

Diversity Council Australia Ltd

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan January 2024 – January 2026



DIVERSITY
COUNCIL
AUSTRALIA



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE

DCA acknowledges the Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respect to them, and to Elders past, present and emerging and thank them for their ongoing custodianship of this land and community. This always was and always will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and seas.

Buranbaa Ngarran (New Dawn) by artist Kirsten Gray

The piece is bright and bold and speaks to the hope for the future between First Nations people and non-Indigenous Australians and amongst First Nations people themselves.

It shows many communities coming together from across the country to rally around justice for First Nations people. You can see this in the large pink circle on the left and all the different colours interacting with it. These represent all the diverse populations coming in to answer the call for a better Australia for us all. Important discussions are being had by and with First Nations people about Voice, Treaty, Truth, and beyond. It is a long and ongoing journey.

You can see a new day breaking in the background and community and Country flourishing in the right-hand side of this piece as these changes take hold.

This piece represents the hope around national conversations to change the Constitution through the Referendum and the long call for justice for First Nations people. It envisions the positive change that will flow from this, an act that will unite all Australians and provide the basis for substantive outcomes for First Nations people now and into the future.



Contents

Our Vision For Reconciliation	4
Our Role	4
Our Guiding Principles	4
Message from Lisa Annese	5
Message From Kate Russell	6
Message From Reconciliation Australia	7
Our Business	8
Our Reconciliation Action Plan	10
Our Reconciliation Journey	12
Relationships	18
Respect	21
Opportunities	25
Governance	28

Our Vision For Reconciliation

Diversity Council Australia supports Reconciliation Australia's vision of a just, equitable and reconciled country.

Our vision is an Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are central in any discussions around recognition and reconciliation; and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to workplaces across the country.

Our Role

Diversity Council Australia's (DCA's) role in achieving this vision is to support Australian organisations to develop their knowledge, capability and capacity so they are able to create inclusive workplaces that understand and respect the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories. DCA works with its members to support them in providing safe, welcoming and culturally competent environments for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to work in. DCA also collaborates and supports organisations who are starting out on their reconciliation journey, through providing education, resources and connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have experienced significant exclusion and racial injustices in Australian society for many years. We believe that ending that exclusion is foundational to diversity and inclusion, and must be a fundamental element of any workplace's diversity and inclusion strategy and planning.

Our Guiding Principles

In 2019, our [Reflect RAP](#) was developed on the basis of two guiding principles: **Inclusion and Reconciliation**. In 2021 we launched our first Innovate RAP which built on these principles.

DCA defines **inclusion** as occurring when a diversity of people feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organisation.

Genuine inclusion must begin with **reconciliation**. There can be no genuine workplace inclusion while First Nations Peoples are excluded from opportunities, and we as a nation do not address race relations, equality and equity, unity, institutional integrity, and historical acceptance.





Message from Lisa Annese

Diversity Council Australia Chief Executive Officer

DCA RAP Champion

Diversity Council Australia is proud to launch its third Reconciliation Action Plan. Over the past two years, we have continued to reflect on our internal work as an organisation that specialises in diversity and inclusion, to support and empower First Nations Peoples. In improving our internal capability, we are better placed to support our members. This has been an ongoing and valuable process for us. We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to DCA's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel for their ongoing partnership and contribution to our work.

One of the key inspirations for our third RAP has been DCA's seminal research report *Racism at Work: How Organisations Can Stand Up to and End Workplace Racism*, which we launched in 2022. This report highlights that the first foundational principle for understanding racism in Australia is recognition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique position as First Nations people. We firmly believe that Australian employers should prioritise addressing racism towards First Nations Peoples, as there can be no genuine workplace inclusion and equity while such discrimination exists. We also released a ground-breaking new report, *Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) Women in Leadership: A Framework for Organisational Action* on International Women's Day 2023. This report examines the state of play for CARM women (including First Nations Women) in leadership, focusing on how the intersections of two key marginalising characteristics - race and gender - are still operating in workplaces to lock CARM women out of leadership.

In February 2023, DCA announced our support for the Yes! Campaign and have been vocal in our advocacy for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament. Through our network of over 1,300 employers, we encouraged DCA members to support First Nations staff and provide employees with educational resources that cut through the rampant misinformation campaigns.

