



Australian Government
Australian Public Service
Commission



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE

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RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

AUGUST 2019—AUGUST 2021





Contents

Reconciliation Australia’s foreword2

Foreword.....5

Our vision for reconciliation6

Our business.....7

A brief history of our Reconciliation Action Plans8

Our Reconciliation Action Plan.....9

 Value Relationships.....10

 Respect Culture11

 Grow Opportunities13

 Governance, Tracking Progress and Reporting14

The Australian Public Service Commission would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and pay respects to their Elders, past and present.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this document may contain images and names of deceased persons.

Message from Reconciliation Australia

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I am delighted to see the Australian Public Service Commission continue its reconciliation journey and to formally endorse its second Innovate RAP.

Through the development of an Innovate RAP, the Australian Public Service Commission 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 advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Innovate RAP provides the Australian Public Service Commission with the key steps to establish its own unique approach to reconciliation. Through implementing an Innovate RAP, the Australian Public Service Commission will strengthen its approach to driving reconciliation through its business activities, services and programs, and develop mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

We wish the Australian Public Service Commission well as it embeds and expands its own unique approach to reconciliation. We encourage the Australian Public Service Commission to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on its 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 the Australian Public Service Commission on its fourth RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia





Foreword

'A document does not bring about reconciliation, people do. The Australian Public Service Commission is committed to making our RAP a living document and to see through its implementation'.

It is our privilege to introduce the Australian Public Service Commission's (the Commission) fourth Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The Commission's RAP Working Group, under the guidance of the Commission's Indigenous Champion, have developed this document to support the Commission to drive reconciliation across the public service. The themes set out in the RAP provide measurable actions over the next two years including valuing relationships, respecting Indigenous cultures and growing opportunities for reconciliation. These actions support previous initiatives and continue to build on the foundations set in previous RAPs.

The Commission is committed to improving employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across the Commonwealth public sector. This RAP highlights some initiatives to promote learning and understanding of their culture. This supports our journey to reconciliation. In practice, this means we share our learnings with other government agencies, guide our employees to enhance their cultural knowledge and understanding, and provide support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees throughout the workforce.

Our RAP allows us to explore opportunities for growth towards reconciliation over the coming years and into the future. It is crucial that we support each other to grow respectful relationships and provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Peter Woolcott AO
Australian Public Service Commissioner

Richard Bartlett
Indigenous Champion,
First Assistant Commissioner



Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision is for Australia with a public service that:

- respects and celebrates the unique place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold as our First Australians
- acknowledges the contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees can make to closing the gap on disadvantage and ensuring all Australians have the same opportunities in life.

We are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive Commonwealth public sector. Our RAP provides a framework for building respectful relationships and for our staff to increase their cultural capability, and provides opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander both within our workplace and the broader community.

Our business

The Commission's influence reaches across the Australian public sector through our statutory responsibilities under the *Public Service Act 1999*, which include to:

- develop, promote, review and evaluate Australian Public Service (APS) employment policies and practices
- facilitate continuous improvement in people management throughout the APS
- contribute to learning and development and career management
- contribute to and foster leadership in the APS
- provide advice and assistance on public service matters to APS agencies
- promote high standards of integrity and conduct in the APS.

As part of our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, we provide best practice advice on recruitment, retention and career development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We convene the following APS-wide networks, which aim to lift cultural capability and increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Commonwealth sector:

