



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Reflect

Reconciliation Action Plan

September 2021–22



Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Artwork by Dreamtime Creative

Artist's meaning behind the artwork: The central meeting place represents Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission) supporting quality, flexible and culturally appropriate aged care to older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, close to their home and communities represented by the meeting places outside. The small pathways from the concentric circle is the Commission reaching out to the communities. Everything is connected by the larger pathways representing the importance of hearing, and listening to consumers' stories to manage and deliver their care effectively. The star top right represents the Commission always looking for better ways to do things and the patterning within the segments are the different communities.



Our business

The Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission (the Commission) was formed on 1 January 2019 from the former Australian Aged Care Quality Agency and the former Aged Care Complaints Commissioner. On 1 January 2020 additional functions were transferred to the Commission from the Department of Health to create a single and integrated regulatory authority. Our purpose is to protect and enhance the safety, health, well-being and quality of life of aged care consumers.

Our vision is that older Australians trust and have confidence that aged care services protect and enhance their safety, health, well-being and quality of life.

Our role is to independently accredit, assess and monitor aged care services that are subsidised by the Australian Government, and to take appropriate regulatory action where a service is non-compliant with its legal obligations. The Commission also seeks to resolve complaints about these services, provides education and information about our functions, and engages with consumers and providers to develop and promote best practice models of care.

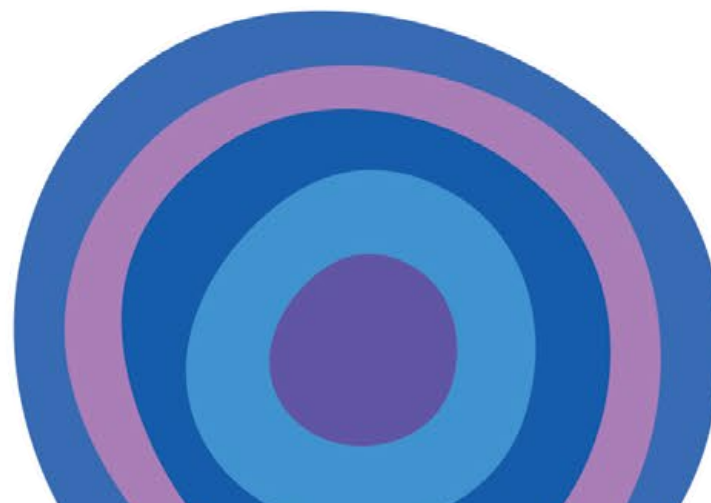
We undertake our work consistent with the Australian Public Service (APS) values outlined in the *Public Service Act 1999*.

- **Impartial** – we are apolitical and provide the Government with advice that is frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence.
- **Committed to service** – we are professional, objective, innovative and efficient, and work collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community.
- **Accountable** – we are open and accountable to the Australian community under the law and within the framework of Ministerial responsibility.
- **Respectful** – we respect all people, including their rights and their heritage.
- **Ethical** – we demonstrate leadership, are trustworthy, and act with integrity.

Our commitment to reconciliation is demonstrated through our alignment with Reconciliation Australia's five critical dimensions:

- **Race relations** – we inspire our staff and enable them to participate in a journey towards reconciliation and to better understand the histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples.
- **Equality and equity** – we seek ways to support Aboriginal and Torres Islander communities to be partners in our work.
- **Unity** – we embrace diversity and acknowledge the values and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples in our purpose and vision.
- **Institutional integrity** – we demonstrate through our actions that we actively walk the path of reconciliation through our work practices.
- **Historical acceptance** – we seek to understand the wrongs of the past and the impact of these on today in order to shape a better future.

We are a national organisation with over 800 staff located in eleven sites across all states and territories including all eight capital cities in Darwin, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane. Our 2020-21 APS Staff Census results indicate that the number of staff in the Commission who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is five. Overall, this represents less than 1%, which is 2% lower than the APS average.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Our reconciliation vision is:

- To ensure that the delivery of Government funded aged care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities is culturally safe and inclusive.
- That all Commission staff receive appropriate culturally safe training and professional development to build their cultural capabilities.
- To create a culturally safe Commission workplace that is inclusive and provides rewarding employment opportunities for all staff within the Commission.



Our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as a newly formed and expanded regulatory organisation commits us to our reconciliation vision through the achievement of specific deliverables. This Reflect RAP is the beginning of this journey.

Reconciliation is a shared responsibility for all work areas across the Commission. In November 2020, the Commission designated the Executive Director, Quality Assessment and Monitoring (Mr Anthony Speed) as a senior champion for the Indigenous Staff Network and Friends of Indigenous Staff Network and a Reflect RAP. The senior champion is responsible for driving engagement and internal awareness of the Reflect RAP. In December 2020, the Commission supported the formation of an Indigenous Staff Network and Friends of Indigenous Staff Network which provides a forum for all staff to build knowledge and share culture and is open for all staff participation.

In February 2021, the RAP Working Group was formed with representation from our Indigenous Staff and Friends of Indigenous Staff Networks to provide a governance forum for the development of the Reflect RAP plan. The RAP Working Group is chaired by the Executive Director, Quality Assessment and Monitoring Group and includes the Chair of the Indigenous Staff Network (Michael Woodbridge) and representatives from across Commission business units including an Elder, Senior Quality Assessors, a Director (Learning and Professional Development), a Graphic Designer, a Regulatory Analyst, a Review Officer and Assistant Directors, Accreditation. The RAP Working Group will monitor the implementation of the RAP and the Executive Director will provide regular reports to the Commissioner on progress against actions.