As an organisation, DCA was enormously disappointed by the outcome of the referendum. We remain committed to principles of self-determination for First Nations Peoples and, in line with this commitment, DCA continues to be guided by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel and the Uluru Statement From the Heart.

Now, with an even greater sense of urgency, we must actively listen to First Nations Australians and take proactive steps to support reconciliation so that we can bring about real, tangible outcomes. This time remains an opportunity to continue the conversation and work towards increased unity and understanding so that together we can continue to build a nation that works to heal historical harm and respects every voice."

Through our network of over 1,200 employers, we will be encouraging DCA members to play a key role in supporting their First Nations staff and encouraging other employees to engage, to learn and to listen before they vote.

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a reflection of our ongoing commitment to promoting justice, equity, and reconciliation in Australia. We look forward to continuing this work with our partners, colleagues, and stakeholders, and to continuing to learn from and be guided by First Nations Peoples.

Lisa Annese
Chief Executive Officer
Diversity Council Australia

Message From Kate Russell

DCA Board Director

Chair, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel CEO, Supply Nation

This marks DCA's third Reconciliation Action Plan and it's been my privilege to serve as the Chair of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel (EAP) throughout this journey. DCA takes its commitment to reconciliation very seriously, reflecting on the role it plays in guiding organisations to a more inclusive culture. This is evident throughout this iteration of the RAP, as well as the integrated approach to cultural capability and inclusion demonstrated in all DCA's research, resources and events.

Since our last RAP, DCA has launched pivotal research including [*Racism at Work: How Organisations Can Stand Up to and End Workplace Racism*](#) and [*Culturally and racially marginalised women in leadership: A framework for \(intersectional\) action*](#). These reports reinforce that, as a nation, we have much work to do but DCA presents solutions for how we can do better.

Guided by research and the EAP, DCA was a proud supporter of the Yes! Campaign. Their guidance and advocacy led to many members publicly supporting the campaign and countless others considering how to educate staff and consider the needs of Indigenous employees. DCA helped make Australian workplaces a safer place for Indigenous peoples during an incredibly difficult year.

This past year presented a particular challenge for First Nation's Communities. Many of us are still processing the outcome of the referendum, wondering "where to from here?". But I believe this is not the end, merely the beginning of a new path forward.

I want to thank the EAP and the DCA Board for their courage in this space. DCA's unique and intersectional approach to First Nation's issues gives me a great sense of pride and hope for our collective futures.

Kate Russell
DCA Board Director
Chair, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel
CEO, Supply Nation





Message From Reconciliation Australia

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Diversity Council Australia on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

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

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Diversity Council Australia continues to be part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

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

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Diversity Council Australia will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Diversity Council Australia using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Diversity Council Australia to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Diversity Council Australia will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Diversity Council Australia's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Diversity Council Australia on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Our Business

Diversity Council Australia (DCA) is the independent not-for-profit peak body leading diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We provide unique research, inspiring events and programs, curated resources and expert advice across all diversity dimensions to a community of member organisations.

Our mission is to encourage and enable Australian organisations to create diverse and inclusive workplaces.

Over 1,300 Australian-based organisations are members of DCA, many of whom are Australia's business diversity leaders and biggest employers.

Apart from one research project on creating pathways to leadership for culturally and racially marginalised women, funded by a grant from the Federal Government, we are not government funded - our income is generated from membership fees, sponsorships and services to business/employers.

DCA, formerly known as the Council for Equal Opportunity in Employment Ltd, was established in 1985 as a joint initiative of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia to demonstrate the business community's commitment to equal opportunity for women.

Our focus since then has expanded to cover all aspects of diversity and inclusion in employment, reflecting changes in practice to embrace all areas of the diversity of human resources.

DCA works in partnership with members to generate ground-breaking evidence-based diversity and inclusion resources that enable Australian organisations to fully leverage the benefits of a diverse talent pool.