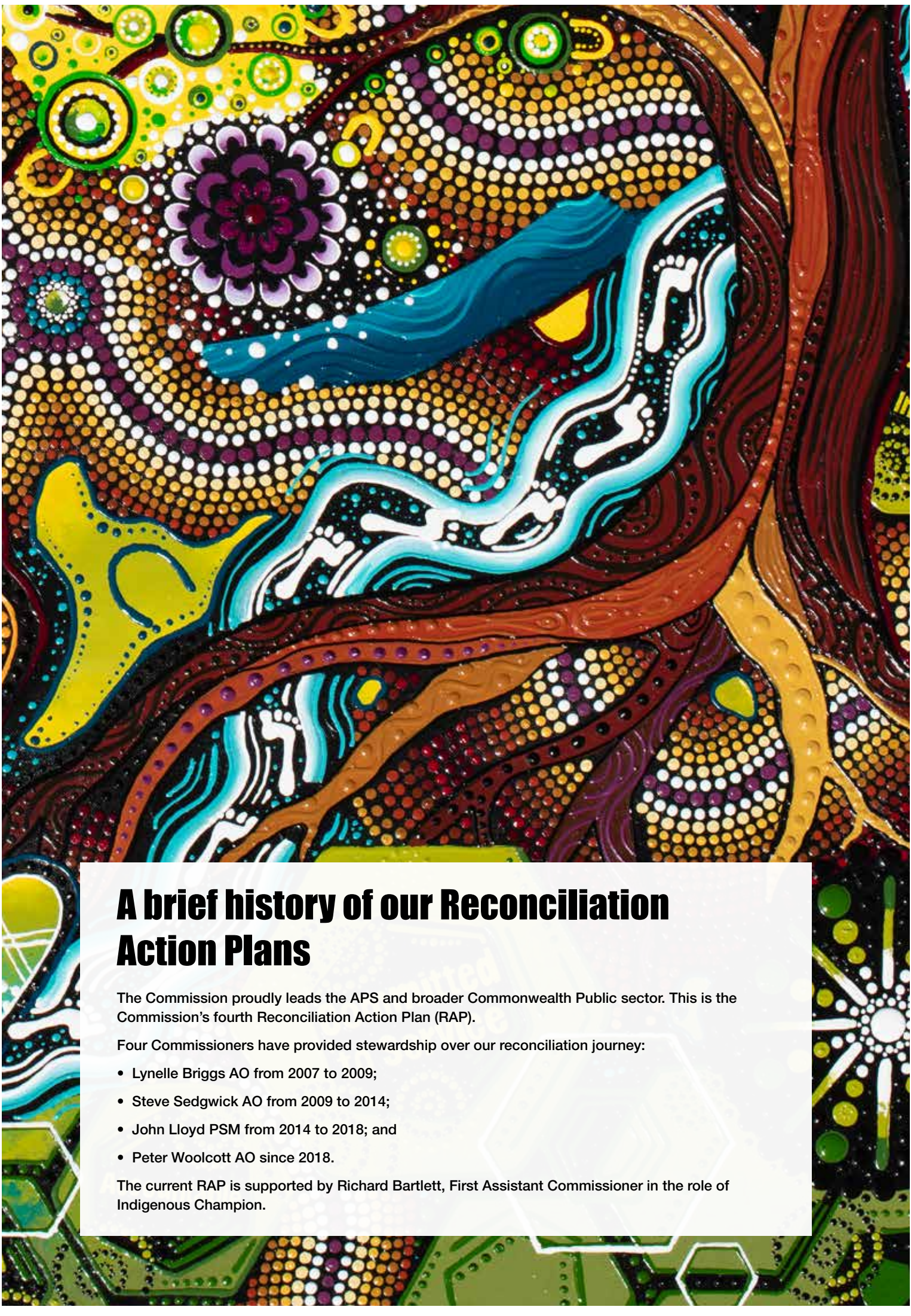
- the Indigenous SES Network
- Indigenous Champions Network
- the HR Inclusion Forum
- the Indigenous Liaison Officers Network
- the Indigenous Employee Yarns networking events across the country.

The Commission is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity within the Prime Minister and Cabinet portfolio. We operate under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The Commission also provides resources to support the Merit Protection Commissioner.

The main office location is at Parkes Place West, Parkes, ACT. The Commission also has an office with a small number of staff located at 580 George Street, Sydney, NSW. At 30 June 2018 the Commission had 199 staff.

The Commission is committed to driving employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who currently make up 5.5 % of our workforce.



