful relationships with First Nations communities, peoples and organisations to inform new ways of working in partnership. We will develop and harness knowledge and expertise to improve all stages of our programs and services, from conception through to evaluation, ensuring we can contribute towards meeting the social and economic needs and expectations of First Nations peoples.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	1.1 Work with First Nations stakeholders wherever we conduct business to develop local First Nations engagement protocols which support and encourage regular engagement.	December 2027	<p><b>Leads:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia Provider Support</li> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy</li> </ul> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Managers</li> <li>• Assistant Secretary, Closing the Gap</li> <li>• Assistant Secretary, Activities and Experience</li> <li>• Co-Chairs, First Nations Employee Network</li> </ul>
	1.2 Implement, promote and monitor the use of local engagement plans with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	July 2026	<p><b>Leads:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia Provider Support</li> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy</li> </ul> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Managers</li> <li>• Assistant Secretary, Closing the Gap</li> <li>• Assistant Secretary, First Nations and Inclusion</li> </ul>
	1.3 Work with First Nations organisations and peak bodies to establish mutually beneficial secondment programs for all levels of our staff (in addition to Jawun).	December 2026	<p><b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division</p> <p><b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia Provider Support</p>

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	2.1 Organise at least one NRW event each year and register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2026 May 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Chairs, First Nations Employee Network</li> <li>• First Nations Co-Champions</li> </ul>
	2.2 Circulate and promote Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources, reconciliation materials and activities to our staff and external stakeholders.	May 2026 May 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	2.3 Our Senior Executive Officers and members of RAP governance forums, including the RAP Working Group, to participate, advocate and promote participation by all staff in NRW events (internal and external), including using business plans and performance agreements.	May 2026 May 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations Co-Champions</li> <li>• Chair, RAP Working Group</li> <li>• All SES Officers</li> </ul>
	2.4 Commit funding for annual hybrid face-to-face/online NRW programs of events across all our sites, with a focus on educating staff on our shared histories and engaging with local culture.	May 2026 May 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	3.1	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation and nurturing prosperous relationships with First Nations peoples and communities through our Corporate Plan, line area business plans, and individual performance agreements.	June 2027 <b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy
	3.2	Demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation publicly, including through digital platforms, branding and physical mediums (e.g. banners), including within our buildings.	June 2026 <b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, Activities and Experience
	3.3	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders (for example industry associations, portfolio agencies, contracted organisations and other partners) to drive reconciliation outcomes and advocate new ways to add value and benefit for all stakeholders.	November 2027 <b>Lead:</b> Assistant Secretary, PALM Delivery Branch <b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia Provider Support Division
	3.4	Collaborate with organisations (for example relevant industry sectors or associations, portfolio agencies, contracted organisations, RAP organisations, partners and other stakeholders) to co-design innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	November 2027 <b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Evaluation and Assurance Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy</li> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia Provider Support</li> </ul>

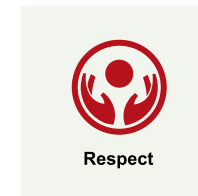
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	3.5 Publicly acknowledge our portfolios' shared histories with First Nations peoples (truth-telling).	October 2026	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, Closing the Gap
	3.6 Promote the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme to Senior Executive Service Band 2 officers and above and set a target of up to four DEWR nominations per year to participate in training, for the life of the redress scheme.	June 2026 June 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, Closing the Gap
	3.7 Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	May 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	3.8 Promote and encourage First Nations allyship with visual merchandise to support employees to reach out to a First Nations ally when required or in need of local support.	July 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	3.9 Work with the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) to develop a formalised program of allyship and implement within first year of RAP.	October 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	4.1	Engage external First Nations experts, ensuring the procurement process is inclusive of certified vendors on Supply Nation, to conduct a review of HR policies and procedures in consultation with First Nations and other staff to identify and eliminate institutional racism.	January 2026 First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	4.2	Continue to enhance, promote and monitor our “Managing Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy” to drive the elimination of bullying, harassment and discrimination.	March 2026 First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	4.3	Establish cultural safety standards for our staff and conduct an annual cultural safety health check, identifying specific areas for action.	June 2026 June 2027 <b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, PALM Performance Branch
	4.4	Educate senior leaders and other staff on the effects of racism, including through unconscious bias training, and openly share examples of racism that occur daily within the Australian community.	September 2026 <b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, PALM Performance Branch
	4.5	Implement processes to ensure all new and updated policies, guidelines and contractual documents (internal and external) are independently assessed for institutional racism; support the objectives of the <i>National Agreement on Closing the Gap</i> ; and do not contravene the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).	May 2027 <b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Legal and Assurance Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division</li> <li>• First Assistant Secretary, Finance and Budget Division</li> </ul>