- **DCA research is grounded in the contributions of people with lived experience.** DCA projects use expert panels, focus groups, think tanks and surveys to make people with lived experience central to the project findings.
- **DCA resources are ahead of the curve.** They establish leading diversity thinking and practice, enabling Australian organisations to re-imagine and reconfigure the way they manage talent in today's dynamic operating environments.
- **DCA resources drive business improvement.** They are high impact, driving business improvement through providing evidence-based guidance.
- **DCA resources are practice focused.** They respond to the information needs of industry leaders and the people they employ.
- **DCA resources speak to the Australian context.** DCA projects generate leading diversity thinking and practice that speaks to Australia's unique and distinctive institutional, cultural and legal frameworks.
- **DCA resources considers all diversity dimensions.** The full spectrum of diversity dimensions is investigated including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status, age, class, culture and religion, disability, family and domestic violence, gender, LGBTIQ+ status, mental health, neurodiversity, race, and work and care.

DCA currently employs 27 permanent staff with one of those staff members identifying as Aboriginal.

DCA's Events Coordinator and Aboriginal Advisor, Simone Empacher Earl, commenced employment in 2013 and has undertaken the following development opportunities through her employment with DCA:

- Certificate in Aboriginal Cultural Education Program,
- Certificate of Aboriginal Knowledge for the Workplace,
- Diploma of Aboriginal Studies for Professional and Community Practice through Eora College of Sydney TAFE

Simone was appointed as DCA's first Aboriginal Advisor in 2018.

Over the past decade, DCA has made concerted efforts to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional and community networks and has required recruitment agencies to include Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander candidates. DCA actively values Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in our selection process and the expertise, cultural knowledge and lived experience Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees have provided to DCA over the past 10 years.

In 2018, DCA actively sought an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander voice for the DCA Board of Directors and in July appointed Kate Russell, as the first DCA Board member to identify as Aboriginal. Kate not only brings her vast professional experience in government and diversity to the Board but contributes cultural knowledge, lived experience and expertise as a proud Awabakal woman and Chair of the DCA Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel.

DCA has offices located in Sydney and Melbourne with staff located across the country.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

DCA is passionate about promoting and facilitating reconciliation between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with respect, in particular, to better labour market engagement and recognition of the talents and untapped potential of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

In 2023, DCA decided to improve on our current *Innovate* Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) by creating more substantial and significant deliverables, strengthening our current position and setting a firm foundation for our future RAP development.

Through this *Innovate* RAP we will build on our past *Innovate* RAP and the work DCA has done, and continues to do, to promote true reconciliation by developing an aspirational and innovative approach to our commitment to create an Australia that takes meaningful action on reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-First Nations people, in a way that is informed and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

DCA's 2019 *Reflect* RAP helped us to recognise areas where DCA needs to build deeper and more meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and peak groups across **all areas** of our business. Our next step will be focussing on strengthening these relationships.

In order to do this, we believe it is critical to commit the time needed to adequately assess the internal needs of our organisation to progress our journey, as well as our sphere of influence. We looked at what we were currently doing and how we could use this as a foundation for our RAP process.

Our 2021 *Innovate* RAP was a framework to work together to develop innovative strategies to ensure the self-determination and inclusion of First Nations People in our workplaces. We will continually review our work to ensure we improve, as individuals and as an organisation, in this area.

This RAP was designed to foster and develop internal awareness, understanding and cultural competency for all DCA staff to improve the way our organisation works internally, and externally, allowing DCA to lead by example within the Australian business community. We will continue to utilise our unique position as an organisation that supports Australian employers to build their capability to embed inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australian workplaces.

This RAP has been developed by DCA's RAP Working Group, led and chaired by Simone Empacher Earl, DCA's Aboriginal Advisor and proud Awabakal woman.

The RAP Working Group is also made up of:

- Lisa Annese, DCA's Chief Executive Officer and RAP Champion,
- Dr Jane O'Leary, Research Director and RAP Champion,
- Catherine Petterson, Operations Director,
- Emily Tynan, Research & Projects Manager,
- Rebecca Kearney, Communications Advisor, and
- Clea Newson, People and Culture Lead.

In addition to publicly reporting on our RAP achievements via the DCA Annual Report, we continue to consult in the following ways:

- We present our progress to the DCA staff and senior leaders on a regular basis and conduct internal questionnaires on required cultural continuum.
- The RAP working group and RAP champions meet quarterly to drive and monitor the RAP implementation.
- The Board of Directors are briefed at Board meetings to ensure support is formed throughout all levels of the organisation.
- We consult with our [Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel](#), for guidance, support, cultural knowledge and advice throughout our reconciliation journey, our work and our RAP. Our panel is made up of respected Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community members across Country, with representatives throughout Australian states and territories.

