

REASON

GROUP

original thinking | lasting impact



**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**

REFLECT

Reconciliation Action Plan

REFLECT

October 2019 - December 2020

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INTRODUCTION



Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to see Reason Group continue its reconciliation journey and to formally endorse its second Reflect RAP.

Through development of this Reflect RAP, Reason Group continues to play an important part in a community of over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to progress reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Reflect RAP provides Reason Group a roadmap to lay the foundations for its reconciliation journey. Through implementing a Reflect RAP, Reason Group will strengthen the governance, relationships and understanding required for effective future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

We wish Reason Group well as it takes these first critical steps in its reconciliation journey. We encourage the organisation to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on the successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Reason Group on its second RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Karen Mundine'.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Message from the CEO

Reason Group has a strong commitment to reconciliation. Through our work we aim to contribute to delivering positive intergenerational change for all Australians.

We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders should be equally empowered to share in the opportunities that exist within Australian society. Our RAP is a key part of enabling us to be amongst the many positive voices that are advocating for changing the way we engage with the issues and opportunities of reconciliation.

Our vision for a Smarter Australia® is one where Australia continues to punch above its weight, leading the rest of the world in the digital economy in key areas such as agriculture, education, health care, and tourism.

We are committed to this objective through working closely with our federal and state government clients to develop a world-class public sector that enables and stimulates private sector innovation. Government – at all levels – needs to work together to coordinate and target investment into innovative technologies and ventures that drive the digital economy.

Our work intersects many policy areas intended to make changes to the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are engaged by government. We see many opportunities to participate in building stronger regional and local partnerships and solutions. Often the difficulties in realising these opportunities relate to a lack of understanding about how to effectively engage the people involved.

We are only at the beginning of our RAP journey and still have a lot to learn. In our first RAP cycle we gained an appreciation of the complexity of the issues and opportunities facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. We have explored relationships and opportunities within our business and social community that we now intend to build on during the coming year.

Positioned as we are in Canberra, delivering services to government to improve the delivery of policy and programs, we are close to the renewed public debate about an Indigenous recognition referendum.

Whatever the outcome, the renewed debate provides an opportunity to participate in making a difference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Scheer'.

William Scheer
Chief Executive Officer
Reason Group

Our Business

Reason Group is a Canberra based consulting firm specialising in business performance improvement for Government. We find new and easier ways for Government to do business - today, tomorrow and beyond, and are known for building relationships and solving intractable problems.

We believe there is always a better way to be found.

Reason employs approximately 20 staff members in our single location in Canberra, currently none of which identify as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person. We work predominantly in Canberra, but our work often has a regional or national reach through the programs of the clients we support.

Our RAP

Our purpose isn't just to be a world-class consulting practice. It's to make Australia better.

That's why we are working to build a Smarter Australia. A country with a world-class public service sparking world-class private sector innovation. As part of this vision we feel it is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to acknowledge the unique identities of Australia's First Peoples.

Our client base includes Government departments that work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to seek improved outcomes. This means we are at times in a position to influence policy implementation and optimise the delivery of services across priority areas. We are also actively working to engage with Indigenous business partners to deliver outcomes. Our overall aim is to facilitate investment in smart ideas that leverage the Indigenous Estate to increase financial returns and create jobs for communities.

We take the time to get to know all our clients so that we can find better ways to deliver lasting results that work for them. As such we strongly believe that we need to have a sound understanding of the past, present and future challenges and opportunities facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples if we want to make a lasting impact.

Reconciliation Australia has identified four stages for developing a Reconciliation Action Plan. A RAP includes a series of actions and activities listed under three standard headings; relationships, respect and opportunities.

- A **Reflect** RAP is for organisations laying strong foundations for successful future RAPs
- An **Innovate** RAP is for organisations that have developed a strong governance structure including relationships with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and are ready to develop and implement programs for cultural learning, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, supplier diversity, as well as actions tailored to their core business and sphere of influence.
- A **Stretch** RAP is for organisations who have demonstrated they are confident in their approach and ready to challenge themselves by setting measurable targets for the actions outlined in their RAP.
- An **Elevate** RAP is for organisations with a long, successful history in the RAP Program; completed a strong Stretch RAP and demonstrating leadership through significant national impact.

We are in the second year of our Reconciliation journey, and this next Reflect RAP captures our learnings from the past year. We have achieved many of the objectives we set during the period of our first RAP. Our main progress has centred on the pillar of Respect.

Having initiated several RAP related activities throughout the year, we have been successful in raising our own cultural awareness and generated interest among our staff to participate in related events. Activities and

events have ranged from distribution of information, resources and promotional material to staff, attending seminars, workshops and documentary screenings. Some key highlights have included:

- 1) Our culture awareness training – Discovering Australia’s rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, listening to lived experience stories and learning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander painting techniques
- 2) Participating in movie nights covering a range of topics, including stories about the Stolen Generations

We have learned it is important to provide opportunity for all staff to participate in the implementation of the RAP to ensure its success. Our leaders are seen by staff as playing an active role in delivering on RAP commitments and we have provided the opportunity for new members to join the team to develop and implement our next RAP.