# Respect

We are committed to fostering and embedding a workplace culture grounded in respect, understanding and appreciation for First Nations peoples' cultures, sovereignty, histories and rights. Through active engagement, learning, sharing and celebration, we strive to create a supportive, respectful and inclusive environment that values diversity and promotes reconciliation. We embed reconciliation initiatives in our organisational framework and ensure First Nations perspectives are considered and reflected in all facets of our work. Together, we strive to empower representation, reconciliation and contribute to an equitable future of mutual respect and understanding.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</b>	5.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	June 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	5.2 Consult Traditional Owners and/or First Nations advisors to inform a Cultural Capability Development Plan.	June 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	5.3 Develop, implement, communicate and regularly review a cultural learning action plan for all staff.	June 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	5.4 Introduce progressive cultural learning offerings for all staff, including face-to-face training sessions with local First Nations providers in addition to our existing online training – mandated reporting will apply to employees at the APS 6 classification and above.	November 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	5.5 Develop and implement a First Nations Employment Manager Guide which includes building capability to provide culturally safe workspaces.	August 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

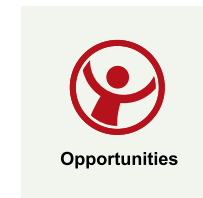
## Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	6.1 Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols.	February 2026	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy
	6.2 Develop, implement and communicate cultural protocols, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, in partnership with local Traditional Owners.	November 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	6.3 Invite local Traditional Owners and Custodians to provide Welcome to Country or other ceremonies at significant events each year.	May 2026 May 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, PALM Operations Policy
	6.4 Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	February 2026	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy
	6.5 Publish a First Nations terminology style guide on the intranet to help staff when referring to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander words and cultures.	February 2026	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy
	6.6 Develop and implement a communications strategy to acknowledge historically significant dates and histories for First Nations peoples.	September 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	7.1 Review our HR policies, procedures and guidance to reduce barriers to staff participating in departmental NAIDOC Week events.	July 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	7.2 Promote and encourage staff to participate in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	July 2026 July 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy
	7.3 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event at least once per year over the life of this RAP.	July 2026 July 2027	Chair, RAP Working Group
	7.4 Develop and implement annual activities to support the celebration of NAIDOC Week. This includes creating and sharing culturally appropriate events with access to funding where necessary.	July 2026 July 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, PALM Operations Policy
	7.5 Recognise and celebrate the achievements of First Nations staff with the creation of a permanent intranet page.	May 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

# Opportunities

We recognise and value the extensive knowledge, skills and lived experiences that First Nations employees bring. We strive to ensure we are a culturally safe workplace for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. We will improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development opportunities. We commit to increasing the engagement of First Nations businesses to create mutually beneficial commercial and cultural relationships that build economic self-determination.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</b>	8.1 Build understanding of current First Nations staffing levels, skills and experiences to inform future employment and professional development opportunities, including through monthly reporting of First Nations staffing metrics.	June 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.2 Engage with First Nations staff in the development and implementation of a First Nations recruitment, retention and professional development strategy and action plan which incorporates and builds on the targets in the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.3 The department will increase its First Nations employee representation to 5% for Australian Public Service Level 4–6 officers.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communications Division
	8.4 Through the life of this RAP, the department will increase its First Nations Executive Level employee representation to 5%.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communications Division
	8.5 By December 2027, the department’s Senior Executive Service Officer cohort will be represented by 4% of First Nations employees.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communications Division

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	8.6 Work collaboratively with our portfolio agencies in progressing First Nations recruitment, development and retention initiatives.	October 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.7 Ensure managers, supervisors and First Nations employees are supported and encouraged to establish career development pathway plans to enable them to actively manage their careers.	August 2026 August 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Employment Strategy and Policy
	8.8 Develop and implement processes and guidance material to support business areas to conduct culturally appropriate and inclusive recruitment processes.	March 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.9 Develop clear requirements and processes for the use of an Affirmative Measure – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples recruitment.	March 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.10 Advertise job vacancies to First Nations stakeholders by creating tailored job packs with clear value propositions, advertising via First Nations job boards and targeted campaigns, listing only essential skills and qualifications.	June 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.11 Develop and maintain regular and effective marketing and engagement programs for our entry-level recruitment pathways.	April 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.12 Mandate cultural capability training for staff on interview panels, including unconscious bias training to recognise and value non-traditional career paths and the life experiences of candidates.	April 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