DCA Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel Members

Kate Russell

Awabakal (NSW)
DCA Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel Chair
DCA Board Director
CEO, Supply Nation

Lauren Letton

Ngarrindjeri (SA) and Narungga (SA)
Planning and Audit Officer, Department of Health and Wellbeing SA
Central Adelaide Local Health Network

Professor Peter Anderson

Walpiri (NT) and Murinpatha
Professor and Director Indigenous Research Unit, Griffith University

Thomas Mayo

Zenadth Kes (TSI)
Northern Territory Branch Secretary, Maritime Union of Australia

Jordy Mifsud

Peek Whurrong, Gunditjmara (VIC)
Policy Advisor, Business Council Australia

Professor Nareen Young

Inner City Sydney (NSW)
Associate Dean UTS Business School and Professor for Indigenous Policy at the UTS Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research



Our Reconciliation Journey

2007	DCA appoints CEO Nareen Young, first identified Aboriginal Executive leader, who spearheaded DCA's engagement in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment space.
2009	DCA research <i>Engaging Aboriginal Australians in the Private Sector</i> released, in partnership with National Australia Bank.
2011	The <i>National Indigenous Corporate Network</i> launched in partnership with Reconciliation Australia as a forum for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in the corporate sector to come together to share experiences, discuss the challenges they may face in the workplace and promotes career and talent development opportunities.
2012	Jason Glanville spoke at the 2012 <i>DCA Annual Diversity Debate</i> which asked "Is racism a minor obstacle or major roadblock in Australia?"
2013	Partnered with Reconciliation Australia and Lendlease on research <i>Closing the Work Gap in Corporate Australia: Indigenous Perspectives on Effective Engagement Between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Communities and the Private Sector</i> .
2016	<p><i>Building Workplace Capability for Indigenous Australia Network</i> established, sponsored by Lendlease, to examine leading practice in attraction, retention and promotion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander talent, improve understanding of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures and issues and build organisational capability in this area.</p> <p>Partnered with PwC Indigenous Consulting to produce <i>Words At Work: Building Indigenous Cultural Inclusion Through the Power of Language</i> guide.</p>
2017	<p>DCA-Suncorp <i>Inclusion@Work Index</i> released, creating the first national benchmark for inclusion in Australian workplaces.</p> <p>DCA's <i>Building Workplace Capability for Indigenous Australia Network</i> events, sponsored by Lendlease, explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Engaging and empowering Indigenous women leaders</i>, the keynote presentation was delivered by The Hon Linda Burney MP. • <i>Tackling unconscious bias to progress Indigenous talent</i>, Jodie Sizer, Owner & Co-CEO, PwC Indigenous Consulting, delivered the keynote address. <p>Two members of the RAP Working Group attended the Eora College (TAFE) Aboriginal Cultural Education Course.</p> <p>The inaugural DCA <i>Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on Diversity and Inclusion</i> was delivered by Stan Grant, Indigenous Affairs Editor for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and special advisor to the Prime Minister on Indigenous constitutional recognition.</p>

2018

DCA's *Building Workplace Capability for Indigenous Australia Network* events, sponsored by Lendlease, covered:

- *Exploring What the Uluru Statement Means for Corporate Australia in Terms of Our Own Action*, Thomas Mayo, Northern Territory Branch Secretary, Maritime Union of Australia delivered a keynote address.
- *The Process of Developing and Progressing a RAP*, a keynote presentation was delivered by Andrea Kelly, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Reconciliation Australia.

DCA established its RAP Working Group.

Kate Russell, Awabakal woman, was appointed to the DCA Board of Directors.

DCA [Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait External Advisory Panel](#) formed.

DCA podcast series [the Art of Inclusion](#) launched. Each episode begins with an Acknowledgment of Country to recognise the Traditional Owners of the land on which that episode was recorded. The episode 'Connecting Country' featured the Hon. Linda Burney MP, Karen Mundine and Aunty Norma Ingram who gives a Welcome to Country.