We also understand it is important to partner with organisations with experience and ahead of us in the RAP journey to better inform our own decisions. We have learnt to ensure long term sustainability and success of the commitments we make, it is important that we embed our commitments (e.g. cultural awareness training for new employees) within our company administrative processes.

We believe the above learnings and proposed actions will help us foster an environment that further enables the success of our next and future RAP commitments.

The key focus of our next RAP is to further explore Relationships and Opportunities. Our goal is to be able to move to implementing an Innovate RAP as our next step.

Our approach to developing and implementing this RAP is to continue to embed the actions into relevant responsibilities and processes in our day to day business. In this way we feel that our approach to Reconciliation will be most effectively aligned with our sphere of influence.

The existing RAP Working Group will continue to be the driving force and custodian of our RAP. The working group will continue to work closely with our senior leaders to guide the execution of the RAP activities. The working group monitors the delivery of the plan including its contribution to Reason’s strategy and internal culture.

The working group will report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the RAP Impact Measurement Report.

Our partnerships/current activities

At this stage we have only formed informal relationships with several Indigenous owned and/or service delivery organisations. A key objective of this Reflect RAP is to identify and establish partnerships that will support our Reconciliation journey.

RELATIONSHIPS



Reason Group will build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Establishing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and stakeholders to identify and realise opportunities that deliver economic and social outcomes. Sound relationships formed through collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities will deliver the best outcomes.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. 	Dec 2019	Practice Development Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	Nov 2019	RAP WG Chair
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff, e.g. feature link in Newsletter leading up to NRW. 	April 2020	Ops Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. 	27 May-3 June, 2020	RAP WG Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	27 May-3 June, 2020	Ops Manager
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff, e.g. launch next endorsed RAP. 	Oct 2019	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. 	Mar 2020	Practice Development Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. 	Jun 2020	Practice Development Manager
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. 	Oct 2019	Ops Manager

discrimination strategies.			
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RESPECT



The Reason Group respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, lands, histories and rights.

Building respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, lands, histories and rights aligned to an overarching commitment to reconciliation. We will embed respect within the Reason Group through delivering a cultural development program that engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both through our client engagements as well as events such as NAIDOC week.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. 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"> Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. 	Jun 2020	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. 	Jan 2020	Ops Manager
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area. 	Oct 2019	RAP WG Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	Oct 2019	Ops Manager
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week. 	Apr 2020	Ops Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area. 	May 2020	Ops Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	First week in July 2020	RAP WG Chair

OPPORTUNITIES



We will identify and enable opportunities with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Extending opportunities to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sector with the aim of supporting endeavours that contribute to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic independence. To support this, the Reason Group aims to increase levels of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. We are also committed to engaging and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses where appropriate, particularly when completing engagements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. 	Oct 2020	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	Dec 2020	Service Delivery Manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	Dec 2020	Operations Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	Dec 2020	Operations Manager

GOVERNANCE



Tracking progress and reporting is critical for the success of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue a RWG to govern RAP implementation. 	Jul 2019	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	Oct 2019	RAP WG Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	Mar 2020	RAP WG Chair
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 	Oct 2019	RAP WG Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. 	Oct 2019	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	Dec 2019	RAP WG Chair
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	30 Sep 2020	RAP WG Chair
13. 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. 	Oct 2020	RAP WG Chair

Document Control

PROJECT DETAILS

Project Sponsor	Willian Scheer	CEO, WILLIAM SCHEER, Reason Group
RAP Working Group	Amanda Phillips	Manager
	Stephanie Serhan	Manager
	Arjun Wariar	Senior Consultant

APPROVALS

Name	Position	Comments	Date
CEO, WILLIAM SCHEER	CEO, WILLIAM SCHEER	Endorsed to submit to Reconciliation Australia	16/10/2019

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Comments
0.1	8/07/2019	Arjun Wariar	Initial draft incorporating RAP action plan template requirements
0.2	16/07/2019	William Scheer	Draft incorporating RAP Working Group comments
0.3	30/10/2019	Stephanie Serhan	Final draft incorporating Reconciliation Australia comments
1.0	10/12/2019		Final endorsement by Reconciliation Australia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Reason Group wishes to thank the staff of Reconciliation Australia for their time, effort and cooperation during the preparation of this plan.

DISCLAIMER

The recommendations within this plan above should be reviewed and endorsed by the executive before implementation.

The materials presented in this report reflect Reason Group's best judgement in light of the available information at the time of preparation.

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