We recognise that the Commission must not only develop a strong inclusive culture and sound practices for our employees but also understand how aged care service providers demonstrate how they deliver more inclusive, appropriate and culturally safe services for all consumers of aged care services. Delivery of safe and inclusive services to people with diverse needs and life experiences is built into the Aged Care Quality Standards. Diversity is woven throughout the Quality Standards and is particularly underpinned by Standard 1 which values the identity, culture and diversity of each consumer of aged care services.

We know the success of our vision can only be achieved by working closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia. We are committed to working with communities to develop new understanding and respect for cultures.

Our reconciliation journey recognises that we are only beginning our journey as a new and expanded regulatory organisation. The launch and implementation of this RAP will continue to support the work required to realise our vision.

In implementing our RAP, we will build on the learnings from past actions completed by legacy agencies before the formation of the Commission. We will continue to reflect on our actions and ensure that we implement lessons as we continue to build and develop our RAP into the future.

This RAP is intended for the period from September 2021 through to September 2022. We will review our progress and commitments prior to the conclusion of the RAP period.



Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	1.1 Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	September 2021	Executive Champion
	1.2 Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	December 2021	Director, Stakeholder Engagement
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	April 2022	Executive Champion
	2.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May to 3 June 2022	Executive Champion
	2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May to 3 June 2022	Executive Champion

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	3.1 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	September 2021	Commissioner
	3.2 Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	October 2021	Director, Stakeholder Engagement
	3.3 Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	November 2021	Lead: Executive Champion Support: RAP Working Group
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	4.1 Promote case studies to exemplify good practice on equality and anti-discrimination strategies to both internal and external stakeholders.	December 2021	Lead: Executive Champion Support: Chair of Indigenous Network
	4.2 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify opportunities for action to promote cultural safety.	March 2022	Director, Human Resources



Respect

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	5.1 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation:	June 2022	Executive Champion
	a) Review the Indigenous Staff Network intranet page.	June 2022	Director, Communications
	b) Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in all Commission properties.	June 2022	Chief Operating Officer
	5.2 Consult with Traditional Owners to ensure appropriate use of language and permissions are practised:	June 2022	Chief Operating Officer
	a) Rename meeting rooms and new property locations.	June 2022	Chief Operating Officer
	b) Display information regarding the local Aboriginal history of the region.	June 2022	Chief Operating Officer
	c) Ensuring the visual representation of First Nations cultures through display of visual art in at least one common area for each Commission property.	June 2022	Chief Operating Officer
	d) Active use of signature blocks for promoting shared knowledge of local country.	March 2022	Director, Communications

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
5. continued Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	5.3 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs and develop a cultural awareness training strategy within our organisation.	March 2022	Director, Learning and Development
	5.4 Promote all staff awareness of existing online learning opportunities available through the Commission's online learning resource (LEARNHUB).	September 2021	Director, Learning and Development
	5.5 Promote Cultural Awareness and Core Cultural Learning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia (APSC Course for staff at all classification levels).	September 2021	Director, Learning and Development
	5.6 Promote access to subject matter experts to deliver consumer experience and other identified sessions to all Commission staff.	December 2021	Director, Learning and Development

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	6.1 Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	December 2021	Director, Learning and Development
	6.2 Increase staff use of and understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	September 2021	Executive Champion
	6.3 Source and distribute lanyards and wallet sized cards which can be used by staff to increase the use and understanding of the purpose of Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country protocols.	September 2021	Executive Champion
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	7.1 Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2022	Lead: Executive Champion Support: Office of the Commissioner
	7.2 Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week through internal events and by promoting external events in our local area.	July 2022	Lead: Executive Champion Support: Office of the Commissioner
	7.3 RAP Working Group to lead planning for NAIDOC Week event.	June 2022	Lead: Executive Champion Support: RAP working Group



Opportunities

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	8.1 Increase recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisation through targeted and general recruitment opportunities e.g. participation in the Indigenous Graduate Development Cadet program.	June 2022	Executive Director, Workforce and Organisational Development
	8.2 Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing profile to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	September 2021	Executive Director, Workforce and Organisational Development
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	9.1 Develop awareness of Commonwealth procurement requirements and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	December 2021	Chief Operating Officer
	9.2 Investigate Supply Nation membership.	September 2021	Chief Operating Officer



Governance

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective Indigenous Staff Network and Friends of Indigenous Staff Network to include support for a RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive development and governance of the RAP.	10.1 Maintain an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Champion on the Executive Leadership Team.	September 2021	Executive Leadership Group
	10.2 Maintain an Indigenous Staff Network and Friends of Indigenous Staff Network.	September 2021	Executive Champion
	10.3 Review Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	September 2021	Lead: Executive Champion Support: RAP Working Group
	10.4 Maintain a Commission RAP Working Group to develop, recommend and monitor the Commission's RAP.	June 2022	Lead: Executive Champion Support: Indigenous Staff Network and Friends of Indigenous Staff Network

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	11.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	September 2021	Executive Champion
	11.2 Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Ongoing Review January 2022	Lead: Executive Champion Support: Indigenous Staff/Friends networks
	11.3 Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	September 2021	Executive Champion
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	12.1 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	Annually – September	Lead: Executive Champion Support: Indigenous Staff/Friends networks
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	13.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia’s website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2022	Lead: Executive Champion

Contact

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Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present.



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Write

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