DCA made a submission to the *Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition Relating to Aboriginal and/or Strait Islander Peoples*. We consulted with our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel and DCA members to survey how Australian organisations could, and should, contribute to constitutional recognition and reconciliation.

Karen Mundine, CEO of Reconciliation Australia spoke at the *2018 Annual Diversity Debate*, asking is it really a good idea to bring your whole self to work.

2019

Launch of DCA's first [Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

DCA partnered with University of Technology Sydney, Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research to launch its world first *Indigenous People and Work Research and Practice Hub*.

DCA's *Building Workplace Capability for Indigenous Australia Network* events, sponsored by National Australia Bank, explored:

- Improving Indigenous cultural competence.
- *Championing Indigenous women leaders*, the keynote presentation was delivered by Dr Tess Ryan.

The second season of DCA's podcast series, [The Art of Inclusion](#), included an episode on the cultural protocols for death in Indigenous communities – and how workplaces can better understand and support this practice, '[Sorry Business](#)', and another on Constitutional recognition and the role wider Australian workplaces play, '[Unfinished Business](#)'.

DCA released a guide on [Creating Inclusive Multi-Faith Workplaces](#), which included information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spiritualities.

DCA's [Counting Culture: Six Principles for Measuring Cultural Diversity of Your Workplace](#) guide was released. The guide recommends organisations recognise Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people's unique position by separating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from the broad category of 'cultural diversity' when Counting Culture.

Jackie Huggins AM spoke at DCA's 2019 *Annual Diversity Debate* on whether backlash is good for diversity and inclusion.

DCA launched the second iteration of the [Inclusion@Work Index](#) which highlighted the experiences of inclusion and exclusion in the workplace for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers.

As part of DCA's *Reflect* RAP, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples information on the website was updated. The website provides information for DCA members on:

- [Inclusive language](#)
- [The Case for Action for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment](#)
- [The key issues affecting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers' experiences](#)
- [Leading practice principles](#)
- [Surveying and benchmarks](#)
- [Toolkits](#)

DCA [officially announced](#) its support of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* campaign to secure constitutional recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

DCA staff attended a cultural awareness program run by Shared Knowledge.

2020

DCA's *Building Workplace Capability for Indigenous Australia Network* events, sponsored by National Australia Bank, explored:

- Progress on Constitutional recognition and the Uluru Statement from the Heart

DCA's [Building Workplace Capability for Indigenous Australia Network](#) events, sponsored by BAE, explored:

- Exploring the impacts of COVID-19 on Indigenous people and work
- Indigenous workforce engagement

A DCA event was held on [How organisations can move beyond tokenism to real action on racism](#), focusing on how the US Black Lives Matter movement has shone a light on the continued injustices and inequalities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in our society.

DCA and the UTS Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research launched a nationwide survey to find out the truths about Indigenous Australians' employment experiences in Australia, sponsored by National Australia Bank and Coles. The [Gari Yala](#) (which means 'speak the truth' in Wiradjuri) survey aims to be a voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait

	<p>Islander workers, capturing the state of play when it comes to workplace cultural safety, inclusion and exclusion/racism.</p> <p>DCA staff completed the SBS Inclusion Program: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander course.</p> <p>DCA's CEO interviewed John Paul Janke about what is needed to recognise Australia's ongoing racial injustices and how we can shift the dial to create a future that includes Australia's First Nations people.</p>
2021	<p>DCA staff attended a Cultural learning session provided by Dr Lynette Riley in Sydney.</p> <p>DCA's <i>Indigenous Network</i> events, sponsored by BAE Systems, explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking Culture, Knowledge and Australia's Truth • Moving from Safe to Brave on Reconciliation in Australia • Understanding Constitutional Recognition and Becoming an Advocate • Supporting From the Heart Campaign for the First Nations Voice to Parliament to be Enshrined in the Constitution <p>DCA, along with Jumbunna Institute of Indigenous Education and Research, launched the <i>Gari Yala: (Speak the Truth) Gendered Insights</i> Report.</p> <p>DCA held two events which focussed on our <i>Gari Yala: Speak the Truth</i> Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gari Yala Deep Dive – which provided a deep-dive into the research findings to look at how to improve workplace inclusion for Indigenous staff • Gari Yala: Understanding the Intersection of Gender and Indigenous Identity at Work <p>In 2021 we felt the impacts of COVID-19 on our business which saw a quick response to enable and support all colleagues to work from home. Some of the commitments in our RAP were also impacted, particularly our commitments to attend community events. We did encourage all colleagues to continue learning online and to attend external online events.</p>
2022	<p>DCA staff attended a Cultural learning session provided by Dr Lynette Riley in Melbourne.</p> <p>Sean Choolburra was a panellist at DCA's Annual Diversity Debate – 10th Anniversary on 'Is it time to move on from gender equality?'. Uncle Brendan "Japangardi" Kerin provided the Welcome to Country and performed a song on his yiddiki.</p> <p>DCA launched Racism At Work: How Organisations Can Stand Up to and End Workplace Racism research report.</p> <p>Dr Virginia Mapedzahama, DCA's Member Education Director, presented DCA's research <i>Racism At Work</i> to DCA staff.</p>