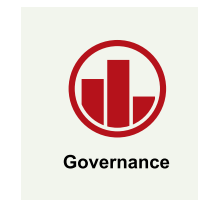
## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	8.13 Create a First Nations employee support and development resource tool/hub on the intranet.	March 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.14 Continue to support First Nations staff through the operation of the First Nations Employee Network (FNEN), including holding an annual face-to-face symposium, with participation valued as a core part of members' work duties.	October 2026 October 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.15 Supplement the exit interview process to anonymously capture and report upon the experiences of First Nations staff.	August 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	8.16 Establish Indigenous Liaison Officer (ILO) roles within each state and territory to build relationships, identify service delivery gaps and barriers, and provide cultural guidance at the local level. In addition, implement appropriate governance frameworks in collaboration with ILO's to build connections and ensure our commitments to First Nations peoples are actioned at the local level.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia Provider Support Division
	8.17 Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to First Nations participation in our workplace.	July 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	9.1 Maintain our membership and foster our relationship with Supply Nation as the preferred method to source goods and services from First Nations businesses.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, Finance and Budget Division
	9.2 Ensure the department complies with the Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) by aiming for a 4% target of contracts awarded to Indigenous businesses – surpassing the IPP’s 3% requirement – monitoring weekly progress through the IPP Reporting System, and regularly updating procurement guidance to reflect IPP obligations, including the Mandatory Set Aside policy.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, Finance and Budget Division
	9.3 Develop and share resources to help staff establish compliant commercial relationships and boost procurement from First Nations businesses by providing IPP training and guidance, promoting engagement with Indigenous suppliers, encouraging simpler and more accessible procurement processes, and facilitating ‘meet the supplier’ events.	December 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, Finance and Budget Division <b>Support:</b> Assistant Secretary, PALM Operations Division

# Governance

Strong governance embedded within the department’s Reconciliation Action Plan framework drives accountability and transparency leading to better leadership and decision-making outcomes. Effective governance arrangements ensure DEWR is sustaining, maintaining and embedding reconciliation outcomes that are meaningful and impactful.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group to drive governance of this RAP.</b>	10.1 Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group.	December 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations Co-Champions</li> <li>• RAP Working Group Secretariat</li> </ul>
	10.2 Establish and apply Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	December 2025	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	10.3 Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	December 2025 – December 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Secretary, PALM Operations Policy</li> <li>• First Nations Co-Champions</li> <li>• RAP Working Group Secretariat</li> </ul>
	10.4 Ensure all DEWR strategic decision-making bodies (Tier 1) <sup>2</sup> and mid-level governance committees (Tier 2) have First Nations representation in their membership, including external representation where necessary.	January 2026	First Assistant Secretary, Finance and Budget Division
	10.5 Establish relevant forums at State Offices to ensure RAP actions and deliverables remain a priority and implemented.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, Workforce Australia Provider Support Division

<sup>2</sup> Tier 1 committees are the department’s main strategic decision-making bodies with overall authority. Tier 2 committees are the department’s mid-level governance groups that support Tier 1 committees by focusing on specific areas and providing advice and recommendations.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</b>	11.1 Define the resource needs for RAP implementation.	January 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	11.2 Engage senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2025 December 2026 December 2027	Reconciliation Champion
	11.3 Establish formal internal reporting and/or sharing arrangements to ensure line areas are accountable for delivering RAP commitments.	February 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	11.4 Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	December 2025	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
<b>12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</b>	12.1 Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify our primary and secondary contact details are up to date.	June 2026 June 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	12.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link to the online RAP Impact Survey.	August 2026 August 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	12.3 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2026 September 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

## Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	12.4 Report RAP progress to all staff, including the First Nations Employee Network and senior leaders, quarterly.	2026: February, May, August and November  2027: February, May, August and November	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconciliation Champion</li> <li>• Assistant Secretary, PALM Operations Policy</li> </ul>
	12.5 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	July 2026 July 2027	<b>Lead:</b> First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division <b>Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Secretary, PALM Operations Policy</li> <li>• Reconciliation Champion</li> </ul>
	12.6 Participate in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	March 2026	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
	12.7 Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	December 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division
<b>13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</b>	13.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2027	First Assistant Secretary, People and Communication Division

# Glossary of Terms

<b>APS</b>	Australian Public Service	<b>IBEB</b>	Indigenous Business is Everyone's Business Committee	<b>RAP</b>	Reconciliation Action Plan
<b>APSC</b>	Australian Public Service Commission	<b>ILO</b>	Indigenous Liaison Officer	<b>RAP Working Group</b>	Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group
<b>DEWR</b>	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations	<b>IPP</b>	Indigenous Procurement Policy	<b>SES</b>	Senior Executive Service
<b>EL</b>	Executive Level	<b>NAIDOC</b>	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee	<b>TAFE</b>	Technical and Further Education
<b>FAS</b>	First Assistant Secretary	<b>NIAA</b>	National Indigenous Australians Agency	<b>UNDRIP</b>	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
<b>FNEN</b>	First Nations Employee Network	<b>NRW</b>	National Reconciliation Week		
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources	<b>RA</b>	Reconciliation Australia		
<b>IAP</b>	Indigenous Apprenticeships Program	<b>REAL</b>	Reconnection, Employment and Learning Program		



## Contact Details

For more information about the RAP please contact the Director, Diversity and Inclusion on 1300 488 064 or [diversity@dewr.gov.au](mailto:diversity@dewr.gov.au).