A brief history of our Reconciliation Action Plans

The Commission proudly leads the APS and broader Commonwealth Public sector. This is the Commission's fourth Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Four Commissioners have provided stewardship over our reconciliation journey:

- Lynelle Briggs AO from 2007 to 2009;
- Steve Sedgwick AO from 2009 to 2014;
- John Lloyd PSM from 2014 to 2018; and
- Peter Woolcott AO since 2018.

The current RAP is supported by Richard Bartlett, First Assistant Commissioner in the role of Indigenous Champion.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Since 2007, the Commission has supported reconciliation through the development of four Reconciliation Action Plans including this current plan.

Our employees have their own aspirations for reconciliation. They acknowledge the positive impact our RAPs have in their professional and personal lives. Employees tell us that our RAPs have increased recognition of First People's culture within the Commission. This has contributed to encouragement of diversity in ideas, strengthened inclusiveness in working groups and heightened understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artefacts, ceremonies and traditions.

When we asked our employees about the RAP's place within the Commission, they stated that it should help ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel welcome in our workplace; that it should contribute to an understanding of their cultures and, that it must aim to create further opportunities for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues.

Our RAP is developed by a team of dedicated and enthusiastic employees and led by a Convenor. These individuals work with our Executive to create a groundswell of support for our RAP actions, and generate strong participation in RAP activities. RAP Working Group members include employees from diverse backgrounds including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

The current RAP Working Group Convenor is Alia Imtoul and the following members shaped the RAP and secured organisation-wide support for achieving its stated deliverables.

Glenys Agnew, Katie Box, Jonathan Broadley, Nikki Curtin, Lauren Duckworth, Kiki Heineback, Alanna Keogh, Purva Koparkar, Sherman Leung, Alex Maron, Chelsie McIvor, Tegan Morris, Phoebe Morrison, Emma Perkins, Tracey Quinn, Debi Richardson, Sophie Roper, Amanda Russell, Alexander Sallabank, Rachael Shields, Kathleen Si'ulua, Marie Smithson, Gabriel Walsh, Miara Watson, David Wilks and Helen Wottiez.

The RAP Working Group would also like to acknowledge the efforts of Melinda Kopilow for her contributions to the early development of this RAP and previous RAPs.

This fourth RAP represents a renewal of our commitment to reconciliation and recognition of our employees' expectations of the RAP. Through its actions and deliverables, we strive to uphold standards in driving Indigenous representation and strengthen our capability and authority to speak to other agencies on reconciliation.

We extend our thanks to Reconciliation Australia for helping us to express our evolving vision of reconciliation in the production of this RAP.

Value Relationships

The Commission fosters strong relationships across the APS, external and internal stakeholders and the Australian community. All three of these areas include fostering relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and APS employees. The Commission's work also directly or indirectly impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through our work in increasing diversity within the APS workforce and encouraging inclusive workplaces.

Action 1:

Celebrate and participate in days of cultural significance by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Provide opportunities for Commission staff to participate in an external National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event each year.	National Reconciliation Week 27 May–3 June 2020, 2021	Indigenous Champion
b) Organise and deliver at least one internal event to raise awareness for NRW each year.	National Reconciliation Week 27 May–3 June 2020, 2021	RAP Working Group Convener
c) Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	National Reconciliation Week 27 May–3 June 2020, 2021	RAP Working Group Convener
d) RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	National Reconciliation Week 27 May–3 June 2020, 2021	RAP Working Group Convener
e) Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff	National Reconciliation Week 27 May–3 June 2020, 2021	RAP Working Group Convener

Action 2:

Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Active engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, businesses and organisations to co-design and deliver programs create mutually beneficial relationships.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	Indigenous Champion
b) Continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders guided by relevant strategic documents.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	Indigenous Champion

Action 3:

Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation through ongoing engagement with all stakeholders across our business and sector.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Raise internal awareness of our RAP through all-staff emails, posters placed in common areas, invitations to attend meetings and maintaining information on the Commission's intranet.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	RAP Working Group Convener
b) Raise awareness of our RAP activities to co-located Commonwealth agencies through information and invitations to attend RAP events.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	RAP Working Group Convener People and Business Management Group Manager

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
c) Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	RAP Working Group Convener
d) Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	RAP Working Group Convener
e) Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	RAP Working Group Convener