DCA's *Indigenous Network* events, sponsored by BAE Systems, explored:

- [Engaging Community, Engaging your Business](#)
- [Truth-telling in the Workplace](#)
- [Belonging and Connection to the Workplace](#)

DCA also introduced a series of *Case Study Conversations* events, where we deep dived into ANZ's approach to effectively building cultural awareness, why they went down this path, what was achieved, and lessons learnt along the way: [Case Study Conversation: ANZ's Indigenous Cultural Awareness](#).

2022 saw our working environments return to more like those before Covid-19, however we still have felt the impacts on our business.

One commitment in our RAP which was especially impacted was our commitment to attend in-person community events however we did encourage all DCA colleagues to attend online events that were available. The other commitments we were unable to deliver on was our policies and procedures and recruitment practices as we did not have a specialised people and culture practitioner to assist in this area. Despite these setbacks we continued to achieve and deliver on all other commitments in our RAP.

2023

In 2023 DCA continued our support of constitutional recognition and the Uluru Statement from the Heart by publicly coming out, via a media release promoted on social media, in support of the Yes! Campaign and a First Nations Voice to Parliament announced by the Prime Minister.

Professor Tom Calma AO delivered DCA's 2023 flagship event, the *Anna McPhee Memorial Oration on Diversity & Inclusion* in support of the Voice.

DCA launched [Culturally and Racially Marginalised Women in Leadership: A Framework \(Intersectional\) Action](#) research report.

DCA's *Indigenous Network* events, sponsored by BAE Systems and open to DCA member organisations and non-DCA members to attend, explored:

- [Activate Your Voice to Support The Voice](#)
- [RAPs, Reconciliation and the Referendum](#)

DCA's CEO and Aboriginal Advisor attended the launch of the Yes! Campaign in Adelaide and both regularly attend Allies for Uluru Working Group meetings and Voice from the Heart Alliance meetings.

DCA staff participated in the *Walking Together Project Workshop*, hosted by ANZ in Sydney and Melbourne, which was an interactive 3-hour workshop to help us develop a better understanding of how we can accept the invitation to walk together with First Nations peoples for Constitutional Recognition, in the lead up to this year's historic Referendum.

DCA's Aboriginal Advisor also attended the *Wiyi Yani U Thangani (Women's Voices) National Summit* in Canberra which brought together over 800 First Nations women delegates from across Australia, for decision-making, innovation and celebration.

DCA has seen substantial growth in the past few years, but we have struggled to increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce. However, when the opportunity arises we do ensure that we advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and ensure that all DCA recruitment processes encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people via a diversity statement in the job advertisement inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply. DCA has appointed a People and Culture Lead who will be working on our policies and procedures and will investigate our recruitment practices. When possible DCA engages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers and going forward DCA is now able to investigate implementing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy across the organisation.

DCA sees our Innovate RAP as a framework to work together to develop innovative strategies to ensure the self-determination and inclusion of First Nations People in our workplaces. Our vision continues to be for an Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are central in any discussions around recognition and reconciliation; and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to workplaces across the country. We will continually review our work to ensure we proceed to improve, as individuals and as an organisation, in this area.





Relationships

At DCA, ‘partnering to include’ is key to what we do. We are conscious it is not the role of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to lead this discussion, and so instead we aim to partner with and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations to create a collective voice. We believe that it is essential to be advised by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people on issues that affect them.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement and opportunities for DCA to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led campaigns. 	February 2024, February 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update DCA's engagement plan annually, to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	February 2024, February 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials and events to our staff and external stakeholders via electronic newsletters. 	May 2024, May 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Communications Advisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. 	May 2024-3 June 2024, May 2025-3 June 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event recognising National Reconciliation Week. 	27 May - 3 June 2024, 27 May - 3 June 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise at least one NRW event each year and include details of National Reconciliation Week in our electronic newsletters, blogs and socials. 	27 May- 3 June 2024 27 May- 3 June 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Communications Advisor

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register all DCA NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. Report on events attended. 	May 2024, May 2025	RAP Working Group Chair
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation by attending DCA events, external events as well as support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led programs and campaigns. 	March 2024	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly via our online published RAP, e-newsletters, events and by supporting the Voice. 	January 2024, January 2025	Operations Director Communications Advisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes through DCA events, newsletters and supporting Aboriginal led programs and campaigns. 	March 2024, March 2025	Operations Director Communications Advisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation. 	February 2024, February 2025	RAP Working Group Chair CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use social media and communication platforms to promote and raise awareness of reconciliation topics via newsletters, socials, email signatures and blogs. 	January 2024, January 2025	Communications Advisor
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an annual review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. 	May 2024, May 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy based 	May 2024,	People & Culture Lead

on DCA's current research and leading practice.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy. 	<i>January 2024</i>	People & Culture Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote DCA's next research project centred around racism and notify staff of the release date. Continue to educate the team on the effects of racism. 	<i>February 2024, February 2025</i>	Operations Director Research Director Member Education Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to update and circulate resources on anti-discrimination reading material, videos, movies and research and encourage other staff members to add to resources. Remind staff of these resources at staff meetings and via email. 	<i>June 2024, June 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair





Respect

Genuine inclusion requires creating an organisation that understands and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Accordingly, providing a safe and welcoming environment should be a critical part of any workplace's diversity and inclusion strategy and planning.

"For workplaces to be authentic, they need to ensure that actions are not being taken for tokenistic reasons, instead showing genuine respect for Indigenous cultures, and valuing the contributions of staff." Gari Yala: Speak the Truth 2020.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct an annual survey to review the cultural learning needs within our organisation.	February 2024, February 2025	Research & Projects Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review, update and communicate a cultural learning strategy for DCA staff from the annual survey results.	April 2024, April 2025	Research & Projects Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consult with DCA EAP, respected leaders and advisors in the Community and Traditional Owners on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	March 2024, March 2025	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to encourage all DCA staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning. Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, P&C staff and other leaders to participate in formal and structured cultural learning when possible.	May 2024, May 2025	Operations Director People & Culture Lead CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to update and circulate a list of resources focussing on reconciliation reading material, videos, movies and research and encourage other staff members to add to resources. Remind staff of	June 2024, June 2025	RAP Working Group Chair

	these resources at staff meetings and via email.		
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols. All staff briefing on Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols as well as correct use of language to used. To be delivered a minimum of once a year at regular staff meetings. 	February 2024, February 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise, update, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of Country and correct use of language to use. Ensure this is kept up to date with the changing environment at DCA. 	January 2024, January 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage Traditional Owners or Custodians to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant DCA events. Introduce Welcome to Country for team days. 	February 2024, February 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Acknowledgement of Country for team meetings. If it is an online meeting, encourage staff to include the Country where they are joining from. 	February 2024, February 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director CEO
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event together to share the experience. 	July 2024, July 2025	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the provisions put in place and outlined in the DCA staff 	May 2024,	People & Culture Lead

	HR handbook and policies, to remove barriers towards Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff participating in NAIDOC Week or requiring cultural leave.	May 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and encourage DCA staff participation in external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance events as part of staff development plans. Encourage staff to share information about events happening in their area. 	May 2024, May 2025	RAP Working Group Chair People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all DCA members via newsletters, socials, blogs and events. 	July 2024, July 2025	Communications Advisor
Recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support employees to take up the option to work on January 26th and switch it for a day off on another date. 	January 2024, January 2025	People Lead & Culture CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to encourage DCA staff participation in external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance and events as part of their development plans. 	August 2024, August 2025	People & Culture Lead CEO

Enhance the understanding and appreciation of the importance of cultural safety across the DCA membership.