Action 4:

Valuing relationships with current and former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Organise a minimum of one informal lunch each year, between the Indigenous Champion and current and former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to encourage mobility and develop strong alumni networks within the APS.	March 2020 March 2021	Indigenous Champion

Action 5:

Promote positive relationships through anti-discrimination strategies.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	Jan 2020	People and Business Management Group Manager
b) Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation	August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
c) Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	Indigenous Champion
d) Educate senior leaders and managers on the effects of racism	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	Indigenous Champion

Respect Culture

Consistent with the APS Values, our staff are aware of, respect, acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This enables us to build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and provide culturally appropriate strategic human resource policy, training and advice across the APS.

Action 6:

As part of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness strategy, engage employees in continuous cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Encourage employees to undertake the CORE e-learning program. This will involve tracking progress of implementation through LearnHub to report to RAP Working Group. Promote the Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride online tool to all staff including new employees upon commencement	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	Reporting—People and Business Management Group Manager Encouraging—Group Managers and RAP Working Group Convenor Indigenous Champion
b) The RAP Working Group will share information in upcoming events.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor
c) Refresh meeting room names within the Commission premises to recognise Indigenous places or people.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
d) Send at least 2 EL staff to participate in Jawun each year	December 2019	People and Business Management Group Manager
e) Feature the cultural learning journeys of JAWUN secondees to share their experiences with our organisation and promote the program	January 2020 January 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
f) Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors / staff on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy	June 2020	People and Business Management Group Manager
g) Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff	January 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
h) Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	July 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager

Action 7:

Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	December 2019	Inclusion and Implementation Group Manager
b) Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of meetings and ensure it is incorporated into draft speaking notes where appropriate.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	All staff
c) Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events, including events associated with the Commission's whole of government Indigenous recruitment and development programs, and the NAIDOC Touch Football Competition.	NAIDOC Week July 2020 July 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor Group Managers
d) Organise and deliver an APS-wide touch football competition for NAIDOC week.	NAIDOC Week July 2020 July 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor Inclusion and Implementation Group Manager

Action 8:

Provide opportunities for staff to celebrate and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and communities.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	December 2019	People and Business Management Group Manager
b) Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities. Provide opportunities for all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week activities.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	Group Managers
c) Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance by developing a calendar of activities and days of significance.	January 2020 January 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager RAP Working Group Convenor
d) RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	NAIDOC Week July 2020 July 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor

Grow Opportunities

As the lead agency promoting inclusive workplaces, through building workforce capability in the APS, the Commission is well placed to role model best practice in recruiting, developing and retaining its own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to the APS and Australian community.

We will achieve this through promotion and participation in whole of government Indigenous recruitment and mentoring programs, increasing Affirmative Measure recruitment at senior levels and supporting our Indigenous employees to participate in career development programs and opportunities.

The Commission is committed to contributing to a prosperous and sustainable Indigenous business sector and increased workforce participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through engagement with Indigenous-owned businesses and companies.

Action 9:

Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Implement commitment to increase the percentage of Indigenous employees in the Commission to six per cent by July 2021.	July 2021	Indigenous Champion
b) Explore options to use Affirmative Measures and identified recruitment at all levels of the Commission, particularly at executive levels and above.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	Group Managers People and Business Management Group Manager
c) Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workforce.	December 2019	People and Business Management Group Manager
d) Update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention strategy	July 2020	People and Business Management Group Manager
e) Collaborate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across the APS to identify and implement best practice from a range of programs and initiatives.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor
f) Actively promote opportunities to participate in the Commonwealth Indigenous Mentoring Program for existing staff and managers where mentors and mentees are encouraged to engage in reciprocal learning and development.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
g) Actively promote opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the Sir Roland Wilson Foundation Scholarship, the ANU Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research Secondment Program, and other whole of government Indigenous career development programs.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
h) Continue to build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager

Action 10:

Continue to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation.

DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Promote the Commission's Indigenous procurement strategy to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
b) Continue to develop commercial relationship with Indigenous-owned businesses.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	SES
c) Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager

Governance, Tracking Progress and Reporting

Action 11:

RAP Working Group actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.	August 2019	RAP Working Group Convenor
b) Invite all new employees to join the RAP Working Group via induction processes.	January, August 2020 January, August 2021	People and Business Management Group Manager
c) Establish Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	December 2019	RAP Working Group Convenor
d) Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.	30 September 2020 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor
e) Investigate participating in the Workplace RAP Barometer.	July 2020	RAP Working Group Convenor

Action 12:

Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia.

DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Publish our endorsed RAP on the Commission’s website. Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	August 2020 August 2021	Indigenous Champion RAP Working Group Convenor People and Business Group Manager
b) Report on progress of RAP implementation a Comission's Executive Committee meeting every quarter.	February, May, August, November 2020 February, May, August, November 2021	Indigenous Champion
c) Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff representation on the RAP Working Group.	August 2020 August 2021	Indigenous Champion

Action 13:

Review, refresh and update RAP

DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	RESPONSIBILITY
a) Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop the next RAP based on our learnings, challenges and achievements	July to September 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor
b) Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback.	July to September 2021	RAP Working Group Convenor
c) Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement	October to December 2021	Indigenous Champion RAP Working Group Convenor



“Australian Public Service Commission”

121cm wide X 151cm high.

3D Acrylic and textured acrylic on canvas

Chern’ee Sutton

www.cherneesutton.com.au

About the artist and artwork

My name is Chern’ee Sutton I am 22 years old and I am a contemporary Indigenous artist from the Kalkadoon people from the Mount Isa area in Queensland. This painting represents The Australian Public Service Commission and their commitment to their Reconciliation Action Plan.

In my painting the large community symbol represents the Australian Public Service Commission and is painted in their corporate colours. The purple spirit trails all lead to the Australian Public Service Commission’s organisation structure which is the executive committee. The two larger purple, green and aqua circles surrounded by the brown dots represent The Merit Protection Commissioner in the top right and The Australian Public Service Commissioner on the left. The spirit trail then leads to two medium dotted circles which represent The First Assistant Commissioner and the Deputy Australian Public Service Commissioner. The spirit trail then leads to nine smaller dotted circles which represent the rest of the executive committee.

The boomerang represents the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy and the Indigenous capability team within the Commission which has a multi-faceted role to support and engage with APS agencies, support Indigenous employees and promote the APS as an employer to the Indigenous community more broadly. The Rainbow Serpent represents the Australian Public Service Commission’s connection to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their history and their culture and the coloured U symbols (people) around the serpent represent Respect Culture. Value Relationships is represented by the handprints and Grow Opportunities is represented by the tree which has strong roots. The lines on either side of the footprints represent Governance, Tracking Progress and Reporting and the footprints themselves represent The Australian Public Service Commission’s R.A.P journey which are intertwined within the tree’s roots which is a strong foundation for the R.A.P plan to develop over time.

The leaves of the tree represent the 200 staff that make up the APSC and the white community symbols surrounded by the purple and aqua dots represent the 2 main offices of the APSC. The three flowers around the APSC community symbol represent the commission’s tag line which is Inform, influence and inspire. The three coloured community symbols represent diversity and inclusion with the far-right symbol representing Gender Equality, next on the left represents Disability and below represents Indigenous Employment Initiatives. The APSC maintain a vision of a public service free of barriers and full of potential and will aim to lead by best practice.

The four-star symbols represent the APSC priorities which are Modernise the Employment Framework, Shaping the APS Workforce, Building Workforce Capability and Promoting Integrity. The hexagons represent connection, building, layers of knowledge and expertise with groups linked together as a beehive to show the APSC working closely together with the many layers of complexity and work they do. The words within the hexagons represent the APSC’s principals which are Add Value, Stay the Distance and Partner Effectively in the top left and in the bottom right Committed to Service, Impartial, Accountable, Respectful and Ethical which are the APSC’s values. The larger aqua circle in the background represents how the APSC is the thread that binds all Australian Public Service work forces together and leads them into the future.