- Encourage DCA members to learn about the importance of cultural safety by accessing and reading DCA's *Gari Yala: Speak the Truth* research and *Racism at Work* research.

May 2024,
May 2025

Communications
Advisor

CEO

- Investigate hosting specific events for DCA Members on cultural safety, highlighting research and recommendations from DCA's *Gari Yala* research and *Racism at Work* research.

January 2024,
January 2025

RAP Working
Group Chair

Operations
Director





Opportunities

Many organisations are committed to engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and providing employment opportunities is a key part of this engagement. But genuine inclusion is about more than simply creating employment opportunities. Inclusion in a workplace is achieved when a diversity of people feel that they are respected, connected, contribute and progress within an organisation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	May 2024, May 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities by ensuring policies are kept up to date with the changing work environment.	June 2024, June 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	June 2024, June 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure all DCA recruitment processes encourage applications from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people via a diversity statement in the job advertisement inviting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to apply.	June 2024, June 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. Internal policies to be updated and work with external	June 2024, June 2025	People & Culture Lead

	recruitment agencies to fill any current vacancies.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace. 	June 2024, June 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review DCA recruitment and selection practices to ensure that they are inclusive of, and align with, best practice for the recruitment and selection of, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. 	June 2024, June 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all DCA recruitment processes encourage applications from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people via a diversity statement in the job advertisement inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply. 	June 2024, June 2025	People & Culture Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to encourage DCA members and stakeholders to improve Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development through education, resources, events and communications. Continue to encourage conversations. 	April 2024, April 2025	Communications Advisor
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy to include that at least one quote sourced must be from an Aboriginal owner organisation supplier. 	June 2024	Operations Director Research & Projects Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	May 2024,	RAP Working Group Chair

	May 2025	Operations Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff. DCA to ensure, when sourcing a supplier, at least one quote is sourced from an Aboriginal supplier. 	June 2024, June 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director Research & Projects Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. Encourage to select quotes sourced from Aboriginal owned organisation suppliers, even if they are slightly higher but within a reasonable budget. 	July 2024	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director Research & Projects Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop and maintain commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses by supporting organisations creating change, working with specialised organisations leading the way in this space and engaging supply chain suppliers. 	July 2024, July 2025	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director Research & Projects Manager Communications Advisor





Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group. 	<i>January 2024,</i> <i>January 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and maintain Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group and ensure this is kept up to date with the changing environment at DCA. 	<i>January 2024,</i> <i>January 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair Research & Projects Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation. 	<i>March 2024,</i> <i>June 2024,</i> <i>September 2024,</i> <i>November 2024,</i> <i>March 2025,</i> <i>June 2025,</i> <i>September 2025,</i> <i>November 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation and present to senior management team. 	<i>February 2024</i>	RAP Working Group Chair Research & Projects Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments. Ensure a RAP update is included on regular team mtgs and Director mtgs. Circulate 	<i>January 2024</i>	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director

	notifications to all DCA team about events and dates of significance.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	<i>January 2024</i>	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a brief of responsibilities and expectations for RAP Champions. 	<i>January 2024</i>	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management. 	<i>January 2024, January 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair Operations Director
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey. 	<i>August 2024, August 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia. 	<i>September 2024, September 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence. 	<i>September 2024, September 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly. To be conducted at staff team meetings. 	<i>April 2024, November 2024, April 2025, November 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually. 	<i>June 2024, June 2025</i>	Operations Director

			Communications Advisor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. 	<i>April 2024</i>	Research & Projects Manager
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	<i>June 2025</i>	RAP Working Group Chair

For any enquiries regarding this Reconciliation Action Plan, please contact DCA's Aboriginal Advisor and RAP Working Group Chair, Simone Empacher Earl: simone@dca.org.au or the DCA office on (02) 8014 4300.





Buranbaa Ngarran (New Dawn) by artist Kirsten Gray



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